

How Does Anxiety affect Performance in a Foreign Language?

by

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Dissertation

Submitted towards the requirements for the degree of

Master of Education

to

The Institute of Education of

The British University *in* Dubai

April, 20006

Approx. 16500 words
98 pages

Abstract

This study explores the dimensions of foreign language anxiety upon the foreign language performance of two ability groups of Arabic-speaking students in grades 11 and 12, and examines the relationship between anxiety (foreign language writing anxiety and foreign language class anxiety), and performance as well as their associations with foreign language speaking and writing achievements. The investigation follows both quantitative and qualitative research traditions and is based on a critical review of the existing work in the field of foreign language anxiety research, two sets of questionnaires, single interviews and a focus group interview. The relationship between the students' foreign language anxiety and their performance in a foreign language is investigated. Findings suggest that most of the students experience anxiety, with the Arts group experiencing higher levels of foreign language anxiety. Statistical analyses revealed a significant negative relation between the foreign language writing anxiety and the speaking performance, for the Arts group. While no correlation was found between writing and speaking achievements of the Arts group, a significant positive relation was noted between writing performance and the speaking performance for the science group. Qualitative data analyses show that personal and interpersonal anxieties were the main sources of anxiety for the students. There is an indication that the students may be equally experiencing anxiety about speaking in the foreign language.

Dedication

To my parents, in memoriam

To my husband, Hussam

And

Children: Hana and Hala.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks are due to my friends, the headmistress and the students at Al Rumallah Girls' Secondary School, Al Ain. They made this study possible through their participation and contributions. To my supervisor, Dr. Randall; thanks for your support and assistance through the critical stages of this dissertation. Lorna Nairn, I appreciate your sense of humour, your worldly wisdom and academic support. Thank you my Personal Tutor, Professor Scott for the encouragement and support. Thank you Marilyn Miles, I will for ever cherish your gift: indeed, "the task doesn't get easier rather, one gets better at it!"

I wish to express my gratitude to Emirates. Your Group Scholarship lessened the load for many of us, thank you. I am indebted to all family friends for their contributions to this study, and for the manner in which they generously gave their time and support.

Above all, this dissertation would never have been written without the support of my wonderful family: my husband, Hussam, you always believed in me; my children, Hana and Hala, I appreciate your understanding when it seemed that I had neglected you – I love you!

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Introduction

Background

In the United Arab Emirates, Arabic is the country's official language and it is used in the government and bureaucracy. English, increasingly important commercially is equally used, as the *lingua franca* for the expatriates. Arabic is predominantly used in social life and in education. There has been increased effort by the Ministry of Education to improve English language levels in schools. This is shown by the initiatives in beginning English language instruction from grade 1 rather than from grade 4, and in enforcing English as the medium of instruction in tertiary education. The expectation was that graduates into the secondary stage would have acquired adequate proficiency in the language to facilitate further growth. Yet, in the schools, English is studied as a subject, hence viewed largely as a foreign language. Generally, school children do not use English outside the classroom. Within the classroom, foreign language learning can be affected by anxious feelings especially where the learner had not achieved adequate proficiency.

Foreign Language Anxiety and the Learner

There is a relationship between anxiety and effective language learning, (Steinberg, 1982). The damaging effect of anxiety can be seen in speaking and writing activities in the classroom. Experiences in teaching English as a Foreign Language have shown that there are two particular areas where anxiety becomes apparent. Firstly, students are generally reluctant to speak in the target language especially when they have been called to do so. An initial investigation showed that students are afraid of committing errors, (Price, 1991). This is mainly because they dislike losing face among peers and friends, when there is an indication that their oral production may not be so good. Secondly, another area where anxiety becomes apparent is in writing activities. Students are reluctant to engage writing activities or in creative writing. This fear of

committing errors during self expression in both writing and speaking is an educational problem that cannot be ignored.

Researchers find that the kind of anxiety which affects foreign language learners is of a special kind called by Horwitz et al (1991,p 27) *Foreign language Anxiety*. Language anxiety “is seen as a stable personality trait referring to the propensity for an individual to react in a nervous manner when speaking...in the second language” (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, p.5; cited in Mitchell & Myles, 2004, p48). It has been observed in classrooms that most students actually despaired to see corrections made to their written work. Under such a condition, a foreign language learner starts feeling depressed (Oxford, 1999), and may become silent. The result may be a lowered performance, and eventually failure associated with the negative effects of anxiety. While Horwitz, (1986) maintains that there is nothing facilitating about anxiety, due to the difficult nature or peculiarity of the language learning process; low level anxiety may facilitate positive effects on the learner’s foreign language performance, (Oxford, 199; p. 59). Heightened anxiety may cause a poor performance (Scovel, 1978). Foreign language anxiety in these students’ situation needs to be examined for causes and remedies.

Statement of the problem

Although research (Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Horwitz& Young 1991; Macintyre & Gardener, 1993; Price, 1991) has consistently revealed that anxiety can impede foreign language production, anxiety and the EFL learning situation in the Arab Emirates have not been examined. There appeared a need to explore the Arab Emirates female students’ reluctance and fear in speaking and writing English in the classroom. Various researchers have studied the effect of foreign language anxiety on the language learning of ESL students in the USA and elsewhere, but, almost no studies have examined the effect of the two anxiety constructs: Foreign Language Writing Anxiety and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety concurrently, upon foreign language learning. And no anxiety studies have been devoted to the EFL situation in the United Arab Emirates.

Purpose of the study

The aim of this study is to explore how anxiety affected the foreign language speaking and writing performances of two ability groups of 20 female high school students aged between 17 and 18 in grades 11 and 12. This study examines the relationship between language anxiety and performance in a foreign language. There is a belief that students who join the science stream are high achievers, while those in the Arts stream perform poorly. It is hoped that the investigation will identify the ability group affected the most by foreign language anxiety. In addition, causal factors in the students' experiences of foreign language anxiety are explored.

Research questions

The following research questions were devised to investigate the above objectives.

1. Are there any relations between the students' foreign language anxiety and their performance in a foreign language?
2. What are the students' attitudes to English as a foreign language?
3. What factors contribute to the students' experience of foreign language anxiety within the classroom context?
4. How can the students' foreign language anxiety be reduced?

Significance of the study

This study has two-fold significance. In the first place, it is hoped that the investigation of the relationship between foreign language anxiety, and the performance of two different ability groups of foreign language learners; would point to new directions into further research in foreign language anxiety. In the second place, the results are expected to indicate to education administrators, curriculum planners and teachers that foreign language anxiety exists in the classrooms; perhaps the advantages of the streaming system may be weighed against the disadvantages in order to reassess the soundness of the system, and perhaps a re-examination of the curriculum will be undertaken, so as to reformulate guidelines aimed at a performance-oriented foreign language teaching and learning. In addition, foreign language teachers will then need to reflect upon their own practices.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter one presents the background and objectives of the dissertation. In chapter two, research relevant to the findings of the investigation are reviewed. Chapter three discusses the research methodology, procedures, participants, instruments, data collection procedures and procedures for data analysis. In chapter four, results of the investigation are presented and analysed. Chapter five discusses the results of the investigations. Chapter six presents conclusions drawn from the results, pedagogical implications, limitations and suggestions for further research. In the next chapter, research relevant to the present study is reviewed.

Review of the Anxiety Research

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to attempt to investigate the effect of foreign language anxiety on the performance of two ability groups of students, as well as the association of anxiety with the students' foreign language speaking and writing achievements. This chapter reviews relevant research on foreign language anxiety and performance in foreign language, in order to provide a framework for the study. This chapter is organized into four major sections. The first section presents a brief overview of research leading up to the identification of foreign language anxiety as a distinct construct. The second section examines the relationship between foreign language anxiety and performance in foreign language. The third section is devoted to review of research in the foreign language writing anxiety. The fourth and final section reviews research relevant to findings in this study.

Overview of the Anxiety Research

The great interest in the nature of anxiety's effect on foreign language learning can be sensed from a 1939 article by Stengal, (Stengal's work is discussed by Schumann in his 1975 review of affective and personality variables related to language learning). Stengal described the concepts of language shock, culture shock, and culture stress. Parallels can be drawn between two of Stengal's sources of "language shock" and the modern conceptualization of foreign language anxiety. Stengal claimed that one of the causes of language shock was that utilizing a new language may bring about a sense of shame which results from feelings of inadequacy. This is similar to Horwitz and colleagues' (1986) observation that foreign language anxiety may be derived from the perception that one will have difficulty understanding others and making oneself understood. Another of Stengal's sources of language shock, an adult's fear of appearing comic, can be related to the threat to self concept and fear of negative evaluation discussed by Horwitz and her colleagues (1986).

In the 70s, studies on anxiety took mostly the state-trait approach. Scovel (1978) reviewed four papers and detailed many of the confusing and ambiguous results that had been obtained. One such study on anxiety and language learning in the 1970s was conducted by Backman (1976) who examined the relationship between anxiety and language progress among a sample of 21 Venezuelan students learning English in the U.S. Students' performance was measured by a placement test, a listening comprehension test, and teachers' ratings. No significant relationship was found between English Class Anxiety and English achievement. It was observed that more anxious students had poorer attitude toward learning English as a second language and were less motivated. And it was puzzling to find that the least proficient students scored at both the highest and the lowest point of the anxiety scale.

Reviews of the early research on the role of anxiety in foreign language learning found a considerable amount of ambiguity arising from the conflicting results, (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989); due largely to the problematic definitions and to problems with specificity of the instruments chosen to measure anxiety, (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986). And past studies failed to demonstrate any clear-cut relationship between anxiety and a learner's achievement in a foreign language, (Aida 1994). Most of the studies employed a general anxiety scale rather than an instrument that specifically measured foreign language anxiety, (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989; Scovel, 1978). More recent studies have been reported to have obtained accurate results with newly developed instruments which seem to have provided consistent proof of a clear relationship between foreign language anxiety and foreign language proficiency, (Horwitz et al., 1986; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1999). Scovel's study (1978), then, served to illustrate the complex nature of anxiety, and to draw attention to the value of continued research in this area.

Approaches to Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety has been defined in various ways. Generally speaking there are two approaches to the description of foreign language anxiety. One approach treats foreign language anxiety as a manifestation of other more general types of anxiety, such as; State anxiety, Trait anxiety, Facilitating and Debilitating anxiety. Early studies

on the effects of anxiety on foreign language learning mostly adopted this approach. The other approach sees language anxiety as a distinct form of anxiety expressed in response to second language learning, (Horwitz and Young, 1991). This later approach has been widely adopted since the development of several second language-specific anxiety scales.

Situation Specific Anxiety

Situation specific anxiety has been adopted in preference to the state anxiety approach. Situation specific anxiety refers to anxiety experienced in a well defined situation such as speaking or writing. It is also considered as trait measure limited to a given context, (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991a). This approach examines the specific forms of anxiety that occur consistently over time within a given situation, (Horwitz and Young, 1991). This view has been criticized from the perspective that the researcher is free to define the situation under consideration. It can be defined very broadly (e.g., shyness), narrowly (e.g., communication apprehension) or most specifically (e.g., stage fright). There are a number of scales used in measuring situation specific anxiety in a language learning context: the French Class Anxiety Scale, (Gardner and Smythe, 1975); the English Use Anxiety Scale, (Clement, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977).

Nature of Foreign Language Anxiety

In the recent time, the most widely used anxiety scale is: The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, (FLCAS) developed in 1986 by Horwitz et al. It is based on an analysis of potential sources of anxiety in language classrooms. And respondents are required to make attributions of anxiety to particular sources thereby affording a better understanding of anxiety, (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). (Horwitz et al. (1986) believed that anxiety was responsible for learners' negative affective reaction to language learning. They developed the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), an instrument for measuring language anxiety. The FLCAS is the first large-scale anxiety instrument that asks questions reflective of anxiety specifically in response to foreign language learning. The instrument incorporates three other anxieties: communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. In their view, foreign language anxiety 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”, (128). Nowadays it is Horwitz and her colleagues' (1986) definition of second language anxiety that is most commonly accepted.

Research on the Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety and Performance

A large number of researches has focused on the effects of foreign-language-specific anxiety on second language achievement as assessed by a performance in global measures of language ability such as course grades or standardized proficiency test.

Attitude, Motivation and Performance

Studies that have dealt explicitly with foreign-language-specific anxiety can be divided into two groups according to their major research focuses. The first group of studies was carried out by researchers whose major concern has been with more general issues of attitudes and motivation. Although the attitude/motivation instrument used in these studies contained a foreign language anxiety scale, the more specific role of anxiety was often of a secondary issue. Gardner, Smythe, Clement, and Glikzman (1976), Gardner, Smythe, and Brunet (1977), and Tucker, Hamayan, and Genesee (1976) were three of the early studies that belonged to this group. They provided evidence for the effects of the second language class anxiety on high school student's second language achievement. Although the focus of Gardner and his associates (1976, 1977) was on the role of attitudes and motivation as measured by an earlier version of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB, Gardner, Clement Smythe, and Smythe, 1979). They consistently found that a lower French Class Anxiety level was associated with higher achievement in French. It is puzzling to find that anxiety increased with grade level in the 1976 study, but decreased with language proficiency level in the 1977 study. Tucker et al. (1976) also showed that those subjects scoring high on the standardized proficiency test reported a significant lower level of French Class Anxiety.

Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcraft and Evers (1987) also reported studies whose original focus was on attitudes and motivation. While examining second language loss over the summer break, they tested students of French at the end of grade 12 and at the beginning of grade 13, again using the AMTB. French Class Anxiety was significantly

and negatively correlated with all of the four proficiency measures for both testing. In fact, in seven of the eight cases, the highest correlations of the AMTB scales with French achievement involved the anxiety scale.

Effect of Anxiety on Performance

In contrast to the preceding group of studies based on models of attitudes and motivation, the other group of studies on second language anxiety were focused on anxiety and largely inspired by the development of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). The FLCAS and its variations have been used in studies involving different foreign languages, such as French, Spanish, English, and Japanese. Regardless of the languages involved, consistent, negative correlations between the FLCAS and second language performance have been found in a good number of studies (e.g., Aida, 1994; Ganschow et al, 1994; Horwitz 1986; Phillips, 1992; Young, 1985). More importantly, with test anxiety controlled in Horwitz (1986), second language class anxiety still correlated significantly with second language achievement. Relevant to the present study, Aida's (1994) investigations revealed that factors associated with the students' experience of anxiety in learning Japanese were mainly: communication anxiety, the fear of negative evaluation and fear of failing the Japanese class.

On the other hand some obscure results with respect to the effects of second language anxiety were obtained in Young (1985), Phillips (1990), and Ganschow et al. (1994). Young (1985) reported a negative correlation between foreign language class anxiety as measured by a modified version of the FLCAS and scores on an oral proficiency measure called Oral Proficiency Interview. However, when self-ratings of proficiency were statistically partialled out, the partial correlation was not significant. In a similar fashion, although a moderate yet significant, negative correlation between second language class anxiety and overall oral performance was established in Phillips (1990), only some of the possible partial correlations between second language class anxiety and performance measures were significant after language ability (i.e., written exam average, teacher ranking, or written exam average plus teacher ranking) was statistically controlled. More impressive is the finding concerning a high-achieving student's affective

reactions to the oral exam. One student of the highest ability in Phillips' study provided a dramatic example of anxiety reactions, i.e., breakdown during the oral exam. Nevertheless, she was able to recover enough composure afterwards and received a grade of A on the test. This suggests that anxiety may initially challenge a learner's self-concept but anxiety's effect may be adverse only where there is an existing low ability. Similarly, investigations conducted for the present study showed that the higher achievers who belonged to the Science group had not been adversely affected by their experience of foreign language anxiety. Ganschow et al., (1994) also reported a significantly negative correlation between anxiety and foreign language course grades as well as foreign language aptitude. However, a closer examination of individual second language profiles revealed that the high-anxious group in itself was not homogeneous. It was found that a number of them performed as well as the low- anxiety group.

Language Aptitude, L1 Skill and L2 Performance

Sparks and Ganschow (1991), did not appreciate any relationship between anxiety and performance, instead they advanced the 'Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis' (LCDH) theory which sought to relate problems in oral and written performance in native language to problems with the acquisition of a foreign language. According to them, there may be an interaction between anxiety and language skills. They indicated that "the ability to use and understand language, rather than affective variables is the important causal factor in foreign language learning within the classroom context" (Sparks and Ganschow, 1995, p. 236).

MacIntyre rejects Sparks and Ganschow's LCDH view of anxiety as a mere side effect or by-product and maintains that anxiety causes individual differences in foreign language learning. For MacIntyre, anxiety is not a consequence; rather anxiety is a cause of language learning problems. The relation between anxiety, ability and language aptitude seems complicated and calls for further examination.

Qualitative Approach in the Anxiety Research

In addition to the empirical studies into foreign language anxiety and performance in a foreign language, other studies have sought to investigate the relationship between

foreign language anxiety and foreign language performance using the qualitative approach. In one qualitative study, Price (1991) interviewed ten anxious students to obtain descriptions of their experiences in foreign language learning. The students indicated that the most anxiety-provoking activity was speaking the foreign language in front of their peers. Price was able to advance important suggestions to help language teachers reduce anxiety in the classroom. The problematic aspect of communicating in the foreign language within the classroom was also mentioned by subjects in the present study.

In a peculiar qualitative study involving diary entries, Bailey (1983) analysed her own language learning diary as well as the diaries of ten other researchers. She found a relationship between anxiety and competitiveness. However the subjects were not actual learners. Competitiveness is related to self-adequacy and to fear of negative evaluation, though this is not overt competitiveness, it is a comparison to an idealised self image. When expectancy falls below that of an idealised self-image, debilitating anxiety builds up leading to depression and probably reduced performance.

Summary

To sum up, quantitative studies of foreign language anxiety based on a situation-specific anxiety model generally have confirmed a negative, yet moderate, correlation between foreign language anxiety and foreign language achievement or performance. The consistency of the results tends to support common beliefs about the detrimental effects of anxiety on second language learning. Nonetheless, a closer analysis of individual differences given in Backman (1976), Phillips (1990), and Ganschow et al (1994) suggests an intricate relationship among second language anxiety, language ability, and second language learning.

Foreign Language Writing Anxiety

In this section, research related to foreign language writing anxiety will be reviewed. In contrast to the large volume of research directed toward examining the role of anxiety in general foreign language learning, research on foreign language writing anxiety has been scant. Writing anxiety did not attract wide attention until the

development and validation of the Daly-Miller (1975a), Writing Apprehension Scale (WAS), or alternatively; Foreign Language Writing Apprehension Scale (FLWAS). The FLWAS is an attitudinal measure based on models derived from speech communication and interpersonal communication. Its introduction has popularized empirical investigations into writing anxiety, for example, the Jeroski and Conry's Attitude toward Writing Scale (1981). However, bulk of the studies in writing apprehension is based on native English speakers

Definition of Writing Apprehension

Daly and Miller coined the term "writing apprehension" to refer to "a situation and subject-specific individual difference ... concerned with people's general disposition to approach or avoid situations perceived to demand writing accompanied by some amount of evaluation" (Daly, 1978, p.10). Operationally writing apprehension is hereby defined as performance on the Foreign Language Writing Apprehension Scale (FLWAS) Daly and Miller (1975a). The questions on the FLWAS probe several anxiety-related factors. The adapted version of the FLWAS used in the present investigation included several questions that refer to anxiety about writing (1,5,6,10,13,17) and some that refer to fear of negative evaluation(2,3,9,16,18,20). Other items refer to enjoyment of writing and writer's ease(8,12,14,19) and the satisfaction of completing writing(4,7,11,15). Writing anxiety research is limited within the school context and has focused upon students and teachers. The effect of foreign language anxiety is observed based on classroom-related factors.

Writing Anxiety and Performance

Various standardized verbal measures have been used to examine the relationship between student writing anxiety and performance although many of the standardized instruments used by the researchers as measures of writing-related skills do not particularly deal with writing aptitude, but with vocabulary, reading and analysis. Daly (1978) found significant differences between high and low apprehensive writers with respect to their performance in comprehensive test of grammar and mechanics. This

appears to support a negative relationship between writing apprehension and individuals' performance in writing related tasks.

Products of Writing

A large volume of studies have examined how the actual products of high and low apprehensive writers differ. Studies by Daly and his colleagues noted differences in the complexity and intensity of messages decoded by high-low anxious student writers. Daly and Miller (1975c) reported that high apprehensive writers used significantly less intense language than low apprehensive writers. Daly (1977) found that highly anxious writers, when compared to low anxious writers, wrote shorter essays, made fewer statements, used fewer adverbs and adjectives and were less capable in their use of punctuation.

Influence of the Language teacher

Daly et al., (1988), have shown the important role teachers play in cultivating student's general idea about writing. And certain studies have explored how teachers' writing apprehension influence their teaching practices and attitudes toward writing. Daly et al. (1988) and Daly and Witte, (1982) carried out investigations into the relationship of teachers' writing apprehension to their attitudes and classroom practices. It was revealed that the teachers' writing apprehension affected their views of their own subject matter areas, their views of students, the frequency and types of assignments they gave, and the way they evaluated students' written works. It was found that teachers' writing apprehension was negatively and significantly related to their perceptions of the relevance of writing in their chosen subject areas and to their use of exercises and activities that demand writing. Low apprehensive teachers, compared to high apprehensive teachers appear to be less bound by rigid rules, to emphasize creative expression, and to worry less about mechanical structures. It follows that high or low apprehensive teachers may determine students' general performance in writing related tasks and the quality of students' written products.

Research on Foreign Language Writing Anxiety

Research on foreign language writing anxiety among foreign language learners is relatively little. In his doctorate work, Elkhatib (1985) considered the relationship between writing anxiety and writing behaviours. He carried out a case study of 4 Egyptian college freshman writers of English Majors. Elkhatib found that writing anxiety was related to syntactic maturity and various lexical problems. Masny and Foxall (1992) found no significant differences between high apprehensive learners and low apprehensive learners for their concern about form/grammar or about content/ideas. On the relationship between L2 writing anxiety and willingness to take more advanced L2 writing demands for their majors, Masny and Foxall (1992) reported a significant negative correlation between L2 writing anxiety and an expressed desire to engage in advance writing activities. It follows that the students did not enjoy writing probably due to their anxious concerns.

MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement (1997) studied the relationship between language anxiety, perceived second language competence, and actual second language competence. Their study included 37 Anglophone students (29 females and 8 males). They were administered 26 French tasks involving speaking, writing, reading and comprehension to examine their self-perceptions of competence. The authors found a negative correlation between language anxiety and both actual and perceived foreign language competence. In their view, anxious students communicated less information and were less articulate than students who were not anxious.

In their study, Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert (1999) investigated the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and foreign language writing anxiety with foreign language speaking anxiety components as well. Their study took place in Taiwan, in the context of English as a foreign language. Participants were administered the FLCAS and the foreign language version of the Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Scale (FLWAS) that have been adapted to the Chinese language. Cheng, Horwitz, and Schallert (1999), found a significant negative correlation between second language classroom anxiety and speaking and writing in English. They stated in their study that the magnitude of the correlations was found to be small, but still large enough to be significant.

Relevant to the present finding is that Cheng et al., (1999), also found that self-perceived inadequacy plays a crucial role in the students' experience of foreign language writing anxiety. Fear of negative Evaluation is borne out of self-perceived inadequacy in the foreign language

Argaman and Abu-Rabia (2000) conducted a study with 68 Hebrew students aged 12 and 13 to examine the influence of language anxiety on their achievement in English writing and reading comprehension tasks. To measure comprehension and writing achievement, the students were administered a 320-word text, followed by 10 true or false questions. They were then asked to write approximately 15 lines describing the events recorded in the text. The results showed "highly significant but moderate negative correlation between language anxiety and the two measures of foreign language achievement, reading comprehension and writing achievement".

Summary

Research in writing anxiety has suggested that the association between writing anxiety and writing-related performance is of a complex nature involving the language teacher's attitudes and classroom practices. Generally, anxiety was found to adversely affect the products of writing. On the other hand, it can't easily be said that writing anxiety will lead to poorer written products. Although, research on foreign language writing anxiety may have been scant, the results show evidence of the detrimental nature of anxiety in the research (MacIntyre, Noels, and Clement 1997; Cheng et al., 1999; Argaman and Abu-Rabia 2000). Earlier research (Elkhatib, 1985, Masny and Foxall, 1992.) presented somewhat inconsistent and sometimes confusing results. Nevertheless, if validated and reliable measures were used, if the questionnaires in L2 were properly administered, it is possible to expect some consistent results.

Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign Language Classroom and Foreign Language Learning

This section seeks to review studies directly related to aspects that come out of the present investigation. Research directly addressing the sources of foreign language

anxiety is sparse in the literature. Nevertheless, several sources have been proposed either by inference or by analogy from clinical experience, anecdotal reports, self-report surveys, as well as formal interviews with foreign language instructors or learners. Given the uniqueness of the foreign language learning situation, sources of foreign language anxiety identified in the present study can be classified by source, into three categories: (1) classroom component (2) nature of the foreign language learning and (3) the curriculum .

The Classroom Component

Fear of Negative Evaluation

In his discussion of social evaluation anxiety, Leitenberg (1990) commented that "the fear of the prospect of negative evaluation and social rejection is probably inherent in being human. The ultimate imaginable consequence of negative evaluation and social rejection is to be shunned and abandoned. Something we may learn to dread from the dependency of infancy" (p.1). Unfortunately, like many other classrooms, a foreign language classroom usually involves scrutiny or evaluation by others and negative evaluation is a possible, or even a likely, outcome in that context because foreign language learners often have to perform in front of their instructors and peers, and in a language that they cannot present themselves as fully as they can in their first language. The threat of exhibiting one's deficiency or inadequacy in the public eye accounts for the anxiety-provoking nature of the second language classroom. Therefore, Young (1991) maintained that social anxiety is one of the components of a theoretical model of second language anxiety. Her view is closely related to Horwitz et al's (1986) concepts of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation.

Self-Perceived Inadequacy

Low self-confidence is also considered to be a significant source of anxiety. Krashen in Young's (1992) interview argued that an individual's degree of self esteem is highly related to second language anxiety. He believed that people with low self-esteem worry about what their peers think and are concerned about pleasing others. In Krashen's view, worry and concern are closely related to the experience of anxiety. Price (1991)

also reported that many anxious learners in her study had low self-esteem. Clement and his associates found that a key characteristic of the self-confident language learner in their studies was a lack of anxiety (e.g., Clement et al, 1977; Clement, 1980, 1987). Because social evaluation anxiety occurs only when one wants to make a favourable impression but doubts that he or she will succeed, it makes sense that a self-confident language learner will experience less anxiety because he or she has more confidence in his or her success.

Failure

Skehan (1989) suggested that anxiety may partly be the result of low achievement in a second language. MacIntyre and Gardner(1989, 1991), hypothesized that anxiety specific to foreign language learning develops from poor performance and negative experiences at the earlier stages of foreign language learning although later, foreign language anxiety may lead to cognitive interference from self-derogatory cognition that produces performance deficits. As described in Phillips (1990, 1992), a student broke down during the oral exam confessing later that her anxiety intensified because she could not get her "failure" out of her mind. Anxiety is so complex that it can be experienced both as a cause and outcome. MacIntyre (1999) and Horwitz (2001) strongly argue that anxiety is a multifaceted variable that can be both a cause and a consequence of poor language learning and as Horwitz (200, p.256) put it, "the potential of anxiety to interfere with learning and performance is one of the most acceptable phenomena in psychology and education."

Teacher as anxiety-provoking

An instructor's beliefs about language teaching, her teaching attitudes, and the classroom procedures she adopts are all potential sources of anxiety. Both Proulx (1991) and Young (1991) argued that instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly when they commit errors, who believe that the class may get out of control working in pairs or groups, who believe that their role is more like a drill sergeant's than a facilitator's, and who believe that some intimidation is necessary for promoting students' performance may contribute to foreign language class anxiety. This is similar to

the picture students in the present study painted of their teachers.

Price (1991) explicitly stated that most students in her interviews complained about the great anxiety caused by their instructors' harsh attitudes toward making errors. According to studies by Koch and Terrell (1991), Horwitz (1988,) and Horwitz (1986), what really matter is not the error correction itself, but the teacher's manner of error-correction. Cohen and Norst (1989) also exemplified how a positively motivated student with strong interactive views suffered from pronounced anxiety, describing herself "a victim in a language class," due to the discouraging attitudes of a teacher, who was "unsympathetic, and who used ridicule and even physical abuse on adult students"(p.69).

Allemand and Aida (1994) used a questionnaire (based on Horwitz's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale), classroom participant observation and interviews to examine the role of the instructor in relation to anxiety in two second-semester university classes. One instructor was described as "authoritarian", while the other was found to be "facilitative". Every student interviewed from the former instructor's class pointed out that they felt a high level of anxiety in the class. Students from the other class felt more relaxed and referred to their instructor's attitude as non-intimidating, and the class as "challenging but fun."

Roberts (1989), conducted participant observer research in an ethnographic study of a high school Spanish class in which both teacher-student and student-student relationships within the classroom were detailed. The teacher in this class placed a heavy emphasis on oral Spanish production. It was observed that the teacher created an atmosphere in which loss of face was at the minimum. Thus, positive reinforcement and error correction was provided in a non-threatening manner.

Within the classroom, student-student relation can influence their performance and general attitude to language learning. In Roberts' (1989) study, a group of students who came from other classes where teachers demanded very little oral production in Spanish resisted the teacher's attempts. The effect of these resistant students on the overall classroom atmosphere was discouraging. Their attitude had the potential to immediately check the flow of a communicative activity within the classroom. In the anxiety research, the environment of a classroom has been shown to have far-reaching

consequences for students. Similarly, in the focus group interviews conducted for the present study, participants reported feeling discouraged by other students' lax attitudes and by their teachers' lack of insistence on oral English in the classroom.

Difficult nature of the foreign language

Students in the present study indicate that they found foreign language learning "difficult to speak and difficult to write", this is partly due to the "uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1986p.128). Language learning has been proposed to be one major contributor to foreign language anxiety by several foreign language researchers (e.g., Horwitz et al, 1986; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). According to Guiora (1983, p. 8) "the task of learning a new language is a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition" a view reinforced by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991. p.31) who contend that "probably no other field of study implicates self-concept and self expression to the degree that language study does".

The Curriculum

One important aspect of the anxiety in the language classroom is related to apathy on the part of the students because of inappropriate curriculum content. Johns (1991) advocates a content-based instruction and the development of curricula designed for the specific language purposes of identified groups. According to Johns (1991), the curriculum should be guided by the answers to the following questions: What will these students be doing with the foreign language when they finish studies? What are the characteristics of the language they need in order to succeed? Only then could a realistic and effective curriculum be realized.

Graves (1996) also advocates the adoption of content-based approach to foreign language teaching and supports that content teaching be based upon the most systematic, accurate and empirical measures of students' needs and language required by the tasks the students must perform outside the classroom.

Summary

A close review of the relevant research suggests several potential sources of second language anxiety. In fact, it is the involvement of a language element that makes foreign language anxiety distinguished from other kinds of academic anxiety, such as math anxiety. Unlike students struggling with learning a subject in their native language whose stress mainly comes from the materials, foreign language learners additionally have to deal with the threat to their self-perception as competent communicators and the agony of being unable to present a true self to others. It can be said that foreign language learning is so conducive to anxiety. The close relationship among limited self-expression, poor self-perceptions, language anxiety and failure suggests that performance anxiety will be on the increase.

Conclusion

Reviews of the relevant studies above have invariably pointed to the negative correlation obtained in those studies between language anxiety and performance which supports the findings of the present investigation. A significant negative correlation was obtained between foreign language writing anxiety and speaking performance. These indicate the detrimental effect of foreign language anxiety and draw attention to its sources within the classroom. Some sources of foreign language anxiety are associated with the learning environment, some with the learner, some with the foreign language teacher and the instructional materials, and some with the language are particularly related to foreign language learning. The nature of foreign language anxiety's effect on foreign language performance may indeed be debilitating.

Methodology

Introduction and outline

The investigation is based on the quantitative and qualitative research traditions: a critical review of the existing work in the field of foreign language anxiety research, two sets of questionnaires and follow-up interviews. All instruments were piloted in the translated version. Data collection took place in three stages. First, a set of language learning questionnaires were used to collect data from 20 secondary school students enrolled in the Science and Arts Sections. Next, semi-structured interviews were conducted with students within the 20 participants along with other volunteers. Those selected to be interviewed were identified as: (a) students who demonstrated high anxiety and (b) those who indicated low/nil anxiety. The interviews focused on the students' foreign language learning experiences and the aspects that made them anxious. Other factors discussed were the students' attitudes toward a foreign language. Then, focus group interviews were carried out with a group of 12 students. The group discussion concentrated on factors that made the students anxious and suggestions on how to reduce their anxiety. The participants' term marks were obtained and utilized in assessing their performances.

The combination of the above data-gathering techniques was designed to get an appropriate balance between breadth and depth in order to achieve a valid understanding and description of anxiety on classroom foreign language performance. The use of the questionnaires provided an opportunity to gather quantitative data which was used to construct questions for the follow-up interviews. The target population of this study was 30 secondary school students in Al Rumailah Girls Secondary School in Al Ain Educational Zone. Al Ain is located next to Abu Dhabi in the East of the United Arab Emirates. Convenience sampling, with a classroom as a unit of sampling was adapted to recruit participants. This chapter details the participants, the instruments, data collection process, and procedures for analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data.

Participants

Demographic information of the subject Population

The participants in this study were female volunteers consisting of grade 11 and 12 students. They ranged in age from 17 to 18. They were drawn from 4 classes (2 Arts classes and 2 Science classes). 10 students were randomly selected from each section. In order to determine whether there were any significant relationships between the students' foreign language anxiety and their performance in a foreign language; their scores were grouped according to the streaming system .i.e. grade 11 Science and grade 12 science form the science group. Then, grade 11 Arts and grade 12 Arts form the Arts group. They totalled 20. And, according to this subject population's data results, the research questions (see p. 3) were asked and answered

Selection of participants on the basis of the streaming system was adopted because the participants' achievement and emotional experiences in English speaking and writing are the chief concerns of this study. In the UAE, the common notion is that students in the science section are high achievers while those in the Arts sections are believed to present mediocre performance. An attempt was made to understand how their respective anxieties (if any) relate to their achievements. Table 1, (see appendix 8) presents the demographic information of the subject population by categories of class. The table shows that the two groups consist of equal number of subjects.

Data collection instruments

The Quantitative Approach

A set of questionnaires (see appendix 1 & 2) was designed and translated into Arabic (see appendices 1b & 2b) to measure foreign language writing apprehension and foreign language class anxiety respectively and to examine the relationship between these two constructs in the students. Presenting as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours ... arising from the uniqueness of the foreign language learning process" (Horwitz et al; 1986), foreign language class anxiety in this research was investigated by an adapted version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Scale (FLCAS, Horwitz et al, 1986). Foreign language writing anxiety was seen as an individual's tendencies to avoid situations perceived potentially to require L2 writing accompanied by some amount of evaluation, and was carried out by an adapted Foreign Language version of the Daly and Miller's (1975) Writing Apprehension Scale (WAS/FLWAS). The FLCAS and the FLWAS were chosen because they have been used extensively and proven to be reliable and valid instruments in the relevant research.

The FLWAS, originally developed to measure native speakers writing anxiety, was modified to reflect foreign language learning and to suit the English language learning situations (EFL) in the UAE. This clarification was effected by adding the word "English" to each of the 20 statements. Daly and Miller named their instrument "Writing Apprehension Test", (WAT). In the present study, the word "test" has been substituted with 'scale', thus (WAS). In addition, one new item (no. 18), (see appendix 1) below, was added to the foreign language version of the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale (FLWAS), based on a preliminary survey of 12 Emirates students' description of their most nervous English writing experiences, in early September 2005.

Likewise the Foreign Language Classroom anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was first adapted to the Emirates context and further modified for the current study based on comments collected in the pilot study. Two new items (items 15 and 16) were added, (see appendix 2). It was found that students were somewhat introspective of their contribution during pair-work, rather than in a group-work. Unlike the scaffolding that characterises groupwork, pair-work easily exposes the failings of either pair; hence students seem uneasy about pair-work. In the original FLCAS, item no.2 was negatively worded. In the adapted version, it was positively worded. Students were unanimous in the point that they worried about being laughed at by peers or evaluated negatively by their teachers, if they made mistakes. The modification took into consideration, the language students would easily identify with. Conforming to the clarification specification process, general words, like "languages", "language" class or "foreign language"; used by Horwitz et al., (1986) have been replaced with "English".

It needs to be stated that the changes and modifications were necessary for contextualising the instruments. English language remains a foreign language within the United Arab Emirates' (UAE), language educational system. In the section on

modifications on the two scales, the adapted versions are italicised and in blue; with the modifications highlighted. The original versions are in black.

Valididility and Reliability the FLCAS and the FLWAS

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

The FLCAS, a 33-items self-report instrument, was developed based on “student self-report, clinical experience and a review of related instruments” (Horwitz et al., 1986). The instrument was designed to investigate the level of anxiety students experience in their foreign language classes. The FLCAS integrates three related anxieties (Communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and general anxiety). The FLCAS has been used in many studies of anxiety in foreign language learning and found to be a highly reliable measure (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996). The FLCAS is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. It has been tested with ESL students and American language students.

The Writing Apprehension Scale

The widely used 26-items version of the Writing Apprehension Scale (WAS) was developed by Daly and Miller (1975a). Modelled after those items in use in the measurement of communication apprehension (McCroskey, 1970), unwillingness to communicate (Heston & Paterline, 1974), receiver apprehension (Wheeless, 1974), and general public speaking apprehension (McCroskey, 1970), an initial 63-item instrument of writing anxiety was composed and then administered to a sample of 164 undergraduate students. A factor analysis suggested a predominant single factor. The 26 items having the strongest loadings were selected for inclusion in the present FLWAS. Like the FLCAS, the FLWAS was composed into a Likert-type scale format, each with 5 possible options. It has been commonly used with native speakers of English and ESL students in the USA.

The Qualitative Approach

Interviews (see appendix 4)

From among the students who indicated a willingness to be interviewed, ten were chosen to include four high levels of foreign language anxiety; four low levels of foreign language anxiety and two students presenting no anxiety at all. The two showing no anxiety at all were included to see whether students not suffering from foreign language anxiety could offer any insights into the problem. The interviewees were asked about their attitude towards the English language and factors that made them anxious in their English class. The interviews were conducted on 5 separate days. The interviews, organized around an interview guide (see appendix 3) were loosely structured and when participants addressed unanticipated topics or ideas, interviewees were encouraged to pursue them. The interviews were typically about 50 minutes long. Each interview lasted approximately 35 minutes. The interviews were partly audio-taped, transcribed and analysed.

Focus Group Interviews (see appendix 5)

An audio taped focus groups interview was conducted in late September 2005. Twelve students participated in the study. Two research Questions were raised. 1. What are the sources of foreign language anxiety? 2. How can foreign language classroom anxiety be reduced? The interview lasted about one hour. The data was transcribed and analysed.

Measurement of Achievement

For the purpose of examining the relationship between the participants' anxiety and performance in English language learning, two measures of achievement were obtained to serve as criterion variables in this study; they were the two term marks the participants scored for their respective English speaking and writing examinations in the first term of the academic year 2005/2006.

There are three reasons for using term marks in as achievement measurement in this study. In the first place, both the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale (FLWAS)

and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) are classroom specific anxiety measures. Based on situation specific anxiety theory, term marks can be a better performance measure than any one-shot proficiency test in examining the relation between anxiety and achievement in this study because the instrument specificity level of the term marks corresponds better to that of the FLCAS and the FLWAS. Also the term marks are the results of averaging individual students' performance across a variety of class activities rather than in one task. Finally, the students' term marks were fully verified and approved by the relevant educational authorities.

Data Collection Procedures

Volunteers

Three teacher colleagues who demonstrated interest in anxiety studies were formerly invited to assist in data collection and cross translation. The participants were drawn from those colleagues' classes. The principal of the school was approached and a private room was made available for interviews and all activities relevant to the present study. After making arrangements with the colleagues, the researcher held a meeting with the students to request their participation. A bilingual consent form (see appendix 7) was displayed to the participants via a Power Point Presentation format. Some very general comments about the purpose of the study were made, and it was explained that participation was completely voluntary and anonymous. Because the students' participation in this study was on voluntary basis, the students' willingness to participate and report their feelings honestly was increased by informing them that this study would contribute to the development of theories regarding foreign language learning and teaching. A large number of the students volunteered to participate. When they were asked whether they would be willing to participate in a taped interview, many replied "yes". A few made no comment. However, at the time of the interviews only a few were audio-taped. The colleagues allowed class time for study participation and the selected students completed questionnaires in class. The term marks, together with the students' responses to the questionnaires were coded and analysed.

Translation of instruments

The translation of the questionnaires and the interviews into Arabic focused on literal translation. Back-translation was used to check that English and Arabic versions were compatible. The questionnaires and the interviews were first translated by a colleague into Arabic and checked by two teachers to ensure their comprehensibility. The Arabic version of the instruments was then translated back into English by a translator. The original and the back-translated version of the questionnaires and interviews were compared by myself and my three colleagues to examine whether the two English versions were similar in concepts. Two items in the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLWAS) were found to “sometimes” express slightly different meanings, depending on the “teshkeel” (accents). However, when it was pointed out that the first translation which was literal followed classical Arabic grammar, the group of us agreed that the matter should be left until after the pilot study.

Pilot Study

All the instruments (the questionnaires, the focus group interviews and the single interviews) were piloted prior to the formal survey for the following reasons: 1. To ensure the translation accuracy of the questionnaires and the interviews. 2. To check procedures of the administration of the questionnaires and the conducting of interviews. 3. To check that the whole instruments worked. The completed Arabic versions of the questionnaires were administered to 12 volunteer students in grades 10/11 at Al Rumaillah Girls Secondary School. Others presented for the interviews. Although these students were not representative of the target population, their comments on the questionnaires and interviews were highly valuable in improving the comprehensibility, administration and operation of the instruments in the formal study. There were no comments on the contrary regarding the 2 items (mentioned above) in the FLWAS.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative Analysis

Data, students' response to Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale (FLWAS) and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) were coded, scored and then entered onto spreadsheet using Microsoft Excel. Statistical analyses were completed using SPSS 13.0 for windows.

Scoring Procedures

Since both the FLWAS and FLCAS used a scale of five possible answers to each of the questions; ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), the students' responses were scored in such a way that answer indicating the highest degree of anxiety received five points, while the answer indicating the least anxiety received one point. Negative-worded questions were reverse scored. A higher score indicated a higher degree of anxiety students experience in their foreign language classes

Statistical Procedures

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the total scores on the Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale (FLWAS) and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), as well as their association with the two aspects of the English achievement; English Writing Term Marks (WTM) and English Speaking Term Marks (STM).

Qualitative Analysis

Data resulting from the single interviews and focus groups interview were included to provide a greater understanding of the feelings and experiences that accompany foreign language anxiety. According to Seidman (1991) interview-based research replaces the statistical notions of representativeness and generalizability with "compelling evocations" of peoples' experiences. Statistical generalizability is replaced by finding connections among the experiences of different interviewees, allowing for discovery of common patterns. An analytical program was partly applied in grouping and

categorizing the focus groups data. The process of qualitative data analysis described in this paper is based in part on the recommendations of Seidman (1991) and Weiss (1994), and it was applied in the analysis of the single interviews. First the interviews were transcribed in their entirety. Next, several readings of the transcripts revealed that their content could be divided into categories:

- Personal and interpersonal anxieties
- difficult nature of the foreign language
- curriculum elements
- suggestions to reduce anxiety

Following the identification of the 4 main categories, 'local integration' Weiss (1994) was employed to organise the contents within those categories. Connections were formed among the various contributions of the interviewees. The findings were summarized. It was noted that interviewees contrasted experiences that they had with different teachers and different classroom atmospheres. These along with the interviewees' view of their course books were summarized and presented in the next chapter: Results.

Results

Introduction

This dissertation investigated the relationship between anxiety and performance in a foreign language, as well as the impact of anxiety on the respective foreign language performance of two different groups (Arts Students and Science students). In this chapter, the results are presented. First, descriptive statistics of the anxiety and achievement measures are presented, followed by analyses of statistical data. Analyses of qualitative data are presented thereafter. Subsequently, data is discussed based on the research questions. Five questions guided the study (see page 3, Chapter 1).

Quantitative Research Findings

Two measures of anxiety (the Horwitz, and Horwitz, and Cope's Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale-FLCAS, and Daly & Miller's Writing Anxiety Scale-FLWAS) served as predictor variables in the investigation with two outcome measures; the subjects' first term marks: Writing Term Marks (WTM) & Speaking Term Marks (STM). They serve as indicators of achievement.

Descriptive Statistics of Anxiety and Achievement Measures

As shown in the tables (see appendix 8 tables 2 and 4), the data represent the students' scores rated on the FLWAS, the FLCAS, the WTM, and the STM. They show the averages, lowest, highest scores and standard deviation of the two groups.

Anxiety Measures

Foreign Language Writing Anxiety Scale (FLWAS)

The 29 items in the original FLWAS yielded a composite score ranging from 29 to 145. A higher score indicated a higher degree of anxiety students experience in their foreign language writing-classroom-related activities. In this study, scores on the

FLWAS, ranged from 20 to 100. The ten subjects in the Arts group scored between 58 and 79, with a mean score of 66.9 and a standard deviation of 7.288, (see appendix 8 table 2); the ten subjects in the science group, scored between 49 and 67 with a mean score of 58.9 and a standard deviation of 6.024, (see appendix 8 tables 4).

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

Like the FLWAS, the original FLCAS was a self-report instrument scored on a five point Likert scale. The 33 items yielded a composite score with a possible range from 33 to 165. A higher score indicated a higher degree of anxiety students experience in their foreign language classes. In this study, scores on the FLCAS ranged from 20 to 100. The Arts group scored between 49 and 91 with a mean score of 69.3 and a standard deviation of 13.933 (see appendix 8 table 2). And the Science group scored between 28 and 75 with a mean score of 49.4 and a standard deviation of 14.96, (see appendix 8 table 4).

Achievement Measures

Writing Term Mark (WTM)

The WTM is derived from averaging the marks students obtained in a variety of classroom writing activities. The maximum mark obtainable was 100 and the pass mark was 50. The Arts group scored between 28 and 84 with a mean of 58.1 and a standard deviation of 24.231, (see appendix 8 table 2). And the science group scored between 58 and 98 with a mean of 81 and a standard deviation of 13.63 (See appendix 8 table 4).

Speaking Term Mark (STM)

Like the WTM, the STM was also a classroom-specific achievement measure that focused on students' oral performance. Speaking activities included telling, retelling stories and a range of other oral activities. The maximum mark obtainable was 100 and the pass mark was 50. The Arts group scored between 40 and 88 with a mean of 64.8 and a standard deviation of 16.463 (see appendix 8 table 2); while the science group scored between 64 and 98 with a mean of 86 and a standard deviation of 11.9 (see appendix 8 table 4).

Interpretation

Looking at the Arts group, (see appendix 8 table 2); the average scores on FLWAS (66.9) and FLCAS (69.3) are high. The similar range of scores on the two anxiety scales seem to indicate that the Arts group experience both foreign language writing anxiety and foreign language class anxiety. On the achievement scores, (see appendix 8 table 2); WTM (58.1) and STM (64.8) are within average ranges. When scores on the FLWAS are compared with WTM (58.1), and scores on the FLCAS (69.3) with STM (64.8); it appears that, irrespective of their higher score on the FLCAS, the Arts group performed better in speaking than in writing. However, according to t-tests (see appendix 8 table 3), a significant negative correlation (-0.65 sig. =0.042) was indicated between the group's Writing anxiety (FLWAS) and speaking performance (STM). This seemingly odd result will be discussed later. The expectation was that FLWAS would correlate negatively with WTM, while FLCAS would correlate with STM. The Arts students' overall lower score on the achievement measure is commensurate with their high anxiety score. The Arts group appear to exhibit the negative effects of high levels of foreign language anxiety.

With regard to the science students, the group scored an average of 58.9 (FLWAS) indicating moderate anxiety and 81(WTM), which represents very good performance. On the FLCAS, the group scored 49.4 which indicate less anxiety leading to better performance 86 (STM), (see appendix 8 table 4). The result of correlations (see appendix 8 table 5), was 0.799 sig. =0.006. This means a significant positive relation between writing and speaking achievements. It suggests that as performance in writing increases, so does performance in speaking. The science group seem unharmed by their low to moderate level of anxiety, their performance on the achievement measures is high.

In sum, according to t-tests, the difference between the two groups' scores on the anxiety scale is not significant statistically. However, the difference in the groups' score on the achievement measure is significant statistically. Although the two groups experience some level of foreign language anxiety, only the Arts group can be said to experience heightened anxiety and its performance is adversely affected. The indication is that the Arts group suffers the debilitating type of foreign language anxiety which leads to low performance or failure in a foreign language; while the science group can be said

to experience the facilitating type of anxiety that spurs subjects to higher achievements. Therefore, foreign language anxiety affects performance in two ways.

Correlation Analysis

The following section attempts to further answer research question 1, using data based on statistical procedures, (see appendix 8 tables 3, 5 and 6); and bearing in mind the limited number of subjects examined. The question was examined by evaluating the students' performance on the two anxiety scales with their achievement in the two outcomes of foreign language learning; writing term marks (WTM) and speaking term marks (STM). First, the result of the whole sample in this study was presented, then, followed by the single group results.

Research Question One

Are there any significant relationships between the students' foreign language anxiety and their performance in a foreign language?

The correlation between FLWA and FLCA was; Pearson correlation coefficient $r = +.566$ which was highly significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). This means that there is a positive correlation between the two sets of data. This shows that there is a relationship between the student's experiences of foreign language writing anxiety and foreign language class anxiety. Students who experience foreign language writing anxiety, also experience foreign language class anxiety. The indication is that the students may be experiencing the two types of foreign language anxiety.

Between FLWA and STM, the result yielded correlation coefficient $r = -.470$ which was significant at the .05 level (2-tailed). This result suggests that students who experience higher levels of foreign language writing anxiety tend to perform poorly in speaking. On the other hand, students who experience lower levels of foreign language writing anxiety can be said to perform better in speaking. The seemingly odd phenomenon will be discussed in chapter 5. However, this shows that there is a negative relationship between the students' level of foreign language writing anxiety and their

performance in speaking. As their anxiety about writing rises, speaking performance decreases.

Then, between WTM and STM, the result was a correlation coefficient $r = .600$ which was highly significant at the .01(2-tailed). This means that there is a correlation between the two variables. It shows that there is a relationship between the students' WTM and their STM, and implies that students whose performance is good at WTM will achieve a similar performance level at STM.

To sum up, according to the combined groups' results, the population investigated experience foreign language anxiety, their anxiety about writing inhibit their performance in speaking, however, they achieved an overall parallel performance in writing and speaking. This somewhat confusing result was verified by assessing individual group scores.

Arts Group

For the Arts group (see appendix 8 table 4), statistical calculations between FLWA and STM, resulted a correlation coefficient $r = -.650$ which was significant at the .05 level (2-tailed). This means a negative correlation between the two variables. The result shows a relationship between the group's level of FLWA and their performance in speaking. The suggestion is that students with high levels of foreign language writing anxiety tended to perform poorly in speaking. And it can be said that the negative correlation obtained between FLWA and STM (see appendix 8 table 6) is attributable to this group and therefore is consistent.

Science Group

Again similar to the results obtained when the group were combined, the result obtained between WTM and STM for the science group was: Pearson correlation coefficient $r = .799$ which was highly significant at the .01 level (2-tailed). This signifies a strong positive correlation between the two sets of data. It indicates that a relationship exists between writing performance and speaking performance. The result suggests that students who are good at writing are equally good at speaking or; as performance levels in writing rises, so does performance levels in speaking rise.

To sum up, correlation analysis showed that all the students experience foreign language anxiety since the combined group results showed a significant positive relation between the students' FLWA and their FLCA. While most of the students in the Arts group experience high levels of foreign language anxiety, their foreign language writing anxiety correlated negatively and significantly with their speaking performance. In addition, a strong positive relation exists between writing and speaking performances for the science group. This suggests an overall good performance in the foreign language, and seems to confirm the hypothesis that science students are the higher achievers while the Arts students are likely to perform poorly. This result is consistent with earlier result as presented in the descriptive analysis. It can be said that anxiety acts to facilitate or debilitate performance in a foreign language.

Qualitative Research Findings

In this section, the results of the qualitative investigations; single interviews (see appendix 4) and focus group interviews (see appendix 5) will be presented. The qualitative investigations were needed for the triangulation of quantitative data. The research questions 2, 3 and 4 (see p. 3) relied on the single interviews data and focus group interviews to identify answers. However, since the two investigations have been found to support one another, only the single interview data is quoted in direct answer to the research questions 2 and 3. Data from the focus group interviews also identified answers to research question 4. For a fuller version of the analysis of focus groups interviews, see appendix 6

Analysis of Interviews Data

During the informal interviews with students, three main topics were presented. The second research question asked simply what the students' attitudes to English language were. This question was expected to reveal any affective variables (attitudinal/motivational) that may be underlying the students' performance in the foreign language or otherwise anxiety-provoking. The third topic of the interviews sought ways to alleviate the students' anxiety. The interviews followed the organisation of the research questions. For maximum participation, the students were handed an interview in

English (see appendix 3) with a translated (Arabic) version. The questions were also read out to them in English.

Attitude and Motivation

Research Question Two

What are students attitude toward English as a foreign language?

Interviewer: “We are familiar with the sections. Now we will begin with section ‘A’. (See appendix 3)

When questions relevant to attitude towards English were asked, interviewees offered a variety of responses and clarifications that almost always dealt with anxiety associated with interpersonal interactions, as in the following excerpts:

Interviewee (1) “I have never travelled to any English –speaking country. I don’t enjoy speaking English. I speak English only at school or in the Malls, sometimes with friends. In the future, English is important as a means of communication and for future career. Of course some people learn English more easily than others especially if they travel. If they let me choose, I will choose English. Of course I like English but I have little problem with vocabulary and pronunciation”.

Interviewee (2) “I travelled to London when I was 8years old. All I could say was: *yes/no, Ok/bye*, I was young and it was fun. English is important, everywhere people speak English. I will still study English even if they say it is not a must because English is beautiful. Of course some people learn languages more easily than others because maybe they started early, but for me it wasn’t easy to learn.”

The interviews showed that students maintain a positive attitude towards English language. They indicated that they were motivated to learn English as a foreign language. They are aware that English is a global language; of science and technology and of advanced studies. The students’ believe that English is “fun”, English is “beautiful”.

They recognise the importance of English and agree that English is a global language, spoken “everywhere” and they would choose it if it were an optional subject. They appreciate individual differences in language learning but attribute proficiency in language learning to “travelling” and an “early” start. The students have clear objectives for studying the foreign language.

However, it is possible that their language learning experience was not without anxiety “I don’t enjoy speaking English”, “I have little problem with vocabulary and pronunciation” (see interviewee 1); “but for me it wasn’t easy to learn” (see interviewee 2), suggesting that they had encountered anxiety in their social and interpersonal interactions.

It can be concluded that students maintain a positive attitude towards English. This predisposes them to an awareness of its benefits. They are equally motivated as they appreciate the need to utilize the foreign language to succeed in any environment where English may be operational. The two variables therefore maybe ruled out as factors in this study. Students do like English. What they see as problematic is having to master and use the relevant lexis, “vocabulary and pronunciation” (see interviewee 1). And this may refer to lack of adequate proficiency, lack of confidence in the foreign language, and implicating anxiety about personal and interpersonal communication. Research question 3 is discussed in the following section.

Personal and Inter-personal Anxieties

Research Question Three

What contributes to the students’ Experience of Foreign Language Anxiety within the classroom context?

Interviewer: In section “B”, (see appendix 3) let’s talk about your anxiety, what makes you anxious in the classroom?

To investigate the second research question, the interviewer asked the students what made them anxious. The responses elicited were insightful and delineated a classroom component that hadn’t been so eloquently enunciated; the teacher’s attitudes

and practices, other aspects of the classroom, the difficult nature of the foreign language and the English language curriculum were presented as most anxiety-provoking. These factors are evidence of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived inadequacy. They refer to personal and inter-personal anxieties. The following excerpts are revealing.

Interviewee (3) “Speaking in the class makes me anxious- because it is a big problem. Also girls speak a lot, so I don’t understand. The atmosphere of the class is noisy. The class must be quiet place. Girls make me nervous. When I want to speak, girls giggle and make sounds. My teacher is fantastic- no problem. I speak English more at home only – with maids. I hate it when teacher speaks English only and when she speaks fast. I dislike difficult vocabulary, because I don’t understand it. I don’t like the teacher when she is nervous. Also when no one participates the teacher is angry, I don’t like angry teacher.”

Interviewee (1) “What makes me anxious are many like pronouncing difficult words- - and teacher position in class. If she’s too far, I fear that I don’t hear her teaching. If she is near, I fear that she will ask me questions. I’d like to change the decoration. Also the girls disturb me, they are noisy. The only place I speak English is in the classroom. The worst thing is paragraph writing. My best teacher must be interesting”

Interviewee (5) “I can’t speak English and can’t understand what the teacher says. This makes me anxious. I am uncomfortable because I can’t speak English. Nothing makes me calm in the class. I can’t understand English. I wish to learn like others, but me, I don’t know what to do. The exercise that makes me jump is *Functions*. I think the English book is easy but I can’t read it, even if it changes, I still can’t read it.”

Interviewee (6) “All the activities make me nervous. We are nervous because English is difficult and there are no attractive techniques. I like to feel calm – not anxious. I like to have confidence. The most exercise that make me panic is *paragraph*

writing – I don't like it and I don't like the book- even if they change it, I am still nervous in English.”

Interviewee (8) “Girls are uncomfortable about English class because it is difficult to understand, difficult to speak and they don't know how to express ideas. But I don't like vocabulary and I don't like the book – too much exercises. The exercises are difficult. The book is big. Of course I will feel calm if they change it, if it is going to be easier, I am going to understand better.”

Interviewee (9) “Girls feel afraid because speaking is difficult and they are afraid of making mistakes. I feel nervous when we have functions or vocabulary. I don't like the book because it has too many writing exercises in the work book. If it is changed, I don't think I will feel less anxious”.

The classroom components that provoke anxiety are: Teacher's classroom techniques, practices, attitudes and behaviours (mentioned by interviewees 3, 1, and 5); students in the class, (cited by interviewees 3 and 1); difficult nature of the foreign language, (stated by interviewees 1,3,4,5,6,8 and 9); the course book, (brought up by interviewees 5,6, 8 and 9); and the physical appearance of the classroom, (mentioned by interviewee 1).

Fear of Negative Evaluation

The teacher-aspect points to fear of negative evaluation. Students are “afraid of making mistakes.” “The teacher's proximity to or distance from any individual student causes anxiety. Proximity may threaten a student's right to be at ease. Likewise, a teacher's distance creates anxiety over loss of access to learning “I don't hear her teaching”. A Teacher's neutral position is important in the classroom. By “my best teacher must be interesting,” the students imply that the teacher is uninteresting, lacking in innovative techniques or ethics of the profession. This point was clearly stated by a participant in the focus group, who declared: “and there are no attractive techniques”. The teacher's behaviour too, “when no one participates, the teacher is angry...”

The second classroom component is students in the classroom. “Girls make me nervous. When I want to speak, girls giggle and make sounds”, (reported by interviewee 1). “Also the girls disturb me, they are noisy”, (disclosed by interviewees 3 and 4). To be conscious about “giggles” and “sounds” alludes to fear of negative evaluation. There is also a reference to the personality of the teacher. Noisy class suggests teacher’s lack of control and failed classroom techniques; inability to create conducive learning atmosphere. These notions were also mentioned by participants (PM, PY, PF, PD, PA, PI and PN) in the focus groups (see appendix 5).

Relevant to noise pollution within the classroom is the pollution of the students visual clarity, “I’d like to change the decoration”. And a participant in the focus group, (PM) declared in a collective voice, “We don’t like the decoration”. This emphasizes that the physical atmosphere of the classroom has potential to cause anxiety.

Communication Apprehension

Another aspect alluded to by the students is, communication apprehension. “Speaking in the class makes me anxious”, (acknowledged by interviewees 3, 4, 5, and 8). “I like to have confidence” (declared interviewee 6), suggesting need to be a confident speaker of the foreign language. “Girls feel afraid because speaking is difficult” and they are afraid of making mistakes”, (pointed out by interviewee 9). “Girls feel worry because they can’t understand in English”, (said by interviewee 7). Students reported that they are unable to speak and unable to understand the target language. And, from focus groups interviews, PF (see appendix5) emphasizes their lack of practice in speaking and “English needs how to communicate and speak”. Fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension are two main components of Horwitz’s et al’s Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.

Anxiety

General feeling of anxiety, the third aspect of the scale can be identified in the students’ utterances: “I like to feel calm- not anxious” (interviewee 6), “Girls are uncomfortable about English class”, (interviewee 8), “...This makes me anxious” (interviewee 5), “What makes me anxious are many”, (mentioned by interviewee 4) and

“Girls make me nervous”, (indicated by interviewee 3). There is a general feeling of anxiety which is generated by a combination of factors related to the foreign language learning process: fear of being called upon by the teacher, anxiety owing to inability to speak in the target language and, panic over writing activities.

The third aspect of the classroom component is the type of exercises. This aspect pertains to the curriculum and is rooted in the educational strategy. Students “don’t like the book because, it has too many exercises”. Students “feel nervous, when we have functions or vocabulary”. Some find “the worst thing is paragraph writing”, while others complain that “the book is big”, “I don’t like the book”. There is a minority that view “I think the book is easy...”, (Interviewee 5). This point is probably due to inadequate ability to access the book. Then, Interviewee 5 continued, “...but I can’t read, if it changes, I still can’t read it”. An idea closer to the point is: “If it is changed, I don’t think I will feel less anxious”, (Interviewee 9). This summarizes the whole aspect of the book and the exercises by demonstrating that the immediate cause of anxiety may not be the course book per se.

Based on the interview data, it can be concluded that, in addition to the teacher’s pedagogical practices and failed classroom techniques, inability to speak English in the classroom makes the students anxious. Four students reported having “problem” pronouncing difficult words. This is aggravated by a curriculum steeped in exercises that demand writing beyond the student’s immediate command. Some strong evidence support the prevalence of anxiety about speaking.

The inaccessibility of the course book and the exercises suggest the presence of writing anxiety. It can be seen that the exercises identified as anxiety-provoking are writing-based: vocabulary, functions and paragraph writing, (cited by all interviewees). These classroom writing-activities are anxious issues for the students and it can be said that the students have anxiety about writing. These students find “English” language ‘difficult’ to “understand”. Difficulty in language learning appears to be the result of an accumulated weakness owing to an absence of an “early” start, improper start or a learning plateau. Next section discusses research question 4.

Research Question Four

What factors do Students perceive May Reduce Anxiety in the Classroom?

The fourth research question relied also on the single interview data together with the focus group data to identify strategies to alleviate the students' foreign language anxiety. These strategies were suggested by those students included to be interviewed, who demonstrated nil anxiety. The participants were unanimous on the following suggestions:

Pairwork and Groupwork

Five interviewees suggested students' preference for pairwork and groupwork over other types of activities, as they realize that their classes are characterized by a wide range of abilities that often creates anxiety. For example:

I like group work or when groups compete to see who finishes first" (interviewee 3).

"The best thing I like about English class are the activities" (interviewee 1).

"The classroom activity that makes me feel calm is reading stories" (interviewee 10)

"I like... working in pairs" (interviewee 8).

I feel calm when we have pair work or group work (interviewee 9).

Need for teacher Support

This was seen to check anxiety that emanates from the teacher. Participants in the focus group seem to imply that students preferred a teacher who understands a student's weaknesses in the foreign language, rather than abuse or embarrass the needy learner. For example, PN said;

"And maybe in the class, there is a girl who doesn't understand English well, the teacher refers to her as stupid- maybe we can encourage this girl", (see appendix 5).

They would rather a teacher who treats them with friendship or with motherliness; a teacher capable of relating the course book to their life and to reality. For example, PS said:

“The teacher should be our friend- mother- make the lesson touch our life. Teacher must encourage us even if we make a mistake. Teacher must say “OK”, “Good Try. If the teacher encourages us, we will make good answer”, (see appendix 5). Students would like a class period devoted to oral practice alone- “speaking” and “reading” (see focus groups interviews, PF).

Other Students’ suggestions include; encourage interaction between students and teacher. Improve and innovate techniques. Don’t single students out. Adjust speed of speech. Be friendly: ‘smile’. Be available to help students. Always pre-teach new vocabulary. Avoid intimidation and over correction. Encourage well-performing students by presenting them with gifts. To fellow students: “Don’t worry, relax and try to speak”, (see appendix 4 Interviewee 7) “Be calm”, (see appendix 4 Interviewee 8); “Try to speak English as much as possible, make a lot of practice”, (see appendix 4 Interviewee 9).

In sum, the students suggest that activities where group dynamics operate to soothe their feelings would alleviate their anxiety. Most importantly, students felt that if their teachers were more understanding of their language needs; proffering more friendship, assistance and less criticism, they’d feel less anxious; and more encouraged to succeed in the language classroom.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the investigations, all the students experience foreign language anxiety. Quantitative analyses indicate that students in the Arts group experience high anxiety about writing which correlates negatively with their performance in speaking. While no correlation was indicated between their writing performance and speaking performance, a significant correlation was observed between WTM and STM for the Science group. This seems to confirm the hypothesis that the science students are the high achievers while the Arts students may perform poorly. The qualitative investigation showed that students experience the personal and interpersonal type of anxieties, interpreted as: fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension, which indicates anxiety about speaking. There seems to be a suggestion that anxiety can

indeed be debilitating as in the case of the Arts group, or facilitating as in the case of the science group. The findings in this chapter will be discussed in the next chapter entitled Discussion.

Discussion

Introduction

This study examined the effect of foreign language anxiety, its relationship to performance in a foreign language, as well as their associations with the foreign language speaking and writing achievement of two ability groups of Arabic-speaking students. This chapter discusses the study's major findings based on the two research approaches. Discussion of the quantitative findings is followed by discussion of qualitative results.

Discussion of Quantitative Findings

The result of this study seems to indicate a negative relation between foreign language anxiety and the performance of students in the Arts group. Result from the anxiety questionnaires show that the Arts students scored higher than the Science students, indicating the high anxiety they experience in their language learning, and implying that the Science students are less anxious. In addition, for the Arts students, their FLWA appears to correlate negatively with both their STM and WTM. Looking at tables 3 and 4, it can be seen that the Arts students scored consistently high, while the Science students scored consistently low on the anxiety scales. The reverse is the case on the achievement measures. While the Science students scored higher marks, the Arts students scored lower marks. These results tend to suggest that the students in the Arts section tend to experience higher levels of anxiety, and perform poorly on achievement measures.

Irrespective of their generally high academic performance, the science students were expected to exhibit heightened anxiety in view of the higher expectations set for them by their families and by the social environment. Simply by virtue of having joined the science section; they are expected to achieve higher goals. They opt for difficult subjects: "maths", "sciences" and "English"; the subjects of *knowledge*. However, data from this study indicate that they experience only moderate to low level anxiety. Though they fear failure, they seem more tolerant of making mistakes, more eager to experiment

with language and therefore take on difficult assignments or projects. They can work reasonably independently. They relied on their confidence and are less likely to be affected by foreign language anxiety than their peers in the Arts section.

On the other hand, the students who had joined the Arts section, more often than not on the basis of their ability rather than by choice, are constantly mindful of their inadequacies. They are equally worried about failure or not attaining higher education as greater emphasis has been placed on acquiring paper qualifications. They worry about the sometimes negative evaluation attached to being in the Arts section and the very less expectations set for them. These students need to make good impression by passing the English exams. This need to pass the exams interprets their anxiety since failing in English or in any school subject precludes promotion, and English is always the most subject that is found to be difficult, feared and failed in. In the class, these students are generally less responsive and too self-conscious to venture answers or engage in classroom participation. They favour the teacher-centred approach to teaching, and are often quiet and appear apprehensive. They fear making mistakes and looking “stupid” in front of their teachers and peers.

In the present study, Foreign Language Writing Anxiety correlated negatively with speaking achievement, rather than with writing achievement. This seems unusual and the expectation would be that FLCAS may correlate positively/negatively with writing or speaking achievements, since FLCAS is directly associated with both foreign language speaking and writing achievements. The FLWAS on the other hand, is believed to be directly associated with only foreign language writing achievement (Cheng et al., 1999). There are plausible explanations: it could be that the students merely practised the strategy; “talk written down” (Nunan, 1999, p.274). It seems that the students speak English in the same manner as they write or vice versa. It could be said that they are in the primary stages of their foreign language learning, and therefore lack self-confidence. Perhaps, the students’ shyness due to self-perceived inadequacy is dimensionally related to both speaking and writing in the foreign language.

In the Combined groups’ result, the strong positive correlation between writing anxiety and class anxiety seem to suggest the overall anxiety experienced by all the students. Likewise, the writing achievement and the speaking achievement were found to

correlate positively. This may have been influenced by the science group or may be because both are classified as being classroom language-skill specific measures used specifically for communication and are performance-bound. They may not be parallel skills, yet their ultimate aspects of reproduction indicate their peculiar natures. Writing tends to be used for composing thoughts on paper, while Speaking may relate to articulating thoughts and ideas.

Relevant Studies

The negative correlation obtained between anxiety and performance in this study echoes the findings of previous studies (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Philips, 1992; Aida, 1994; Cheng, Horwitz and Schallert, 1999; Argaman and Abu Rabia, 2000) that found a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement. Other results have been observed, (Sparks et al., 1997; cited in Argaman and Abu-Rabia, 2000), found no significant relationship in the writing task. However, the above studies seem to indicate that anxiety may adversely affect performance in a foreign language.

Discussion of the Qualitative Findings

This section will discuss factors analysed as anxiety-provoking, collected from the interviews and the focus group data. Analysis of the data shows that classroom-related personal and interpersonal anxieties were the main factors that the students identified as anxiety-provoking. They are: fear of negative evaluation (teacher-learner, learner-learner interactions); communication apprehension (shyness, difficulty in speaking English); fear of failure; and self perceived inadequacy. Other sources of anxiety are: the difficult nature of the foreign language and instructional tools, as seen in the curriculum.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation refers to a kind of "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situation and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 31.). According to Horwitz et al.,

(1986), both 'real or imagined' (p. 31) critical evaluation by either the teacher or peers can provoke anxious feelings. Speaking activities are seen as the main sources of anxiety. The qualitative data show that fear of negative evaluation is a major source of anxiety for the students. They declared that they worried about their teachers' evaluative measures especially since they view their teachers as fault-finding "experts" out to "catch...mistakes". They fear being laughed at and ridiculed by peers and teachers. These problems lead to silence instead of participation.

Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) was defined originally by McCroskey (1977, p78) as 'an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another or persons'. As part of the conceptualized foreign language anxiety, Horwitz et al., (1986); defined it as a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communication with people. Students worry about communicating in the target language in view of their restricted communicative skills. Almost all interviewees have mentioned the difficulty of communicating in English. They fear that the teacher might "ask ... questions" (interviewee 1), "...and they don't know how to express ideas, (interviewee 8) as they are inadequately equipped to answer because they "can't speak English and can't understand what the teacher says" (interviewee 5).

This inability to both understand the teacher and be understood by her and others is a main source of anxiety and embarrassments;" "...it is a big problem" (interviewee 3). Consequently some students practise "failure- avoidance" behaviour Kleinman, H. H. (1977). For example, this excerpt from the focus group interview PS said: "I talk English with my sister. She tells me what I say wrong and I know what she says wrong, but the teacher?! *O! You are wrong! You are this and that!* The student cherishes the mutual understanding she shares with her sister and avoids the sense of failure in being bullied by her learned teacher during communication activities. According to Horwitz et al., (1986); difficulties in these activities are all "manifestations of communication apprehension" (p. 30). Students in the present study strongly experience communication apprehension. As interviewee 8 put it; "English ...is difficult to understand, difficult to speak". And probably this variously cited difficulty with speaking is related with the

strong negative correlation between foreign language writing anxiety and speaking performance noted for the Arts group.

Fear of failure

In the focus group interviews students expressed concern over the outcome of their exams. They reported feeling anxious in subsequent classes or activities after an especially difficult exam or after time had run out and they had to hand in their papers without finishing the sections. PF said "...in the exam, many teachers...say *I will take the paper*, then I come afraid. I am unable to finish" (see appendix 5). Students' fear of failure is reasonable especially when teachers threaten them with failure, as PA said; "You will fail, you!" (See appendix 5). About 70% of the examinations are writing-based and great value is attached to passing an exam in our context. Within our educational system, students need to achieve the pass mark of 50 where the maximum mark is 100. A student who fails in any subject must repeat the year and English is the most subject that cause students to repeat a whole year. Fear of failure and fear of failing English exams is most anxiety-provoking for the students.

Self-perceived inadequacy

Most probably, due to inadequate start or improper beginning, students doubt their ability to use the target language before their teacher or before the *best*, "special" girl, (see PN appendix 5). Young (1991) believes that students with self-perceived inadequacy will easily experience foreign language anxiety. Most interviewees believe that their language is not adequate for example, "I don't speak English with the teacher because she is professional and she will catch my mistakes" (see PS appendix 5). Similarly, Arts students in this study seem to lack self-confidence, they offer no answers, or suggestions in the foreign language class.

The difficult nature of the foreign Language Learning

Horwitz talked about the peculiarity of the language learning process. Apart from the classroom components that contribute to the students' anxiety, there were views about the difficulty encountered in the foreign language learning process.

Speaking in the class

“Girls are uncomfortable about English class because it is difficult to understand, difficult to speak and they don’t know how to express ideas” (see interviewee 5, above). Students reported that speaking in English class causes them anxiety due to the evaluation attached to speaking English in the class, so rather than be harshly corrected and ridiculed by teachers; students are relaxed speaking English with non-judgemental siblings and maids or with shopkeepers in the Malls. Students asserted that they speak within the classroom only to provide correct answers to the teacher’s questions,(see PS appendix 5).

Writing Activities

Students expressed aversion towards certain classroom activities. These activities are those that have writing contexts, for example: functions, compositions, letter writing and structures. All these aspects of the writing skill are associated with grammar and grammar is linked with rules which students find difficult to master. This may be due to inadequate/improper start.

The reason why speaking and writing are identified as anxiety-provoking, in relation with teacher’s classroom strategies is that the two language skills are product-oriented. The finished product must be presented on the spot and that is the aspect that causes anxiety. In addition, the two skills are exam-based, the students asserted that “in the class, we are talking to get the right answer” (PS see appendix 5). And, if they fail to produce “the right answer”, then, the teacher “gets angry and embarrasses us, we feel shy” (PS see appendix 5).

Instructional materials

Curriculum manuals such as the course book, has been cited as causing anxiety in terms of its size, volume, difficult nature, and lack of relevance to the students’ sense of reality. A revised version of the course-book may work to alleviate the students’ fear and pave way for them to “understand better.” Students remarked its irrelevance to their academic and social needs. “The book is so...stupid, it’s like for kids not for big”, (PS

see appendix 5). They find that they cannot relate to the curriculum; its contents and their needs are in divergent ends. "...we need real life, make us ready for real life", (see PS appendix 5) and "Our language is many generation back. What we study in class is not the same in real life. When we get out of school, to real life, we will not be able to-" (see PHD appendix 5. This dichotomy between the purpose of the course book and the students' sense of reality, cause the students to doubt whether their present education can equip them to engage in meaningful communication outside the school, and for the demands of further education.

Personal and inter-personal anxieties have been well documented in the research, as was reviewed in chapter 2. Students experience personal and interpersonal anxieties which affect performance by restricting their oral communicative abilities, and in writing, these anxieties act to reduce the volume and quality of the finished product. The general indication is that the students may experience anxiety about writing as well as anxiety about speaking. Although Young (1991) explained that sometimes language anxiety is relatively related to one skill and not to another, the results of the present study suggest contrary to that view.

This study illustrates the benefits of more than one approach in investigating the effect of anxiety upon performance. The qualitative methods are needed to avoid the disadvantage of self flattery associated sometimes with self report measures (Daly, 1978; Philips, 1990) such as the FLCAS and the FLWAS. Conclusions drawn from the whole study is presented in the next chapter, conclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter presents conclusions drawn based on the findings of the study, along with pedagogical implications, limitations and suggestions for future research.

Conclusions

Since a significant negative correlation between foreign language writing anxiety and speaking performance has been found, for the Arts group, and then, the interviews and the focus group interviews identified writing and writing-related activities as anxiety-provoking; it can be concluded that the student's anxiety about writing impacts on their speaking performance owing to their experience of high levels of language anxiety. Yet it is possible that the students experience some levels of class anxiety, because qualitative investigation identified fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension in direct relation to their speaking anxiety, in addition to the probability that students speak as they write or vice versa. This is evident in the combined groups' result which indicated a significant positive correlation between writing anxiety and class anxiety. Thus, for the Arts group; there exists a significant negative relation between their level of anxiety and their performance in the foreign language. The nature of their anxiety is debilitating; in that the group's experience of high level of anxiety leads to low performance in the foreign language.

For the Science group, a strong positive correlation was found between their WTM and STM, suggesting equally good performance in the two measures of achievement. It can be said that foreign language anxiety has no pervasive effect on the performance of students academically identified as high achievers whether they experience anxiety or not. And this is in agreement with ideas of Philips (1990, 1992 ;) and Ganschow et al., (1994) that high achieving students do experience anxiety in their language learning. The conclusion to be drawn is that though both groups of students experience moderate levels of anxiety, only the performance of the Arts group is significantly affected by its experience of foreign language anxiety.

Pedagogical implications

In view of what causes anxiety among the students in their foreign language learning, two important factors are crucial; the language teacher and the curriculum. Young, (1991) suggests that language teachers need to appreciate the students' feeling of anxiety and review those aspects of their pedagogic roles that are potentially anxiety-provoking. In this way, anxiety may be reduced and language learning will be optimised. Indeed, language teachers may use discussions to explore questions rather than insisting upon made-to-fit "right answers".

In this study, the implication of the streaming of students into the Science and Arts sections is that one group is associated with a better performance and the expectations are high while the other, supposedly weaker may just achieve the pass mark. In a system where there is no strict streaming, highly motivated students certainly have positive effects on the least motivated ones.

To maximise students' interest in the foreign language curricular, educators need to design meaningful contents, relevant to students' needs. What is needed is a consciously reworked curriculum that wholly embraces the communicative approach to language teaching. This will afford students ample opportunity to experiment with the language within the classroom. Authentic dialogues, which are suitably scripted, are required. In addition, a different approach to writing, like process writing might be considered.

Limitations

With the present study one obvious limitation is the small size of the subjects, and they were a population most unfamiliar with research projects of this scale. It required patience and understanding. The limitation associated with the small number of the sample relates to comparing the statistical figures obtained in this study with that of other studies with similar results. Another limitation was a lack of proficiency in the learners' native Arabic. This required all the instruments to be translated and meant heavy reliance on colleagues and certified translators.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study sought to examine the effect of foreign language anxiety on the performance of 20 secondary school females. In view of the limitations likely to be associated with this study, the small number of subjects may render any kind of generalisation difficult. And to generalise the results, this study needs to be replicated with a different and larger number of subjects. While I hope that this study will offer some insights on foreign language anxiety and performance in the foreign language learning of two different ability groups , the correlation between writing anxiety score and speaking achievement score may need to be verified in future studies.

Appendix 1a

Instruments and Their Modifications

Modifications made to the Writing Apprehension Scale (WAS), Daly and Miller (1975a).
The Foreign Language Writing Apprehension Scale (FLWAS)

1. I avoid writing.
1. I avoid writing in English.
2. I have no fear of writing being evaluated.
2. I have no fear of my English writing being evaluated by the teacher.
4. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.
3. I am afraid of writing essays in English when I know that they will be evaluated.
6. Handing in a composition makes me feel good.
4. Handing in English composition makes me feel good.
7. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.
5. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on an English composition.
8. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be waste of time.
6. Expressing ideas through writing in English seems to be a waste of time.
9. I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.
7. I would enjoy submitting my English writing to magazines for publication.
10. I like to write my ideas down.
8. I like to write my ideas down in English.
12. I like to have my friends read what I have written.
9. I like to have my friends read what I have written in English.
13. I'm nervous about writing.
10. I'm nervous about writing in English.
14. People seem to enjoy what I write.
11. People seem to enjoy what I write in English.
15. I enjoy writing.
12. I enjoy writing in English.
16. I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas.
13. I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas in English.
17. Writing is a lot fun.
14. Writing in English is a lot of fun.
19. I like seeing my thoughts on paper.
15. I like seeing my thoughts on paper in English.
20. Discussing my writing with others is an enjoyable experience.
16. Discussing my English writing with others is an enjoyable experience.
21. I have a terrible time organizing my ideas in a composition course.
17. I have terrible time organizing my ideas in an English composition.
23. It's easy for me to write good compositions.
19. It's easy for me to write good English compositions.
24. I don't think I write as well as most other people.
20. I don't think I write in English as well as most other people.

Added Item

18. I am frightened when I see the corrections made on my English composition.

Appendix 1 b

Writing Apprehension Test (Arabic Version)

مقياس القلق أثناء الأداء الكتابي

1. أوافق بشدة 2. أوافق 3. لا تعليق 4. لا أوافق 5. لا أوافق بشدة

- 1- أتجنب الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية
- 2- لا أخشى من تقييم المعلمة لأدائي الكتابي.
- 3- أخشى كتابة البحوث باللغة الإنجليزية عندما أعلم أنه سيتم تقييمها.
- 4- أشعر بالراحة عندما أساعد في كتابة المواضيع الإنشائية باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 5- يبدو ذهني فارغا حينما أبدأ في كتابة مواضيع الإنشاء.
- 6- يبدو لي التعبير عن الأفكار بواسطة الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية مضيعة للوقت.
- 7- سأستمتع بتسليم كتاباتي باللغة الإنجليزية للمجلات من أجل النشر والتقييم.
- 8- أحب أن أكتب أفكارتي باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 9- أحب أن تقرأ صديقاتي ما أكتبه باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 10- أشعر بالتوتر عند الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 11- يبدو أن الآخرين يستمتعون بما أكتبه باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 12- أستمتع بالكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 13- أشعر أنني لا أستطيع كتابة أفكارتي بوضوح باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 14- الكتابة بالإنجليزية شيء ممتع.
- 15- أحب أن أرى أفكارتي على الورق باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 16- أعتبر مناقشة كتاباتي الإنجليزية مع الآخرين تجربة ممتعة.
- 17- أجد صعوبة في تنظيم وقتي في الإنشاء في اللغة الإنجليزية.
- 18- عندما أشارك في مواضيع الإنشاء باللغة الإنجليزية، أعرف أن أدائي ضعيف.
- 19- إنه من السهل علي أن أكتب مواضيع الإنشاء باللغة الإنجليزية.
- 20- لا أعتقد أنني أكتب اللغة الإنجليزية بطريقة جيدة كما يكتبها الآخرون.

Appendix 2

Modifications made to the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS),
Horwitz, (1986).

Adapted Version of the FLCAS

2. I don't worry about making mistakes in the language class.
- 3. I worry about making mistakes in English class.**
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
- 20. I often daydream in English class.**
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
- 8. I feel that the other students are better than me at speaking English.**
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
17. I **worry about English** tests.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
- 18. I worry about failing English class.**
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
- 9. I get so nervous in class that I forget everything.**
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
- 2. I am embarrassed when I answer the teacher in English class.**
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
- 11. I feel anxious even if I have prepared for English class.**
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
- 12. I worry if the teacher corrects me in class.**
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language.
- 5. My heart pounds when I do something in English class.**
21. The more I study for language test, the more confused.
- 13. The more I study English, the more I get confused.**
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
- 8. I feel that the other students are better than me in speaking English.**
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language.
- 6. I feel self-conscious when speaking in English with my classmates.**
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
- 19. The English class makes me most nervous (more than other classes)**
27. I get nervous when I am speaking in my language class.
- 4. I get nervous when speaking in English in class.**
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
- 14. I worry if I can't understand every word the teacher says.**
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
- 7. I am afraid that others will laugh at me when I speak English.**
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.
- 10. I get nervous if I haven't prepared for English class.**

Added Items

15. In pair-work, I worry if my partner is better than me at English.
16. In pair-work, I worry if my partner is worse than me at English.

Appendix 2 b

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Arabic Version)

مقياس القلق في استخدام اللغة الأجنبية في الصف الدراسي

1. أوافق بشدة 2. أوافق 3. لا تعليق 4. لا أوافق 5. لا أوافق بشدة

كيف أشعر في الصف

- 1- أشعر بالقلق عندما تحدثني المعلمة في حصة اللغة الإنجليزية .
- 2- أشعر بالإحراج عند الاجابة في الصف .
- 3- أشعر بالخوف من ارتكاب الأخطاء في الصف .
- 4- أشعر بالقلق عند التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية .
- 5- يزداد خفقان قلبي عند القيام بأي مهمة في الصف .
- 6- أشعر بعدم الثقة والأرتباك عند التحدث باللغة الانجليزية مع زميلاتي .
- 7- أشعر بالخوف من أن يسخر الغير مني عند التحدث باللغة الانجليزية .
- 8- أشعر بأن زميلاتي أفضل مني في التحدث باللغة الانجليزية .
- 9- أشعر بالقلق الشديد لدرجة أنني أنسى كل شيء في الصف .
- 10- أشعر بالقلق إذا لم أستعد لحصة اللغة الإنجليزية .
- 11- أشعر بالخوف حتى لو قمت بالتحضير لحصة اللغة الإنجليزية .
- 12- أشعر بالقلق إذا قامت المعلمة بتصحيح أخطائي في الصف .
- 13- كلما زادت دراستي للغة كلما زاد ارتبائي .
- 14- أشعر بالقلق إذا لم أفهم كل كلمة تقولها المدرسة .
- 15- في العمل الثنائي أقلق إذا كانت زميلتي أفضل مني في اللغة الانجليزية .
- 16- في العمل الثنائي أقلق إذا كانت زميلتي أسوء مني في اللغة الانجليزية .
- 17- أشعر بالقلق من اختبارات اللغة الانجليزية .
- 18- أشعر بالقلق من الرسوب في اللغة الانجليزية .
- 19- حصة اللغة الانجليزية تقلقتني أكثر من أي حصة أخرى .
- 20- غالباً ما أكون شاردة الذهن في حصة اللغة الانجليزية .

Appendix 3

A. Question guide for single Interviews

A. Students' attitude towards English

موقف الطالبات من اللغة الإنجليزية

1. Have you ever lived in/travelled to an English speaking country? Where? How long?
1- هل سبق وأن عشتِ أو سافرتِ لبلاد يتحدث أهلها بالإنجليزية ؟
2. Did you speak English all the time?
2- هل تحدثت باللغة الإنجليزية طوال الوقت ؟
3. What importance do you think English will have in your life?
3- ما هي الأهمية التي ستحتلها اللغة الإنجليزية في حياتك حسب رأيك ؟
4. Do you think you would study English if it was made an optional subject?
4- هل تعتقدين بأنك ستدرسين اللغة الإنجليزية لو كانت مادة إختيارية ؟
5. What grade do you think you would get in English this term?
5- ما هي الدرجة التي تتوقعين أن تأخذوها في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية هذا الفصل ؟

B. Students' Anxiety status

حالة القلق لدي الطالبات

1. What makes you anxious?
1- ما الذي يقلقك؟
2. How do you feel about the atmosphere in your class?
2- كيف تشعرين تجاه الجو الدراسي في الفصل ؟
3. Is there something you would like to change to make it less uncomfortable?
3- هل تودين تغيير شيء ليخفف من شعورك بعدم الراحة ؟
4. Where do you speak more English? In the classroom or outside while shopping?
4- أين تتحدثين باللغة الإنجليزية أكثر ؟ في الفصل الدراسي أم في الخارج أثناء التسوق ؟

C. Not Anxious

اللا قلق

1. Are there any activities that make you feel calm?
1- هل هناك بعض الأنشطة التي تشعرك بالهدوء؟
2. Why do you think some students get very uncomfortable about English class?
2- لماذا تعتقد أن بعض الطالبات يشعرن بعدم الراحة كثيرا لحصة اللغة الإنجليزية؟
3. What would you advise an anxious student?
3- بماذا تنصحين طالبة القلق؟

D. Implications of Curriculum design

1. Are there any kinds of exercises that cause you to panic?
1- هل هناك أي نوع من التدريبات التي تسبب لك الذعر؟
-2
2. What do you think about your English curriculum?
2- ما هو رأيك بمنهج اللغة الإنجليزية؟
3. Would you feel less anxious if it was changed?
هل سيقال القلق لديك إذا ما تغير المنهج؟

B. Question guide for Focus group Interviews

1. What makes you anxious in your English class?
2. What exercises are there that cause you the most anxiety?
3. What would you advise an anxious student?

Appendix 4

Qualitative Investigations

Summary of Single Interviews Data

The informal interviews with the students were carried out on 5 separate days. Ten students were interviewed; each session lasted for about 50 minutes. Three main topics were presented. The first focused on their general attitude towards the English language. Probing the students' attitude to English was necessary in order to include or isolate factors in the students' views of anxiety. The second topic discussed what made them anxious. The third topic of the interviews sought ways to alleviate the students' anxiety. The interviews were needed for the triangulation of quantitative data.

In addition, the interviews follow the organisation of the research questions; where the second research question asked simply what the students' attitude to English language were? This question is expected to reveal any affective variables (attitudinal/motivational) that may be underlying their performance in the foreign language or otherwise anxiety-provoking. In the present interviews, a list of questions in English and the Arabic translated version was handed the students. The questions were also read out in English to them. The interviews showed that students maintain a positive attitude towards English language. They indicated that they were motivated to learn English as a foreign language. They are aware that English is a global language; of science and technology and of advanced studies.

(I=Interviewee, followed by number identification of the student)

Text of the Interviews

I9. "I feel calm when we have pair work or group work. Girls feel afraid because speaking is difficult and they afraid of making mistakes. My advice is try to speak English as much as possible, make a lot of practice. I feel nervous when we have

functions or vocabulary. I don't like the book because it has too many writing exercises in the work book. If it is changed, I don't think I will feel less anxious".

I 1. "I have never travelled to any English –speaking country. I don't enjoy speaking English. I speak English only at school or in the Malls, sometimes with friends. In the future, English is important as a means of communication and for future career. Of course some people learn English more easily than others especially if they travel. If they let me choose, I will choose English but only if it is not difficult. Of course I like English but I have little problem with vocabulary and pronunciation. I hope to score 98% this term." What makes me anxious are many like pronouncing difficult words- - and teacher position in class. If she's too far, I fear that I don't hear her teaching. If she is near, I fear that she will ask me questions. The atmosphere in my class is o.k., but I'd like to change the decoration. Also the girls disturb me, they are noisy. The only place I speak English is in the classroom. The best thing I like about English class are the activities and the worst thing is paragraph writing. My best teacher must be interesting

I 10. "The classroom activities that make me feel calm is reading stories Students get very upset about English class because they feel that English is difficult, so they can't understand. The best thing is to take course in English, speak English at home. I think that the English curriculum is nice. All the exercises are ok and if it changes, no difference" (would make no difference)

I 2. "I travelled to London (England) when I was 8years old. All I could say was: *yes/no, Ok/bye*, I was young and it was fun. English is important, everywhere people speak English. I will still study English even if they say it is not a must because English is beautiful, because it is easier than any other language. Of course some people learn languages more easily than others because maybe they started early, but for me it wasn't easy to learn. This term maybe I will score 70%."

I 3. "Speaking in the class makes me anxious- because it is a big problem. Also girls speak a lot, so I don't understand. The atmosphere of the class is noisy. The class must be quiet place. Girls make me nervous. When I want to speak, girls giggle and make sounds.

My teacher is fantastic- no problem. I speak English more at home only – with maids. In my English class, I like it when the teacher gives sweets. I like group work or when groups compete to see who finishes first. I hate it when teacher speaks English only and when she speaks fast. I dislike difficult vocabulary, because I don't understand it. I don't like the teacher when she is nervous. Also when no one participates the teacher is angry, I don't like angry teacher.”

I 5. “I can't speak English and can't understand what the teacher says. This makes me anxious. I am uncomfortable because I can't speak English. Nothing makes me calm in the class. I can't understand English. I wish to learn like others, but me, I don't know what to do. The exercise that makes me jump is *Functions*. I think the English book is easy but I can't read it, even if it changes, I still can't read it.”

I 6. “All the activities make me nervous. We are nervous because English is difficult and there are no attractive techniques. I like to feel calm – not anxious. I like to have confidence. The most exercise that make me panic is *paragraph writing* – I don't like it and I don't like the book- even if they change it, I am still nervous in English.”

I 7. “I don't feel nervous in class. I like *paragraph writing*. The students feel worry because they can't understand in English. My advice is; don't worry, relax and try to speak. Anyway, I don't like *Functions*. I think the book is good- fine. If they change it, it will be the same.”

I. 8 “I like *functions* and working in pairs, they are the activities that make me feel calm. Girls are uncomfortable about English class because it is difficult to understand, difficult to speak and they don't know how to express ideas. My advice is to be calm, don't make it difficult on you. But I don't like vocabulary and I don't like the book – too much exercises. The exercises are difficult. The book is big. Of course I will feel calm if they change it, if it is going to be easier, I am going to understand better.”

Appendix 5

Focus Groups Interview

- Introduction of the participants as they were drawn from different classes/groups/sections of the student community.
- Reason for tape recording (to refer back to the discussion report when writing the report).
- Request that only one speaker to speak at a time while I play the role the moderator. Please don't allow what I say or what your neighbour says to affect or influence your ideas. So say exactly what you think and let's exchange ideas and no worry.

Now girls, we are talking about the question of anxiety in language learning. How do you feel in your language class? - Especially in your English class. Actually what makes you anxious? What makes you nervous? What makes you fear? What makes you unable to speak when you stand up to answer the teacher's questions, in class?

The focus group discussed the issue of what makes the students anxious, two components were implicated:

- The classroom environment.
- The curriculum and students' attitude to English

The classroom component identifies three related aspects:

The students in the class and the
The teacher
The classroom decoration

(P=Participant, followed by first letter of participant's name).

P M: "I agree that the teacher makes us anxious, and I afraid from my girls in the class. Because they sometimes laugh- When answer is wrong or right –ashamed- but they don't know it- they laugh and we feel shy"

P Y: “Sometimes I feel calm at other times I don’t because maybe girls are sleepy- why should I share in the class?! Some girls’ attitude in the class-- discouraging “

P M: “I feel confident when I see my classmates get good marks—I feel relaxed. The atmosphere, sometimes it helps us answer, but sometimes it is not good. Sometimes it’s normal—nothing. We don’t like the decoration.”

Teacher’s attitude and classroom practice

P F: “Sometimes when the teacher shouts, first we fail to answer, then, we feel worried to answer-maybe it’s wrong, maybe it’s right. I am not sure-sometimes. Also in the exam, many teachers say “after five minutes, I will take the paper.” Then I come afraid. I am unable to finish. Also I am afraid to go quickly because of a lot of mistakes.

P D: “And the teachers sometimes don’t respect our point of views. They don’t attract us to the lesson- don’t start the lesson with attractive-” – “We feel uncomfortable when the teacher punish us because we are late. They don’t give us the exam, they delay giving us the question paper. Then we don’t finish the questions and no good marks. Then we will remain worried whenever we have the teacher, Sometimes when the teacher is angry from other class and when she comes to us, she is still angry, and it’s not our fault.”

P A: “Some teachers scare us by saying *the exam will be hard, study everything* and when we see the exam, we know that it is easy but we are worried by what they had said- we know that when the teacher says like that, she mean that they want us to study, but they can say it in another way e.g. *if you get good marks, I will give---* not to just—so the teacher can use positive way not in negative way. *You will fail, you---* Also the teacher don’t let us discuss together and we don’t speak English with the English teacher”

P I: “I am anxious when I tell teacher I don’t understand, teacher say: You don’t understand?! You must listen in the class. I just explained it to you”...and the, she said silly! Teacher, they make us ashamed and we not return to the teacher”.

P A: “The teacher is the main thing for English. If the teacher is good, the class will be good. Sometimes the teacher is boring, using Arabic all the time- angry all the time, doesn’t give useful information—we are not allowed to discuss anything, just right/wrong answers – just allow us to write what we know, she teaches us to complete the exercises and homework. She is boring because she is discussing the book, no other thing of life”.

P N: “Some teachers give different treatment to girls. If there is in the class a good girl, the teacher only speaks to this girl, and the whole class wait for the girl to answer all the questions The teacher makes all the class feel stupid and only this girl—the head of the class or maybe in the English. That makes the students hate the teacher, hate the special girl and hate the subject. Also when the teacher say to the girl *you are very good*, maybe the teacher is unfair, to discourage the whole—because of one girl. And maybe in the class, there is a girl who doesn’t understand English well, the teacher refers to her as stupid- maybe we can encourage the girl.”

P A: “And some teachers, if we didn’t understand something and we go to ask her questions, they feel us as stupid—they refuse us—we stupid—can’t understand anything. And that’s the reason some girls don’t go to the teacher to ask her about something. The teacher doesn’t try to answer us. Maybe she has some work in the room, she can tell the students to come again—that can encourage the girl to--”

P S: “I don’t speak English with the teacher because she is professional and she’ll catch my mistake. I talk English with my friends, with my sister. She tells me what I say wrong and I can know what she says wrong and she tells me about movies and new words, but the teacher?! O! *You are wrong! You are this and that!* We feel shy from our mistakes and we don’t speak English with the teacher. In the

class, we are talking to get the right answer, but, the teacher says the questions— maybe she thinks the student must give her the right answer? Then she gets angry and embarrasses us, we feel shy”

P SH: “Another reason why we don’t speak English is because we are ashamed, we don’t understand the words.

P A: “Also the important thing is new voc, because English is words and sentences and how can we say words and sentences if you don’t know the words- and how to speak (pronounce) the words. Some teachers say that we will get the meaning from the text, but the meaning we is not the same in the text. So what happens? - We read the word, use it and forget about it. Our English is academic not for life, not for using.”

P HS: “Teacher, they mix everything nowadays. They make education only to earn money. You must do something beautiful because one day we will die. O.k. you teach to get money—but the best, the main thing is to help girls to study lesson, life, how people think and how to use English in real situation. Here is just a waste of time, money and energy. When we get to the University we can’t read. We can’t understand - Teacher comes and expresses the lesson and the students don’t get anything”

Ways to overcome / reduce the teacher-component

P S: The teacher should be our friend- mother- make the lesson touch our life. Teacher must encourage us even if we make a mistake. Teacher must say “OK”, “Good Try. If the teacher encourages us, we will make good answer”

P SH: “Maybe gifts, maybe sometimes for example, give presents to the good girl- - make us want to study, not for the exam....We know that when we go University no one will give us presents, so we need the present now; to help us to know all things about English”.

P HS “A teacher is best because of the way she teaches. She’s happy all the time, smiling at us, she makes us happy and ready to get the lesson, interesting”.

P HD: “When we have a new lesson, teachers have to discuss the new words we don’t know. When the teacher doesn’t discuss these words, we don’t understand. They suppose that we already know everything”

The Curriculum Component

P S:. “The book is so--- stupid, it like for kids not for big—its about your job and what you want to be. These are what we need to know when we are young, not now that we are going to college, we need real life- make us ready for real life. This is the age of dreams.”

P M: “Maybe it is the way of the book, the way of the teacher. When we take a lesson about the job, she still asks us what we want to be. Asking in this way, most of us like to work as doctors, and we talk as we will be doctors, maybe girls have other dreams, even, we write compositions – all about being doctors- that’s stupid.”

P HD: “English is important in the University, everywhere, to communicate with other- we meet English people. We have to speak English everyday in our life. In the University, study is in English for the computer and the teachers are English. English has new words- we watch movies- we meet new people, they use other words. Our language is many generations back. What we study in class is not the same in real life. When we get out of school, to real life, we will not be able to-.”

P D: “And in the class, we must use our imagination. The curriculum does not allow us to use our imagination- no not very much. All that we know about English is the one class in school. That’s our English to us, not something we use in life, something- .”

Ways to improve things

P I: “We need easy exams, not difficult exams of English. We don’t agree that we need very easy exams, the exams are good but put some pictures, use good hand writing- font- make it bigger- not to see, but to feel that it is not hard. Also, we want tests once a week to have constant review all the time. And I hope to get same (good) marks as last year maybe better. Some of us will study more and understand more and do better”.

P HS: “We need more things, like to play game – to play games within the lesson. Even we are in the senior class we need games- not all the time, but, but to make lesson interesting-.”

P S: “We need to get out of the tension of studying, to refresh, because the lesson is 60 minutes. In the half of the lesson, we are sleeping, so we don’t understand the entire lesson. We need to refresh our minds. Too long- boring- brain is tired- so we need games to revive-.”

P I: “-or maybe using computer and other technologies- in the future- something visual, not just writing and reading, reading also. We like seeing movies. These activities, we like best.”

P S: “If the curriculum changes we will feel comfortable and less anxious. We want the style of the book to change. We love to see another kind – of the way of presenting the information. You must make students see movies in the school, during the class to learn- answer questions- have fun and learn at the same time- - bring - read.”

P F: “We like to have a class only for speaking. In the class, only for two minutes, the girls read the lesson, you can’t learn speaking- because English needs how to communicate and speak- even no reading- Teacher uses the recorder and we answer the questions.”

P S: “We wish to have one lesson about Shakespeare, about Hamlet. When I see in America how they learn, they make students think- touch the lesson. We always sitting on seats and just listen and write and we don’t stand up and make something”

Attitude to English

P N : “The best thing about English is knowing new words and knowing how to talk to English persons. And we like the movies about English people. We hate writing letters.”

P Y: “I like writing but not formal – letter. We can’t speak formal language, also the way to do it – the technical part of writing a letter. We like writing about the subject - . In English, we can’t speak English in a good way. Also we like to speak English in the play ground, during the break, but we don’t – because anytime - -When I write in the structures, I get 90% / 95% but we can’t speak.”

P F: “If there are other languages like French and Germany, we will still study English and also French, because they are languages of culture. Such languages are spoken by large number of people. Learning about language of culture opens the door for us on them, to learn about them and maybe they have wrong thoughts about us, maybe we have chance - - We like learning language , to tell them advice and to talk about our religion, our culture, to know it – exchange language.”

P M: “Language learning is not difficult to everyone – some people – maybe one loves English more, so he learns it fast and easily – than others. It was difficult for me to learn English; also if I put it in my mind, if I believe that it is difficult then it is difficult.”

Appendix 6

Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

The focus group which was used after administering English language questionnaires were needed to supplement the single interview data in order to obtain a better understanding of anxiety in language learning and to ascertain views of the participants regarding strategies to reduce their anxiety; identified two broad categories. The focus group data was audio taped, transcribed, and then verified by two colleagues. Prior to the focus group session, participants had been acquainted with the aim of the focus group. The participants had accessible clarification checks throughout the focus group time and the moderator would restate or rephrase an idea to allow participants the opportunity for clarification and correction of ideas or opinions.

The two broad categories (a classroom component and the curriculum) that resulted from the focus group data were divided into sub-categories represented by four major factors that made the participants anxious in their foreign language classrooms: teacher's attitudes and techniques, students' attitudes in the class, the nature of the foreign language and the curriculum. These aspects of the language learning classroom emerged from the analysis and form the basis for identifying sources of foreign language classroom anxiety and remedial suggestions. There is ample suggestion that the focus group data (presented below) corroborated the single interview data.

The Classroom Components

Teacher attitudes and techniques in the classroom

A major source of anxiety identified by students related to the teacher's classroom practices and techniques. The problems association with the teacher included unsympathetic attitude, lack of time for personal attention and favouritism. Also, there is the sense of being judged by the teacher or inability to impress the teacher. The pedagogic techniques, classroom practices and actions of the teacher were a factor both in

how language teaching was carried out and how the participants experienced it. The aspect of the teacher as a source of anxiety is vividly depicted in the utterance of PF:

“Sometimes, when the teacher shouts, first we fail to answer, and then we feel worried”.

Another participant, PA continued with the idea:

“Some teachers scare us by saying the exam will be hard, and when we see the exam we know that it is easy but we are worried by what they had said”.

Teachers need to create a non-threatening environment that allowed learning to occur. On the contrary, the participants found their teachers intimidating, unsympathetic and sometimes abusive.

As P A said:

“And some teachers, if we don’t understand and we go to ask questions, they feel us as stupid- they refuse us- we stupid- can’t understand anything”. “And that’s the reason some girls don’t - - - ask about something”.

One very animated participant, P I; supported that point:

“Yes, like this” “You don’t understand?! You must listen in the class. I just explained it to you!” ...and then, she said “*silly!*” Teacher, they make us ashamed and we not return to the teacher”

In addition the teacher threatens them verbally, as PA put it:

“You will fail, you!”

The participants were unanimous regarding their teacher’s unsympathetic attitude and lack of time for them. PA said:

“And some teachers, if we don’t understand and we go to ask questions, they feel us as stupid- they refuse us- we stupid- can’t understand anything”. “And that’s the reason some girls don’t - - - ask about something”.

What is lacking is the quality of teacher support. In this case, support appears to be lacking to such an extent that the students choose not to go to the teacher for support or clarification.

Another anxiety provoking aspect of the teacher's behaviour is the tendency to favouritism and providing differential treatment. PN said:

“Some teachers give different treatments to girls, that makes the students hate the teacher, hate the special girl and hate the subject, maybe the teacher is unfair; a girl who doesn't understand English well, the teacher refers to her as stupid-maybe we can encourage the girl.”

Other teacher's action frequently brought up by the participants relate to the ability of the teacher to motivate students, the expectation set by the teachers for their students and the techniques used to maintain discipline. PD said:

“And the teachers sometimes don't respect our point of views. They don't attract us to the lesson- don't start the lesson with attractive-” – “We feel uncomfortable when the teacher punish us because we are late. They don't give us the exam, they delay giving us the question paper. Then we don't finish the questions and no good marks. Then we will remain worried whenever we have the teacher, Sometimes when the teacher is angry from other class and when she comes to us, she is still angry, and it's not our fault.”

In addition, the students describe their teachers' incompetence and inability to incorporate relevant language teaching techniques. A somewhat agitated PA said:

“The teacher is the main thing for English. If the teacher is good, the class will be good... the teacher is boring, using Arabic all the time-angry all the time, doesn't give useful information. We are not allowed to discuss anything, just right/wrong answers –

just allow us to write what we know, she teaches us to complete the exercises and homework. She is boring because she is discussing the book, no other thing of life”.

And the feeling of having accomplished very little was endorsed by the participants as being very demoralising for the students. As PSH continued the idea:

“The main thing is to help girls to study lesson, life, how people think and how to use English in real situation. When we get to University we can’t read. We can’t understand”.

Then PSH summarised that point:

“The teacher comes and expresses the lesson and the students don’t get anything”.

It is indeed debatable whether students are equipped to assess their teachers’ competence level. However, because the use of L2 in the foreign language classroom is a major aspect of foreign language teaching and learning, students are bored, uncomfortable and distrust in a foreign language classroom where L1 is frequent; “using Arabic all the time”...“doesn’t give useful information”. Participants agree that their teachers’ use of L1 in the foreign language classroom cause them anxiety as they worry about their own competence and lack of confidence during self expression in the foreign language. The teacher is directly responsible for establishing a communicative classroom climate where students are provided opportunities to interact with teacher and with other students in the foreign language classroom. And the point was voiced by PA:

“The teacher don’t let us discuss together and we don’t speak English with the English teacher”

Other students described their desire to communicate with the teacher, and the anxiety and frustration caused by their awareness of her role in evaluating them, and PS said:

“I don’t speak English with the teacher because she is professional and she’ll catch my mistakes. We feel shy from our mistakes and we don’t speak English with the teacher, she thinks the students must give her the right answer, then she gets angry and embarrasses us, we feel shy. I talk English with my sister. She tells me what I say wrong

... but the teacher?! *O! You are this, you are that!* In the class we are talking to get the answer right.”

To summarise, the students were made anxious by their teachers who intimidated, threatened and abused them in various ways. Students suffer a loss of confidence, as the teachers do not consider their views or input, do not encourage classroom discussions in English, among the students and between the students and the teachers. What is obvious is the fear of failure and the fear of negative evaluation; teacher as an expert that points out all the errors. The students also have communication apprehension as they lack confidence in their ability to communicate effectively. .

Students in the Classroom

This classroom component includes factors within the classroom context that affected how the participants felt, classroom expectations, the teacher and the other students. Creating a classroom atmosphere conducive for learning is an essential pedagogic practice. However, the participants fail to identify such qualities with their teachers. They present a classroom situation where the teacher is not in control, a noisy class. Some students believe the teacher cause anxiety just by being there. One of the greatest concerns of the anxious students was the sense of being judged and laughed at by peers. P M stated:

“I agree that the teacher makes us anxious and I’m afraid from my girls in the class because sometimes they laugh . . . when answer is wrong or right but they don’t know it, they laugh and we feel shy. We feel ashamed”.

On the one hand, the students in the class played a decisive role in the comfort level and motivation of the participants:

“Sometimes I feel calm, at other times I don’t because maybe girls are sleepy-why should I share in the class?! Some girls’ attitudes in the class are discouraging”

P M continued:

“The atmosphere, sometimes it helps us answer, but sometimes it is not good”.

And on the other hand, active participation in the classroom is revitalizing as P M put it:

“I feel confident when I see my classmates get good marks. . . . I feel relaxed”.

And in unison the group chorused:

“Yes!”

In sum, the point is the fear of being negatively evaluated by peers. The participants recognise a noisy classroom and the sight of students “sleeping” are discouraging aspects of a language classroom. They’d prefer a more conducive classroom atmosphere where they’re not laughed at.

The Difficult nature of the Foreign Language

Horwitz talked about the peculiarity of the language learning process and suggested its inherent difficulty. Apart from the possibility of the teacher in the classroom to contribute to the students’ anxiety, there were feelings about difficulties with lexical items. P SH said:

“Another reason we don’t speak English is because we are ashamed, we don’t understand the words.”

A very important underlying factor is the students’ perceived inadequacies. They found the English lexis rather difficult. What proved very frustrating to some were their perceived inadequacies with L2. Not only did they have problems understanding the teacher, but they were unable to understand the lexical items-vocabulary. PA said:

“Also the important thing is new vocab, because English is words and sentences and how can we say words and sentences if you don’t know the words- and how to speak (pronounce) the words? Some teachers say that we will get the meaning from the text, but the meaning we get is not the same in the text. So what happens? - We read the word, use it and forget about it.”

And P N said:

“The best thing about English is knowing the new words and knowing how to talk to English persons.... We hate writing letters.”

PM continues with the idea of difficulty in language learning but emphasises individual differences and beliefs:

“Language learning is not difficult to everyone – some people – maybe one loves English more, so he learns it fast and easily – than others. It was difficult for me to learn English; also if I put it in my mind, if I believe that it is difficult then it is difficult.”

The Curriculum

The course content represented in the Pupils’ book and Pupils’ work book is a major concern for the participants. Its relevance to the participants’ needs and expectations was a consistent factor. P S said:

“The book is so--- stupid, it like for kids not for big—it’s about your job and what you want to be. These are what we need to know when we are young, not now that we are going to college, we need real life- make us ready for real life. This is the age of dreams.”

Participants complained that the topics for their writing tasks weren’t chosen with any sensitivity, insight or vision, nor were they consulted regarding their aspirations. They were usually given to write about the same easy topic, ignoring that, (according to PM):

“Maybe the girls have other dreams, even; we write compositions-all about being doctors-that’s stupid.”

The participants wondered where it all went wrong, when PM said:

“Maybe it is the way of the book...or the way of the teacher?”

The students seemed to believe that they had been robbed of their motivation and subsequently, to some extent, are uncertain about their future, PHS:

“Teacher, they mix everything nowadays. They make education only to earn money. You must do something beautiful because one day we will die. O.k. you teach to get money—but the best, the main thing is to help girls to study lesson, life, how people think and how to use English in real situation. Here is just a waste of time, money and energy. When we get to the University we can’t read. We can’t understand - Teacher comes and expresses the lesson and the students don’t get anything”

Although a foreign language, English has been endorsed as a global language and the participants are aware of its pervading importance in their lives. They insist that their language learning had turned irrelevant and became a source of anxiety. P HD lamented:

“English is important in the University, everywhere, to communicate with other- we meet English people. We have to use English everyday in our life. In the University, study is in English for the computer and the teachers are English. English has new words- we watch movies- we meet new people, they use other words. Our language is many generations back. What we study in class is not the same in real life. When we get out of school, to real life, we will not be able to-.”

They perceive their course book as uninspiring, P D said:

“And in the class, we must use our imagination. The curriculum does not allow us to use our imagination- no not very much. All that we know about English is the one class in school. That’s our English to us, not something we use in life, something- .Our English is academic not for using”.

In sum, the person, the techniques and classroom practices of the teacher cause anxiety. Students feel that they get little or no support from the teacher. All these indicate fear of negative evaluation, brought about by the teacher. Consequently, the students they avoid the teacher and speak with friends or siblings. Relationships among students in the classroom indicate a lack of identification with a group, a lake of affiliation seems to exist. Within the classroom, participants attributed their anxiety to student’s judgments, which translates again to fear of negative evaluation. The students’ anxiety is associated

with interpersonal interaction. They find language learning difficult, and this may be attributed to individual differences rather than to mere beliefs. The course content represented a major concern for the participants. They indicated a sense that the curriculum does not provide students' with right equipment to lead independent lives outside the classroom. All the participants described how surreal, unsuitable, redundant, impractical and uninspiring the course book was.

Appendix 7

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in an educational research study. My name is Margaret. I am registered in a Master's programme at The British University in Dubai, and one of your teachers at school. This study is conducted for my dissertation. I hope to gather information concerning the effects of anxiety in foreign language. You were selected as a possible participant in this study since secondary school students are my target population. You will be one of about 30 students chosen to participate in this study.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete some questionnaires in class. Five to twenty minutes will be needed for each administration. Some students will be asked to be interviewed for further information regarding their foreign language anxiety. There will be a simple written test.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will not bear your name and will remain confidential. It will be your decision whether or not to participate in this study. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

If you have any questions, Please ask me.

رسالة موافقة

أنت مدعوة للمشاركة في دراسة بحثية

أدعى مارغريت وأنا منتسبة للجامعة البريطانية في دبي لدراسة الماجستير وأنا أعمل كمدرسة في المدرسة. لقد قمت بهذه الدراسة لأداء رسالتي الجامعية ولأجمع معلومات تتعلق بأثر القلق على أداء الطالبات في تعليم اللغة الأجنبية. لقد اخترتكم كمشاركين وهذه الدراسة تعنى بطلاب الثانوية. وسوف تكوني ضمن ثلاثون طالبة تم اختيارهم للمشاركة في هذه الدراسة، فإذا اخترت المشاركة عليك ملء بعض الاستبيانات في الصف. كل استبيانته تحتاج من 5-20 دقيقة. سوف تجري مقابلات لبعض الطالبات للحصول على معلومات إضافية وأيضاً سوف يكون هنالك امتحان كتابي بسيط. ونؤكد لك بأن أي معلومات تدلين بها سوف تكون سرية وبدون ذكر الأسماء وسيكون لك مطلق الحرية في المشاركة ولا تتردد في طلب المعونة مني إذا احتجت لأي سؤال.

Signature of Participant:

توقيع المشاركة

Date:

التاريخ

Signature of investigator: **MAgbalizu**

توقيع الباحثة

Date:

التاريخ

Appendix 8

Tables

Table 1. Number of subjects by class

Grades	Science	Arts
Grade 11 C	5	5
Grade 11 B	5	5
Grade 12 C	5	5
Grade 12 B	5	5
Total	20	20

Table 2. Arts Group Average, Highest and Lowest Scores.

Arts Group

ITEM	N	AVERAGE	LOWEST	HIGHEST	SD
FLWAS	10	66.9	58	79	7.288
FLCAS	10	69.3	49	91	13.933
WTM	10	58.1	28	84	24.231
STM	10	64.8	40	88	16.463

Table 3. Pearson Correlations for the Arts Group

Correlations^a

		Score on The WAS	Score on The FLCAS	Writing Marks	Speaking Marks
Score on The WAS	Pearson Correlation	1	.305	-.068	-.650*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.391	.851	.042
	N	10	10	10	10
Score on The FLCAS	Pearson Correlation	.305	1	.179	-.193
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.391		.621	.594
	N	10	10	10	10
Writing Marks	Pearson Correlation	-.068	.179	1	.121
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.851	.621		.739
	N	10	10	10	10
Speaking Marks	Pearson Correlation	-.650*	-.193	.121	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	.594	.739	
	N	10	10	10	10

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

a. major = Art

Table 4. Science Group Average, Highest, and Lowest Scores.

Science Group

ITEM	N	AVERAGE	LOWEST	HIGHEST	SD
FLWAS	10	58.9	49	67	6.024
FLCAS	10	49.4	28	75	14.96
WTM	10	81	58	98	13.63
STM	10	86	64	98	11.9

Table 5. Pearson Correlations for the Science Group

Correlations^a

		Score on The WAS	Score on The FLCAS	Writing Marks	Speaking Marks
Score on The WAS	Pearson Correlation	1	.497	.288	.449
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.144	.419	.193
	N	10	10	10	10
Score on The FLCAS	Pearson Correlation	.497	1	-.016	.169
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.144		.965	.640
	N	10	10	10	10
Writing Marks	Pearson Correlation	.288	-.016	1	.799**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.419	.965		.006
	N	10	10	10	10
Speaking Marks	Pearson Correlation	.449	.169	.799**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.193	.640	.006	
	N	10	10	10	10

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a. major = Science

Table 6. Pearson Correlations for the two groups (Arts & Science)

Correlations

		Score on The WAS	Score on The FLCAS	Writing Marks	Speaking Marks
Score on The WAS	Pearson Correlation	1	.566**	-.255	-.470*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009	.278	.036
	N	20	20	20	20
Score on The FLCAS	Pearson Correlation	.566**	1	-.285	-.339
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009		.222	.144
	N	20	20	20	20
Writing Marks	Pearson Correlation	-.255	-.285	1	.600**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.278	.222		.005
	N	20	20	20	20
Speaking Marks	Pearson Correlation	-.470*	-.339	.600**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	.144	.005	
	N	20	20	20	20

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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