

# THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF STUDENTS' ACADEMIC GOAL ORIENTATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES AND LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the significance of students' academic goal orientation as a mediating variable in the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. The primary variables of the study included Academic Goal Orientation, Language Learning Strategies, and Language Classroom Anxiety. Results indicated that Academic Goal Orientation was described at a high level, as were both Language Learning Strategies and Language Anxiety. The researchers employed a quantitative, non-experimental research design to systematically examine the relationships among the variables. The respondents of the study were the grade 12 senior high school students from selected schools in Panabo City. Data were gathered using standardized survey instruments and were analyzed to determine both direct and indirect effects among variables. Statistical tools used in the analysis included weighted mean, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, multiple regression analysis, and the MedGraph technique incorporating the Sobel z-test. Findings revealed that significant relationships existed among academic goal orientation, language learning strategies, and language classroom anxiety. Furthermore, mediation analysis showed that students' academic goal orientation fully mediated the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. This implies that students' goal orientation plays a crucial role in explaining how language learning strategies influence levels of anxiety in the language classroom. Overall, the results highlight the importance of fostering positive academic goal orientation to enhance effective language learning and reduce anxiety. These findings have important implications for teachers, curriculum planners, and future language research.

*Keywords: academic goal orientation; language learning strategies; language anxiety; quantitative research*

**SDG Indicator: #3** (Good Health and Well-being), **#4** (Quality Education).

## I. INTRODUCTION

English is the most widely spoken language globally and serves as a second language for Filipinos, playing a vital role in the Philippine educational system as a primary medium of instruction. However, many learners experience stress, nervousness, and anxiety when learning to speak English, making it challenging to become proficient (Giray et al. 65). Chang observed that language learners often feel frustrated and anxious when learning English, and using English in oral presentations can intensify their anxiety (56). Similarly, (Jugo 2) noted that speaking and expressing ideas in English can significantly heighten language classroom anxiety among learners, which connects to the broader issue of language anxiety.

On the other hand, Mohammadi (637) added that a high level of second language anxiety interferes with foreign language learning. Hence, foreign language learners equip themselves with language-learning strategies to help them learn the target language and cope with their language-learning anxieties (Mohammadi et al. 637). In this regard, Bajri and Omer (2224) found that effective language-learning strategies reduce language anxiety. Moreover, research shows that language-learning strategies decrease anxiety and enhance learner independence (Bajri and Omer 2225). These strategies consist of specific actions that learners undertake to make acquiring a second language easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations (Ghavamnia et al. 1156-1157).

In addition, Abubakar's (61) study found that language classroom anxiety showed a very low positive correlation with language learning strategies. According to the study of Sadeghi, Karim, and Soleimani (70), a very low correlation was observed between language classroom anxiety and language learning strategies. This means that the most anxious and the least ambiguity-tolerant learners use more strategies. It indicates that anxiety is positively correlated and significant towards learning strategies, so a high level of anxiety increases students' usage of learning strategies.

In line with this, the authors found a highly significant correlation between language-learning strategies and students' goal orientation (Wen et al. 6440). These findings suggest that understanding the interplay between goal orientations and language learning strategies can significantly enhance learning outcomes for language learners, teachers, and curriculum developers. The study by Takashiro concluded that College students exhibited an array of goal orientations and learning strategies in the classroom setting. Students demonstrated multidimensional goal orientations and versatile learning strategies tailored to their specific needs in class (180). Similarly, Zeng et al. (5) and Barani et al. (6) found significant positive correlations between language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation, consistent with previous studies showing that effective language learning strategies can enhance students' goal orientation.

Students' goal orientation and language anxiety reveal a complex relationship with language learning outcomes. It may be helpful in the development of effective interventions for language anxiety to identify the specific goal orientations that are associated with high levels of foreign language classroom anxiety (Koul 676). Moreover, Nakayama argued that students' goal orientation significantly influences learners' anxiety and behaviors (20). Goal orientation is an indispensable part of determining how students think about their academic abilities, how they engage in tasks, and their performance. On the other hand, Chou said that goal orientation negatively correlates with language anxiety (242). Similarly, Cahalan (95)

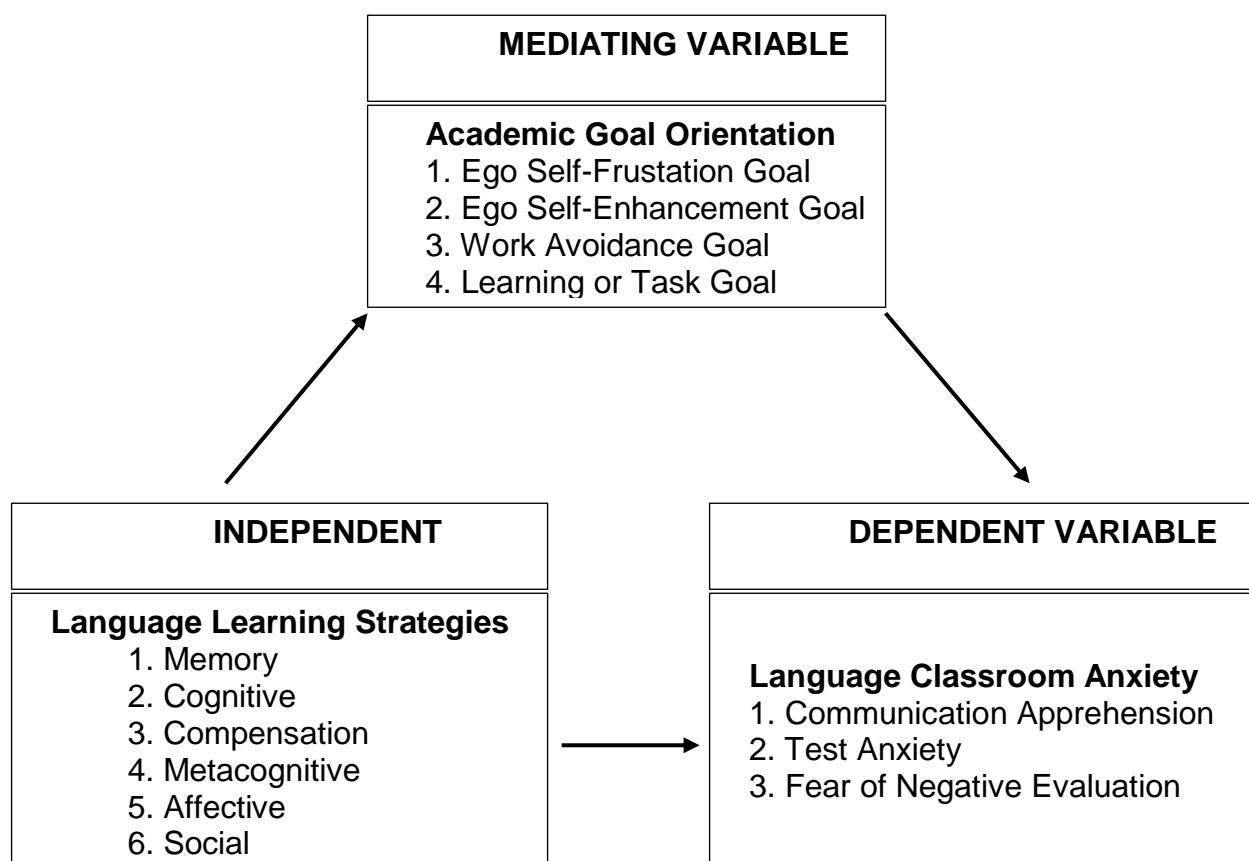
identified academic goal orientation as a significant predictor of language classroom anxiety, noting that students are often motivated more by a fear of failure than by a desire to demonstrate competence. McKinney (34) further supports this, emphasizing that students' academic goal orientation influences emotional responses during task performance.

This study is anchored in Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which emphasizes the role of emotion in learners' ability to process language input. The theory states that even when teachers provide high-quality language input, negative emotions such as anxiety, low motivation, or low self-esteem may act as a "filter," preventing students from absorbing and processing the language information. In contrast, when the affective filter is low, learners feel relaxed, motivated, and confident, allowing them to receive and process language input more effectively in second language acquisition (Radzi et al., 6124).

In this regard, language anxiety may arise more from negative language-learning experiences than from an initial cause of difficulty (Alamry 26, 28). Notably, researchers believed that language classroom anxiety is not just a state of anxiety associated with the process of language learning and supported their hypothesis by studying a group of learners who did not experience any anxiety while in other classes but felt anxious while learning English as a second language. Language classroom anxiety is a specific type of anxiety that is different from the type of anxiety experienced in regular academic contexts. Horwitz et al. identified three situation-specific anxieties that are only related to language classroom anxiety: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety (Marnani 7).

Furthermore, language learning strategies are anchored to the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning by Oxford (1990) as cited by Hanafiah et al. (1364). Researchers classify language learning strategies into two types: direct and indirect. Direct strategies involve learning and using the target language, which requires mental processing. Indirect strategies involve internalizing the learning process, which supports language learning without directly involving the target (Sie 3). Direct strategies consist of memory, cognitive, and compensation strategies. Memory strategies refer to the ability to store and retrieve new information from the mental lexicon. Cognitive strategies enable learners to understand and produce new language by many different means, such as repeating, analyzing expressions, and summarizing (4). Compensation strategies are the skills that allow learners to use the language despite their often large gaps in language knowledge. Indirect strategies contain metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies "allow learners to control their cognition." Affective strategies help learners to regulate their attitudes, emotions, and motivations. Social strategies help students learn a language by interacting with others through different social contexts (5).

This study also focuses on students' academic goal orientation, which is anchored in the achievement goal theory of Elliot and McGregor, as cited by Swendseid, who notes that achievement goal Theory is one of the most prominent frameworks for studying motivation (1). Manrique-Abril et al. organize this theory into four dimensions according to the types of academic goal orientation: (i) learning or task goal, (ii) ego self-enhancement goal, (iii) ego self-frustration goal, and (iv) work avoidance goal. On the other hand, learning or task goals focus on developing and mastering competencies. The student with this type of goal focuses on intrinsic stimuli and seeks to assimilate knowledge, acquire skills, and develop a fundamental understanding of the issues. Ego-oriented goals are social, and the student seeks to satisfy extrinsic needs through academic performance. These goals are linked to Ego self-enhancement (seeking favorable results) and Ego self-frustration (having a defensive attitude



*Figure 1. Conceptual Framework*

and avoiding frustration and an unfavorable image); the fourth type of academic goal orientation is rooted in avoiding work. The student avoids learning situations using common behaviors such as making minimal effort and avoiding complex tasks (Manrique-Abril F. et al.).

Additionally, the research highlighted by various authors is pertinent to the current report since it emphasizes students' goal orientation as a mediating factor in the relationship between language learning strategies and language anxiety. The authors have comprehensively discussed matters that enable the researcher to view students' goal orientation as mediating language learning strategies and language anxiety. However, most students struggle to learn the language, particularly in relation to their goals for the subject and their learning strategies, which may, in turn, affect their language anxiety. Hence, these reasons motivate the researcher to formulate a statement of the problem and identify the indicators. These insights also help support the study's claims and findings.

This study aims to determine the significance of students' academic goal orientation as a mediator in the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. More specifically, this sought to realize the following objectives: To determine the level of language classroom anxiety, language learning strategies, and students' academic goal orientation. To determine the significant relationships among students' academic goal orientation, language learning strategies, and language anxiety. To determine the significance of students' academic goal orientation as a mediator in the relationship between language

learning strategies and language anxiety. Also, the hypotheses that there is no significant relationship between language classroom anxiety, students' academic goal orientation, and language learning strategies, and that students' academic goal orientation has no significant mediating effect on the relationship between language classroom anxiety and learning strategies and language anxiety will be tested at the 0.05 significance level.

This study will be beneficial to growing language learning researchers by examining how the students' academic goal orientation mediates the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. In this more integrated global society, it is crucial to understand the psychological and strategic factors that shape language-learning outcomes. This study offers a critical viewpoint that can inform instructional practices grounded in evidence and implemented across diverse educational contexts. In addition, this study contributes to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in quality education (SDG 4) and good health and well-being (SDG 3).

This study promotes emotional well-being and adaptive learning strategies by emphasizing ways to reduce language classroom anxiety. Moreover, this study includes students, teachers, school administrators, and curriculum developers. Students will better understand themselves and the relationship between their actions, attitudes, and beliefs that they can influence and their achievement in learning a language. On a micro-scale, this study shall benefit relevant institutions, namely educational stakeholders, experienced teachers, new teachers, coaches, and coordinators, by developing strategies to reduce students' anxiety in language learning and maximize students' English performance. The study would also be helpful to other researchers by supplementing the existing literature on the same study area and providing a rich ground for further research to address the gaps left by this study.

## II. METHOD

This section describes the study's methods, including the research respondents, materials and instruments, the design and procedures used to measure the constructs of interest, data collection procedures, statistical tools, and ethical considerations.

### **Research Respondents**

This study included a total of 335 Grade 12 senior high school students, all aged 18 years and above, from Panabo City, Davao del Norte, specifically drawn from four selected institutions in the area. Except for the Grade 11 students, Grade 12 students younger than 18 years old, and students enrolled in schools outside the city proper or in institutions not among the four selected schools. Respondents were free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, provided the research had not yet been finalized. Given the situation, the participant may withdraw if they feel threatened or uncomfortable responding to the survey.

### **Materials and Instruments**

Three sets of survey questionnaires were used to obtain data from the respondents, adopted from previous studies. The survey questionnaires underwent content validity and reliability analyses to ensure accurate measurement. The reliability results showed that Language Learning Strategies had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, Students' Academic Goal Orientation had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87, and Language Classroom Anxiety had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94, indicating acceptable reliability levels. Additionally, the survey

instruments were validated by internal and external validators with specialization in social research and statistics expertise.

The language-learning strategies were adopted from Sie's (2021) research. This tool measured the learner's English learning strategies. The questionnaire is a 5-point Likert Scale from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), average (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5), and had two subscales, namely, Direct and Indirect strategies.

The language classroom anxiety questionnaire was adopted from the study of Marnani and Cuocci (2022). The Second Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (SLCAS) is a 5-point Likert scale that measures anxiety by summing the scores of 33 items. SLCAS ranged from 33 to 132 points, and highly anxious learners typically scored higher on this questionnaire (Wang and Liu). These items were graded on a modified five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) undecided, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree.

The student's goal orientation was adopted from the study of Manrique-Abril F. et al. (2020). The Academic Goals Orientation Questionnaire was used in the study. It has 16 items that raise questions about what guides student learning. The respondents marked the answer that best described their situation with a Likert scale of five levels (1 = in total disagreement; 5 = in total agreement). The items were organized in four dimensions, according to the types of academic goal orientation: (i) Learning or task goal, (ii) Ego self-enhancement goal, (iii) Ego self-frustration goal, and (iv) Work avoidance goal.

The following scales were used to evaluate the level of language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation. Across the range of means, the descriptive levels offered valuable insights into interpreting the data. A range of 4.20 to 5.00 indicated a Very High level, implying that the items associated with language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were consistently put into practice. In the range of 3.40 to 4.19, a High descriptive level suggested that the items concerning language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were frequently practiced. A Moderate level within the 2.60 to 3.39 range indicates that the items related to language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were occasionally implemented. Falling within the range of 1.80 to 2.59 indicated a Low descriptive level, suggesting that the items associated with language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were rarely practiced. Lastly, in the range of 1.00 to 1.79, a Very Low descriptive level conveyed that the items about language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were never put into practice. These ranges and their corresponding descriptive levels provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the extent to which language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation were employed, based on the data.

In determining the level of language classroom anxiety, the provided outlines the range of means, descriptive levels, and their corresponding interpretations concerning the manifestation of language classroom anxiety. In the range of 4.20 to 5.00, the descriptive level is categorized as Very High, indicating that items associated with language anxiety were consistently and always evident. Within the range of 3.40 to 4.19, the descriptive level becomes High, indicating that items related to language classroom anxiety were frequently observed. As the mean falls within the range of 2.60 to 3.39, the descriptive level was labeled as Moderate, suggesting that items concerning language anxiety were sometimes evident. Within the range of 1.80 to 2.59, the descriptive level was identified as Low, indicating that items related to language anxiety were rarely manifested. Finally, for means ranging from 1.00 to 1.79, the descriptive level was denoted as Very Low, indicating that items associated with

language classroom anxiety were never manifested. This framework helped determine the extent of language classroom anxiety based on the provided data, offering valuable insights into its prevalence.

To ensure a comprehensive interpretation and analysis of the data, a range of statistical tools had been employed. The mean serves as a measure of language learning strategies, language classroom anxiety, and students' academic goal orientation. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation has been used to examine the relationships among language learning strategies, language classroom anxiety, and students' goal orientation. Additionally, the methodology involves applying Multiple Regression Analysis, which enables the measurement of the influence of language classroom anxiety on language learning strategies among senior high school students. To assess the mediating effect of students' goal orientation on the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety, the Medgraph technique incorporating the Sobel z-test was employed. This comprehensive suite of statistical tools enhanced the depth and insight of the analysis, facilitating a more thorough understanding of the complex interplay among language learning strategies, language classroom anxiety, and students' goal orientation.

### **Design and Procedure**

The study used a quantitative, non-experimental correlational design, which utilized correlational statistics to define and assess the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores (Stuart 17). Furthermore, mediation analysis that stands between the independent and dependent variables mediates the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Liew, Bernard X., et al. 1). According to Ward (1), stratified random sampling narrows the difference between different types of individuals through classification, is conducive to extracting representative samples, and reduces the sample size, and it has relatively remarkable advantages. The study examined students' goal orientation, language learning strategies, and language classroom anxiety. The mediating effect of students' goal orientation on the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety was also investigated.

The researcher also took the following steps in data collection: First, she presented the concept to her adviser before drafting the survey instruments. Second, the survey instruments were validated by the internal and external validators. Third, after the survey instruments were validated, the researcher conducted the pilot test of the reliability index on the scheduled date at the University of Mindanao Panabo College, with the school's approval. Fourth, the accomplished survey instruments were submitted to the statistician at the University of Mindanao for reliability testing. Fifth, after completing the validation and reliability testing for the survey instruments, the researcher submitted her manuscript to the Ethics Review Committee (ERC) for review.

In the sixth step, a letter was attached to the endorsements and then submitted to the different schools. As soon as individual permission was granted, a schedule was made for the distribution and retrieval of the survey forms. However, as the academic year was nearing its end, the researcher shifted to an online survey. Seventh, the researcher provided clear instructions to the participants on how to administer the survey instruments. The instructions specified that the survey would be conducted during break times, "toolbox" meetings, and other group activities to maximize time and effectively explain each questionnaire item.

Eighth, the researcher collected the questionnaires via Google Forms. After retrieval, the data were screened, encoded, tabulated, and analyzed.

This research was meticulously executed in strict adherence to the ethical protocols and standards established by the University of Mindanao Ethics Committee. The researcher obtained the requisite permissions from key officials, ensuring compliance with all necessary procedures. Thorough risk analysis and mitigation measures were implemented, covering physical, psychological, and socio-economic aspects. Informed consent was diligently acquired from the study participants, ensuring their interests were fully protected. The researcher prioritized the respondents' views, decisions, and well-being, valuing their contribution to the study. Respecting the principles of voluntary participation, senior high school students of Panabo City were given the freedom to respond to the questionnaire without facing penalties or losses. Privacy and confidentiality were paramount; the researcher ensured that personal information remained confidential and was handled with the utmost discretion. The researcher was unwavering in upholding ethical considerations, guaranteeing respect for participants' opinions and safeguarding the integrity of their data.

The informed consent process was transparent, emphasizing the study's benefits for both participants and the school. Recruitment procedures were clarified, inclusion and exclusion criteria were outlined, and the data collection process was detailed. The research posed minimal risks to participants, and potential benefits included improved teaching methodologies, enhanced student perspectives on the English language, and valuable insights for curriculum administrators. Stringent measures were taken to prevent plagiarism, fabrication, and falsification, ensuring the authenticity and accuracy of the data. Conflicts of interest were avoided, and there was no trace of deceit or potential harm to participants.

In addition, the researcher affirmed that there were no personal, financial, or professional relationships that may have compromised the integrity and objectivity of this study. Although the researcher is affiliated with the same academic institution as some of the potential respondents, no direct teacher-student relationship exists with any of the respondents involved in the data collection.

To ensure impartiality, participation was entirely voluntary, and recruitment was conducted transparently and neutrally. The researcher refrained from any form of influence or pressure during the consent and data-collection processes. Furthermore, all responses were collected anonymously through Google Forms to safeguard participant confidentiality and maintain unbiased analysis. Data interpretation and reporting were based solely on the information provided by the participants and followed ethical research standards.

The study then proceeded after obtaining formal permission from the relevant school authorities. The researcher, in collaboration with the research adviser, adheres to authorship qualifications, ensuring meaningful contributions to the study's conception, design, data acquisition, analysis, and interpretation. Both parties collaborated on drafting and critically revising the article, underscoring the joint effort that led to the publication of the research. This comprehensive ethical approach underscores the integrity and validity of the study's findings.

The study strictly adhered to ethical standards and protocols approved by the Ethics Committee (UMERC2025-127). Permissions and endorsements were obtained from the school authorities prior to conducting the research. Respondents' participation was voluntary and limited to Grade 12 learners aged 18 and above from selected institutions. Eligibility to participate was confirmed through an age verification item in the Google Form. A clear

consent process was implemented, including a written explanation and a pre-recorded video outlining the study's purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, and respondents' rights. Only those who provided consent were allowed to proceed. Recruitment followed a fair and unbiased procedure through school-approved channels, and respondents' rights to withdraw or skip questions were emphasized. The research posed no physical or socio-economic risks, with only minimal psychological discomfort possible, and support measures were made available to ensure respondents' well-being.

Confidentiality and data privacy were strictly maintained, with all personal information securely stored and accessible only to the researcher, in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. After the data analysis, all questionnaires were properly disposed of. The researcher upheld integrity by avoiding plagiarism, fabrication, and falsification, ensuring accurate citation (MLA 8th edition) and the use of authentic first-hand data. There was no conflict of interest or deceit, and all procedures were communicated transparently to the respondents. The study was implemented with formal approval from the participating schools, and data collection via Google Forms ensured secure, independent responses. Authorship standards were also observed, with the researcher and adviser collaboratively contributing to the study's design, analysis, and manuscript preparation.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data obtained from the respondents on language classroom anxiety were presented, analyzed, and interpreted in this section based on the research objectives previously stated. The order of discussions on the mentioned topic is as follows: level of language learning strategies; level of language classroom anxiety; and level of academic goal orientation; correlations between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety; language learning strategies and academic goal orientation; academic goal orientation and language classroom anxiety; and mediation analysis results.

#### Language Learning Strategies Among Senior High School Grade 12 Students

Shown in Table 1, the descriptive statistics results in assessing the level of language learning strategies, which have an overall mean of 3.84 ( $SD=0.95$ ), described as high. Taken individually, the indicators of the level of language learning strategies of the participants were as follows: *Memory* ( $\bar{x} = 3.84, SD = 0.91$ ), *Cognitive* ( $\bar{x} = 3.94, SD = 0.92$ ), *Compensation* ( $\bar{x} = 3.61, SD = 1.02$ ), *Metacognitive* ( $\bar{x} = 3.95, SD = 0.90$ ), *Affective* ( $\bar{x} = 3.82, SD = 0.99$ ) and *Social* ( $\bar{x} = 3.87, SD = 0.96$ ), both of which are assessed to be high. This implies that the language learning strategies of grade 12 students are frequently practiced.

There is a descriptive level of high language learning strategies among senior high school grade 12 students. This means that the students are able to incorporate their *memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social skills*. This also implies that grade 12 students frequently use language learning strategies.

The grade 12 students' levels of *memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social skills* are high, which implies that language learning strategies are often practiced by the students. The results align with the study of Hanafiah et al., which employed Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and found that

metacognitive, compensation, social, moral, and cognitive strategies were frequently used, while affective strategies were used at a moderate level.

These findings suggest that successful language learners possess strong awareness of the strategies they employ. Such strategic awareness supports effective language acquisition and highlights the importance of using varied and appropriate strategies in learning English (1364).

**Table 1**  
*Language Learning Strategies among Senior High School Grade 12 Students*

Indicators	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Memory	0.91	3.84	High
Cognitive	0.92	3.94	High
Compensation	1.03	3.61	High
Metacognitive	0.90	3.95	High
Affective	0.99	3.82	High
Social	0.96	3.87	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>0.95</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>High</b>

Consistent with the results, Hashim (262) also stated that students commonly employ metacognitive, affective, social, and cognitive strategies. Similarly, the current study reveals widespread use of these strategies, highlighting their importance in language learning. In addition, Language-learning strategies have been identified as major variables associated with second language acquisition (Flemens, 312). Students used social strategies, followed by memory strategies, compensatory strategies, metacognitive strategies, cognitive strategies, and affective strategies in English writing, respectively (Pongsukvajchakul 3).

### **Language Classroom Anxiety Among Senior High School Grade 12 Students**

Shown in Table 2 are the descriptive statistics results for measuring the level of language classroom anxiety among grade 12 students. The overall mean of language classroom anxiety is 3.62 (SD = 1.15), assessed to be high. The high level could be attributed to predominantly moderate ratings given by grade 12 students on test anxiety (= 3.51, SD = 1.13) and fear or negative evaluation (= 3.69, SD = 1.27), which are the highest, followed by communication apprehension (= 3.66, SD = 1.07), which is assessed to be high. In general, it is surmised that language classroom anxiety of grade 12 students is frequently manifested.

The overall level of language classroom anxiety among senior high school grade 12 students is *High*, based on respondents' responses in the areas of *communication apprehension*, *test anxiety*, and *fear of negative evaluation*.

The grade 12 students' level of *communication apprehension* is high, suggesting that language classroom anxiety frequently manifests as hesitation, panic, nervousness, uncertainty, confusion, feeling overwhelmed by the number of rules, and discomfort with speaking and learning English.

**Table 2**  
***Language classroom anxiety among Senior High School Grade 12 Students***

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Level</b>
Communication Apprehension	1.07	3.66	High
Test Anxiety	1.13	3.51	High
Fear or Negative Evaluation	1.27	3.69	High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>High</b>

A high level of anxiety in verbal activities suggests that students may struggle to process language input effectively, even when they possess adequate language abilities. This supports Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which posits that emotional factors – such as stress and anxiety – can hinder learners' ability to fully acquire and internalize language input. When anxiety levels are elevated, the affective filter becomes stronger, thereby limiting meaningful language acquisition (Radzi et al., 1629).

These findings are consistent with Jalleh et al. (5), who noted that students may experience high levels of communication apprehension when communicating in English due to their culture, educational background, attitudes towards the role of English in their society, and a lack of opportunities to practice speaking English. Students' language learning experiences might not have focused on oral communication skills. The results of their study revealed that most students exhibited a high level of communication apprehension, likely because oral communication typically occurred in two specific contexts: group discussions and conversations.

The high level of *test anxiety* indicated language classroom anxiety is frequently manifested among grade 12 students is frequently manifested in terms such as trembling when students are called on in English language class, uneasy during tests, worries so much about the consequences of failing, the more they study for an English language test, the more confused they get, feeling pressured, feel uneasy and confused when studying English.

The study by Waluyo, Zahabi, and Panmei (6) found that students had high test anxiety in English, which negatively affected their English proficiency test results. This indicates that students' anxiety over the English exam was characterized by four distinct constructs: worry, tension, emotionality, and physical symptoms. In line with this, Aydin et al. (23) added that learners suffer from test anxiety due to several reasons and that they experience physical problems, problems related to tests, and affective problems, whereas they use a limited number of strategies to decrease the level of test anxiety.

In addition, the high level of *fear of negative evaluation* indicated that language classroom anxiety is frequently manifested among grade 12 students is frequently manifested in terms such as worrying about making mistakes in English language, keep thinking that the other students are better at English languages than them, embarrassed, afraid that their English language teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make, and afraid that the other students will laugh at them when they speak the English language.

The statement is akin to the pronouncements of Quvanch, Ziauddin, Ahmad, and Kew (4) that students' fear of negative evaluation significantly affects their performance. This

indicates that students with a fear of negative evaluation tend to have low self-confidence, which results in experiencing higher levels of English language anxiety.

### **Academic Goal Orientation Among Senior High School Grade 12 Students**

Presented in Table 3 are the descriptive statistics assessing the level of academic goal orientation among grade 12 students, with an overall mean of 3.94 ( $SD = 1.02$ ), indicating a high level of academic goal orientation. The high level is also reflective of high to very high levels of its indicators, to include *Ego Self-Frustration Goal* ( $= 3.86, SD = 1.14$ ), *Ego Self-Enhancement Goal* ( $= 3.53, SD = 1.19$ ), *Work Avoidance Goal* ( $= 4.06, SD = 0.95$ ) both of which are high and *Learning or Task Goal* ( $= 4.32, SD = 0.81$ ) being the highest and a measure assessed to be very high. Grade 12 students frequently demonstrate academic goal orientation in learning English. The very high level of learning or task-oriented goals suggests that they are highly motivated to improve their English language skills.

The level of academic goal orientation among senior high school grade 12 students is high for ego self-frustration, ego self-enhancement goal, and work avoidance goals, while the learning or task goal shows a very high level.

**Table 3**  
*Academic Goal Orientation among Senior High School Grade 12 Students*

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Descriptive Level</b>
Ego Self-Frustration Goal	1.14	3.86	High
Ego Self-Enhancement Goal	1.19	3.53	High
Work Avoidance Goal	0.95	4.06	High
Learning or Task Goal	0.81	4.32	Very High
<b>Overall</b>	<b>1.02</b>	<b>3.94</b>	<b>High</b>

Meanwhile, the overall mean was described as *high*. This means that academically goal-oriented students frequently demonstrate in learning English. The very high level of learning or task-oriented goals suggests that they are highly motivated to enhance their English language skills. This also implies that students like to learn interesting things, always try to do better than other students, strive for higher grades, are eager to learn new things, and are concerned about improving their skills/abilities in class.

This corresponds to Rinthapol's (38) statement that high levels of academic goal orientation are more likely to lead to an appropriate response to failure, which helps maintain self-efficacy. Conversely, students with academic goal orientation are more likely to exhibit high levels of effort and persistence. In addition, the positive effects of academic goal orientation on student effort have long been supported. Students who adopt academic goal orientation apply greater effort and persist through difficulties in learning situations (Sapio, 3).

**Correlations between Language Learning Strategies,  
Language Classroom Anxiety, And Academic  
Goal Orientation among Senior High School  
Grade 12 Students**

Displayed in Table 4 are the results of the relationship between the independent (Language Learning Strategies), dependent Language Classroom Anxiety), and mediator (Academic Goal Orientation) variables. A bivariate Pearson product-moment correlation was used to assess the relationship between the variables. The first zero-order correlation analysis between Language Learning Strategies and Language classroom anxiety revealed a computed  $r$ -value of 0.116, with a probability value of  $p < 0.000$ , which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates a strong, positive association between the two variables. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is therefore rejected.

The test of the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety revealed a significant relationship. This implies that the language learning strategies of grade 12 senior high school students are correlated with their language classroom anxiety. In other words, it revealed a very low positive correlation between language-learning strategies and language-classroom anxiety. This suggests that language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety have a weaker correlation: when language learning strategies increase, language classroom anxiety tends to increase as well, though only weakly or inconsistently.

**Table 4**  
*Correlation analysis of the variables*

Pair	Variables	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Decision on Ho
IV and DV	Language Learning Strategies and Language Classroom Anxiety	0.166	0.003	Reject
IV and MV	Language Learning Strategies and Academic Goal Orientation	0.608	0.000	Reject
MV and DV	Academic Goal Orientation and Language Classroom Anxiety	0.366	0.000	Reject

This result aligns with the study by Abubakar (61), which found that language classroom anxiety has a very low positive correlation with language learning strategies. Similarly, the study by Sadeghi, Karim, and Soleimani (70) found a very low correlation between language classroom anxiety and language learning strategies. This suggests that learners who experience higher levels of anxiety may tend to use slightly more language learning strategies, although the effect is weak.

In this regard, Mohammadi (645) found that there is a negative and significant correlation between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. Furthermore, the finding supports an inverse relationship between language-learning strategies

and language-classroom anxiety. This means that students who use more language-learning strategies experience less language classroom anxiety. This amount of relationship is also meaningful and significant. Moreover, making extensive use of strategies would especially help students with low proficiency in their second language control their emotions and attitudes in that language, thereby lowering their anxiety levels and increasing their motivation (Mickwitz, 6). Additionally, exploring language learning strategies, such as reducing anxiety and providing encouragement, reveals their significance in creating a supportive, emotionally conducive learning environment, thereby enhancing learners' motivation and persistence (Hashim, 258).

In the same manner, the second bivariate correlation analysis involving Language Learning Strategies and Academic Goal Orientation yielded an  $r$ -value of 0.608 and a  $p$ -value of  $<0.000$ , which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates a positive association between the two variables (Wen et al., 6440). Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is also rejected.

The test of the relationship between language-learning strategies and academic goal orientation revealed a significant relationship. This implies that the language learning strategies of senior high school students are correlated with their academic goal orientation. This means that the increase in language learning strategies would also likely increase their academic goal orientation towards learning English.

This result is consistent with the study by Zeng et al. (5), which shows a significant positive correlation between language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with previous studies demonstrating the significant positive effect of learning strategies on Chinese students' motivation. In addition, Barani et al. (6) found similar results, indicating a significant correlation between language learning strategies and students' academic goal orientation.

Learners with an academic goal orientation not only exhibited higher participation in English learning but also used more language-learning strategies. This means that learners with a higher goal orientation exhibited a significantly greater intention to continue learning. Furthermore, this demonstrates that academic goal orientation positively affects self-language learning strategies (Beik, 3).

The third correlational analysis between Academic Goal Orientation and Language classroom anxiety yielded an  $r$ -value of 0.366 with a probability value of  $p < 0.000$ , which is significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates a positive association between the two variables (Koul, 676). Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected.

The test of the relationship between academic goal orientation and language classroom anxiety revealed a significant relationship. This implies that the academic goal orientation of senior high school students is correlated with their language classroom anxiety. This means that the increase in academic goal orientation would also likely increase their language classroom anxiety in learning English. However, the result shows a low correlation between academic goal orientation and language classroom anxiety.

This finding supports Cahalan's (95) study, which found that students' academic goal orientation is a significant predictor of language classroom anxiety. Similar results have been found in earlier research, with some scholars proposing that goal orientation is inherently connected to anxiety. This implies that students are often motivated by a strong fear of failure in their academic pursuits. Overall, students seem to adopt academic goal orientations mainly due to language classroom anxiety, such as the fear of failing or being seen as incompetent,

rather than a desire to demonstrate their abilities or knowledge. Moreover, McKinney's (34) study further supports this, emphasizing that goal orientation significantly influences emotional responses during task performance. Individuals with a learning goal orientation typically report lower levels of anxiety, while those with a performance goal orientation are more likely to experience increased anxiety and negative emotions.

On the other hand, Miller (91) presents a contrasting finding, indicating that academic goal orientation overall has been shown to have a negative relationship with anxiety (including test anxiety) and a positive relationship with effective stress-coping behaviors. Moreover, both approach and, more notably, avoidance types of performance orientation have been strongly linked to increased classroom anxiety, particularly during evaluative situations such as academic tests.

### Mediation Analysis of the Three Variables

Data were analyzed using the linear regression method as input to the medgraph. Mediation analysis, developed by Baron and Kenny (2001), is the mediating effect of a third variable in the relationship between two variables.

There are four steps to be met for a third variable to act as a mediator. In Table 5, these are categorized as steps 1-4. In step 1, language learning strategies, as the independent variable (IV), significantly predict language classroom anxiety among senior high school grade 12 students, the dependent variable (DV) in this study. In step 2, language learning strategies significantly predict academic goal orientation, the mediator (M). In step 3, academic goal orientation significantly predicts language classroom anxiety of grade 12 students.

Since the three steps (paths a, b, and c) are significant, further mediation analysis using medgraph is warranted, including the Sobel z test to assess the significance of the mediation effect. If the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable becomes non-significant at the final step of the analysis, full mediation will be achieved. It means all the effects are mediated by the mediator variable.

**Table 5**  
*Regression results of the variables in the four criteria of the presence of mediating effect*

Step	Path	Beta (Unstandardized)	Standard Error	Beta (Standardized)	Sig.
Step 1	c	0.256	0.086	0.166	0.003
Step 2	a	0.689	0.051	0.608	0.000
Step 3	b	0.571	0.090	0.420	0.000
Step 4	c'	-0.138	0.102	-0.089	0.176

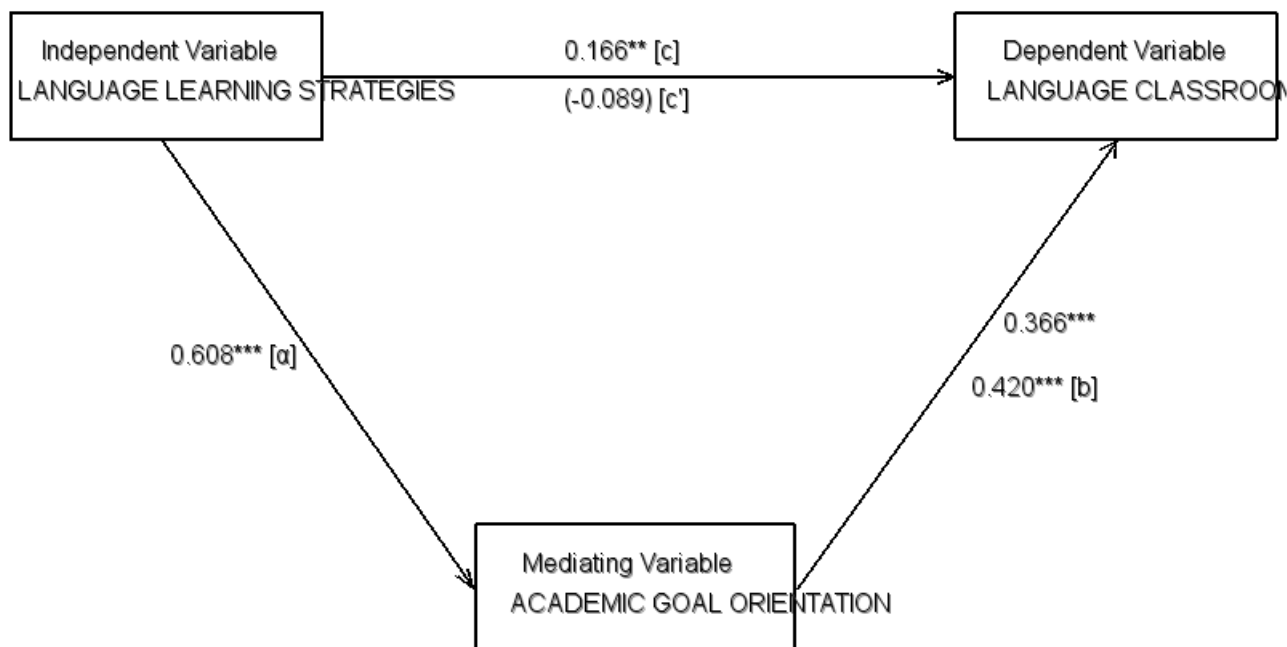
In addition, if the regression coefficient is substantially reduced at the final step but remains significant, which implies that part of the independent variable (language learning strategies) is mediated by the mediator (academic goal orientation), but other parts are either direct or mediated by other variables that are not included in the model. In this case, as gleaned in step 4 (denoted as c'), the effect of language learning strategies on language classroom anxiety was even found to reduce after mediated by academic goal orientation. With this, the effect was found to be not significant at  $p < 0.05$  level. Furthermore, the results of the mediating-effect computation are shown in Figure 2. The Sobel test yielded a z-value of

5.742717 and a p-value of 0.000001, both significant at the 0.05 level. This indicates that the mediating effect is significant, as the original direct effect of language learning strategies on language classroom anxiety was reduced and became non-significant when academic goal orientation was included. The positive value of Sobel z indicates that the addition of academic goal orientation removes the effect of language learning strategies on language classroom anxiety.

The figure also showed the results of the computation of the effect size in the mediation test conducted between the three variables. The effect size measures the extent to which language learning strategies' effect on language classroom anxiety is mediated by the indirect path. The total effect value of 0.166 is the beta of language learning strategies towards language classroom anxiety. The direct effect value of -0.089 is the beta for language learning strategies on language classroom anxiety, with academic goal orientation included in the regression. The indirect effect value of .255 is the amount of the original beta between the language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety that now goes through academic goal orientation to language classroom anxiety ( $a * b$ , where "a" refers to the path between LLS  $\rightarrow$  LCA and "b" refers to the path between AGO  $\rightarrow$  LCA).

The mediation analysis revealed that academic goal orientation fully mediates the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety. The mediating effect suggests that academic goal orientation is the primary reason language learning strategies can influence language classroom anxiety among senior high school students learning English. This indicates that academic goal orientation can fully explain how language learning strategies influence language classroom anxiety.

#### Standardized Coefficients



NOTE: The numerical values in the parentheses are beta weights taken from the second regression and the other values are zero order correlations.

**Results:**

Significance of Mediation		Significant
Sobel z-value	5.742717	$p = < 0.000001$
95% Symmetrical Confidence Interval		
Lower	.25914	
Upper	.52769	
Unstandardized indirect effect		
a*b	.39342	
Se	.06851	
Effect size Measures		
Standardized Coefficients		
Total:	.166	
Direct:	-.08	
Indirect:	.255	
Indirect to Total Ratio:	.000	

*Figure 2. Medgraph Showing the Variables of the Study*

In line with this, academic goal orientation significantly mediated the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety; this finding aligns with Sha's (20) pronouncement that academic goal orientation has a full, significant effect on language classroom anxiety. This implies that students with higher levels of fear and anxiety are more likely to adopt an academic goal orientation, and that academic goal orientation, in turn, positively predicts classroom anxiety. This finding suggests that self-described anxious students may fear negative evaluation by classmates and that their performance is being monitored by others. Moreover, they are afraid of taking risks and making mistakes when asked to speak English in front of other classmates, and noted that when students are more anxious, they tend to fear making mistakes.

Furthermore, second language learners are often afraid of being laughed at by their peers. Therefore, in a language class, anxious students may keep quiet and sit in the back of the classroom in order to avoid being called on (Chang, 133).

#### **IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As can be gleaned from the findings of the study, conclusions are drawn in this section. The findings of this study confirmed the assumption that academic goal orientation mediates the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety among senior high school students. The academic motivation fully mediates the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety, which means that all can be explained by the mediator of the influence of language learning strategies on language classroom anxiety.

Moreover, the findings showed that the language-learning strategies of senior high school students were influenced by their language classroom anxiety. In effect, senior high

school students exhibit high levels of language learning strategies, language classroom anxiety, and academic goal orientation. It generally indicates a significant relationship among academic goal orientation, language learning strategies, and language classroom anxiety. Furthermore, a full mediation analysis examines the effect of academic goal orientation on the relationship between language learning strategies and language classroom anxiety among senior high school students.

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered. Given the high levels of language learning strategies, language classroom anxiety, and academic goal orientation, it is suggested that senior high school students maintain or even improve their levels to better learn English. Furthermore, to improve the use of language-learning strategies, reduce language-classroom anxiety, and enhance academic goal orientation, English teachers shall create a positive, conducive, and attractive learning environment. In addition, teachers shall promote positive goal-setting to reduce the fear of failure in the classroom. Moreover, schools shall offer emotional support, such as counseling services and anxiety management programs, to help students better cope with the emotional demands of language learning.

Furthermore, teachers shall focus on this goal orientation to stimulate students and promote their academic efficiency. Language teachers can incorporate discussions of language-learning strategies into their lessons and guide students in using these strategies to reduce their anxiety. In addition, instructors consider not only learning styles and strategies to help learners learn dexterously but also motivational strategies to raise students' motivation, given their strong effect on success. Hence, teachers shall encourage students to adopt positive academic goals and give them appropriate academic assignments that promote self-esteem and competition without fear of making mistakes or being evaluated by others. Finally, learning environments shall support students in adopting self-, task-, and other-based goal orientations that contribute to their academic success.

The mediation analysis suggests that educators must design and strictly implement interventions, such as providing positive reinforcement, offering constructive feedback, and fostering a conducive environment and positive peer attitudes, to strengthen students' goal orientation. Finally, future studies should explore other variables that may influence and reduce language classroom anxiety, as this would provide valuable insights for the research community and contribute to the development of more effective educational interventions. Additionally, include a more diverse range of participants from different regions or socioeconomic backgrounds to see if the results hold true across the Philippines. It would also be beneficial to use a "mixed-methods" approach, adding student interviews or classroom observations to the existing surveys; this would provide deeper, "human" insights into why students feel anxious that numbers alone cannot capture.

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