



## Effect of English Language Learning Anxiety on Learner's Interactive Language Activities at Matriculation in Punjab

<b>Fouzia Azhar</b>	MPhil Scholar, Superior University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.
<b>Muhammad Amir Hashmi</b>	Associate Professor, Institute of Education & Research Punjab University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.
<b>Shabana Zafer</b>	Senior Lecturer, University of Management & Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

**Abstract:** *The psycholinguistic aspect of English Lexicon schooling as a foreign language plays a crucial character in the enlightenment of learners. Present-day research is focused to get an answer about the agitation and anxiousness level of English language learning in Matriculation students, both in public schools and private schools in Lahore, Punjab. To carry out this study, using FLCAS as a research instrument, data was collected from 800 participants, an equal number of learners from government and private institutions, as well as an equal number of female and male students. Data analysis was done by SPSS, it was found that learners experience moderate level to high levels of language anxiety in classroom situations. However, T-tests were adapted to figure out the difference in anxiety levels between government school and private school students. Similarly, a T-test was adapted to figure out the difference in anxiety levels among female and male learners.*

**Key Words:** Psycholinguistic, Language Anxiety, Foreign / Second Language

**Corresponding Author:** MPhil Scholar, Superior University, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.  
Email: [Fouzia.azhar05@gmail.com](mailto:Fouzia.azhar05@gmail.com)

### Introduction

We are living in a modern world, the whole world is turned into a global village, where media technologies have interconnected people, not only in big cities but all around the towns and villages. Through this Globalization, an important role of the English language has emerged. It's a language of communication between different nations of the world, besides it's the language of technology and science, it erases differences

in terms of industry, culture, trade, commerce, education, research, history, latest techniques and technology, agriculture and politics. The worldwide globalization factor has increased the demand for sound communication skills in the English language.

In third-world countries, especially in Pakistan, the schooling of English as a lingo of foreigners is a challenge for learners from the primary level till the Matriculation level.

It is observed that a number of students in Pakistan are not good at speaking English. They have to learn all four strands of the English language i.e. reading, listening, writing and speaking. When a student couldn't grasp or learn these fundamental language skills, his confidence gets affected. English Language being a foreign/second language has its significance which cannot be ignored, on the other hand, it is a must to learn a language in the Pakistani educational scenario. Learners face feelings of fear, uncomfortable and confusion during foreign language class. In the Pakistani educational scenario, most traditional methods of teaching are being practised in Public schools, classrooms are teacher-centred and teacher dominant. Students are passive learners, all the knowledge and information is from the teacher, passive learners are required to note and memorize whatever the mentor has asked whereas, in private schools, the situation is quite different. In the Private sector, classrooms are not strictly teacher-centred and teacher dominant. The classroom environment is student-friendly, student-centred and student supportive. No doubt the role of an English language teacher is very important to make his classroom active, vibrant and interactive where students are given the maximum chance to put forward their responses. In such a supportive environment fear, stress or anxiety about a foreign/second language gets lesser.

English is considered a compulsory subject, right from the 1st grade till Bachelor level (Shah, 2012) "as an essential subject at graduation level in all public and private level". During the schooling of the English language as the lingo of foreigners, students at different levels and stages face difficulties to comprehend the language, it might be rules and regulations, listening or speaking difficulty. It may be the writing or reading inefficiency that is responsible to generate foreign language anxiety.

## Literature Review

Anxiety, stress or feeling of uncomfortableness is common in almost all disciplines of learning. In 1986, Horwitz and Cope, in their article, defined foreign language anxiety as the complex feelings and behaviour of learners during the learning process of the lingo of foreigners. In 1986 Horwitz have shown that the sense of anxiety both has positive and negative points. The positive aspect of language anxiety encourages the foreign language learner to move on, to ignore feelings of uncomfortableness by realizing his weak areas. To overcome this situation by learning and applying or using foreign language expressions, on the other hand, the negative aspect discourages the learner to participate in foreign language activities because of the inner fears and confusion of his mind. This negative impact of anxiety slows down the learner's learning process and his performance, his results and achievements. On the contrary, positive language anxiety provides an opportunity for the learner to overcome his inner turmoil, to gain confidence by learning consistency to acquire high scores.

In 1986 Horwitz proposed the postulation of "foreign language anxiety", to predict the foreigner lingo anxiousness of the learner", he developed a research tool called Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Whereas MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989 introduced and used nine anxiety scales "to examine the relationship between levels of anxiety and its impact on the achievements" in all four strands of English language speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Many researchers have done their investigations in this area of Psycholinguistics since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these studies have shown it very clear that in the process of schooling the foreigner, lingo/lexicon anxiousness and

uncomfortableness play an important role in classroom situations. MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) claimed the presence of a negative correlation between French lexicon anxiety and vocabulary outcome. Similarly Aida in 1994 and Satio & Samimy in 1996 pointed out a noteworthy negative relation between lexicon anxiety and academic accomplishments. Kim in 1998, had shown an impact of negativity of foreign lingo anxiousness on academic performance in traditional reading and speaking classes. An important note is highlighted by Horwitz in 2001 that in spite of the negative relationship between language anxiousness, upon scholar's performance and achievement, the presence of inconsistent levels of language anxiety is found, when studied in diverse cultural groups, as noticed in the research work of Truitt in 1995, with the Korean learners., and Kunt in 1997 with Turkish and Cypriot students.

Foreign language/second language anxiety is a major factor to affect the learning process of a learner because it is the central point to developing negative feelings of uncomfortableness, stress and anxiousness among students. An anxious learner with his dilemmas and learning discomforts cannot fully focus on the tasks at hand. In such a situation, a lack of interest increases his anxiety level, because the language teacher and language books seemed like an alien. Pappmihiel in 2002, Casado and Dereshiwsky in 2004 have given arguments that "students may experience three types of anxiety in foreign language learning situation, namely communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety". The four strands of the English lexicon, speaking, listening, writing and reading are influenced by anxious learners, which rings bells of alarm for the research scholars.

Research on Foreign language/ second language Anxiety has been exhibited in various academic scenarios. Some Pakistani researchers like Ahmed 2016, Ismail 2015,

Rahmat 2014, Adeel 2011, and Azher, Anwar & Naz 2010 have paved the way for upcoming research scholars in psycholinguistics. As far as the current research is an attempt to dig deeper to get an answer about the level of English lexicon anxiousness among the young scholars of Matriculation 10th grade in public and private schools of Lahore district, Punjab province.

## The Objective of the Research

This study is focused on these objectives:

- To find out different dimensions of English classroom anxiousness and uncomfortable feelings among students of Matriculation 10th grade in public and private institutions.
- To pinpoint the reasons for English language anxiety, on the basis of the response of participants.
- To make recommendations for the reduction of English anxiousness and agitation among our scholars at Matriculation, 10th class.

## Research Question

1. To what extent do English language agitation and FLA affect the scholars of Matriculation, 10<sup>th</sup> grade in the public sector and private sector?
2. Does there exist any difference in English anxiety levels among private and government sector learners?
3. Does English anxiety vary according to gender among the scholars of Matriculation in government and non-government schools?

## Hypothesis

To execute the investigation about the existence of foreign lingo anxiousness, and its impact on the difference between public and private school students at the Matriculation level, the following questions were hypothesised.

**H1:** No difference in English language anxiousness exists between public and private school students at the Matriculation level.

**H2:** No difference in English agitation exists between female and male students.

### Instrument

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz 1986, is used as a research instrument, a five-point Likert scale consisting of 33 questions.

### Methodology

Under the umbrella of quantitative research, the methodology is designed, and the study is descriptive in nature. Data from 800 participants had been collected. These 800 participants were selected from four government schools and from four private schools in the Lahore district of Punjab. An equal number of female and male students participated in this research.

### Communication/ Speaking Apprehension Statistics

Table 1

Communication / Speaking Apprehension in 10<sup>th</sup>-Class Students of Lahore, Punjab

	Q24	Q27	Q29	Q32	Q1	Q9	Q14	Q18
NValid	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800
Missing	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Mean	3.4013	3.3813	3.3575	2.9700	3.3138	2.6225	2.6000	3.0200
Std Error of Mean	.03808	.04153	.04226	.04952	.04461	.04953	.04870	.04643
Median	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000
Mode	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	3.00
Std Deviation	1.02058	1.17479	1.19540	1.40055	1.26186	1.40087	1.37745	1.31311
Variance	1.042	1.380	1.429	1.982	1.592	1.962	1.897	1.724
Range	4.00	4.00	10.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	11.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum	2721.00	2705.00	2686.00	2376.00	2651.00	2098.00	2080.00	2416.00
Sum of Squares	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Percentiles								
25	3.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000
50	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000
75	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000

Communication apprehension is a major source of English anxiety among the scholars at Matriculation level. Question 24, has shown an alarming level of language anxiety with a total of M=3.40 whereas Q 27, with a

### Data Analysis

SPSS is used for the numerical analysis of data. The means responses were computed individually and then collectively analyzed to find out which are the most common sources of English anxiety among 10th-grade scholars of Matriculation in private and government schools of Lahore District, Punjab. A total of 800 respondents participated, 400 were female and 400 were male.

### Variable Wise Data Analysis

A total of 33 questions of FLCAS are sub/divided into four areas: 8 questions for communication/ speaking apprehension, 9 questions to assess the anxiousness of negative evaluation, 5 questions to assess test anxiety and 11 questions for the anxiety of English classroom. These four dimensions are separately analyzed to highlight the different levels of anxiety faced by 10th-class students of Matriculation in Government and private schools in Lahore, Punjab.

total of M=3.38, shows the second highest level of communication apprehension. As similar results were shown by Young, 1991. Speaking ability in a foreign language affects the confidence and moral level of the student

directly, with a weaker speaking ability they think that their peer is superior to themselves, which provokes a feeling of uncomfortableness. In 2001 Kitano states

that “speaking skill is usually the first thing that learners compare with that of peers, teachers and native speakers”.

## Anxiousness of Negative Evaluation

### Statistics

Figure 2

Anxiousness of Negative Evaluation in 10<sup>th</sup> Class Scholars of Lahore, Punjab

Q3	Q7	Q13	Q15	Q20	Q23	Q25	Q31	Q33		
N	Valid	800	800	800	800	800	800	791		
	Missing	14	14	14	14	14	14	23		
Mean		3.1313	3.2175	3.3525	3.2725	3.0525	3.4525	3.2975	3.4188	2.6334
Median		3.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	2.0000
Mode		2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		1.23731	1.34628	1.39577	1.37135	1.17961	1.77882	1.23629	1.34561	1.31673
Variance		1.531	1.812	1.948	1.881	1.391	3.164	1.528	1.811	1.734
Range		4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	41.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	42.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum		2505.00	2574.00	2682.00	2618.00	2442.00	2762.00	2638.00	2735.00	2083.00
Percentiles	25	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000	2.0000	2.0000
	50	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	2.0000
	75	4.0000	4.0000	5.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000

A negative evaluation is another convincing factor to generate language anxiety in 10th-class students of Lahore, Punjab. As a result of which they are afraid to be topic of the

gossip. Question number 31, has shown a high level of anxiety among the learner with a total M=3.41

## Test Anxiety

### Statistics

Table 3

Test Anxiety in 10<sup>th</sup>-Class Student

Q2	Q8	Q10	Q19	Q21		
N	Valid	800	800	800		
	Missing	14	14	14		
Mean		3.6300	2.7138	2.9700	3.0975	3.3363
Median		4.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000
Mode		4.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	5.00
Std. Deviation		1.22576	1.89044	1.27225	1.22367	1.53497
Variance		1.502	3.574	1.619	1.497	2.356
Range		4.00	44.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	45.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum		2904.00	2171.00	2376.00	2478.00	2669.00
Percentiles	25	3.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000
	50	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000
	75	5.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	5.0000

To evaluate the performance of the students, the teacher has to take assessments. These assessments might be announced or unannounced, but to get feedback about the progress, such tests are part and parcel apart from the regular examination system. A

considerable number of students find it hard to overcome this test anxiety. Question 14 shows a high level of language anxiousness with a total Mean = 3.63 However Q 21 has shown foreign language test anxiety with a total M= 3.36

## Classroom Anxiety

### Statistics

**Figure 4**

*Classroom Anxiety in 10<sup>th</sup>-Class Students*

Q4	Q5	Q6	Q11	Q12	Q16	Q17	Q22	Q28	Q30	
N	Valid 800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	800	
	Missing 14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	
Mean	3.3063	2.5850	2.7763	2.8913	3.0638	3.2950	3.3775	2.8213	2.7713	3.2313
Median	3.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000	3.0000
Mode	3.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	1.35268	1.35187	1.31085	1.05751	1.45511	1.14875	2.26360	1.33004	1.23929	1.20710
Variance	1.830	1.828	1.718	1.118	2.117	1.320	5.124	1.769	1.536	1.457
Range	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	54.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	55.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Sum	2645.00	2068.00	2221.00	2313.00	2451.00	2636.00	2702.00	2257.00	2217.00	2585.00
Percentiles	25	2.0000	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000	2.0000
	50	3.0000	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	3.0000
	75	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000	4.0000

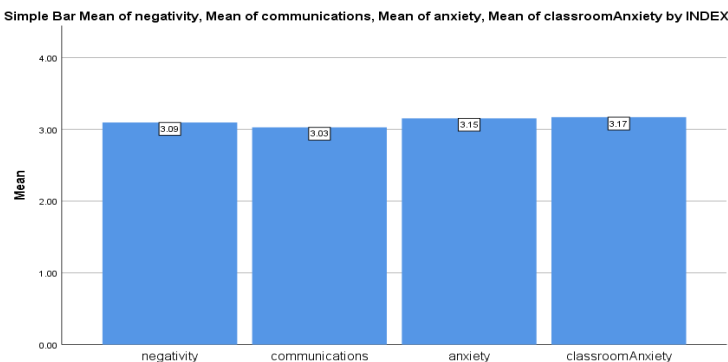
The procedures and environment of the English classroom are separate variables that can be subdivided into the teacher's personality, accent, manners, behaviours towards learners and learning process. The classroom situation of the English lexicon is highly significant, as the environment of

language class may cause fear and anxiousness among scholars. In 2013, Hashemi and Abbasi stated, "formal language classroom setting is a major source of stress and anxiety because of its demand to be more correct and clearer in using the target language".

## Bar Mean Graph of components of FLCAS

**Figure 5**

*Bar Mean Graph*



This ranking of four components of Foreign language anxiety is based upon the feedback received by the 800 regular participants of Matriculation, in 10th class at public and private schools in Lahore, Punjab. To sum up, it is found that Pakistani students face fear and uncomfortable feelings like many international students in their English/foreign language learning classroom. The Bar

Mean Graph of FLCAS has shown a clear picture to identify which component is more anxiety provoking.

To answer the second question of the study regarding the high light difference in anxiousness among public and private school students. Levene's test for Equality of variances was conducted.

## Group Statistics

Table 5

What is your school	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean Questions Government School	400	2.9802	.40424	.02021
Private schools	400	3.2366	.60911	.03046

## Independent Samples Test

Table 6

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper	
Mean Questions	Equal variances assumed	72.401	.000	-7.014	798	.000	-.25636	.03655	-.32811	-.18461
	Equal variances not assumed			-7.014	693.367	.000	-.25636	.03655	-.32813	-.18460

F= 72.401, sig.= .000 as Levene's test of equality was sig =.000 we took equal variance not assumed which is sig =.000 mean difference = - 0.25636. Std. error = 0.3655, t=-7.014 and df= 693.367, lower value = -0.32813 and upper value = -0.18460 as sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000 it reflects null hypothesis has been rejected which means there exists a

difference in the anxiousness and confusion level of public school and private school learners.

To address the third question of the study, to find out the relationship between gender and English language anxiety, Levene's test for the Equality of Variance was conducted.

## Group Statistics

Table 7

What is your gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Mean Questions Male	398	3.0126	.43337	.02172
Female	399	3.2046	.60171	.03012

## Independent Samples Test

Table 8

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
Mean Questions	Equal variances assumed	65.913	.000	-5.169	795	.000	-.19204	.03715	-.26497	-.11911	
	Equal variances not assumed			-5.171	723.438	.000	-.19204	.03714	-.26495	-.11913	

F= 65.913, sig.= .000 as Levene's test of equality was sig =.000 we took equal variance not assumed which is sig =.000 mean difference = - 0.19204. Std. error = 0.3714, t= -5.171 and df= 723.438, lower value = -0.26495 and upper value = -0.11913 as sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000 it reflects null hypothesis has been rejected which means there exists a difference of uncomfortableness and anxiousness among female and male disciples.

### Finding

The researcher in the current study focuses on the first question to figure out the level of agitation among the 10th-grade students in government and private schools in the Lahore district, Punjab. To answer the first question, FLCAS the research instrument is divided into four anxieties i.e. speaking /communication skill anxiety, the second is being afraid of negative evaluation, the third is the fear of test anxiety and the fourth anxiety is the anxiousness of the English classroom. The four anxieties were evaluated to determine the level of English anxiety faced by 10th-grade scholars in public and private schools in Lahore, Punjab. Firstly, speaking anxiety or Communication Apprehension had been one of the anxiety-inducing factors faced by students. The results have shown that the students are highly agitated when they are in a situation to communicate in English. The total mean

of these items had been a shred of clear evidence to state that speaking/communication apprehension is the most anxiousness-producing element in English language classrooms. Secondly, being afraid of negative results is another important factor to provoke anxiety among disciplines, as a result, they are afraid of degradation. Consequently, it is concluded that anxious students have low self-esteem compared to their classmates. Thirdly, test anxiety is another tension-inducing factor, most of the students find it fearful to go through the assessments even outstanding learners or high achievers suffer from test anxiety. The bar graph mean results depict that learners in a language class in 10th grade have gone through moderate levels of test anxiousness in the classroom with a total mean of 3.00. Although it can be noticed that the students remain at ease while taking assessments in the classroom. They don't want to go through formal exams. Fourthly, the English classroom environment and procedures have been an important factor to trigger agitation and anxiousness. The total mean of English classrooms is at the top with M=3.12. The results show that scholars are very conscious in English classrooms as they are overburdened with grammar rules and regulations, consequently, they avoid staying for extra classes. The present-day study has figured out a significant difference among the anxiety level of government and private school students of 10th grade in Lahore.



## Discussion

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The present research has investigated the questions: To what extent the Foreign language learning anxiety affect 10th-grade students of government and private students in Lahore, Punjab? Does there exist any difference, between levels of language anxiety among the government and private school students? The results have shown that English anxiety has an enfeebling effect upon 10th grade students of Matriculation. They feel anxious about English learning even outside of the class, the government school students are noticed to be in the high rank of anxiousness in all four strands of English language anxiety i.e. communication skills, afraid of negative results, English classroom and test anxiety. It might be a reason for insufficient chances of using the English language outside of the classroom situation. Whereas the students of private schools are reported to experience a moderate level of anxiety as they get exposure to use the English language in their surroundings. The present-day study claims parallel results to the research studies by Hasan,2013; Javed 2013; who had shown moderate levels of English anxiety while using FLCAS. The results of the t-test have shown the existence of a difference in English anxiety levels between government school students and private school students. An Independent t-test has shown a significant difference in anxiousness among female and male scholars in the English language classroom.

## Conclusion

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The researcher concludes her investigation, with the conclusion that foreign lingo/lexicon anxiety plays a very dominating character in the enlightenment of students, they become anxious and confused, even if they are well prepared. There are certain elements like social pressures including peer pressure, environmental pressure in the English Classroom, weak speaking skills, test anxiousness and being afraid of negative evaluation, to create hurdles in the smooth flow of literacy knowledge and academic skills. It is realized that the important role of English language Teachers cannot be ignored, this heavy freight of English Language upon students can be made facile and simple with the help of teachers. As we all agree that Teacher is the boss of his class, he is responsible to create a student-friendly environment to get and develop the maximum possible good and positive change among his students.

## Recommendation

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It is recommended that the psycholinguistic aspect of Foreign language anxiety among learners at Matriculation should be considered seriously to enhance the confidence level of our learners especially their communication skills in the English language. No doubt FLA is a common phenomenon in the enlightenment procedure but it should be tackled tactfully with the mastery and empathy of a language teacher.

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