

Exploring the Factors of Classroom Anxiety in the Context of EFL Arab Students

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Abstract: The influence of affective variables on language learning production is acknowledged by researchers and language scholars. They filter the amount of input into the language acquisition device. As one of the most important affective variables, anxiety is a significant predictor in EFL learning attainment. This paper investigates the factors that contribute the most in provoking general FL classroom anxiety from the perspective of Arab postgraduate students in UKM. The sample study consisted of thirty four postgraduate Arab students majoring in English. The FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) as well as focus group interviews were employed to collect the required data. The statistical package of SPSS version 16 was used to analyse data. Results of the study suggested that test anxiety, fear of failing the course, instructor-learner interaction, vocabulary, negative evaluation, and high expectations were factors that provoked the general FL classroom anxiety the most. Investigating the factors of classroom anxiety could help the teachers and lecturers substantially in generating a worry-free educational environment, and consequently lead to fruitful learning outcomes.

Keywords: Classroom Anxiety; Arab Learners; Test Anxiety; EFL Postgraduate Student; Language Anxiety Factors

I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of anxiety has been widely acknowledged as one of the most important psychological phenomena that is experienced in many social or learning contexts and relates to fear, unpleasant, and worries. According to [23 pp 3] anxiety is “tense, unsettling anticipation of a threatening but vague event; a feeling of uneasy suspense. It is a negative affect so closely related to fear that in many circumstances the two terms are used interchangeably”. He argues that anxiety and fear are an amalgamation of tension and unpleasant anticipations.

Research on the effect of anxiety on the learning process has revealed its significant effect on language learning and production [10], [26], [33], [27], [28]. For example, [7] administered a survey questionnaire among 700 ESL students in Universiti Putra Malaysia randomly to an oral communication test. Findings indicated that anxiety has a pivotal role in language learning. In addition, a considerable amount of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety was discovered among these learners. [32] administered FLCAS among 115 high-school EFL students in China to find out the level of anxiety the participants experience. The findings demonstrated that the participants experienced high level of anxiety which harmfully affect the students’ performance in the language classroom. Among the four sources of general FL classroom anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation was found to be the source that provoked anxiety the most. This is followed by Communication Apprehension (CA), Test Anxiety, and Anxiety of the English class respectively. Two sources, namely Test anxiety and Anxiety of English Classroom were found to be debilitating sources which correlated significantly with the students’ achievement.

Other studies have revealed a correlation between anxiety and attainment. According to [31pp74], language anxiety is “the psychological tension that the learner goes through in performing a learning task and this anxiety is situation-specific”. With regard to the effects of anxiety, it can be either a strong motivational variable which stimulates the learners, or a debilitating variable that deters the learners from achieving their objectives. In other words, a correlation between language learning anxiety and their attainment has been confirmed. [5] claim that anxiety does not help and facilitate performance; furthermore, they disagree with other researchers who tagged positive emotions like self-confidence and excitement of challenges as facilitative anxiety. They argue that negative control expectation and facilitative anxiety only allow further debilitating anxiety reactions.

Contrariwise, others revealed positive or no correlation between anxiety and attainment. For example, [18] carried out a study to discover the relationship between test anxiety and academic performance among 83,000 students and 600 teachers in Nyeri district, Kenya. The results indicated that there was no significant relationship between test anxiety and performance. They concluded that academic performance depends on other factors like discipline, school facilities and intelligent but not very much on anxiety. Moreover, [17] examined the relationship between anxiety, self-efficacy, and French proficiency in listening and reading. However, French reading proficiency found to be positively related to reading self-efficacy, while reading anxiety was not related to French reading proficiency. Listening proficiency was positively related to listening self-efficacy for female students; in addition, reading anxiety was positively related to reading proficiency for both genders (male and female). Although these studies have addressed the phenomena of language learning anxiety and its consequences on the learner’s achievements and attainment, few studies [1], [16], [30] have dealt with the context of Arab learners. Learners from different cultural or educational backgrounds will certainly have different anxiety reactions, so what is considered an anxiety provoking factor for one learner might not be anxiety provoking factor for another learner from different cultural background. According to [33 pp74] “it is recognized that one’s uppermost limit of language anxiety threshold is anything but fixed; it varies from culture to culture, from individual to individual, or even from moment to moment”. Thus, the objective of this paper is to address the classroom anxiety experienced by a group of EFL Arab learners. The findings are pivotal as they provide an awareness of the anxiety variables that make an impact on a FL learning experience as well as on the meaning of language learning from the students’ perspectives.

There have been many types of anxiety; however, trait, state, and situation-specific anxiety have been documented as types of anxiety specific to language learning. [27] Claim that although not all types of anxiety are particular to L2 learning, some of them were addressed in the foreign language learning domain. Individual with trait anxiety tends to be anxious in a wide range of situation and is anxious about many things, which means individual with trait anxiety has a stable tendency to experience anxiety in various situations like language learning or language use. State anxiety is the feeling of apprehension regarding certain situations, is not consistent, but is rather a transient emotional interaction. On the other hand, situation-specific anxiety is the form of anxiety which is constant over time (similar to trait anxiety) but not stable across different situations. It applies to certain setting or situation only, for example FL anxiety, math anxiety, test anxiety, and stage fright [6]. Foreign language anxiety might be considered in relation to state anxiety. In the classroom context, state anxiety is not steady, but rather, a permanent apprehensive feeling during individual class sessions. In the same way, FL classroom anxiety appears to differ during classes or other situations that require the use of the FL and/or over the time of learning the target language [6].

Language anxiety plays a fundamental role in the learning process affecting the learners’ cognitive and behavioral appearance. Anxious students are more concerned about their responses to tasks and performance in tasks they receive in language classroom. [14] States that

“Language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students. Anxious students are focused on both the task at hand and their reactions to it (p.96)”.

In a foreign language classroom context, learners may feel anxious if they were urged to answer questions in a foreign language which they lack proficiency in. This feeling of anxiety will lead to feelings of apprehension and frustration that might diminish the cognitive performance, thus leading to negative self-evaluation and impaired cognition which will

harmfully affect performance [14], [13]. However, some researchers see anxiety as energy provoking (facilitative anxiety) which motivates learners. [4] Argues that the concept of facilitative anxiety and “euphoric tension” is that some concern or worry about how to prepare a task will positively help the learner to accomplish task at hand. He added that facilitative anxiety “keeps one alert, poised, and slightly unbalanced to the point that one cannot relax entirely” (p. 162). If the learner does not have a clear idea on tackling a given task, it is the amount of tension or arousal that keeps him alert to complete the task.

Previous research of competitiveness and anxiety revealed that facilitative anxiety has been found as one of the factors to success in L2 learning in [32],[4]. [19] Have studied the expert ESL\EFL teachers’ viewpoints on how anxiety affects the learning of foreign language. The in-depth qualitative interviews were used to gather more in depth and width information regarding the phenomena. Many of these teachers have maintained that anxiety has a positive or a facilitative effect on language learning. The positive aspect of anxiety can be described as the “attentiveness” or “alertness” which facilitates the learner’s attention to the required level for better input. On the other hand, in Zhang Baoyan’s (1996) research of learners of English in Taiwan, the results indicated that there has been no relation between class achievement and language anxiety in [32].

Three sources of foreign language classroom anxiety have been identified: i) Communication apprehension, ii) Test anxiety and iii) Fear of negative evaluation [10],[2],[11],[4], [33], [29]. Communicative apprehension (henceforth CA) has been defined as one’s apprehension related with communication with other people [29]; [10].[2 pp156] argues that when comparing apprehensive with non-apprehensive people, apprehensive people have further aversive to partake in conversations with other people “and to seek social interactions”. One of the most specific CA permeating learning of the target language comes from the belief that one will surely have difficulties understanding the others and make them understand, hence in some conversations people keep silent in the FL class [10], [27]. Some general characteristic behaviors such as quietness, shyness, and reticence are normally CA-provoking factors [29]. According to [29] one person out of each five college students is communication apprehensive, and the level of reticence and shyness differs significantly from one student to another. Furthermore, if one’s ability and desire to take part in a talk or conversation are available, while the verbalizing process is prevented, subsequently reticence occurs. [25]claim that CA acts as a barrier blocking learners’ mastering English and causes anxiety and reticence when communicating with other people in the target language due to their limited knowledge of the language.

According to [12] “Test anxiety is a universal phenomenon and hardly confined to language study” and is a “potent feature of language learners’ behavior (p.31)”. [29] Further elaborates that it is a psychological condition that one experiences distress before, during, or after an exam to such an extent that this anxiety interferes with normal learning and resulting in poor performances. A learner might develop a tendency to feel anxious during a test due to reasons such as fear of incapability to perform well in a test, short of preparation, time constrains, lack of organization, and poor learning habits. These reasons pose problems affecting learners’ performance in tests and lead them to divide their attention between self-awareness of their fears and class activities and eventually feel overwhelmed.

The third source of anxiety is fear of negative evaluation which refers to “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate one-self negatively [25]. People who are extremely worried about other people’s impressions like to behave in a way that lessen the possibility of critical evaluation wherein they might leave or avoid social discussions [27]. It seems to be similar to test anxiety, but not limited to test environment as it occurs in different situations either social or evaluative situations like job interview or speaking in front of the class. It usually occurs when a FL learner assumes that he/she is not capable to achieve the appropriate social impression [29], [27]. The fear of appearing awkward, foolish or incompetent in the eyes of the learners’ can inhibit attempts to communicate confidently. Hence, once that happens student will avoid communicating and stay silent [12].

Related studies examining foreign classroom anxiety have discovered various contributing factors depending on the targeted context. For example, [2] found that speech anxiety, negative evaluation, fear of failure, level of comfort when interacting with native speaker as well as negative attitudes toward the language class were anxiety factors which affected the learning process negatively. [20]demonstrated that factors like age, academic achievement, prior history of

visiting foreign countries, prior high school experience with foreign languages, expected overall average for current language course, perceived scholastic competence, and perceived self-worth played a major role in arising or decreasing language anxiety. On the other hand, [28] identified motivation, effort, and English proficiency having significant influence on learners' levels of anxiety. Similarly, factors such as age, gender, occupation, experience in language, and time of studying language outside the classroom all played a fundamental role in mastery of language and as anxiety-provoking causes. These factors causing anxiety may slightly differ from one context to another. Taking up this point, the present study aims to investigate the phenomenon of foreign language anxiety among a group of Arab EFL postgraduate students and to identify the factors that contribute towards foreign language anxiety.

Since this study was conducted on a new context (group of Arab learners) the results expected to shed new light on the concept of FL classroom anxiety and contribute to enlarge its implications and scope. In addition to anxiety provoking variables, the researchers decided to investigate the extent to which test anxiety was related to foreign language anxiety. The research questions are as follow:

1. What are the factors that contribute in provoking general FL classroom anxiety from the perspective of Arab postgraduate students in UKM?
2. Is test anxiety exclusive to the experience of EFL?

II. METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted using the mix method design of quantitative and qualitative methods. Hence, FLCAS has been simultaneously employed to collect the quantitative data, while interviews were carried out to collect the qualitative data. Both of the methods were jointly employed to accomplish the aim of this study. This is because an enhanced understanding of the research problem might be obtained while using the mix method design. Moreover, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods would complement each other; hence, the combination helps to counterbalance the strengths and weaknesses of each other [8], [9].

34 out of 41 students participated in the study and answered the questionnaire. This was purposive sampling and homogenous sample selection because it fulfilled the research purpose. The researcher intentionally selected these individuals to learn or understand their perspectives. Whether the people or sites chose are information rich is the primary criteria in sample to be selected and studied [15]. The small number of participants is because the full number of available Arab Postgraduate students in the school of language (PPBL) was 41 at that time only, besides some participants did not return the questionnaire. The following Table (1) shows the participants' profile in detail. The participants consist of both males and females but the males outnumbered the females. That was because the cohort of students during the time of the study comprised more male students. Their responses reflected true life learning experience in the English language classes taken at the School of Language Studies and Linguistics (PPBL).

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Information

Variable	Frequency	Percent%	Frequency	Percent%
Gender	22 Males	64.7 %	12 Females	35.3 %
Age	25 (20-29)	73.5%	9 (30-39)	26.5 %
Marital status	26 Single	76.5%	8 Married	23.5 %

Regarding the participants' age, all of them range from 20-39. This small difference in age is due to the similar educational system that they went through, in other words, age has little bearing on the results of this study as the age difference between the participants is not substantial.

The FLCAS has constantly achieved reliable results in different contexts [10], [24],[2],[20],[13],[28], [16]. The FLCAS is specifically developed by [10] to measure FL classroom anxiety from the students' perspective. It consists of

33 items that are answered in a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “Strongly agree to strongly disagree”. Twenty out of these 33 items focus on listening and speaking skills. Students are required to choose one answer for each item and their choices are equated with a numerical value, where strongly agree is (5 points), agree is (4 points), neither agree nor disagree is (3 points), disagree is (2 points), and strongly disagree is (1 point). The theoretical range for FLCAS is from 33 to 165; the higher score obtained means high level of anxiety, while in contrast, the lower score obtained indicates lower level of anxiety. A statistical test was run to obtain internal reliability and the results showed that the FLCAS achieved the required internal reliability of Cronbach's Alpha reading of .89. The required significant value of internal reliability has a value of higher than .70, which means that the reading obtained is reliable and the value is satisfactory [3].

Focus group interviews conduction requires interviewing five to eight participants in a group and “are typically based on homogeneous groups” [21 pp173]. In this study, the group of five volunteered participants was interviewed. Interview questions were modified from the FLCAS and then discussed with the researcher’s supervisor beforehand who is an expert in anxiety and affective variables field. After the discussion a few question were again modified to reflect the purpose of the study (refer appendix part 3). For more confidential, the participants were given alphabet letters instead of their names like participant A, B, C, D, and E.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question is meant to investigate the factors that contribute to FL classroom anxiety. Using SPSS (version 16), descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation of the FLCAS were used to answer the first research question. The items loaded on the highest means were chosen to guide the study in detecting the factors that provoke anxiety the most. Nine items achieved high means of 3.00 and above. The other items were excluded from the discussion because they achieved a mean less than 3.00. It should be stated that scoring less than 3.00 does not necessarily mean the items are not considered anxiety-provoking. However, since the current study’s aims is to look at the factors that provoke anxiety the most, values of 3.00 and above have been chosen as the required value as demonstrated in the following table (Table 2).

Table 2: FLCAS Items with Mean of (3.00) And Above

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.	3.56	1.353
I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	3.50	1.161
I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.	3.50	1.187
Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.	3.47	1.080
I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in the English class.	3.35	1.125
I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	3.29	1.031
I feel very self-conscious about speaking in English in front of other students.	3.21	1.175
I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	3.09	1.164
It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.	3.03	1.193

These items were answered using FLCAS as well as in the semi-structured interviews with one focus group. Five factors were found to be extremely contributing to general FL classroom anxiety from this group of participants’ viewpoint, namely Test anxiety and Fear of failing the course, Instructor-learner interaction, Vocabulary, Negative evaluation, and

Self-confidence. For further understanding, the following subsections explain these factors in detail. The following domains were taken from [2] to link the current findings with previous related literature.

1. Test Anxiety And Fear Of Failing The Course

With respect to FLCAS item number one: "I worry about the consequences of failing my English class" (Table 2), it appears clear that these learners are generally concerned about English tests and repeating or failing the course. The majority showed high concern about the consequences of failing the course (mean = 3.56). The demand to successfully pass the English courses is highly required since these learners cannot graduate until they complete the required courses. Therefore, they needed to ensure to obtain enough marks to guarantee passing the course successfully; otherwise, they would need to redo the course again. With regard to the interview, the yielded data suggests that test anxiety contributes largely to this group of selected participants' level of anxiety. Some of the participants consider English tests as challenging and problematic to them as most expressed being under stress whenever an exam is held in general.

"I also feel a lot of judge because of failing the, I'm afraid of failing the exam" (Participant E)

"I also agree with my friends I was feeling worry in English exam" (Participant C)

"yes, the exam in English I think .hhh is big challenge of anxiety, I feel very tense ...hhh...and I felt myself it's a very big anxiety" (Participant D)

Test anxiety and Fear of failing the course seem not to be independent concepts, but rather two labels describing one phenomenon in the language classroom. The current study seems to be match previous studies[22],[2], [32]. However, [2] concluded that test anxiety is not conceptually related to other component of FL classroom, but rather is most likely a general anxiety problem. The current study seems to agree with [2] findings. These participants claim that their feeling in any exam is the same. It means that any exam could be anxiety-provoking based on the difficulty encountered during the exam. One student claims that he is always troubled and feels anxious during any exams, regardless of the kind of exam. Furthermore, the participants of this study agree that everyone is worried about failing the course especially when it comes to exams. These opinions support [2] findings in that test anxiety is not a component specific for language classrooms only, but rather is a general phenomenon that could be experienced in any evaluative situation. The difficulty of the exam itself plays a major role in stimulating the feeling of fear or anxiousness, and the majority of students feel terrified of exams whatever the exam is, as the following excerpts depict:

"English exam as another any exam...hhh has worry and the students will be ...hhh uncomfortable there is no difference between English exam and any exam every exam has some worry". (Participant A)

"yes I agree with my friend that any exam whether English or maybe in Arabic all the exams there are some fears worries about the exam about the grades or you'll pass or you'll fail" (Participant B)

2. Instructor-Learner Interaction

There is an interaction between language learning and the environmental components in which the student grew up, and both negative and positive experiences have a strong impact on the success of language learning. The process of interaction between the instructor (teacher) and the learner (student) is regarded as a factor causing anxiety for this group of participants. If the learner does not understand the teacher's corrections, this is considered an anxiety elevation factor (mean 3.50, item 2). Generally, the participants replicate that they feel nervous if they do not understand every word the teacher is saying (mean 3.03, item 9). Furthermore, these learners still feel anxious if they were asked questions they have not prepared for in advance, which in turns affect the interaction process between the learner and the teacher. The lecturer himself/herself could be considered as an anxiety-provoking factor as the following quotations indicate:

"for me the most important is the lecturer himself or herself" (Participant B)

"actually I feel bedlam myself I have something bedlam so...hhh... I need to understand I need to read more to understand the teachers correction" (Participant D)

"...hhh... if I don't understand somehow I feel stress" (Participant E)

Some researchers have found that the instructor-learner interaction is an anxiety factor (Young 1991). The poor mastery of the target language as suggested by [11] is the reason behind the feeling of fear that these students encounter. The

current study revealed that some of the learners feel frustrated when interacting with the lecturer, in case he/she does not understand what the teacher is saying. According to [10] theory of anxiety, this type of anxiety compress a complex behaviour related to classroom interaction. Thus, such statements reflect the amount of frustration a learner could experience when he/she is involved in incomprehensible conversation with the lecturer.

3. Vocabulary

Having enough vocabulary will certainly help the speaker to feel more confident and vice versa. Some of the participants indicate that lack of vocabulary is a reason that elevates their level of unpleasantness and frustration while speaking in English. The majority of the students agrees or even strongly agrees (3.50) that not understanding what the teacher says in the English class is a factor that causes anxiety (item 3). Some others (3.35) demonstrate being afraid when they are asked to speak without preparation in the English class (item 5). This is supported by the interview data yielded as quoted in the excerpts below:

“in English class when I speak with teacher with the classmates, I really feel tense and .hh and frustration but I have many problems I feel that my frustration come when I do mistake so I tried to avoid some vocabularies that are difficult to me” (Participant C)

“I feel a bit difficult when I speak with my classmates because my previous study was focus on grammar more than speaking, you know English is FL in my country there is no opportunity to speak it everywhere” (Participant E)

One of the students attributes the reason of being apprehensive or tense when speaking with the teacher or classmates to the lack of vocabulary. This is obvious based on their response to item three (mean 3.50) which indicates them being worried or upset when they do not understand what the teacher is saying. For item five (mean 3.95), they claim lacking confidence when speaking in the English class. The reason behind the high means for the two items could be attributed to the lack of vocabulary that most of the students suffer from, and the lack of English practice during their previous study as mentioned by the participants.

In general, people when receiving new information will organize it around their prior structured schemata [35],[34]. Lack of vocabulary factor is mainly derived from schemata shortage. Since these learners are deficient in English vocabulary, they still encounter difficulties when they attempt to organize the new vocabulary into their previous knowledge. Thus, they face difficulties which cause feelings of anxiety and ultimately results in deterioration of their performance. According to [22] highly-anxious students are apt to speak fewer, to make shorter cues, and to make use of fewer dependent clauses and target structures than low-anxious students.

The core of [10] theory is that individual's self-conception encounters threat that is caused by the inherent limitations of communicating in and poor mastery of the target language. To summarize, it appears clear that lack of vocabulary for this group of selected Arab participants is an anxiety-provoking factor. Having enough and sufficient exposure to language structure will help them to perform better. According to [11] FL classroom anxiety is the individual's self-conception of encountering a threat that is caused by the inherent limitations of communicating in and poor mastery of the target language. In this study, when it comes to poor mastery of the target language, lack of vocabulary was found to be the main component of mastering the language. This indicates that being deficient in vocabulary will definitely be noticed in performance, and thus incite anxiety in the learner or user of that language. Moreover, [22] demonstrates that a moderate inverse relationship between performance and language anxiety exists. In addition, an important inverse relationship between students' ability to carry out their oral assessment and their expression of language anxiety has been exposed. These negative correlations verify that highly-anxious students are apt to speak fewer, to make shorter cues, and to make use of fewer dependent clauses and target structures than low-anxiety students. Furthermore, [28] argues that English proficiency is a major factor that plays a fundamental role on Taiwanese students' performance and anxiety level. In relation to the current study, lack of vocabulary deters the participants' attempts of speaking in English in the classroom. They are used to keeping silent and to not volunteer or participate in the class and avoid from using the target language until they are more confident of it, as commented by one participant of this study: “at the first I...didn't prefer to volunteer because I'd like to listen first and try to imitate the teacher and the students after that I hope to be volunteer” (Participant A).

4. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Referring to FLCAS items in Table 2, item four “Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it” scored a mean of 3.4 while item seven “I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students” scored a mean of 3.21. Such high means show the students’ immense concern about the negative evaluation factor. It has been demonstrated that their self-conscious can be aroused when speaking in English in front of other classmates and their feeling of anxiety is still aroused even if they are well prepared for the English class. In this study, some students were more apprehensive and worried about how their classmates will judge them. Others feel anxious when they make mistakes in front of the class as indicated in the following excerpt:

“For me yes I feel afraid when making mistakes in front of others or classmates” (Participant C)

[12 pp 31] states that “Fear of appearing awkward, foolish, or incompetent in the eyes of the learners’ peers or others can inhibit attempts to communicate confidently”. Thus, a learner feels threatened when attempting to use the target language in front of other colleagues due to the fear of negative evaluative situations. Fear of negative evaluation as a source of FL classroom anxiety was defined by [10 pp 128] as the “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate one-self negatively.” The students of the current study might not feel anxious in other situations, but speaking in English in front of other classmates in the English class definitely aroused the feeling of fear or apprehension in them. They realized that being EFL learners, idealistic demands are not mandatory, but negative evaluations are still conceived as an anxiety-provoking factor for the majority of these selected participants.

5. High Level of Expectation

A learner with high levels of expectation usually sets an idealistic level of performance for himself or herself and thus conceives any performance of a lower level as unacceptable, and this of course results in unwarranted anxiety in the learner. Thus, high level of expectation (performance) is conceived as a reason that provokes anxiety to this group of selected participants. Regarding FLCAS item “I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared in advance” (mean 3.29, item 6), the anxiety feeling of these learners might be provoked if they were asked questions they have not prepared in advance. This means that they feel they are judged unfavorably if they did not answer correctly.

Moreover, when looking at item eight “I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do” (mean 3.9), it is clear the students feel that others in the class perform better than they do in terms of speaking proficiency. When these students face a situation in which English is used, they have imposed it on themselves not to commit any language mistakes and when this happens they feel intimidated. The result suggests that these learners are affected by their own idealistic level of performance that they assume they have. This in turns leads to the feeling of lack of self-confidence and consequently provokes anxiety. The qualitative data yielded (interview) supports the result of the quantitative data as the following excerpt represents:

“Actually I feel muddled myself I have something muddled so...I need to understand I need to read more to understand the teachers correction” (Participant D)

Another factor of anxiety related to the personal factors that some students expressed is that they have to achieve everything related to comprehension in the target language. Anxious-learners usually develop an idealistic demand they set for themselves to achieve and feel that any test performance which is less than perfect is failure [10]. These high expectations might also cause anxiety. Some learners demonstrate being apprehensive because of their feeling that misunderstanding of the teacher’s correction will confound their attention. [20] Stated that students’ expectation of their overall achievement in foreign language courses is a factor that incites anxiety to EFL learners.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on these selected participants’ perspectives, five factors are found to extremely contribute to general FL classroom anxiety, namely Test Anxiety and Fear of Failing the Course, Instructor-learner Interaction, Vocabulary, Negative Evaluation and Self Confidence. These factors obtained the highest mean scores of 3.00 and above among other FLCAS

items. Furthermore, the qualitative data analysis which is the focus group interviews has strongly supported the FLCAS items' analysis.

Basically, the core of FL classroom anxiety's theoretical conception is derived from the definition of FL anxiety as "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" [10]. However, the current study concluded that the factors discovered are all exclusive to the experience of EFL as a FL classroom except for test anxiety or fear of failing the course. The findings of the present study support the theoretical conception of FL anxiety. It suggests that anxiety symptoms are unique for the FL classroom, as has been discussed previously. All factors were exclusive to the uniqueness of the English language classroom as a FL experience except for test anxiety factor. Test anxiety or fear of failing the course was found to be a common symptom that could be aroused when any exam is taken. This conclusion matches [2] findings where test anxiety was discovered to be a general phenomenon and not specific for the FL classroom, but rather a general phenomenon experienced whenever a test is performed. Anxious learners do not consider language errors as an expected part of language learning routine, but rather as a source of negative impression from lecturer and students and an intimidation to their image as well.

The results of the study show that EFL learners have a tendency to feel moderately anxious. The duplication of factor analyses of general classroom anxiety could provide a clearer picture since it contributes to the distinction of FL anxiety. These findings draw the attention of instructors and teachers of FL languages to the existence of general FL classroom anxiety even in an advanced language context like EFL postgraduate class. When they are clearly aware about this fact, they can easily detect the students with general anxiety, to show considerate attitude towards the problems that are facing their students and implement the appropriate measures to help their students. To recapitulate, teachers and instructors must be aware and responsive to their students' anxiety about the general FL classroom.

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APPENDIX (1) SURVEYS ON FL CLASSROOM ANXIETY

PART (1) STUDENTS' DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Age: 20~29 30~39 40~49 50~59 60~69 70 ~79
3. Marital status: Single Married
5. Academic Major:
8. Do you use English outside the classroom? If yes, for what reason (s)?

PART (2) FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS) (Adapted from Horwitz et al. 1986)

1. SA= Strongly Agree, 2. A= Agree, 3. N= Neither agree nor disagree, 4. D= Disagree, 5. SD= Strongly Disagree
- 1) I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.
1. SA 2. A 3. N 4. D 5. SD
 - 2) I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.
1. SA 2. A 3. N 4. D 5. SD
 - 3) I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.
1. SA 2. A 3. N 4. D 5. SD
 - 4) It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English class
1. SA 2. A 3. N 4. D 5. SD
 - 5) It won't bother me at all to take more English classes.
1. SA 2. A 3. N 4. D 5. SD

- 6) During English classes, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 7) I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than me.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 8) I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 9) I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 10) I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 11) I don't understand why some people get so upset over English class
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 12) In English class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 13) It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 14) I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 15) I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 16) Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 17) I often feel like not going to my English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 18) I feel confident when I speak in English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 19) I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 20) I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 21) The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 22) I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD

- 23) I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 24) I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 25) English class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 26) I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 27) I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 28) When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 29) I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 30) I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 31) I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 32) I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD
- 33) I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance
1. SA 2. A 3.N 4.D 5. SD

APPENDIX (2) INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

No	Question	Question Type
1	Will you introduce yourself please?	Introductory question
2	Can you talk about your experience with the English language class?	General question
3	a) How do you feel when you are speaking in the English class? b) Do you use the English language when talking with your classmates in class?	Communication apprehension
4	Are you afraid of making mistakes in front of the class? How do you feel if you do not understand what the teacher is correcting?	Negative evaluation
5	Do you believe that other students are performing better than you in the English language class? Do you think of others' when you are speaking in the English language?	High level of expectation

6	How do you feel during the English language exam? Are you worried much about failing the course? How do you prepare for your English language exam?	Test anxiety and fear of failing the course.
7	Do you get upset if the teacher corrects any mistake you make in the English language class? Why?	Teacher's style
8	How do you perceive the classroom procedure? Is it comfortable?	Classroom procedures
9	Do you participate in the English language class? Do you volunteer to participate in the English language class? Does it bother you if you do not understand every word the teacher says?	Instructor-learner interaction
10	Do you interact with the native speakers? How do you feel if you are interacting with a native English speaker?	Level of comfort when interacting with native speakers
11	How confident are you in the English language class? Do you feel it is a very difficult course? Does it bother you if you need to take more English language classes?	Motivation and attitudes
12	What makes you apprehensive or frustrated in the English language class?	others

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