

Language Anxiety of Students Studying for a Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language Programme at a Local Education University in Malaysia: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This article presents a case study investigating language anxiety experienced by students majoring in Teaching English as a Second Language at a local education university in Malaysia. The study aimed to identify the causes and effects of language anxiety among these students and explore potential strategies to overcome it. The sample consisted of 126 students who completed questionnaires, and 10 were selected for interview sessions. A mixed methods approach was adopted. After conducting interviews and surveys with participants, several possible sources of language anxiety were identified, including proficiency levels, attitudes towards English language learning, and the writing process. The findings also revealed additional factors contributing to language anxiety, such as classroom interactions, time pressure during writing activities, and teacher attitudes towards students. Furthermore, the article discusses the need for interventions and support to address language anxiety to promote effective language learning and academic success.

Keywords: language anxiety, English as a Second Language, teacher education, qualitative research, quantitative research, higher education

INTRODUCTION

Language is a fundamental means of communication, and many individuals possess at least a basic proficiency in multiple languages (Shanmugam & Jeevarathinam, 2023). In our increasingly interconnected and interdependent global society, communicating effectively in various languages is crucial, enabling individuals to engage meaningfully with the worldwide community. English is among the most widely used languages globally (Nguyen, 2023). As such, proficiency in English is highly valued in Malaysia, reflecting the country's multi-ethnic and multilingual composition. Variations in English fluency among Malaysians can be expected, as factors such as racial and family background and the local context can influence one's command of the language (Rahman et al., 2022).

Learning and mastering a second language can be daunting, often accompanied by feelings of anxiety and unease. Language learning can pose significant challenges for students in Malaysia, particularly in the context of mastering English as a second language. One of the primary difficulties faced by Malaysian students is language anxiety, which can negatively impact their academic performance and overall language proficiency. A poor command of English among Malaysian students can have far-reaching consequences for the individual, the country, and the workforce (Nawi & Nor, 2023).

At the individual level, a weak grasp of the English language can hinder students' academic success (Nawi & Nor, 2023). Many educational programmes and resources are delivered in English, and students who struggle with the language may have difficulty comprehending course materials, participating in discussions, and

demonstrating their knowledge. This can lead to lower grades, limited opportunities for further education or employment, and reduced confidence in their academic and professional abilities (Susidamaiyanti et al., 2023).

At the national level, Malaysian students' lack of English language proficiency can affect the country's competitiveness in the global market (Yaakop et al., 2020). Malaysia's ambitions to become a developed, high-income nation require a workforce equipped with strong English language skills to engage effectively in international business, research, and collaboration (Juen, 2019; Hamid & Idrus, 2021; Nawi & Nor, 2023). The decline in English proficiency among Malaysian students is a significant concern, as it may hamper economic and social progress (Hamid & Idrus, 2021; Zukiflei & Said, 2020).

Many Malaysian students studying in the Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programme experience heightened levels of language anxiety (Badrasawi et al., 2020). This anxiety can stem from various factors, including their perceived proficiency levels, attitudes towards English language learning, and the writing process. Students may feel self-conscious about their language skills, fearing making mistakes or being judged by their peers and instructors (Jugo, 2020). Additionally, the pressure to perform well in written assignments and presentations can exacerbate language anxiety, leading to suboptimal academic outcomes. This pressure may be compounded by the high stakes involved, such as the impact of language proficiency on academic grades, future employment prospects, and the ability to teach English as a second language effectively. The stress and apprehension associated with these expectations can further impede students' language learning and hinder their overall academic success (Jugo, 2020).

The Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) programme is a popular academic programme offered by many public and private universities in Malaysia. Students enrolled in this programme must develop strong English language skills to effectively teach the language to their future students (Jugo, 2020). However, many students in this programme may experience language anxiety, which can negatively impact their academic performance and overall well-being (Jugo, 2020).

Addressing language anxiety is crucial for promoting effective language learning and academic success among Malaysian students. Interventions and support mechanisms, such as language counselling, peer-assisted learning, and teacher training, may be necessary to help students overcome their language anxiety and develop their English language skills more confidently and effectively (Ramarow & Hassan, 2021).

This article presents a case study that explores the language anxiety experienced by students studying in a Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programme at a local education university in Malaysia. The study aims to identify the sources of language anxiety, examine its effects on students' language learning and academic performance, and explore potential strategies to address and mitigate language anxiety.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Anxiety: A common issue faced by learners of English

Language anxiety is a common issue faced by students studying in a second language context (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2021). It can significantly hinder their language learning progress and affect their academic performance (Shanmugam & Jeevarathinam, 2023). Existing research has extensively explored various aspects of language anxiety (Pratiwi & Mukhaiyar, 2020; Daud et al., 2022), including its sources (Shanmugam & Jeevarathinam, 2023), types (Elkhayma, 2020), the impact of general language anxiety on learner performance (Hsu, 2022; Ramarow & Hassan, 2021), the relationship between anxiety and proficiency level (Jugo, 2020), and the correlation between anxiety and motivation (Ramarow & Hassan, 2021; Shanmugam & Jeevarathinam, 2023). These factors can increase stress, nervousness, and apprehension levels, ultimately hindering their language learning progress and affecting academic performance (Jugo, 2020; Suciati, 2020).

The Foreign Language Anxiety Theory

The Foreign Language Anxiety Theory, proposed by Horwitz et al., suggests that language anxiety is a distinct form of anxiety, separate from other types of anxiety. This theory has been widely used to understand the nature and causes of language anxiety among language learners (Rohliah et al., 2023).

Theoretically, the **Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) theory** provides a framework for understanding the sources and impacts of language anxiety. FLA is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986). According to this theory, language anxiety is a unique type of anxiety associated explicitly with learning a foreign or second language, distinct from other types of anxiety.

By conceptualising language anxiety as a distinct construct, the Foreign Language Anxiety Theory has helped clarify the research literature and provided a foundation for understanding the specific factors that contribute to language anxiety and its impact on language learning outcomes.

The **FLA theory** posits that language anxiety arises from three key components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension refers to the fear or anxiety experienced when communicating in the target language. Test anxiety involves the apprehension felt when evaluated or tested on language skills. Fear of negative evaluation encompasses the worry about how others, such as peers and instructors, will perceive one’s language performance. These interrelated components can contribute to the overall experience of language anxiety, leading to negative consequences for students’ language learning and academic success.

Defining Language Anxiety

Language anxiety refers to the fear, uneasiness, and worry individuals experience when using or learning a second language (Shanmugam & Jeevarathinam, 2023). MacIntyre (1999, p 27) defines *language anxiety* as “a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to the anticipated events that occur during language learning.”

This definition highlights the multidimensional nature of language anxiety, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioural aspects. Cognitive dimensions of language anxiety include negative self-perceptions, beliefs, and worries, while emotional dimensions involve feelings of tension, apprehension, and nervousness. Language anxiety also manifests in specific behaviours, such as avoidance of language use and poor language performance.

The Impact of Language Anxiety on Academic Performance

Research has consistently shown a negative relationship between language anxiety and academic performance (Alnahidh & Altalhab, 2020; Manan et al., 2022; Horwitz, 2001). Students who experience higher levels of language anxiety tend to perform more poorly on language-related tasks and assessments, such as oral presentations, written assignments, and language proficiency exams.

According to Horwitz et al., language anxiety can lead to a range of adverse outcomes, including decreased participation in classroom activities, poor language comprehension and production, and lower course grades. Anxious students are less likely to volunteer answers and engage in oral classroom activities, and they tend to avoid attempting challenging language structures (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). This avoidance and lack of participation can further hinder their language learning and academic progress.

Moreover, language anxiety has been linked to other forms of academic anxiety, such as test anxiety, which can compound the adverse effects on students’ overall academic performance (Basri et al., 2020). A study by Baharuddin and Rashid found that communication anxiety among 70 undergraduate ESL students at Universiti Putra Malaysia was associated with a fear of receiving a poor evaluation or being judged, leading to further academic challenges (Ghazali et al., 2020; Badrasawi et al., 2020).

Potential Sources of Language Anxiety

Several factors have been identified as potential sources of language anxiety, including personal, social, instructional, language proficiency levels and teacher-student relationships, to name a few.

Personal factors: Students' beliefs about language learning, self-perceptions, and proficiency levels can all contribute to language anxiety (Basri et al., 2020). Learners who have a fixed mindset about their language abilities or who doubt their competence are more likely to experience anxiety. Personal factors, such as low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence, and perfectionism, can also contribute to the development of language anxiety (Suciati, 2020). Students who have a negative self-perception of their language skills or who strive for unrealistic levels of language proficiency may be more prone to experiencing anxiety (Siddique et al., 2020). Students' personality traits, such as introversion or shyness, can also increase their susceptibility to language anxiety (Suciati, 2020). Introverted learners may feel more apprehensive about speaking up in class or engaging in oral communication activities, which can exacerbate their language anxiety. These students may be more inclined to avoid speaking the target language, leading to a lack of practice and further hindering their language proficiency. Language anxiety can thus create a vicious cycle, where avoidance behaviours lead to limited opportunities to improve fluency, which in turn perpetuates anxiety (Jugo, 2020; Peake & Reynolds, 2020). Furthermore, students' prior experiences with language learning, such as negative feedback or a history of poor performance, can shape their beliefs and expectations, leading to increased anxiety when learning a new language (Jugo, 2020).

Social factors: The social context of language learning can also influence the development of language anxiety. Researchers have found that the fear of negative evaluation from peers or teachers can be a significant source of language anxiety for students (Daud et al., 2022). Students may experience anxiety when receiving negative feedback or being judged by their peers and instructors (Daud et al., 2022; Jugo, 2020). Additionally, cultural factors, such as the value placed on "face" (social reputation) in many cultures, can contribute to language anxiety. Asian students tend to prioritise preserving their social image and avoiding situations that could jeopardise it, which can lead to more excellent passive behaviour and anxiety in the language classroom (Jugo, 2020).

Instructional factors: The teaching methods and classroom environment can also shape language anxiety (Rama, 2021). For instance, students may experience anxiety when the language instruction is overly focused on grammar or emphasises perfection in language production. Instructional factors, such as teaching methods, classroom environment, and assessment practices, can significantly influence students' language anxiety (Jugo, 2020) (Maher & King, 2023). For example, an overly critical or intimidating classroom atmosphere, where students fear being singled out or ridiculed for their language mistakes, can exacerbate language anxiety. Similarly, assessment methods prioritising accuracy over fluency or being perceived as unfair or excessively demanding can increase students' language anxiety (Maher & King, 2023; Daud et al., 2022; Siddique et al., 2020).

Language proficiency levels: Students' proficiency levels can also contribute to language anxiety (Aydın et al., 2020). Learners with lower proficiency in the target language may experience higher levels of anxiety due to a lack of linguistic competence and confidence in their ability to communicate effectively. This can lead to a cycle of avoidance, limited practice, and further deterioration of language skills, perpetuating anxiety (Ahsan et al., 2020).

Impact of Language Proficiency

Previous research has also indicated that various factors, including language proficiency levels, can influence language anxiety (Manan et al., 2022). Daud and colleagues found that students with lower proficiency levels tend to experience higher levels of language anxiety (Jugo, 2020). Factors such as classroom environment, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices can also contribute to language anxiety among students (Elas & Majid, 2019; Daud et al., 2022).

Teacher-Student Relationship and Language Anxiety

Furthermore, the teacher-student relationship can significantly impact language anxiety (Jugo, 2020; Maher & King, 2023). Studies have shown that a supportive and encouraging classroom environment, where teachers foster a sense of trust and rapport with their students, can help alleviate language anxiety (Maher & King, 2023; Rama, 2021). A positive and nurturing teacher-student relationship can provide a safe space for students to practice and improve their language skills without fear of negative evaluation or judgment. When students feel valued, respected, and understood by their teachers, they are more likely to take risks, engage actively in language learning activities, and overcome anxiety (Xiao-wei, 2021). Conversely, an overly authoritarian or critical teacher-student dynamic can exacerbate language anxiety, as students may feel intimidated, self-conscious, and reluctant to participate (Maher & King, 2023). Therefore, fostering a constructive and empathetic teacher-student relationship is crucial in mitigating the adverse effects of language anxiety and promoting successful language learning outcomes (Rama, 2021).

Language Anxiety among TESL Students

Previous studies have explored the language anxiety experienced by students enrolled in Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programmes. A survey by Daud and colleagues found that TESL students with lower proficiency levels tend to experience higher levels of language anxiety. Factors such as classroom environment, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices can contribute to language anxiety among TESL students.

Additionally, the heightened pressure to perform well in their language-related courses and the need to demonstrate strong English proficiency can further amplify the anxiety experienced by TESL students (Jugo, 2020). As future English teachers, TESL students may feel a greater sense of responsibility and expectation to excel in their language skills, which can lead to increased anxiety and self-doubt (Jugo, 2020; Mohamad, 2020).

Research has also indicated that TESL students often experience higher levels of anxiety when engaging in speaking and writing tasks compared to listening and reading activities (Gu & Liu, 2020; Jiang & Dewaele, 2020). This heightened anxiety in productive language skills may be attributed to the perceived risk of making mistakes and being negatively evaluated by instructors and peers. This can lead to avoidance behaviours and hinder language development and academic success (Gu & Liu, 2020; Jiang & Dewaele, 2020).

Several factors that can contribute to language anxiety among students in this program have been identified, including:

1. Perceived language proficiency: Students who perceive their English language skills as inadequate or below their peers may experience heightened anxiety about their ability to perform well in language-related tasks (Jugo, 2020; Daud et al., 2022).
2. Fear of negative evaluation: Students may be anxious about being negatively evaluated by their instructors or peers, leading to a reluctance to participate in class activities or engage with the target language (Daud et al., 2022; Jugo, 2020; Maher & King, 2023).
3. Instructional factors: Instructors' teaching methods, feedback, and assessment practices may inadvertently contribute to students' language anxiety if they are perceived as overly critical or focused on language form rather than communicative competence (Rama, 2021; Maher & King, 2023).
4. Contextual factors: The classroom environment, social dynamics, and cultural norms may also play a role in shaping language anxiety, as students may feel uncomfortable or self-conscious about using the target language in specific settings (Afrida & Wati, 2022; Daud et al., 2022).
5. Career expectations: The high expectations placed on students to perform well and become effective English language teachers in the future may add to their anxiety and pressure to succeed (Siddique et al., 2020; Coppinger & Sheridan, 2022; Jugo, 2020).

These findings suggest that language anxiety is a complex phenomenon that can impact students' language learning experiences and academic outcomes. To address this issue, it is essential to identify the specific sources of language anxiety and develop tailored interventions to support students' language learning and academic success.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis. This approach comprehensively explains language anxiety's multifaceted nature and impact on TESL students' academic and language learning experiences.

Research Questions

1. What are the sources of language anxiety for students in a Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programme at a local education university in Malaysia?
2. What recommendations can be made to help TESL students reduce their language anxiety?
3. How can institutions and policymakers help reduce language anxiety among TESL students?

Participants

The study focused on 126 undergraduate students enrolled in the Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language program at a local university in Malaysia. Participants for the interview sessions were selected using purposive sampling to ensure diverse representation based on gender, age, and language proficiency. 25 participants were male, while 101 were female. The majority of the participants, 80%, were female, while 20% were male.

Table 1:

Gender	Age (years)						Total
	22	23	24	25	26	27	
Female	17	72	8	3	0	1	101 (80%)
Male	4	12	5	2	2	0	25 (20%)
						Total	126 (100%)

Instruments

The study utilised a combination of research instruments to collect data:

1. **Language Anxiety Questionnaire:** The language anxiety questionnaire used in the study has been widely adopted in recent research due to its comprehensive coverage. Studies by Almesaar (2022), Paneerselvam & Yamat (2021) and Javed (2022) have reported high reliability with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.729, 0.894, and 0.932, respectively, on the 33-item, 5-point Likert scale questionnaire. The instrument measures participants' responses on a numerical scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," with scores from 5 to 1. Therefore, this survey instrument is considered appropriate for use in this study. However, the questionnaire was adapted and modified from Muhaisen and Al-Haq (2012) and Male (2018) using 66 items on a 5-point Likert scale. The questions were categorised into themes such as "General Anxiety in English Classes" with 7 items, "Speaking Anxiety" with 18 items, "Listening Anxiety" with 10 items, "Writing Anxiety" with 10 items, "Reading Anxiety" with 10 items, and "Teacher Anxiety" with 11 items. Data analysis made use of statistics provided using SPSS version 29.0.0.0 (241) software.

2. Qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews with a sample of 10 participants. The interviews delved into the specific factors contributing to their language anxiety, its impact on their language learning and academic progress, and their perspectives on effective strategies for managing this anxiety. This qualitative information complements the quantitative findings from the language anxiety questionnaire, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. The interviews, conducted via Zoom, consisted of 10 questions to gain deeper insights into the participants' experiences with language anxiety.

Normality tests

Normality Tests

Table 13: Normality Test for General Anxiety Table 14: Normality Test for Writing Anxiety

	Skewness	Std Error		Skewness	Std Error
General Anxiety in English Classes 1	.592	.216	Writing Anxiety 1	.691	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 2	.739	.216	Writing Anxiety 2	-.221	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 3	.480	.216	Writing Anxiety 3	-.507	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 4	.601	.216	Writing Anxiety 4	-.095	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 5	.668	.216	Writing Anxiety 5	-.622	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 6	.668	.216	Writing Anxiety 6	.152	.216
General Anxiety in English Classes 7	.016	.216	Writing Anxiety 7	-.141	.216
Table 15: Normality Test for Speaking Anxiety			Writing Anxiety 8	-.270	.216
	Skewness	Std Error	Writing Anxiety 9	-.231	.216
Speaking Anxiety 1	-.138	.216	Writing Anxiety 10	.205	.216
Speaking Anxiety 2	-.171	.216	Table 16: Normality Test for Reading Anxiety		
Speaking Anxiety 3	.463	.428		Skewness	Std Error
Speaking Anxiety 4	-1.351	.216	Reading Anxiety 1	-.143	.216
Speaking Anxiety 5	.372	.216	Reading Anxiety 2	-.547	.216
Speaking Anxiety 6	.480	.216	Reading Anxiety 3	-.437	.216
Speaking Anxiety 7	.565	.216	Reading Anxiety 4	-.892	.216
Speaking Anxiety 8	.124	.428	Reading Anxiety 5	-.590	.216

Speaking Anxiety 9	.472	.216	Reading Anxiety 6	-.661	.216
Speaking Anxiety 10	.745	.216	Reading Anxiety 7	.438	.216
Speaking Anxiety 11	.381	.216	Reading Anxiety 8	.008	.216
Speaking Anxiety 12	-.485	.216	Reading Anxiety 9	-.546	.216
Speaking Anxiety 13	-.076	.216	Reading Anxiety 10	-.224	.216
Speaking Anxiety 14	-.370	.216	Table 18: Normality Test for Teacher Anxiety		
Speaking Anxiety 15	-.158	.216		Skewness	Std Error
Speaking Anxiety 16	.849	.216	Teacher Anxiety 1	.020	.216
Speaking Anxiety 17	.729	.216	Teacher Anxiety 2	.455	.216
Speaking Anxiety 18	-.106	.216	Teacher Anxiety 3	.496	.216
Table 17: Normality Test for Listening Anxiety			Teacher Anxiety 4	.280	.216
	Skewness	Std Error	Teacher Anxiety 5	-.949	.216
Listening Anxiety 1	-.125	.216	Teacher Anxiety 6	-.425	.216
Listening Anxiety 2	.442	.216	Teacher Anxiety 7	-.155	.216
Listening Anxiety 3	1.023	.216	Teacher Anxiety 8	-.036	.216
Listening Anxiety 4	-.285	.216	Teacher Anxiety 9	-.704	.216
Listening Anxiety 5	.313	.216	Teacher Anxiety 10	-.129	.216
Listening Anxiety 6	-.315	.216	Teacher Anxiety 11	-.420	.216
Listening Anxiety 7	-.454	.216			
Listening Anxiety 8	-.400	.216			
Listening Anxiety 9	.333	.216			
Listening Anxiety 10	-.752	.216			

The normality tests conducted on the data (see Tables 13 to 18 above) showed that all were within the acceptable range, indicating that the data followed a normal distribution. This is an important assumption for the subsequent statistical analyses, as it ensures the validity and reliability of the findings. The skewness tests fell within the range -1.96 to +1.96 (Muhammad et al., 2020) which confirmed that the data did not significantly deviate from a normal distribution, allowing the researchers to proceed with parametric tests that make this assumption.

Pilot Study

Before evaluating the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire items, a pilot test was conducted with 7 participants. SPSS has calculated a value of .950 for our example indicating a very high level of consistency

between the items on the scale. The resulting Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.950 indicates that the items have a high degree of internal consistency, suggesting that the questionnaire is reliable for use.

Table 19. Cronbach's Alpha

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.950	.946	66

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Source of Language Anxiety

The language anxiety questionnaire findings below revealed several key sources of anxiety experienced by TESL students, addressing the first research question: What are the sources of language anxiety for students in a Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programme at a local education university in Malaysia?

General Anxiety in English Classes

Table 1: General Anxiety in English Classes

No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
General Anxiety in English Classes							
1.	GA1. I get upset when I cannot understand what the English class teaches.	31 (25%) 78 (62%)	47 (37%)	27 (21%)	16 (13%) 21 (17%)	5 (4%)	126 (100%)
2.	GA2. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the teacher says in the English class.	30 (24%) 86 (68%)	56 (44%)	16 (13%)	19 (15%) 24 (19%)	5 (4%)	126 (100%)
3.	GA3. I can get so nervous in English class that I forget things I know.	23 (18%) 71 (56%)	48 (38%)	21 (17%)	22 (17%) 34 (27%)	12 (10%)	126 (100%)
4.	GA4. I worry about being left behind in the English class.	35 (28%) 78 (62%)	43 (34%)	18 (14%)	20 (16%) 30 (24%)	10 (8%)	126 (100%)
5.	GA5. I feel relaxed in the English class.	42 (33%) 97 (77%)	55 (44%)	21 (17%)	8 (6%) 8 (6%)	0	126 (100%)
6.	GA6. I try to understand why some students hate the English class.	46 (36%) 90 (71%)	44 (35%)	14 (11%)	21 (17%) 22 (18%)	1 (1%)	126 (100%)

7.	GA7. During the English class, I think about things that have nothing to do with the course.	10 (8%)	34 (27%)	39 (31%)	33 (26%)	10 (8%)	126 (100%)
		44 (35%)			43 (34%)		
Total		544 (62%)		156 (18%)	182 (20%)		882 (100%)

Table 2: General Anxiety - Mean, median and standard deviation

		General Anxiety in English Classes 1	General Anxiety in English Classes 2	General Anxiety in English Classes 3	General Anxiety in English Classes 4	General Anxiety in English Classes 5	General Anxiety in English Classes 6	General Anxiety in English Classes 7
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.34	2.31	2.62	2.42	1.96	2.10	2.99
Median		2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.104	1.113	1.238	1.267	.871	1.101	1.084
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	4	5	5
Interpretation to be read with findings in Table 1 above		Moderately on higher end	Moderately on higher end	Moderately on higher end	Moderately on higher end	Low as students enjoyed class	Average	Moderately on higher end

The findings revealed that students experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety in their general English language classes. Between 34% and 44% of the respondents reported feeling anxious in their English classes but also somewhat relaxed (77%). 62% thought they got upset when they could not understand what the English class taught, while 68% got nervous when they did not understand every word the teacher said in the English class. Additionally, 62% of the students were worried about falling behind in their English classes. The level of anxiety was particularly pronounced for items GA1, GA2, GA3, and GA6, as shown in Table 1. The standard deviation indicates that the data distribution is positively skewed, suggesting that a few students experienced very high levels of anxiety that pulled the mean upward. Refer to Table 2 above.

The findings suggest that the students generally exhibited moderate to high levels of stress in their English classes, with 62% reporting they experienced some degree of anxiety.

Jugo (2020) and Daud et al (2022) reported that students felt anxious during English classes due to fear of negative evaluation by peers and teachers and a lack of confidence in their language abilities. The current findings corroborate these observations. This is further supported by the conclusions of the interview sessions, where participants cited general apprehension, fear of making mistakes, and concerns about how their peers and instructors might perceive them as significant contributors to their language anxiety in the classroom. Specifically, the interview data revealed that students often felt anxious about speaking up in class due to a

fear of being judged or criticised by their classmates and teachers. Some expressed a lack of confidence in their English language abilities, worrying that they might mispronounce words, use incorrect grammar, or fail to articulate their thoughts effectively. This led to a reluctance to participate actively in classroom activities, as students were concerned about the potential negative impressions they might create. The interviews also highlighted how the classroom environment, if its emphasis on performance and evaluation, would exacerbate students' language anxiety, making them feel constantly on edge and self-conscious about their linguistic competence.

Speaking Anxiety

Table 3: Speaking Anxiety

No	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
2. Speaking Anxiety							
1.	I never feel quite sure of myself when I speak English in class.	19 (15%)	27 (21%)	28 (22%)	38 (30%)	14 (11%)	126 (100%)
		46 (36%)			52 (41%)		
2.	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in the English class.	12 (9%)	30 (24%)	26 (21%)	39 (31%)	19 (15%)	126 (100%)
		42 (33%)			58 (46%)		
3.	I hate the English-speaking activities in class.	4 (3%)	9 (7%)	24 (19%)	54 (43%)	35 (28%)	126 (100%)
		13 (10%)			89 (71%)		
4.	I don't like to attend classes where I am required to speak English.	6 (5%)	6 (5%)	12 (9%)	58 (46%)	44 (35%)	126 (100%)
		12 (10%)			102 (81%)		
5.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in class.	26 (20%)	40 (32%)	21 (17%)	19 (15%)	20 (16%)	126 (100%)
		66 (52%)			39 (31%)		
6.	While speaking I can get so nervous, I forget things I know.	26 (20%)	45 (36%)	23 (18%)	21 (17%)	11 (9%)	126 (100%)
		71 (56%)			32 (26%)		
7.	Even if I am well prepared for the speaking class, I feel anxious about it.	28 (22%)	49 (39%)	16 (13%)	22 (17%)	11 (9%)	126 (100%)
		77 (61%)			33 (26%)		
8.	I often feel like not going to my speaking class.	8 (6%)	11 (9%)	21 (17%)	52 (41%)	34 (27%)	126
		19 (15%)			86 (68%)		

							(100%)
9.	I feel confident when I speak English in class.	19 (15%)	51 (41%)	38 (30%)	14 (11%)	4 (3%)	126 (100%)
		70 (56%)			18 (14%)		
10.	I feel my heart pounding when I am called on to participate orally in class.	30 (24%)	56 (44%)	20 (16%)	16 (13%)	4 (3%)	126 (100%)
		86 (68%)			20 (16%)		
11.	I feel under pressure to prepare very well for speaking activities in class.	24 (19%)	46 (36%)	23 (18%)	26 (21%)	7 (6%)	126 (100%)
		70 (55%)			33 (27%)		
12.	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.	12 (10%)	18 (14%)	36 (28%)	48 (38%)	12 (10%)	126 (100%)
		30 (24%)			60 (48%)		
13.	I feel more tense and nervous in my speaking class than in my other English classes.	19 (15%)	28 (22%)	28 (22%)	34 (27%)	17 (14%)	126 (100%)
		47 (37%)			51 (41%)		
14.	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.	9 (7%)	20 (16%)	34 (27%)	42 (33%)	21 (17%)	126 (100%)
		29 (23%)			63 (50%)		
15.	When I'm on my way to the speaking class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	15 (12%)	35 (28%)	53 (42%)	22 (17%)	1 (1%)	126 (100%)
		50 (40%)			23 (18%)		
16.	I get nervous when the teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared for in advance.	29 (23%)	61 (48%)	11 (9%)	19 (15%)	6 (5%)	126 (100%)
		90 (71%)			25 (20%)		
17.	Whenever I want to speak in English, I worry about how I would sound to others.	28 (22%)	56 (45%)	13 (10%)	20 (16%)	9 (7%)	126 (100%)
		84 (67%)			29 (23%)		
18.	I feel nervous because I cannot pronounce English words properly.	18 (14%)	27 (21%)	31 (25%)	35 (28%)	15 (12%)	126 (100%)
		45 (35%)			50 (40%)		
Total		947 (42%)		458 (20%)	863 (38%)		2,268 (100%)

Table 4: Speaking Anxiety - Mean, median and standard deviation

		Speaki ng Anxiet y 1	Speaki ng Anxiet y 2	Speaki ng Anxiet y 3	Speaki ng Anxiet y 4	Speaking Anxiety 5	Speaking Anxiety 6	Speaking Anxiety 7	Speaki ng Anxiet y 8	Speaki ng Anxiet y 9
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.01	3.18	3.85	4.02	2.74	2.57	2.52	3.74	2.47
Median		3.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00
Std. Deviation		1.255	1.229	1.012	1.035	1.369	1.236	1.257	1.140	.985
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Interpretatio n to be read with Table 3		Avera ge	Avera ge	Low	Avera ge	Moderatel y on higher end	Above average	Above average	Low	Above averag e

		Speaking Anxiety 10	Speaki ng Anxiet y 11	Speaki ng Anxiet y 12	Speaki ng Anxiet y 13	Speaki ng Anxiet y 14	Speaki ng Anxiet y 15	Speaking Anxiety 16	Speaking Anxiety 17	Speaki ng Anxiet y 18
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.27	2.57	3.24	3.02	3.37	2.67	2.30	2.41	3.02
Median		2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.50	3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.061	1.176	1.113	1.284	1.150	.928	1.126	1.202	1.246
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Interpretation to be read with Table 3		Above Average	Above averag e	Avera ge	Avera ge	Low	Low	Moderatel y on higher end	Moderatel y on higher end	Avera ge

The questionnaire results indicated that speaking anxiety was a significant source of language anxiety for the TESL students. Between 56% and 71% of the respondents, they were reported experiencing moderately high

levels of anxiety when required to speak English in class. 52% shared that they started to panic when speaking without preparation, while 56% claimed they forgot what to say when they got nervous speaking in class. Even when they were well prepared for the speaking class, 61% said they felt anxious about it. 68% said they felt their heart pounding when they were called to participate orally in class. 67% shared that they worried about how they would sound to others whenever they wanted to speak in English. The data distribution was again positively skewed, with mean scores exceeding the median, suggesting that a few students experienced very high levels of speaking anxiety that pulled the mean upward. Refer to Table 4.

The moderately high levels of speaking anxiety among TESL students are consistent with previous studies (Basri et al., 2020; Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2022; Jugo, 2020), which found that public speaking in the target language is a significant source of anxiety for language learners. The findings from the interviews revealed that participants expressed considerable unease about engaging in oral activities, such as presentations and group discussions, and responding to the instructor's questions. They were apprehensive due to a fear of making mistakes in their speech and being negatively judged or criticised by their peers and teachers. This anxiety stemmed from a lack of confidence in their English language abilities, as they worried about mispronouncing words, using incorrect grammar, or failing to articulate their thoughts effectively in the target language. The prospect of being evaluated and potentially perceived in a negative light by others in the classroom setting exacerbated the students' language anxiety, causing them to feel self-conscious and reluctant to participate actively in oral activities.

Listening Anxiety

Table 5: Listening Anxiety

No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
3. Listening Anxiety							
1.	It is difficult to understand people with English pronunciation that is different from mine.	14 (11%)	37 (30%)	33 (26%)	39 (31%)	3 (2%)	126 (100%)
		51 (41%)			42 (33%)		
2.	I worry that I might not be able to understand when people talk too fast.	17 (14%)	56 (44%)	23 (18%)	26 (21%)	4 (3%)	126 (100%)
		73 (58%)			30 (24%)		
3.	I worry that I might have missed important information while I was distracted.	42 (33%)	58 (46%)	9 (7%)	15 (12%)	2 (2%)	126 (100%)
		100 (79%)			17 (14%)		
4.	I am worried when I cannot see the lips or facial expressions of the person.	11 (9%)	28 (22%)	25 (20%)	45 (36%)	17 (13%)	126 (100%)
		39 (31%)			62 (49%)		
5.	I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word in listening test situations.	28 (22%)	46 (37%)	17 (14%)	32 (25%)	3 (2%)	126 (100%)
		74 (59%)			35 (27%)		

6.	I feel uncomfortable listening without a chance to read the transcript of the speech.	9 (7%)	30 (24%)	26 (20%)	50 (40%)	11 (9%)	126 (100%)
		39 (31%)					
7.	It is difficult to concentrate on and hear a speaker I do not know well.	7 (6%)	26 (21%)	22 (17%)	54 (43%)	17 (13%)	126 (100%)
		33 (27%)			71 (56%)		
8.	My thoughts become jumbled and confused in listening for important information.	9 (7%)	27 (22%)	24 (19%)	52 (41%)	14 (11%)	126 (100%)
		36 (28%)			66 (52%)		
9.	I get worried when I have little time to think about what I have heard.	13 (10%)	51 (41%)	23 (18%)	30 (24%)	9 (7%)	126 (100%)
		64 (51%)			39 (31%)		
10.	I am not very familiar with English stress and intonation patterns.	5 (4%)	14 (11%)	28 (22%)	62 (49%)	17 (14%)	126 (100%)
		19 (15%)			79 (63%)		
Total		528 (42%)		230 (18%)	502 (40%)		1,260 (100%)

Table 6: Listening Anxiety – Mean, median and standard deviation

	Listening Anxiety 1	Listening Anxiety 2	Listening Anxiety 3	Listening Anxiety 4	Listening Anxiety 5	Listening Anxiety 6	Listening Anxiety 7	Listening Anxiety 8	Listening Anxiety 9	Listening Anxiety 10	
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.84	2.56	2.02	3.23	2.49	3.19	3.38	3.28	2.77	3.57
Median		3.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.061	1.062	1.016	1.194	1.164	1.115	1.123	1.136	1.140	.991
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Interpretation to be read with Table 5		Low to Average	Moderately on higher end	Average	Low to Average	Moderately on higher end	Average	Low	Low	Moderately on higher end	Low

The questionnaire findings showed that listening anxiety was a moderate source of language anxiety for the TESL students. Between 37% and 50% of the respondents reported experiencing moderate levels of anxiety when required to comprehend spoken English, particularly during listening comprehension tests. 41% felt that it was difficult to understand people with English pronunciation different from their own, while 33% felt otherwise. 58% worried they might not be able to understand when people spoke too quickly. Additionally, more than half expressed concern about having little time to process what they had heard. The data distribution was positively skewed, with mean scores exceeding the median. Refer to Table 6 above.

Previous studies have also identified listening to and understanding the target language as a significant source of anxiety for language learners due to factors like lack of proficiency, unfamiliar accents, and rapid speech. The interview data corroborated these quantitative findings, with some participants expressing discomfort and unease when asked to comprehend lectures, instructions, or conversations in English. They were especially anxious about missing crucial information or not being able to fully understand the spoken content during listening tests, fearing that they would be unable to adequately respond or participate. This finding aligns with recent research which also identified listening comprehension as a significant source of language anxiety for students in a TESL programme. Their study revealed that language learners often experience heightened anxiety when required to understand spoken English, particularly in the face of unfamiliar accents, rapid speech, and limited time to process the information (Coppinger & Sheridan, 2022; Jugo, 2020). This highlights the significant challenge that listening comprehension poses for these TESL students, contributing to their overall language anxiety in the classroom.

Writing Anxiety

Table 7: Writing Anxiety

No.	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
4. Writing Anxiety							
1.	I am afraid that I might make grammatical mistakes in English writing.	31 (24%)	60 (48%)	13 (10%)	21 (17%)	1 (1%)	126 (100%)
		91 (72%)			22 (18%)		
2.	Grammar is too difficult in English writing.	6 (5%)	29 (23%)	37 (29%)	45 (36%)	9 (7%)	126 (100%)
		35 (28%)			54 (43%)		
3.	I fail to come up with appropriate English words.	5 (4%)	22 (18%)	34 (27%)	56 (44%)	9 (7%)	126 (100%)
		27 (22%)			65 (51%)		
4.	I am afraid my peers or my teacher would make fun of my mistakes in writing.	13 (10%)	34 (27%)	21 (17%)	36 (29%)	22 (17%)	126 (100%)
		47 (37%)			58 (46%)		
5.	I could not express my ideas well in English.	8 (6%)	14 (11%)	30 (24%)	49 (39%)	25 (20%)	126 (100%)
		22 (17%)			74 (59%)		

6.	I feel stressed when I write English compositions under time constraint.	19 (15%)	43 (34%)	17 (13%)	36 (29%)	11 (9%)	126 (100%)
		62 (49%)			47 (38%)		
7.	I'm afraid of my English composition being chosen as a sample to be discussed in class.	16 (13%)	27 (21%)	28 (22%)	34 (27%)	21 (17%)	126 (100%)
		43 (34%)			55 (44%)		
8.	I'm not afraid at all that my English compositions would be rated as very poor.	10 (8%)	31 (25%)	24 (19%)	48 (38%)	13 (10%)	126 (100%)
		41 (33%)			61 (48%)		
9.	I don't think I have a good command of composition techniques. For instance, I'm too much concerned about the forms and formats.	7 (6%)	34 (26%)	36 (29%)	45 (36%)	4 (3%)	126 (100%)
		41 (32%)			49 (39%)		
10.	I worry at all about what other people would think of my English compositions.	12 (9%)	43 (34%)	36 (29%)	28 (22%)	7 (6%)	126 (100%)
		55 (43%)			35 (28%)		
Total		464 (37%)		276 (22%)	520 (41%)		1,260 (100%)

Table 8: Writing Anxiety: Mean, median and standard deviation

Statistics											
		Writin g Anxiet y 1	Writin g Anxiet y 2	Writin g Anxiet y 3	Writin g Anxiet y 4	Writin g Anxiet y 5	Writin g Anxiet y 6	Writin g Anxiet y 7	Writin g Anxiet y 8	Writin g Anxiet y 9	Writin g Anxiet y 10
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.21	3.17	3.33	3.16	3.55	2.82	3.13	3.18	3.04	2.80
Median		2.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.025	1.020	.980	1.286	1.121	1.248	1.286	1.155	.991	1.066
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Interpretatio n to be read with Table 7		Above Averaa ge	Low to Avera ge	Low	Low to Avera ge	Low	Low to Avera ge	Low to Avera ge	Avera ge	Avera ge	Low

One of the key findings from this study is that writing anxiety was a moderate source of language anxiety for the TESL students. 72% said they feared they might make grammatical mistakes in English writing. About 49% of the students reported experiencing moderately high levels of anxiety when required to produce written work in English (Aripin & Rahmat, 2021; Wahyuni & Umam, 2022), which is in line with previous research indicating that language learners may feel anxious about their linguistic competence and fear of negative evaluation when tasked with writing assignments (Hartono & Maharani, 2020; Jugo, 2020). As discussed in the literature, factors such as students' concerns about effectively expressing their ideas in the target language and the perception that their writing will be evaluated primarily on linguistic form rather than content can contribute to writing anxiety. The findings show that 43% to 49% of the students felt anxious about their writing, lacking confidence in their linguistic capabilities to convey their intended ideas and worrying about how others, including their teachers, would perceive their writing.

The findings indicate that the mean scores for writing anxiety were higher than the median, suggesting that the data distribution was positively skewed. This means that a few students experienced very high levels of writing anxiety, which pulled the mean upward and caused it to exceed the median value. In a positively skewed distribution, the exceptionally high values impact the mean more than the median, resulting in a higher mean. This suggests that while a significant proportion of students, between 43% and 49%, reported moderate levels of writing anxiety, there was a smaller group (9%) who experienced very high levels of anxiety about their writing abilities and how their work would be perceived by others, including their teachers.

These quantitative findings are further supported by the qualitative data collected through the interviews. Some participants expressed discomfort and unease when asked to produce written work in English, particularly when it was to be graded or shared with their peers. They described feelings of anxiety and self-doubt about their linguistic abilities, fearing that their writing would be judged primarily on its linguistic form rather than the content or ideas they were trying to convey.

Reading Anxiety

Table 9: Reading Anxiety

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
	5. Reading Anxiety						
1.	When I am reading in English, I get frustrated whenever I encounter unfamiliar vocabulary.	10 (8%)	38 (30%)	19 (15%)	47 (37%)	12 (10%)	126 (100%)
		48 (38%)			59 (47%)		
2.	I do not like to read an English text that has lots of difficult words.	8 (6%)	21 (17%)	21 (17%)	46 (36%)	30 (24%)	126 (100%)
		29 (23%)			76 (60%)		
3.	It bothers me to encounter words I can't pronounce while reading English texts.	8 (6%)	26 (21%)	23 (18%)	53 (42%)	16 (13%)	126 (100%)
		34 (27%)			69 (55%)		
4.	I do not prefer reading unfamiliar topics, particularly in the English language.	4 (3%)	13 (10%)	21 (17%)	67 (53%)	21 (17%)	126 (100%)
		17 (13%)			88 (70%)		

5.	I feel anxious when I am reading a topic in the English language which I have no idea what it is about.	8 (6%)	23 (18%)	21 (17%)	59 (47%)	15 (12%)	126 (100%)
		31 (24%)			74 (59%)		
6.	I feel anxious in reading aloud in fear of making errors.	6 (5%)	23 (18%)	13 (10%)	54 (43%)	30 (24%)	126 (100%)
		29 (23%)			84 (67%)		
7.	I prefer silent reading rather to reading aloud.	40 (32%)	28 (22%)	27 (21%)	19 (15%)	12 (10%)	126 (100%)
		68 (54%)			31 (25%)		
8.	I get upset when I am not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English or not.	13 (10%)	40 (32%)	26 (21%)	39 (31%)	8 (6%)	126 (100%)
		53 (42%)			47 (37%)		
9.	English culture and ideas seem very foreign to me.	1 (1%)	4 (3%)	30 (24%)	58 (46%)	33 (26%)	126 (100%)
		5 (4%)			91 (72%)		
10.	When reading English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the author is saying.	8 (6%)	22 (18%)	47 (37%)	38 (30%)	11 (9%)	126 (100%)
		30 (24%)			49 (39%)		
Total		344 (27%)		248 (20%)	668 (53%)		1,260 (100%)

Table 10: Reading Anxiety – Mean, median and standard deviation

Statistics											
		Reading Anxiety 1	Reading Anxiety 2	Reading Anxiety 3	Reading Anxiety 4	Reading Anxiety 5	Reading Anxiety 6	Reading Anxiety 7	Reading Anxiety 8	Reading Anxiety 9	Reading Anxiety 10
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.10	3.55	3.34	3.70	3.40	3.63	2.48	2.91	3.94	3.17
Median		3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.00
Std. Deviation		1.172	1.204	1.133	.974	1.111	1.171	1.331	1.139	.837	1.028

Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Interpretation to be read with Table 9	Average	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Average	Low	Low	Average

The questionnaire results indicated that reading anxiety was not a significant source of language anxiety for the TESL students. 47% reported that they did not get frustrated when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary while reading in English, while only 38% agreed that this was a source of frustration. Furthermore, 42% felt they did not get upset when unsure about their comprehension of English reading material, compared to 37% who did. These findings align with recent research by Bensoussan & Kreindler (2019), which also found that many language learners do not experience significant anxiety when reading in the target language, particularly when they can engage in self-paced, silent reading. The study suggested that reading anxiety is often lower compared to other language skills due to the self-paced nature of reading and the availability of strategies like using context clues to comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary. Overall, the students preferred silent reading to reading aloud. The data distribution was positively skewed, with mean scores exceeding the median, suggesting that a small number of students experienced very high levels of reading anxiety.

The qualitative data from the interviews provided further insights into the students' perceptions of reading anxiety. Some participants reported feeling anxious when asked to read aloud in class, as they feared making pronunciation errors or being unable to fully comprehend the text. Nonetheless, others expressed a sense of enjoyment and confidence when reading in the target language, suggesting that reading anxiety was not a major concern for this group of TESL students. However, they generally felt more at ease when engaged in independent, silent reading, as it allowed them to work at their own pace and utilise strategies to overcome comprehension challenges. They felt that reading in English enabled them to gain exposure to the authenticity of the English language and develop their communication skills. In the region where they reside, they have fewer opportunities to use English, so independent reading gave them a chance to practise and improve their proficiency in the language.

Teacher Anxiety

Table 11: Teacher Anxiety

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
6. Teacher Anxiety							
1.	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English language class.	11 (9%)	47 (37%)	17 (13%)	45 (36%)	6 (5%)	126 (100%)
		58 (46%)			51 (41%)		
2.	If my English teacher is a local, s/he will not make fun of me if I make a mistake.	15 (12%)	46 (37%)	44 (35%)	14 (11%)	7 (5%)	126 (100%)
		61 (49%)			21 (16%)		

3.	If my English teacher understands my mother tongue, s/he will understand why I make mistakes in speaking.	15 (12%)	59 (47%)	39 (31%)	11 (9%)	2 (1%)	126 (100%)
		74 (59%)			13 (10%)		
4.	It frightens me when my teacher points at me to answer.	23 (18%)	44 (35%)	19 (15%)	31 (25%)	9(7%)	126 (100%)
		67 (53%)			40 (32%)		
5.	I don't feel comfortable when the teacher is a native speaker of English.	8 (6%)	7 (6%)	26 (21%)	57 (45%)	28 (22%)	126 (100%)
		15 (13%)			85 (67%)		
6.	I am afraid that my teacher would correct every mistake I make while speaking.	14 (11%)	25 (20%)	20 (16%)	52 (41%)	15 (12%)	126 (100%)
		39 (31%)			67 (53%)		
7.	I am afraid that my teacher will make fun of me if I speak wrong English.	18 (14%)	35 (28%)	11 (9%)	47 (37%)	15 (12%)	126 (100%)
		53 (42%)			62 (49%)		
8.	I am always conscious that the teacher might overreact to my mistakes while speaking.	22 (18%)	34 (27%)	15 (12%)	41 (32%)	14 (11%)	126 (100%)
		56 (45%)			55 (43%)		
9.	I feel the teacher will dislike me if I speak wrong English.	14 (11%)	17 (13%)	16 (13%)	58 (46%)	21 (17%)	126 (100%)
		31 (24%)			79 (63%)		
10.	I would be nervous speaking English with my teacher who is a native speaker.	21 (17%)	33 (26%)	13 (10%)	46 (37%)	13 (10%)	126 (100%)
		54 (43%)			59 (47%)		
11.	I am hesitant to speak with my teacher in class.	13 (10%) (10% [^])	21 (17%)	26 (20%)	45 (36%)	21 (17%)	126 (100%)
		34 (27%)			66 (53%)		
	Total	542 (39%)		246 (18%)	598 (43%)		1,386 (100%)

Table 12: Teacher Anxiety – Mean, median and standard deviation

Statistics												
	Teacher Anxiety 1	Teacher Anxiety 2	Teacher Anxiety 3	Teacher Anxiety 4	Teacher Anxiety 5	Teacher Anxiety 6	Teacher Anxiety 7	Teacher Anxiety 8	Teacher Anxiety 9	Teacher Anxiety 10	Teacher Anxiety 11	
N	Valid	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126	126
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.90	2.62	2.41	2.67	3.71	3.23	3.05	2.93	3.44	2.98	3.32	
Median	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	
Std. Deviation	1.127	1.019	.870	1.232	1.072	1.221	1.308	1.322	1.236	1.311	1.231	
Minimum	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Interpretation to be read with Table 11	Low to Average	Low to Average	Above Average	Moderately on higher end	Low	Low	Average	Average	Low	Low	Low	

The findings indicate that teacher-related anxiety was a concern for the TESL students. Over half of the students (53%) reported feeling anxious when the teacher called on them to respond in English or when they had to speak in front of the class. They felt self-conscious and worried about making mistakes, fearing negative evaluations from their teacher and peers. Nearly half (45%) of the students believed the teacher might overreact to their mistakes while speaking. Around 46% were frightened when they did not understand what the teacher said in the English language class. Furthermore, 43% expressed unease and anxiety when speaking to native English teachers, although they generally felt more comfortable with them (67%).

The qualitative data revealed that the students perceived their teachers' positive feedback as helping to lessen their anxiety. Surprisingly, most were happy to attend English lessons because class activities were varied and exciting. However, they felt that if the teacher emphasized form over content or provided excessive, overt error correction, it could inadvertently heighten their language anxiety by creating an evaluative environment that was not conducive to risk-taking and learning. Research has shown that an overemphasis on linguistic accuracy can make students self-conscious and reluctant to take risks in using the target language, as they become overly focused on avoiding mistakes rather than expressing their ideas (Jugo, 2020; Saharani et al., 2023). In contrast, supportive teachers who provided constructive feedback and maintained a positive classroom atmosphere helped to assuage their anxiety, as students felt more comfortable taking risks and making mistakes as part of the learning process (AlKandari, 2021; Xie & Junting, 2020).

These findings align with previous research, which has identified teacher-related anxiety as a significant contributor to language anxiety among students (Daud et al., 2022) consistently. The power dynamics between students and teachers, as well as the fear of negative evaluation, have been identified as critical factors leading to heightened anxiety in the language classroom. These findings suggest that the TESL students in this study experienced notable anxiety when interacting with their teachers, either in response to direct questioning or when speaking in front of the class.

Ultimately, the findings highlight the critical role that the teacher plays in either exacerbating or alleviating language anxiety among TESL students (Daud et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

This case study has provided valuable insights into the language anxiety experienced by students enrolled in a Bachelor of Education in Teaching English as a Second Language programme at a local university in Malaysia. The findings highlight the multifaceted nature of language anxiety, which stems from factors such as fear of negative evaluation, classroom performance anxiety, and self-perceived language proficiency.

The study underscores teachers' crucial role in exacerbating or alleviating language anxiety. Supportive teachers who foster a low-pressure, risk-taking environment and provide constructive feedback can help to mitigate students' anxiety. At the same time, those who emphasize linguistic accuracy and employ overt error correction may inadvertently heighten it. A multi-pronged approach involving teachers, institutions, and policymakers must address language anxiety effectively. TESL programmes can better support their students' language development by creating a learning environment that prioritizes student confidence and risk-taking.

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