Language Learning Anxiety in Online Learning: Malaysian ESL Undergraduates' Perspectives

Nazirah Mahmud

Doctoral School of Education, University of Szeged, Hungary
Nazirah.binti.mahmud@edu.u-szeged.hu

Nur Syasya Qistina Mazeree

Doctoral School of Education, University of Szeged, Hungary
Sysyaqstna.work@gmail.com

Najihah Mahmud

Departement of General Studies, Universti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia
Najihah.m@umk.edu.my

Abstract

The pandemic has changed the dynamics of the educational system, which has drastically turned toward remote learning. This sudden shift from conventional classroom instruction to online learning has affected the students' performance as second language learners. This study focuses on how undergraduate students perceive language learning anxiety when widespread online learning is implemented. This study used a quantitative approach through an adapted questionnaire to gather perspectives from 168 undergraduate students enrolled in online English language courses at a public institution in Malaysia. An analysis of the items was carried out using SPSS software. The findings showed that communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation are the most prominent factors contributing to students' language learning anxiety. Test anxiety, on the other hand, was reported to be the least important element. This study suggested that the implementation of online learning may influence the students' language learning anxiety, and this was further examined along with recommendations for future research.

Keywords: *language learning anxiety; English as a second language; online learning*

INTRODUCTION

Issues pertaining to language anxiety are long debated since the early 1980s (Horwitz et al., 1986). In fact, it has been discovered through decades of study that language anxiety impedes learning, which lowers student performance and accomplishment (Horwitz, 2001; Azher et al., 2010; Luo, 2014).

Daly (1991) stated that anxiety may had rooted from students' inferiority inside the classroom, unprepared, lack a sense of belonging and scared to communicate. However, in a more recent discovery, Khusnia (2017) stated that students often misinterpret their fears as the cause of a certain situation. She highlighted that student tends to imagine danger in which sometimes does not necessarily exist and continue to have such thought without having an effective strategy to cope with it. The development of language anxiety will be triggered if they perceive their learning experience as a "threat" for them. This might lead to a pattern in which they constantly feel anxious and hence perform poorly in class.

The most recent worldwide pandemic, Covid-19, forced humankind to adopt a confined way of living. The education industry has had to undergo considerable adjustments as a result. Physical gatherings were strictly prohibited; thus, technology was used as the primary tool for instruction. A virtual classroom was opted as the best approach to handle the problem at that time since the spike in cases required the instructors to discover the most practical manner to continue the lesson. Technologychanged the classroom setting drastically whereby teaching and learning sessions did not require the learners to interact face-to-face, even to the extent of having eye contact with the instructors. Having their own space and not being monitored closely by the instructors and their peers provided a space for them to take a breather before they speak. Rodrigues and Vethamani (2015) stated that with the setting of virtual learning, learners have time to think, to build and process the information for the task prior to their attempt in answering the task. They also found that online learning gives a positive impact to the students' oral skill development. The setting does not coerce the students to face the crowd physically in which reduces the pressure and anxiousness like the usual physical class does (Linardopoulous, 2010). Furthermore, recent studies on the benefits of online learning during the Covid-19 outbreak also revealed similar findings, reporting that students perceived online learning as being less time consuming, allowing them to ask questions freely, having easy accessed to the information related to the course and enabling them to learn independently (Agung &Surtikanti, 2020; Xhaferi& Xhaferi, 2020; Laksana, 2020)

Even while it first appeared that the halted teaching and learning sessions had been resolved, there is no doubt that this significant step of adjustment may have had a different effect on students. Students who used online learning to continue their studies while surviving the pandemic, experienced psychological side effects such as stress, anxiety, and symptoms of mild to severe depression (Irawan, Dwisona& Lestari, 2020). According to a recent study by Kaisar and Chowdhury (2020), the majority of participants felt that online learning had increased their anxiety because they were worried about getting a poor grade, which made them more concerned about the teaching and learning process. They stated factors including the instructor

dominating the lecture, the absence of students, the lack of interaction that made the class dull and unwelcoming and considering the lessons as unhelpful that triggered their negative views and fear of their language skills would deteriorate.

It thus appears that despite the positive impact of online learning towards students' mastery of English language in general, there are valid concerns with regards to its side effects on students' psychological well-being such as anxiety. Hence, it is necessary to explore to what extent the online setting could trigger their language learning anxiety. As the main construct investigated in this study, exploring what triggers language learning anxiety is vital in all modes of learning including online learning. Therefore, this study aimed to explore Malaysian undergraduate students' perceptions on their language learning anxiety in learning English language through the lens of virtual classroom setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language anxiety

MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) define language anxiety as "feelings of worry and negative, fear-related emotions associated with learning or using a language that is not an individuals' mother tongue" (p.103). The fear can hamper the learning process hence directly impacted the success in the language learning. Oteir and Al-Otaibi (2019) highlights the importance of exploring the problem and encourage the instructors to consider the effects it may bring to the learners' performance.

Moreover, this particular issue was highlighted by Horwitz et al. (1986) back in 1980s where they posited that the relationship between language anxiety in second language or foreign language learning is prone to cause a decline in language performance. A few decades have passed and studies on language anxiety are still reporting consistent findings that anxiety brings detrimental effects on the acquisition of the second language (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Humphries, 2011; Shao et al., 2013; Tugan, 2015; Syamsuri&Bancong, 2022).

Therefore, instructors need to be alert of the presence of language anxiety amongst the learners as it contributes to the learners' incapability to use and express themselves in their target language which directly impacted their language performance (Kruk, 2018; Polat, 2022; Kusuma et.al, 2022).

Online classroom setting on learning English

Due to the huge outbreak of Covid-19 in 2019, immediate conversion of existing face-to-face classes into online classes was carried out across the globe as a response to curb the spread of the deadly virus by minimising physical contact. Classes were being conducted virtually across all levels of education which includes the tertiary education. Even though the world is currently approaching the endemic era, some of the universities are still utilising the online classes to carry out their semesters as a preventive measure against triggering a new outbreak. In addition, Yu and Jee (2020) claimed that the demand of this conversion may not be a temporary one in the educational field due to the increased acceptance and interest of it amongst both the learners and instructors.

Studies revealed that the lack of interaction in online classes as opposed to physical classes impacted students' engagement negatively (Mayer Peyton, 2000; Purcell-Robertson & Purcell, 2000). This includes the English language teaching and learning where a two-way interaction between instructors and learners is important to channel the knowledge and skills properly and effectively. According to Tuyen and Lian (2021), learners are put under more pressure when they have to participate in learning the English language online as they claimed that they have to cope with numerous barriers of the online learning environment.

However, the online setting may also have positive impact on students' language proficiency. Study by Gebhard and Nagamine (2005) revealed that online language learning helped to enhance learners' self-confidence hence improved their linguistic proficiency. This was supported by a study by Rodrigues and Vethamani (2015) who reported that learners that underwent online speaking program showed better performance than learners who did not. With both negative and positive impact of online learning with regard to language learning being reported, there are many aspects that need to be taken into consideration in order to better understand the circumstances and one of the areas that is rarely tapped into is language learning anxiety.

Therefore, it is deemed necessary to conduct a study on determining whether the online setting may have or may have not triggered students' anxiety in speaking English and if it has, what kind of factors that trigger them to be anxious during the online learning.

Horwitz's Conceptual Framework of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCAS)

Horwitz and his colleagues created a conceptual framework identified as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety in 1986, serving as the basis for this study. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), the foundation of foreign language

anxiety is the feeling of difficulties in a person's self-perception, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours due to the contexts and situations present during the learning process. The framework is made up of the following three components:

a. Communication apprehension is defined as "a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with people" (Horwitz et al., 1986; 128). It is a type of anxiety that was built from the worry while speaking to others for example, struggle to communicate in public or to listen to or to pick up spoken words (Lim & Budin, 2014). Due to their perceived lack of knowledge and ability to speak well, it will lead them to have difficulty in understanding others and to ensure they understand the content of the spoken words.

b. Test anxiety is defined as "the type of performance anxiety resulting from fear of failure in academic evaluation setting" (Horwitz et al., 1986; 127). It is a type of anxiety which occurred due to the unrealistic goals set up by the learners both in formal evaluation like examination and other types of tests. Putting themselves in that kind of situation by believing that any grade below excellent, even if it is sufficient for others is considered unacceptable for the anxious learners (Namsang, 2011).

c. Fear of negative evaluation is defined as "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations" (Horwitz et al, 1986; 128). This type of anxiety does not trigger from the instructors' evaluations only but rather also peers' reactions towards the learners' performance. Learners tend to worry about presenting the inadequacy of themselves in front of the society, especially if they are aware that they lack the linguistic skills required to generate the language (Aydin, 2008).

Drawing from the above framework, the situation in a language classroom is pretty much driven by students' beliefs about their language ability and a certain goal they expect to achieve which contribute to their language anxiety. Not being able to achieve their goals or to communicate effectively during the lessons amplify their fear of being judged by their peers and vice versa. In the present study, these constructs are evaluated in the context of online learning to see if they are also the case that contribute to language learning anxiety in the digital age.

Previous Related Studies

Language learning anxiety during class amongst English as a Second Language (ESL) learners are constantly debated by the researchers all over the globe including Malaysia. A study by Dellah et al. (2020) who evaluated Malaysian undergraduates' language learning anxiety specifically addressing speaking anxiety during English oral presentations reported that majority of the

participants experienced moderate level of anxiety during their oral presentations and was dominantly affected by fear of negative evaluation. Afraid of being negatively evaluated by their peers caused them to feel anxious in expressing and voicing their views and thoughts in English (Cagatay, 2015) hence impede their learning process in general.

In a much recent study by Ramarow and Hassan (2021) on the level of English language learning anxiety and motivation in speaking English among Malaysian pre-university students, they found that the level of anxiety amongst the participant was low. The researchers stated that the different mind-set in overcoming the difficulties reduces their language anxiety even though they were not high proficiency speakers. The researchers then reported that motivation may had affected their level of language anxiety as it was reported that there was a positive correlation between language anxiety and motivation in speaking English language. This study however was inconsistent with the other earlier studies by Liu and Chen (2015) and Djafri and Supra (2018) who found no significant correlation between language anxiety and motivation.

Even though studies were carried out amongst both pre-university and university students in Malaysia regarding their level of language learning anxiety, however most of them did not addressed the current setting of online learning. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions on their English language learning anxiety based on their learning experiences during online classes. This is important to find out whether the classroom setting impact the students' perceptions on their language learning anxiety to use English.

METHODS

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Malaysian undergraduate students perceive their language learning anxiety when learning English in the context of a virtual classroom. This study focused on determining factors of language learning anxiety in the virtual classroom in order to explore to what extent it triggers speaking anxiety among the learners. This study used a quantitative design, utilizing a questionnaire to elicit data. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) framework by Horwitz and Cope (1986) was modified to be used in the context of online learning for English as a second language. The adapted questionnaire comprised of 28 items, of which 8 items were used to explore communication apprehension factor, 13 items addressed on the test anxiety factor and the remaining 7 items were formulated to investigate the fear of negative evaluation factor. The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "Strongly Disagree," 2 "Disagree," 3 "Neutral," 4 "Agree," and 5 "Strongly Agree,". The Cronbach's alpha of the

questionnaire was also determined, and it was stated that it was reliable at 0.887.

This study used convenience sampling and a total of 168 undergraduates who took English courses as their compulsory university course at one of the public universities in Malaysia participated in this study. Majority of the participants (96.4%) were in their year 1, with ages ranging from 20 to 21 years old. All participants were degree students from various programmes. 117 students (69.6%) are female, and the remaining 51 students (30.4%) are male.

The data collection started after the participants completed their whole semester of a 14-weeks-long virtual English language classes. Due to the university's policies and norms that still forbid physical gatherings, participants were not physically present on the campus, which resulted in data collection commencing virtually. Hence, all the questions were converted to an online platform using Google Form to ease the data collection process. A total of 168 responses were recorded, and the results were analysed using SPSS version 27. Descriptive statistic was used to analyse the findings of the study. Frequencies and percentages of the items were tabulated andreported in the finding section.

FINDINGS

Frequencies and percentages that displayed and described how the students perceived the items are shown in Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 below. In order to depict the students' overall view of each statement, the percentages, and frequencies of "strongly disagree" and "disagree" were combined. Meanwhile, "agree" and "strongly agree" were added correspondingly. The findings are discussed according to the three constructs of The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) framework by Horwitz and Cope (1986) as follows:

Communication Apprehension

8 out of 28 items of the questionnaire investigated on the communication apprehension factors in students' willingness to communicate during the online class. The results are tabulated and presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Item Analysis (Communication Apprehension)

Item	Item Description	Frequency (N) Percentage (%)					
		Disagree		Neutral		Agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	I never feel quite sure	75	44.7	71	42.3	22	13.1

	of myself when I speak English during my online class						
4	It frightens me when I do not understand what the lecturer is saying in English language	49	29.1	40	23.8	79	47.0
8	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English language online class	27	59.3	47	28.0	94	55.9
12	I get upset when I do not understand what the lecturer is correcting.	27	16.0	41	24.4	100	59.5
15	I feel confident when I speak in English language online class	32	19.1	78	46.4	58	34.5
21	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the English language in front of other students	29	17.2	53	31.5	86	51.2
25	I get nervous when I do not understand every word the English language lecturer says.	41	24.4	52	31.0	75	44.7
26	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English language	74	44.0	70	41.7	24	14.3

As presented in Table 1, the results showed that more than 80% of the students agreed with the statements in items 8, 12, and 21. In item 8, it was said that 94 students (55.9%) experience anxiety when required to speak in front of the class when it is being conducted online. Following that, 100 pupils (59.5%) unquestionably become irritated when they cannot understand the corrections being made by the lecturer. 86 students (51.2%) agreed with the statement in

item 21 regarding students feeling self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students, speaking their mind about the situation.

Item 1 revealed that 22 students (13.1% of the class) said that speaking English in an online setting never made them feel entirely confident in who they were, whereas 75 students disagreed, indicating that they felt the opposite. Most students (44%) who responded to Item 26 indicated that they felt overburdened by the sheer volume of grammar rules they need to understand in order tocommunicate in English. Students who disagreed with the statement and those who were neutral about it differed by just 2.3%.

Test Anxiety

The second factor that was investigated in this study was test anxiety. 13 out of 28 items were adapted according to the online learning context and the results are presented below in Table 2.

Table 2. Item Analysis (Test Anxiety)

Item	Item Description	Frequency (N) Percentage (%)					
		Disagree		Neutral		Agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
3	I tremble whenever I am called during English language online class	48	28.5	43	25.6	77	45.9
5	During English language online class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	112	66.6	40	23.8	16	9.5
7	I am usually at ease during tests in my English language online class	22	13.1	51	30.4	95	56.6
9	I worry about the consequences of failing my English language class	15	9.0	21	12.5	132	78.6
10	In English language online class I can get so nervous I forget	58	34.5	56	33.3	54	32.2

	things I know						
13	Even if I am well prepared for English language online class, I feel anxious about it.	50	29.7	47	28.0	71	42.3
14	I often feel like not going to my English language online class	141	83.9	22	13.1	5	3.0
17	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on during my English language online class	38	22.6	44	26.2	86	51.2
18	The more I study for the English language test, the more confused I get	108	64.3	39	23.2	21	12.5
19	I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for English language online class	19	11.3	47	28.0	102	60.7
22	English language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind	72	42.9	60	35.7	36	21.4
23	I feel more tense and nervous in my English language online class than in my other online classes	88	52.4	52	31.0	28	16.7
24	When I am preparing to attend the online English language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	14	8.3	63	37.5	91	54.2

According to Table 2, items 5, 14, 18, and 23 all had more than 50% of students responding unfavourably to the statement. Item 5 claimed that throughout the online class, some students found themselves thinking about matters unrelated to the course; 16 of the 112 respondents (9.5%) agreed with this assertion. 141 students (83.9%) disagreed with the assertion that they

frequently feel like skipping English online lessons, 22 students said they feel indifferent about it, and just 5 students said they agreed and most likely felt like skipping the online class in response to item 14. According to the results for item 18, 108 students (64.3%) disagreed that they will become more confused as they study for the English language test. In addition, 88 students (52.4%) disagreed that they would feel more uncomfortable and anxious in their English online class than in the online classrooms for the other courses.

Over 50% of students agreed on the statements, as shown by items 9, 17, 19, and 24. Item 9 showed that 132 students in total (78.6%) agreed that they were concerned about the repercussions of failing their English language course, while just 15 students (9%) disagreed. Regarding the response for item 17, 86 students (51.2%) said that they can hear their hearts beating loudly when they are about to be called upon in the English online class. A total of 102 students (60.7%) agreed with the statement that they did not feel pressure to prepare well for their English online class, while 19 students (11.3%) disagreed.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

The third factor was the fear of negative evaluation. 7 out of 28 items were adapted and the results of the analysis are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Item Analysis (Fear of Negative Evaluation)

Item	Item Description	Frequency (N) Percentage (%)					
		Disagree		Neutral		Agree	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
2	I do not worry about making mistakes in my English language online class	50	29.8	55	32.7	63	37.5
6	I keep thinking that the other students are better in English than I am	26	15.4	24	14.3	118	70.7
11	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English language online class	63	37.5	61	36.3	44	26.2
16	I am afraid that my English language lecturer is ready to correct every mistake I make	110	65.5	41	24.4	17	10.1
20	I always feel that the other students speak the English language better than I do	20	11.9	31	18.5	117	69.6
27	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English	47	28.0	45	26.8	76	45.3
28	I get nervous when the English language lecturer asks questions which I have not prepared in advance.	31	18.5	47	28.0	90	53.6

Based on Table 3, 110 students (65.5%) disagreed with the statement that they feel afraid that their English language lecturer is ready to correct every mistake that they made, and only 17 students (10.1%) agreed with it, representing their views on the statement. In addition, over 50% of students expressed that they agreed to items 6 and 20. About 70.7% of students (118) agreed that they keep thinking the other students are more proficient in English than they are while the other 26 students (15.4%) disagreed with it. Item 20 stated that students always feel like their peers speak the English language more fluently than they do, and 117 students (69.6%) agreed of having felt this way while 20 others (11.9%) disagreed with it.

DISCUSSSION

In general, the findings revealed that students may have experienced moderate level of language learning anxiety as mixed findings were reported. It appeared that students were quick to feel anxious whenever they have to speak or answer without any preparation during their online class. However, majority of them stated that they do not feel tense when they attended their English online class. Hence, it can be concluded that language learning anxiety was present amongst the students in the context of online learning, but the level of the anxiety may differ according to the situations that arise during the lesson. To compare, a study by Miskam & Saidalvi (2019) who investigate the language learning anxiety in conventional classroom setting also reported that majority of the undergraduates have moderate level of language learning anxiety. They cited communication apprehension as the dominant factor that provoke their anxiety. Both findings demonstrated that setting is not a significant factor that affect students' anxiety, however, other variables that may arise during their lessons could triggered them to feel anxious during the lesson.

According to the study's findings, it was reported that instructors play a significant role in provoking language learners' anxiety during an online class. Unable to comprehend what the lecturer is saying or correcting during online classes makes them nervous and upset as they feel incapable of following the lesson. These issues fall under the communication apprehension factor, which corroborates a study by Alrabai (2014), who reported that instructors can sometimes be threatening and may cause the learners to become uneasy throughout the lesson.

Next, as stated briefly above, it was discovered that being called upon to speak during online classes without prior notice caused students to worry, which might make them remain silent and even refuse to talk. This study indicates that, even though the virtual experience may permit people to go at their own pace and in their own space, they nevertheless feel anxious and nervous when asked to talk without having prepared beforehand. Learners

with language anxiety who lack preparation prior to the lesson fall under communication apprehension, and this supported the result of a study by Al-Saraj (2014), who reported that learners could feel as though speaking in their class is a major risk since they might provide a wrong answer, mispronounce words, or just unable to communicate successfully using the target language. This was later supported by Achanan, Ramuloo and Mohamad (2021), who found that learners who lack competence avoid taking risks by remaining passive as they are afraid of making mistakes.

Interestingly, the difficulty of the lesson does not appear to be one of the causes for language learning anxiety. Participants reported that they did not feel overwhelmed with all the language rules that they have to learn despite the lessons being carried out online. It appears that the technicalities involved in learning a language was not a significant contributing factor to the learners' language learning anxiety, but it was the psychological aspect of it such as fear of being judged and perceived lack of skills as outlined in the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). However, this finding was inconsistent with Kayaog□lu and Sag□lamel's (2013) study where they reported that linguistic difficulties do have a significant role in the causes of language learning anxiety, listing vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation as the linguistic components that pose a challenge for the learners to speak.

It was also found that test anxiety was not a significant factor in language learning anxiety as the learners claimed that they were at ease during their online test. This can be attributed to the fact that the test was carried out online, a totally different platform and atmosphere for the students hence alleviate their anxiety to a certain extent compared to the conventional test in the classroom. Nevertheless, they do agree that the possibility of failing the test could still trigger their anxiety to speak in their online classes. It was also reported that learners did not feel pressure to prepare well for their online classes and the online tests as they claimed to feel very sure and relaxed when they are preparing for them. This showed that test anxiety does not appear to be one of the main factors for their language learning anxiety and attempting the test in an online setting was not an issue for them. This finding did not corroborate with Aydin's et al. (2020) study on the conventional test where learners are reported to be suffering from test anxiety that causes them to lose their concentration on test, lose their motivation and self-confidence and unable to excel in their test. The finding of this study showed that online test may have bring a positive impact in reducing the test anxiety as the pressure and distractions may have been lesser as compared to the physical test. However, issues pertaining to test reliability and validity need to be taken into careful consideration when it comes to online test. This finding was in parallel with the idea highlighted back in 1970s by Bushnell (1978) who stated that environmental variables can provoke the learners' anxiety towards the test.

The results also showed that feeling inferior to their own peers was also one of the main factors that causes them to be reluctant to speak. Learners with high level of language anxiety have a tendency to become anxious especially if they have to speak in the target language in front of their peers as they are afraid of the judgment that they may receive from their friends. This situation may trigger what Dayhoff (2000) labelled as "anxiety feedback loop" (p.27) whereby anxiety is generated by fear of being negatively evaluated either by their instructors or peers when they are being assessed. This situation falls under the category of fear of negative evaluation under the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986) and the finding was in parallel with Dellah's et al. (2020) study that reported fear of being negatively judged to be the major factor in impeding students' speaking ability hence affected the learning process as a whole. This finding also shows that online setting does not make any difference to students' state of anxiety as the fear of being evaluated is still present even though they are not physically monitored by their instructors and peers.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study revealed that in general, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation appeared to be the major causes that could trigger students' language learning anxiety in an online classroom setting in the context of a public university in Malaysia. They described that the primary causes of their anxiety to speak in the online classroom is the difficulties in understanding the instructors and the lessons, as well as being called upon to speak up without notice. It is not plausible for the instructors to personalize the lesson according to the learners' individual needs and condition especially in the setting of online learning. Now that everything is online, students are expected to be more proactive in the class in order to catch up with the lesson, not the other way around. To alleviate this problem, it is proposed that the instructors provide the task before the class begins, so students will know what to expect and will have ample time to prepare, practice and rehearse if they deemed necessary. Preparing beforehand will help to reduce their anxiousness thus help them to participate and communicate better in class. Instructors can also ask the students to discuss with their peers to familiarize themselves with their classmates. Familiarity with their peers may help to reduce their fear of negative evaluation since they are more comfortable with each other. Essentially, one of the leading causes of their language learning anxiety was their fear of being criticized by their instructors and classmates. Learning from each other will hopefully turn their fear into fun.

The issue of test anxiety is not something that can be easily addressed. It was reported that language learning anxiety was not primarily brought on by

test anxiety. This result showed that providing students with an atmosphere other than the typical "stressful" test environment may influence on how anxious they would be in their online language classroom. It is safe to assume that in the context of this present study, the washback impact of online test does not appear to be affecting the students' language learning anxiety in general as there are many factors pertaining to how the test is carried out in the online context that need to be considered. Hence, future studies could explore explicitly into the washback impact of online test on language learning anxiety in greater depth.

Although this study offers a fresh perspective on the scene, it also has several drawbacks that need to be addressed in further research. As this study primarily focused on students' perceptions of the context, future research may opt for an experimental design to examine how the online learning setting manages students' language learning anxiety. Besides, it is also recommended for prospective researchers to conduct much more extensive research on various populations to ensure a generalization of the finding, as this study only covered a small sample of the population. Other than that, utilising a mixed-method approach research can bring more rigour analyses and discussions for future research as this study was only limited to quantitative data.

REFERENCES

Achanan, S. A., Ramuloo, P., Mohamad, A. R. (2021). Second Language Speaking Anxiety Among TESL Undergraduates in a Private University. *Selangor Humaniora Review, 5*(2). 124-145.

Agung, A. S. N., &Surtikanti, M. W. (2020). Students' Perception of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Study on the English Students of STKIP PamaneTalino. *SOSHUM :JurnalSosial Dan Humaniora, 10(*2), 225–235.

Alrabai, F. (2014). The influence of teachers' anxiety reducing strategies on learners' foreign language anxiety. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 9*(2), 163-190.

Aydin, S. (2008). An Investigation on the Language Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation among Turkish EFL Learners, *Asian EFL Journal*, 421-444.

Aydin, S., DenkciAkkaş, F., Türnük, T., BaştürkBeydilli, A., & Saydam, İ. (2020). Test Anxiety among Foreign Language Learners: A Qualitative Study. *The Qualitative Report, 25*(12), 4289-4309.

Azher, M., Anwar, M. N., & Naz, A. (2010). An investigation of foreign language classroom anxiety and its relationship with students' achievement. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning, 7*(11), 33-40.

Bushnell, D. D. (1978). Altering test environments for reducing test anxiety and for improving academic performance. US Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Institute of Education.

Cagatay, S. (2015). Examining EFL Students' Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: The Case at a Turkish State University. *GlobELT: An International Conference on Teaching and Learning English as Additional Language, Antalya – Turkey*. 199. 648-656.

Daly, J. (1991). Understanding Communication Apprehension: An Introduction for Language Educators. In Horwitz, E. K. & Young, D. J (Eds.), Language Anxiety: *From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. 3-13. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Dayhoff, S. (2000). Diagonally-parked in a parallel universe. Working through social anxiety. Placitas, New Mexico: Effectiveness-Plus Publications.

Dellah, N. F., Zabidin, N., Nordin, N. A., Amanah, F. H. & Atan, M. A. (2020). Glossphobia: Evaluating University Students' Speaking Anxiety in English Oral Presentations. *Journal of Ilmi, 10*, 116-126.

Djafri, F., & Supra, W. (2018). Measuring foreign language anxiety among learners of different foreign languages: In relation to motivation and perception of teachers' behaviours. *Asian- Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education, 3*(1).

Elkafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. *Modern Language Journal, 89*(2), 206-220.

Gebhard, J. G., & Nagamine, T. (2005). A mutual learning experience: Collaborative journaling between a non-native-speaker intern and native-speaker cooperating teacher. *Asian EFL Journal*, *7*(2), 48-67.

Horwitz, E. K. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 21, 112-126.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 70*(2), 125-132.

Humphries, R. (2011). Language anxiety in international students. *Griffith Working Papers in Pragmatics and Intercultural Communication, 4* (1/2), 65-77.

Irawan, A. W., Dwisona, & Lestari, M. (2020). Psychological impacts of Students on Online Learning During the Pandemic COVID-19. *KONSELI: JurnalBimbingan dan Konseling (E-Journal), 7*(1), 53-60.

Kaisar, M. T., & Chowdhury, S. Y. (2020). Foreign Language Virtual Class Room: Anxiety Creator or Healer?.*English Language Teaching. 13*(11), 130-139.

Kayaog̃lu, M. N. &Sag̃lamel, H. (2013). Students' Perceptions of Language Anxiety in Speaking Class. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research. 2*(2). 142-160.

Khusnia, A. N. (2017). Students' Speaking Anxiety in English Foreign Language. *Journal of Education and Learning. 11*(1). 83-90.

Kruk, M. (2018). Changes in foreign language anxiety: A classroom perspective. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 28*(1), 31–57. https://doi.org/10.1111/ ijal.12182

Kusuma, I. P. I., Pratiwi, N.P.A., Paramartha, A. A. G. Y., Utami, I. A. M. I. (2002). Can E-portfolios reduce foreign language anxiety in online speaking courses during the Covid-19 pandemic?.*Computer- Assisted Language Learning Electronic Journal (CALL-EJ), 23*(2). 38-55.

Laksana, D. N. L. (2020). The Implementation of Online Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic: Student Perceptions in Areas with Minimal Internet. *Journal of Education Technology. 4*(4). 502-509.

Lim, H. L., &MardziahBudin. (2014). Investigating the relationship between English language anxiety and the achievement of school based oral English test among Malaysian form four students. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 2*(1), 67-79.

Linardopoulos, N. (2010). Teaching and learning public speaking online. *MERLOT Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6*(1), 198–209.

Liu, H., & Chen, C. (2015). A comparative study of foreign language anxiety and motivation of academic- and vocational-track high school students. *ELT, 8(*3).

Liu, M., & Jackson, J. (2008). An exploration of Chinese EFL learners' unwillingness to communicate and foreign language anxiety. *Modern Language Journal, 92,* 71–86.

Luo, H. (2014). Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: A study of Chinese Language Learners. *Journal of the National Council of Less Commonly Taught Languages, 15,* 99-117.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gregersen, T. (2012). Emotions that facilitate language learning: The positive-broadening power of the imagination. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 2,* 193-213.

Meyer Peyton, L. (2000). Elements of a successful distributed learning program. In Distance Learning Technologies: Issues, Trends and Opportunities; Lau, L., Ed.; Idea Group: Hershey, PA, USA. 82–90.

Miskam, N. N. &Saidalvi, A. (2019). Investigating English Language Speaking Anxiety among Malaysian Undergraduate Learners. *Asian Social Science, 15*(1). 1-7.

Namsang, T., &Mahāwitthayālai, T. (2011). English language anxiety among Thai undergraduate students: A study atDhonburi Rajabhat University. Language Institute, Thammasat University.

Oteir, I. N., & Al-Otaibi, A. N. (2019). Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review. *Arab World English Journal, 10*(3). 309-317.

Polat, M. (2022). Comparison of performance measures obtained from foreign language tests according to item response theory vs classical test theory. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching (IOJET), 9*(1). 471-485.

Purcell-Robertson, R.M & Purcell, D.F. (2000). Interactive distance learning. In Distance Learning Technologies: Issues, Trends and Opportunities. Lau, L., Ed.; Idea Group: Hershey, PA, USA. 16–21.

Ramarow, H. & Hassan, N. C. (2021). English Language Anxiety and Motivation Towards Speaking English Among Malaysian Pre- University Students. *Asian Social Science, 17(*11). 207- 216.

Rodrigues, P. D., &Vethamani, M. E. (2015). The Impact of Online Learning in the development of speaking skills. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Education, 5*(1). 43-67.

Shao, K., Yu, W., & Ji, Z. (2013). An exploration of Chinese EFL students' emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety. *Modern Language Journal, 97*(4), 917– 929.

Syamsuri, A., S., &Bancong, H. (2022). Do Gender and regional differences affect students' reading literacy? a case study in Indonesia. *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics, 8*(1), 97-110.

Tugan, S. E. (2015). The relationship among foreign language classroom anxiety, motivation and achievement of Turkish EFL students (Yayımlanmamıs☐ Yu☐ksekLisansTezi). FatihU☐niversitesiSosyalBilimlerEnstitu☐su☐, I☐stanbul.

Tuyen, N. C. B. & Lian, A. (2021). Exploring Challenges of Major English Students Towards Learning English Speaking Skills Online During Covid 19 Pandemic and Some Suggest Solutions. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research, 621*. 135-144.

Xhaferi, B., & Xhaferi, G. (2020). Online learning benefits and challenges during the COVID 19-pandemic-students' perspective from SEEU. *SEEU Review, 15*(1), 86-103.

Yu, J. & Jee, Y. (2020). Analysis of Online Classes in Physical Education during the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Education Science. 11*(3). 1-14.