Exploring the Depths: Investigating the Degree of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Learners

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Abstract: This research aims to investigate the prevalence of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) within the context of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) program. The study involved 13 participants enrolled in an ESP program at an English private course in Yogyakarta, with ages ranging from 16 to 33 years. Data was collected using a Google Form questionnaire comprising 33 items adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Howitz, and Cope (1986). The results revealed that a solitary participant maintained a relaxed disposition during class, while the majority of learners reported experiencing mild to elevated levels of FLCA. Communication apprehension emerged as the predominant contributor to FLCA, with fear of negative evaluation ranking as the second most influential factor. In contrast, test anxiety was identified as the least consequential factor impacting the participants' levels of FLCA.

Keywords: English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, foreign language learning

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the discourse on Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) has gained prominence, emphasizing its crucial role as a significant affective variable in the second language acquisition process. Apart from the learners' intense determination and genuine interest in the target language, many learners express encountering a mental hurdle in foreign language learning, leading to anxiety reactions that hinder their performance in language classes (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018). Anxiety, as defined by Horwitz, Howitz, and Cope (1986), involves a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with autonomic nervous system stimulation. The experience of anxiety hampers successful foreign language learning by creating stressful classroom environments. Consequently, FLCA has long been perceived as a significant impediment to both foreign language acquisition and proficient target language production, as acknowledged by scholars such as Horwitz (2001), Krashen (1985), Pavlenko (2011), Phillips (1992), and Amengual-Pizarro (2018).

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) represents an intricate and multifaceted framework encompassing self-perceptions, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors intertwined with the language learning process. MacIntyre (1999) further characterizes FLCA as the apprehension and negative emotional response that emerges during second or foreign language learning. These definitions highlight FLCA's situation-specific nature in language classrooms, as emphasized by researchers

like Cheng, Horwitz, and Shallert (1999) and Horwitz (2001), who have documented its detrimental effects. In situations inducing anxiety, learners tend to produce messages that are more concrete and less interpretive than those generated under relaxed conditions, as observed by Kleinmann (1977). High levels of debilitating anxiety led learners to employ different grammatical constructions than their less anxious counterparts, indicating that anxiety can significantly influence the communication strategies used by learners in language classes. In essence, highly anxious learners are inclined to avoid attempting challenging or personal messages in the target language.

In the context of a foreign language classroom, oral production is perceived as a significant cause of anxiety, primarily stemming from learners' apprehension about publicly communicating in a language they have not fully mastered (Amengual-Pizarro, 2018). Moreover, challenges in articulating thoughts may threaten learners' self-perception and identity as capable speakers, potentially leading to anxiety and distress (Ortega-Cebreros, 2003; Schumann, 1978). Such outcomes manifest through various behaviors, including avoidance actions such as tardiness, reluctance to participate, and skipping classes, as well as face-saving measures like humor or experiencing minor physical symptoms such as sweating and headaches (Horwitz & Young, 1991). The prevailing belief is that Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) impedes learning and influences language acquisition effectiveness (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000).

Despite the awareness of the association between anxiety and language acquisition, specific impacts on language acquisition have not been thoroughly delineated. This study aims to determine the extent of FLCA among Indonesian learners in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) class and its repercussions. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), known for its reliability and validity, is employed to assess anxiety levels, emphasizing speaking and listening skills. The study seeks to create more supportive instructional environments, crucial for overcoming FLCA and fostering language proficiency among ESP learners.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Defining Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Certain situations have a tendency to evoke distinct forms of anxiety, as evident in the context of speaking a foreign language. According to MacIntyre (1999), language anxiety refers to the apprehension and negative emotional response experienced when learning or using a second language, emphasizing its situational nature. Horwitz (1986) underscores that anxiety specific to learning a foreign language is independent of other anxieties related to specific situations. The assessment of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety often employs the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), emphasizing communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. This instrument tailored to the foreign language classroom context strongly indicates that language anxiety plays a debilitating role in various second language (L2) classroom settings.

Various factors contribute to the onset of anxiety in the foreign language classroom. Price (1991) asserted that challenges in certain language classes, learners' self-perceived language aptitude, specific personality traits like perfectionism or fear of public speaking, and stressful classroom experiences are potential triggers for anxiety. Additionally, individual traits such as introversion or extraversion in learners are associated with the stimulation of anxiety (Gregersen, 2007). Young (1991) identified six potential sources of language anxiety across the learner, the teacher, and the instructional practices. These sources encompass personal and interpersonal anxiety in learners, learners' beliefs about language learning, instructors' beliefs about language teaching, interactions between instructors and learners, classroom procedures, and language testing.

Eysenck (1979) conceptualization distinguishes worry and emotionality as two categories of anxiety. Worry involves cognitive manifestations, such as comparing personal performance to peers, contemplating the potential consequences of failure, maintaining low confidence in performance, and experiencing excessive concern about evaluation. Emotionality pertains to concurrent negative feelings arising from physiological responses, including an elevated heart rate, dizziness, nausea, and feelings of panic. Eysenck (1979) argued that learners grappling with anxiety tend to be more frequently involved in task-irrelevant cognitive processing compared to those without anxiety. These task-irrelevant cognitive activities preempt some of the available effort and capacity of working memory. Anxious learners may find themselves anxious about their anxiety, thereby hindering the functioning of their working memory. To elaborate further, anxious learners are typically more prone to distraction, and the defense mechanism triggered by anxiety can disrupt the cognitive threshold required for effective learning.

As the focus on communication-oriented language competence intensifies, MacIntyre (1999) emphasized the urgent need for the development of strategies and programs aimed at reducing anxiety. Young (1994) advocated for improvements in addressing language anxiety, highlighting those aspects such as unnatural classroom procedures and the teacher's approach, including error-correction methods, could potentially trigger anxiety in learners. Consequently, when planning courses, pedagogical considerations should account for learners' emotional states. Elkhafaifi (2005) suggests establishing class structures that fulfill learners' need for security and normalizing the learning process as involving mistakes. Teachers should create a supportive learning environment, refraining from a testing or competitive atmosphere. Alrabai's (2015) research delved into the impact of teachers' anxiety-reducing strategies on learners' foreign language anxiety, revealing a significant decrease in anxiety levels with such interventions. Kru's (2018) investigation further demonstrated that language anxiety undergoes changes not only over an extended period but also within a single class and from one language lesson to another. In essence, addressing language anxiety requires a comprehensive understanding of its sources and the implementation of supportive teaching strategies.

2.2. The three components of the FLCAS

This section presents a succinct overview of three distinct types of performance anxieties associated with the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). These anxieties encompass concerns related to communication comprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation.

2.2.1. Communication apprehension

The interpersonal dimensions of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) are intricately linked to the concept of communication apprehension, as outlined by Horwitz et al. (1986). Communication apprehension, as defined in their work, manifests as a form of shyness induced by the fear of engaging in communication with others. Instances of communication apprehension encompass challenges in speaking within group settings, public speaking, and difficulties in listening to or comprehending oral messages (Horwitz et al., 1986). Notably, individuals with high levels of communication apprehension often struggle to speak or listen to foreign languages, particularly in the presence of others. The associated emotion of shyness tends to emerge in social situations where learners interact with individuals who are not psychologically familiar to them. This trait of shyness appears closely linked to the immediate environment, suggesting that communication apprehension may be a spontaneous response to the surrounding circumstances.

Furthermore, individual challenges in speaking or listening to foreign languages are also attributed to linguistic deficiencies. Horwitz et al. (1986) documented the concerns of anxious learners facing difficulty distinguishing foreign-language sounds and structures, illustrating this with an example of a learner who could only hear the loud voice of the

instructor. When learners struggle with discerning specific sounds, anxiety about communication in the classroom ensues. A study by Abu-Rabia, Peleg, and Shakkour (2014) emphasized a negative correlation between linguistic skills and language anxiety, indicating that learners with linguistic deficiencies tend to experience heightened communication apprehension. In summary, social and interpersonal factors such as psychological distance and the presence of a psychologically safe environment, combined with individual attributes, emerge as central contributors to the development of communication apprehension.

2.2.2. Test anxiety

Test anxiety, as identified by Horwitz et al. (1986), emerges from a pervasive fear of failure, causing learners to experience heightened concern and stress specifically during foreign language tests. The incorporation of tests and quizzes in foreign language classes intensifies the challenges faced by individuals with test anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). The central theme of test anxiety revolves around the negative emotions individuals undergo when anticipating potential failure in evaluative methods. Those with high test anxiety are often characterized as perfectionists. In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), test anxiety assumes significance, but an excessive focus on this aspect can create an unfavorable learning environment. Learners may become overly preoccupied with their test performance, diverting their attention from acquiring and developing their English language capabilities and skills.

Research conducted by Kondo and Yang (2003), utilizing measures designed for Japanese undergraduate learners, identified low English proficiency as a contributing factor to Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA). Japanese learners expressed concerns about their performance and harbored fears of failure, particularly in the context of examinations or quizzes. Many Japanese second language (L2) learners adopt memorization and attentive analysis as strategies to achieve high scores, highlighting the relevance of test anxiety in Japanese EFL situations (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). These insights emphasize the need to balance attention to test anxiety in language learning contexts to prevent it from overshadowing the broader goals of language acquisition and proficiency development.

2.2.3. Fear of negative evaluation

Test anxiety, centering on objective evaluation, contrasts with the fear of negative evaluation, which specifically concerns individuals' emotions regarding how others assess or anticipate their performance (Horwitz et al., 1986). The fear of negative evaluation extends beyond test-taking situations, encompassing various social evaluation scenarios like interviews, oral presentations, or speaking contests, making it applicable outside the confines of the classroom. Learners harboring a strong fear of negative evaluations remain highly attuned to the opinions of various figures in the educational environment, including teachers, native speakers, fluent second language (L2) speakers, and peers (Horwitz et al., 1986). The essence of the fear of negative evaluation lies in learners projecting negative assessments from others. Unlike an immediate emotional response in interactive situations, such as shyness, the fear of negative evaluation involves learners thinking or believing that others will assess them unfavorably due to projection or an unstable psychological condition, such as moodiness or neuroticism.

In classroom settings, teachers play a pivotal role in shaping learners' attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors through the socialization process of the educational system. Teachers' behaviors and attitudes significantly impact learners' perceptions in the classroom. Consequently, teachers' evaluative reactions to learners' behavior and performance become significant contributors to learners' anxiety (Cutrone, 2009). Even when teachers recognize learners displaying high motivation, these learners may still experience discom-

fort in their English as Foreign Language (EFL) learning endeavors (MacWhinnie & Mitchell, 2017). This emphasizes the importance of teachers' awareness of their influence on learners' emotional well-being and the need for supportive approaches in language learning environments.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design

This study employed a quantitative research approach. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2002), quantitative research is a suitable method for investigating social problems, aiming to explain phenomena by collecting numerical data that can be analyzed using mathematically based methods, particularly statistics. In this study, quantitative research was chosen to establish objective relationships between variables and ascertain cause-and-effect relationships in highly controlled conditions. Additionally, the results obtained through statistical analysis can be used to generalize the research findings from a small sample to a larger population. When opting for quantitative research, a post-positivist approach was primarily utilized to generate knowledge, employing specific inquiry strategies and collecting data through predetermined instruments that yield statistical data, such as experiments, surveys, or questionnaires (Creswell, 2003).

3.2. Participants

This study involved 13 participants, aged between 16 and 33, who were enrolled in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes at a private course in Yogyakarta. The participants were pursuing majors in hospitality, mathematics, accounting, culinary arts, and chemical engineering. The ESP classes were specifically tailored to address the needs of learners in their respective workplaces, offering materials relevant to their jobs with the aim of enhancing their communication skills.

3.3. Instrument and data collection

This research employed a questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument due to its practicality in gathering a substantial amount of firsthand primary data. The choice of questionnaires facilitated the collection of up-to-date information, allowing for hypothesis testing, identification of correlations, and straightforward acquisition of descriptive data (Bryman and Bell, 2007). The questionnaires were administered to all participants in April 2020 and comprised two sections. The first section aimed to gather background information about participants, including details such as age, gender, and major. The second section incorporated the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), consisting of 33 items. The FLCAS aims to assess three types of performance anxieties associated with foreign language anxiety. The first performance anxiety is communication apprehension (items 1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, and 32). The second performance anxiety is test anxiety (items 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 28). The third performance anxiety is fear of negative evaluation (items 2, 7, 13, 19, 23, 31, and 33). The questionnaire items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Reverse values were assigned to 9 items (2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32), meaning that for these items, score 1 refers to "strongly agree" and score 5 refers to "strongly disagree". Each participant's anxiety score was calculated by summing the scores on the thirty-three items, with total scores ranging from 33 to 165. A higher score indicated a higher degree of anxiety. Participants completed the questionnaire using a Google Form, and the link was sent to them via the WhatsApp Messenger application. As this study employed a quantitative research approach, the resulting data were analyzed using descriptive analysis with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1. The level of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) learners

The overall FLCA level for each participant was determined by calculating their total scores in the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Utilizing Oetting's scale, participants were categorized into five groups based on the anxiety levels they demonstrated. Thus, learners scoring between 33 and 65 were categorized as having very relaxed levels; those scoring between 66 and 86 were classified as having relaxed levels, learners scoring between 87 and 107 were identified as having mild anxiety; those scoring between 108 and 123 were categorized as being in an anxious state; and participants scoring between 87 and 107 were classified as having high anxiety.

Table 1. Classification of Anxiety Levels in the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale based on Oetting's Scale

Range	Level
124-165	Very Anxious
108-123	Anxious
87-107	Mildly Anxious
66-86	Relaxed
33-65	Very Relaxed

In this study, the observed scores ranged from 67 (indicating relaxed) to 122 (indicating mildly anxious). Descriptive statistics reveal that the majority of participants in the study fell into the category of learners with anxious levels (53.8%). A total of 38.5% were categorized as learners with mild anxiety, while 7.7% were identified as learners with relaxed levels. Consequently, 92.3% of the participants appeared to experience some degree of anxiety, ranging from mildly anxious to anxious levels. The mean language anxiety value for the 13 participants was 106.92, with a standard deviation (SD) of 14.66.

Table 2. Degree of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) among English for Specific Purposes (ESP) Learners

Participant	FLCAS Scores	FLA Degree
Participant 1	100	Mildly Anxious
Participant 2	107	Mildly Anxious
Participant 3	122	Anxious
Participant 4	117	Anxious
Participant 5	67	Relaxed
Participant 6	109	Anxious
Participant 7	113	Anxious
Participant 8	118	Anxious
Participant 9	98	Mildly Anxious
Participant 10	100	Mildly Anxious
Participant 11	102	Mildly Anxious
Participant 12	115	Anxious
Participant 13	122	Anxious

4.2. The main source of FLCA among ESP learners

The mean scores and standard deviations for the three categories of performance anxieties linked to Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) – namely, communicative apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation – were examined. The data have been organized in ascending order, starting from the less significant items to those of greater importance, to enhance clarity. In all cases, the highest scores recorded by the instrument signify a heightened level of FLCA.

Table 3. Communication Apprehension Levels among Participants

Items: Communication apprehension	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 32* I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	13	2.38	1.193
Item 18* I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	13	2.77	.927
Item 14* I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	13	3.00	1.080
Item 15 I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	13	3.08	.862
Item 4 It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	13	3.23	1.235
Item 24 I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other learners.	13	3.31	1.032
Item 27 I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	13	3.38	1.121
Item 30 I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	13	3.46	.877
Item 9 I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	13	3.69	.751
Item 29 I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	13	3.77	1.013
Item 1 I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	13	3.92	.862
Valid N (listwise)	13		

Overall mean = 3.27
*Reversed values where the lowest scores represent a high anxiety level in the FLCAS.

Table 3 presents the participants' outcomes concerning communicative apprehension. The items falling under this category yielded a mean score below 2.5 points on a 5-point scale, indicating a significant level of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA). Notably, the three highest anxiety-inducing factors reported by participants are directly associated with speaking anxiety. These factors are expressed in the following statements: "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class" (item 1, x = 3.92), "I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says" (item 29, x = 3.77), and "I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class" (item 9, x = 3.69). In alignment with previous research studies (Aida, 1994; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, 1991; Yang, 2012), these findings affirm that ESP learners often experience discomfort and self-consciousness when required to use the second language in class, leading to apprehension and anxiety for a majority of them.

Concerning the anxiety items with the lowest scores, the data highlight that "I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign" (item 32*, x = 2.38) is perceived as the least anxiety-inducing factor in terms of communication apprehension. Item 32 in this category recorded a mean score below 2.5 points on a 5-point scale, signifying a considerably low level of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) compared to "I feel confident when I speak in a foreign language class" (item 18*, x = 2.77). Therefore, ESP learners seem to experience less nervousness and greater comfort when in the presence of native language speakers (item 32) compared to speaking within the classroom context (item 18). This observation aligns with the situation-specific nature of FLCA as advocated by Horwitz et al. (1986). The overall mean of communication apprehension was the highest (x = 3.27) among the three types of performance anxieties associated with FLCA, indicating that this factor is the most anxiety-provoking for ESP learners.

Table 4. Levels of Test Anxiety among Participants

Items: Test anxiety	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 5* It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	13	2.54	.967
Item 22* I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	13	2.62	1.044
Item 11* I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes	13	2.85	1.214
Item 8* I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	13	2.85	1.144
Item 28* When I am on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed	13	2.92	.954
Item 21 The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	13	3.00	1.225
Item 16 Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	13	3.00	1.080

Item 26			
I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	13	3.15	1.068
Item 17			
I often feel like not going to my language class.	13	3.23	1.166
Item 20			
I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	13	3.46	1.050
Item 10			
I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	13	3.62	.768
Item 3			
I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	13	3.69	.947
Item 12			
In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	13	3.69	.855
Item 25			
Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	13	3.77	.927
Item 6			
During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	13	3.77	1.013
Valid N (listwise)			
	13		

Overall mean = 3.21
*Reversed values where the lowest scores represent a high anxiety level in the FLCAS.

Regarding test anxiety, as depicted in Table 4, the factors most conducive to anxiety in this category were "During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course" (item 6, x = 3.77) and "Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind" (item 25, x = 3.77). These results indicate that a significant number of learners experience distractions in their language classrooms, particularly concerning the pace of the language class. Notably, these findings do not align with aspects exhibiting the most critical levels of classroom anxiety associated with FLCA, as suggested by Salehi and Marefat (2014). Salehi and Marefat emphasize the pressure ESP learners face to pass the language course to meet compulsory requirements for a certain level of English proficiency, as reflected in items like "I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class" (item 10, x = 3.62) or "I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes" (item 26, x = 3.15).

The factors eliciting the least anxiety regarding test anxiety were "It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes" (item 5, x = 2.54) and "I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class" (item 22, x = 2.62). The low scores recorded for these items suggest that learners do not experience high levels of anxiety concerning their preparation for the language class (item 22), and, in fact, most learners do not shy away from the possibility of taking additional foreign language classes (item 5). It is noteworthy from the table that all items related to test anxiety received mean scores above 2.5 points on a 5-point scale. Moreover, 10 out of 15 items scored above 3 points on the scale, indicating that learners generally tend to experience a high degree of anxiety during tests in their language class. The overall mean score for test anxiety was the lowest among the

three subtypes of performance anxiety associated with overall FLCA (x = 3.21). This suggests that this type of anxiety appears to have the least detrimental impact on ESP learners.

Table 5. Levels of Fear of Negative Evaluation among Participants

Items: Fear of negative evaluation	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Item 2* I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	13	2.77	1.166
Item 19 I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	13	3.00	1.155
Item 13 It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	13	3.15	1.214
Item 23 I always feel that the other learners speak the foreign language better than I do.	13	3.31	.947
Item 7 I keep thinking that the other learners are better at languages than I am.	13	3.46	1.050
Item 31 I am afraid that the other learners will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	13	3.46	.967
Item 33 Iget nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance	13	3.62	1.044
Valid N (list wise)	13		

Overall mean = 3.25

*Reversed values where the lowest scores represent a high anxiety level in the FLCAS.

Regarding fear of negative evaluation, as depicted in Table 5, participants acknowledged feeling very nervous when the language teacher posed unprepared questions (item 33, x = 3.62). This was the highest-scoring item in this category, with a mean value above 2.5 on a 5-point scale, signifying it as a highly anxiety-inducing aspect. It was followed by "I am afraid that the other learners will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language" (item 31, x = 3.46) and "I keep thinking that the other learners are better at languages than I am" (item 7, x = 3.46). These aspects notably highlight participants' concerns about the reactions of their peers to their mistakes and the performance of other learners in the language classroom. As indicated in some studies, this heightened uneasiness about the impression they may convey can act as a barrier to taking risks and participating in activities that could aid in improving their language skills (Gregersen, 2007). Conversely, participants exhibit minimal concern about making mistakes in the language classroom, as evidenced by "I don't worry about making mistakes in language class" (item 2, x = 2.77), which has the lowest mean score in this performance anxiety category. The overall mean score of fear of negative evaluation (x = 3.25) indicates that this type of performance anxiety was considered the second source of participants' FLCA after communication apprehension.

5. Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that, consistent with other research (Arnaiz & Guillén, 2013; Liu, 2006), a significant majority of ESP learners (92.3%) appear to experience mild to anxious levels of anxiety in the English language classroom. This observation suggests that Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) could have a detrimental impact on English language learning. Among the three distinct types of performance anxiety, communication apprehension emerges as the primary source of learners' anxiety, particularly in the realm of speaking anxiety. Consequently, ESP learners acknowledge feeling perplexed, uneasy, nervous, and self-conscious when using English in the context of the second language (L2) classroom. Notably, the most anxiety-provoking factor across the three main subtypes of performance anxiety is learners' apprehension in speaking, as evidenced by the statement "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class" (item 1, x = 3.92). This outcome underscores that aspects related to oral skills rank as the foremost anxiety-inducing elements for ESP learners within this category.

Fear of negative evaluation emerges as the second most anxiety-inducing factor associated with Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA). Participants acknowledge being apprehensive about how other learners might react to their foreign language speaking, and many assume that their peers are more proficient in the language classroom. This heightened concern regarding both academic and personal evaluation of their use of the target language may impede learners from enhancing their oral communication skills (Gregersen, 2007; Kim, 2009). On the other hand, test anxiety appears to be the least anxiety-provoking factor related to FLCA. The factors causing anxiety in this category include learners' distracted thoughts in the classroom and concerns about the flow of the class. These findings diverge from those reported by Salehi and Marefat (2014), which posit that the most anxiety-inducing factor across the three main subtypes of performance anxiety should be learners' worry about the consequences of failing their foreign language class. As suggested by Choi (2016), various contextual factors, including class methodology, the role of the teacher, and changes in Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) over language courses, may contribute to the perceived level of learners' anxiety in our study. Furthermore, Kormos (2014) observes that FLCA levels can be influenced by variables such as motivation, learning styles, personality, individual differences, and insights from cognitive science. Therefore, conducting further research on FLCA and its association with these variables could yield interesting results, considering the interconnected nature of these aspects of second language acquisition (SLA) (Park, 2014).

In conclusion, the findings of this study clearly indicate that learners experience a significant level of anxiety in the foreign language classroom, primarily associated with oral communication skills. Given the emphasis on communicative methodologies promoting oral skills, it becomes imperative to establish more supportive instructional environments. This would enable teachers to identify anxiety-inducing aspects in the foreign language classroom, facilitating learners in overcoming FLCA and achieving greater success in acquiring the target language.

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