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Exploring Test Anxiety and Classroom Anxiety in English as a Foreign Language: A Mixed-Methods Investigation Among Pakistani Undergraduates

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Abstract

This study examines test anxiety and classroom anxiety as critical components of foreign language anxiety affecting undergraduate English learners' speaking performance in Pakistan. Using Zhao's model as a theoretical framework, this mixed-methods investigation employed a convergent parallel design, collecting quantitative data through questionnaires from 80 BS English students and qualitative data through semi-structured interviews with 24 purposively selected participants from the University of Malakand and three affiliated colleges. Quantitative findings revealed high levels of both test anxiety ($M=4.45$, $SD=0.65$) and classroom anxiety ($M=4.38$, $SD=0.62$), with over 70% of students reporting debilitating anxiety during assessments and classroom speaking activities. Qualitative analysis identified four major themes: paralyzing fear of formal assessments, teacher behaviors as anxiety triggers, classroom environment as a source of distress, and physiological-cognitive manifestations. The study reveals that test anxiety creates cognitive interference, disrupting language recall, while classroom anxiety stems from large class sizes, teacher-centered pedagogies, and immediate error correction. Findings underscore the urgent need for anxiety-reducing pedagogical interventions, supportive classroom climates, and teacher training in affective dimensions of language learning.

Keywords: Test Anxiety; Classroom Anxiety; Foreign Language Anxiety; Speaking Performance

INTRODUCTION

The global expansion of English as a lingua franca has intensified the pressure on non-native speakers to achieve proficiency in all language skills, with speaking and performance-based assessments becoming increasingly critical benchmarks of success. In academic contexts, particularly at the undergraduate level, students are required not only to comprehend English but also to demonstrate their competence through formal evaluations, classroom presentations, and spontaneous oral interactions. Nevertheless, the mental aspects of language acquisition, namely, test anxiety and anxiety in the classroom, tend to provide an insurmountable obstacle to the performance of the learners (Zheng & Cheng, 2018). Although it has been established that a significant number of studies have



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analyzed the concept of foreign language anxiety (FLA) in general, there is a lack of research that disaggregates its elements to comprehend how test-specific anxiety and classroom environment anxiety have unique and cumulative effects on the speaking performance of learners and their overall performance in education (Dewaele et al., 2019).

Anxiety about tests in foreign language settings is a unique psychological phenomenon that is typified by fear, anxiety, and arousal of the body prior to, during, or after evaluative circumstances. In comparison to the general academic anxiety, test anxiety in language learning is additionally complicated by the fear of linguistic incompetence, uncertainty of using language under pressure, and the perceived effects of low performance on subsequent academic and career opportunities (Salehi & Marefat, 2014). High levels of test anxiety are also associated with cognitive interference, in which the worry and self-doubt take up the mental capacity that would otherwise be used in language processing and production (Cassady & Johnson, 2002). Such cognitive load is observed in low memory of vocabulary, grammatical constructions, and conversation strategies during examinations or oral tests, leading to a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure (Cakici, 2016). It was found that test anxiety consists of two main elements: worry (cognitive fears about performance) and emotionality (physiological and affective responses) (Spielberger & Vagg, 1995), and that both worry and emotionality are exceptionally high in tests of foreign language where students must deal with linguistic and evaluative demands at the same time.

Classroom anxiety, however, encompasses a broader range of issues related to the overall learning environment. It involves uneasiness over classroom processes, anxiety about teacher reprimand, concern over rank among peers, and apprehension regarding teaching speed and organization (Oxford, 1999). Studies indicate that traditional teacher-centered pedagogies, which offer students minimal opportunities for meaningful interaction and where mistakes are corrected before they can be addressed, increase anxiety in the classroom and result in greater self-consciousness and reluctance to engage (Young, 1991). These fears are usually intensified in settings where English is taught as a foreign language, such as in Pakistan, due to large classes, limited exposure to real-life use of the language, and cultural expectations that promote shyness and hinder the expression of imperfect knowledge (Azher et al., 2010). In addition, Von Wörde (2003) identified instructor behavior as a significant cause of classroom anxiety. The behavior of teachers, particularly their attitude, teaching styles, and methods of correcting mistakes, directly impacts students' affective state and desire to engage in oral activities.

The situation in Pakistan is fascinating in terms of studying these aspects of foreign language anxiety. English plays a complicated role within the Pakistani society; it is not the first language of most of the population, but it is not entirely alien since it is an official language, a medium of instruction in the higher education institutions, and the entry point to social and economic mobility (Rahman, 2004). Although the English language has been taught to Pakistani students over the years, most of them find it challenging to attain functional proficiency, especially in speaking. This contradiction suggests that the influence of affective variables, such as test and classroom anxiety, might be even greater than previously considered as the reason for the ongoing gap in the relationship between instructional input and learner output (Manan et al., 2015). Research



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carried out in Pakistani educational institutions has consistently shown high rates of language anxiety among students, and test anxiety and classroom-related fears were recognized as especially disabling factors that disrupt the process of learning and performance outcomes (Gopang et al., 2015).

The model of language anxiety by Zhao (2009) offers an elaborate framework for studying these issues, suggesting that communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety about foreign language classes are separate but interconnected elements. Whereas the former research paper derived the findings of this study, which was concerned with communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation, the second study changes the focus to the least studied aspects of test anxiety and classroom anxiety, which explore how it is realized among Pakistani undergraduate EFL learners and the effects it has on speaking performance. Recent studies by Liu and Jackson (2008) have proven that test anxiety and classroom anxiety, in most cases, interact synergistically to produce a compounded effect that is worse for language learning than either of the factors individually. The proposed study will achieve this objective by using both a quantitative survey and qualitative approaches based on semi-structured interviews. These methods will be used to understand the prevalence of test and classroom anxiety among the students of the University of Malakand and its associated colleges. To create specific pedagogical interventions that can help turn anxiety-inducing classes into positive learning situations where students can experience empowerment to take linguistic risks and build their speaking competencies without being paralyzed by the fear of failure or reproach, it is necessary to comprehend these dimensions (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The phenomenon of foreign language anxiety has garnered substantial scholarly attention over the last forty years, where researchers have come to appreciate its complex nature and significant influence on the outcome of language learning. Language acquisition is inherently a gradual process that occurs systematically, starting with receptive skills like listening and progressing to productive skills such as speaking, reading, and writing. Specifically, speaking, as al-Shboul et al. (2020) point out, turns out to be an active skill, which means that learners must show their linguistic knowledge in action in real time. This aspect of the language input, in turn, makes speaking more anxiety-inducing compared to the passive reception of language input. Listening and speaking are symbiotic in the sense that listening is a prerequisite for developing speaking skills. The lack of development in these skills can significantly affect a person's general language performance and communicative functionality, both in learning and the workplace.

The concept of foreign language anxiety has been defined as a complicated psychological condition that is distinctly and uniquely linked with the process of learning and using a second or foreign language. According to Young (1992), this phenomenon is described as feelings of discomfort, tension, uneasiness, and apprehension that arise when the target language must be used in listening comprehension, oral production, reading tasks, and written expression. Dewaele et al. (2019) also highlighted that such anxiety can be expressed by negative emotional responses and a strong unwillingness to perform communicative



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actions, which may also result in avoidance behaviors that further hinder language development. More importantly, scholars have proven that foreign language anxiety is not just an extension or a form of general trait anxiety, an extension of communication apprehension in the native language, but rather a specific situation-specific anxiety, closely linked to the foreign language learning situation and the specific vulnerabilities it produces.

The literature on the origins of language anxiety in the instructional contexts is well recorded. In their masterpiece, Horwitz et al. (2019) found three main dimensions: communication apprehension, which is the fear or discomfort of communicating with others; fear of negative evaluation, which can be understood as a fear of how teachers and peers will evaluate one; and test anxiety, which is the fear of formal assessment situations and their outcomes. MacIntyre and Gardner (2020) elaborated this conceptualization with the addition of six interrelated causes of language anxiety, such as beliefs and false beliefs of learners about language learning, personal and interpersonal insecurities, the type and nature of teacher-learner interactions, teacher attitudes and beliefs regarding language pedagogy, and the nature of testing and classroom procedures and atmosphere. Such an extended concept recognizes that anxiety in language learning results from a multifaceted interaction of personal, interpersonal, and environmental influences.

The teacher and classroom setting can play a role in reducing or increasing language anxiety; this cannot be overemphasized. The study by Oxford (2020) proved that the insufficiency of teacher support, encouragement, and consideration of the affective needs of learners can become a potent trigger of anxiety. Reid (1995) and Young (1999) have recorded that authoritarian instruction, too much error correction especially in public settings, challenging speaking tasks beyond the current competence levels of students, negative or discouraging classroom interactions, inappropriate matches between instructional methods with the learning preferences of students, understanding problems, and generally unfavorable learning conditions were all noted to be significant causes of high levels of anxiety. This evidence further demonstrates the paramount role of pedagogical consciousness and the necessity for teachers to develop classroom environments that are academically challenging and emotionally safe.

The findings of various empirical studies on different cultural and linguistic backgrounds have shown significant differences in the way foreign language anxiety presents itself and the effects it produces on learners. Alrabai (2019) performed a study among Saudi Arabian students and found that the three most common causes of language-related stress were communication anxiety, negative perceptions towards English classrooms, and comprehension anxiety. Zhou (2017) examined the reading anxiety issue and found that the leading causes of anxiety were the text understanding problems, the inability to follow the patterns of pronunciation, the exposure to new thematic material, and the necessity to read aloud in front of colleagues. These context-dependent results imply that some elements of anxiety might be universal. However, their relative prevalence and intensity can significantly differ across cultures, educational contexts, and the linguistic challenges of a particular target language. The prevalence of foreign language anxiety in the learning environment was argued by Pae and Misieng (2012), and students of secondary, tertiary, and



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university levels had often said that they experienced anxiety when learning English as a foreign language. Such affective disturbances significantly disrupt the efficiency and effectiveness of the learning process. Although English is taught as a mandatory course in most educational systems around the world, including in Pakistan, many learners do not attain reasonable standards of competency, especially in productive skills. According to Rose (2020), the anxiety that dominates English language classrooms at any educational level is one of the critical elements contributing to the ongoing achievement gap. The high levels of anxiety in students are also associated with passive learning behaviors such as being unwilling to engage actively in classroom discussions, unwilling to ask questions or seek clarifications, unwilling to volunteer, and over-reliance on teacher-centered instructions as opposed to independent learning strategies.

Hamamorad (2020) studied the pedagogical consequences of these patterns and discovered them to be extensive. Classrooms with high anxiety and low participation often feature teacher talk, where students play a passive role, primarily involved in memorization, rote learning, and mechanical replication without proper understanding and internalization. Although such pedagogical methods may not be as threatening in the short run, they are counter-productive in the long run because they deny students the communicative, meaningful practice needed to acquire functional language competence. Anxiety, avoidance, and low practice form a vicious circle that leads to low academic achievements and the pattern of chronic underperformance in language skills.

The aspect of foreign language anxiety is testing anxiety, which has been given significant attention in recent literature. Salehi and Marefat (2014) examined the correlation between test anxiety and performance in a foreign language test, demonstrating that the correlation is high and negatively directed. Their study indicated that test-anxious students experienced cognitive interference, affecting their ability to recall and apply linguistic information in evaluative scenarios. Cakici (2016) also examined this phenomenon and discovered that test anxiety resulted not only in short-term negative performance but also in the development of long-term negative attitudes toward language learning, leading students to hold increasingly maladaptive beliefs about their linguistic potential. Tuncer and Doğan (2015) studied the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and the academic performance of Turkish university students. They found that test anxiety and general classroom anxiety significantly explained the outcomes of language proficiency in students, both in speaking and oral assessments.

The study carried out in Pakistani settings has especially emphasized the importance of test and classroom anxiety. Waseem and Jibeen (2013) examined anxiety among English as a second language learners in Pakistan. They found test anxiety to be one of the most crippling elements of the willingness of students to learn the English language. Gopang et al. (2015) examined the anxiety of students learning a foreign language in one of the public sector universities in Pakistan. They discovered that anxiety is high in both test anxiety and classroom-related anxiety, where students stated that they experienced panic before the oral examination and a state of extreme discomfort when speaking in the classroom. Dar and Khan (2019) studied oral communication anxiety in undergraduate engineering students in Pakistan. They found out that formal



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testing conditions and a teacher-centered classroom setting dramatically increased the level of anxiety, which often resulted in not taking English-based courses and engagement with oral activity.

Despite the growing body of research on foreign language anxiety, significant gaps remain in the literature, particularly concerning the specific manifestations and impacts of test anxiety and classroom anxiety in South Asian contexts. While communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation have been extensively studied, the unique contributions of test anxiety and classroom environment anxiety to speaking performance among Pakistani undergraduate students remain underexplored. Moreover, most existing studies have relied exclusively on quantitative measures, providing limited insight into the lived experiences of anxious learners and the contextual factors that shape their anxiety. It is urgently needed that mixed-methods studies be conducted to describe both the prevalence and the phenomenological aspects of test and classroom anxiety, especially in contexts where English plays an ambiguous sociolinguistic role as a foreign language and an important indicator of educational and social capital.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used in this study was a mixed-methods approach to explore in detail the effects of test anxiety and classroom anxiety on the speaking skills of undergraduate English learners. In particular, the convergent parallel design was adopted, where quantitative and qualitative data were gathered simultaneously, analyzed separately, and then combined to present a comprehensive perception of the phenomenon being studied. The quantitative element included a structured self-completion questionnaire based on the Zhao model of language anxiety, which used a five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to agree strongly. This tool was developed with a specific purpose to assess the different aspects of foreign language anxiety, in particular, test anxiety and foreign language classroom environment anxiety. The questions in the questionnaires were well chosen to evaluate students' perceptions of their anxiety levels during formal assessments, their emotional responses to classroom activities, their concerns about teacher correction and assessment, and their overall comfort in the English language learning classroom. The qualitative aspect consisted of semi-structured interviews, which enabled participants to explain their experiences, feelings, and situational aspects that led to their test and classroom anxiety. This approach provided numerical data with contextual information and personal stories.

The research population included all undergraduate students studying at the University of Malakand and its three associated colleges: Government Degree College Thana, Government Degree College Batkhela, and Government Degree College Gulabad. The sample was intentionally chosen and comprised BS English third-semester students who had successfully attended the course titled English in Use II: Listening and Speaking Skills in the second semester. The choice of this criterion was strategic because these students had been given systematic teaching and practice in oral activities; thus, they would be the right participants to evaluate the correlation between anxiety and performance outcomes in oral activities. The quantitative data to be analyzed was the number of students who answered the questionnaire, totaling 80 respondents. In the qualitative stage,



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purposive sampling was used based on a criterion to identify participants for in-depth interviews. This sampling design entailed classification of students into three different performance groups according to their academic performance in the speaking skills course: high performance group, average performance group, and low performance group. Out of four institutions (the central university department and three affiliated colleges), six students were chosen to be interviewed, with two representatives from each performance category, totaling 24 participants in the interviews. The stratified methodology ensured broad representation across various levels of achievement and contexts or institutions, enabling the research to measure differences in how test and classroom anxiety manifest at different levels of proficiency.

The data Collection process occurred in two consecutive stages. The first stage involved administering questionnaires, which produced quantitative data in the form of structured survey responses. The second step was a semi-structured interview of the purposefully sampled participants. During this interview, issues of their experience with test situations, classroom experiences, teacher behavior, peer interactions, and circumstances that provoked or increased their anxiety during English language learning activities were discussed. Strict ethical guidelines were observed during the data Collection process, including obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring voluntary participation, maintaining anonymity of responses and data reporting, and publication, which ensured that all data was anonymous. The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS), where frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize the levels and patterns of anxiety. Thematic analysis was used as a method of analyzing the qualitative interview transcripts and was carried out in six steps according to Creswell and Creswell (2018). These steps include familiarization with the data, initial code generation, theme search, theme review, definition and name assignment, and final report. The combination of quantitative and qualitative results allowed for triangulation, increasing the validity and reliability of the conclusions concerning the effects of test and classroom anxiety on the speaking performance of undergraduate students.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data collected to examine test anxiety and classroom anxiety among undergraduate English language learners. The analysis begins with demographic characteristics of participants, followed by descriptive statistics of questionnaire responses, and concludes with thematic analysis of interview data.

Demographic Profile of Participants

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 80 participants who completed the questionnaire phase of the study.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	46	57.5%
Female	34	42.5%



Age

Less than 20 Years	53	66.25%
Greater than 20 Years	27	33.75%

Institution

College Students	60	75%
University Students	20	25%

The demographic data reveal that male students constituted 57.5% of the sample compared to 42.5% female students. Most participants (66.25%) were under 20 years of age, reflecting the typical age range of third-semester undergraduate students. Notably, 75% of the sample were from affiliated colleges, while 25% were from the central university department, ensuring adequate representation from both institutional contexts.

Test Anxiety Among Undergraduate English Learners

Table 2 presents students' perceptions and experiences related to test anxiety in foreign language learning contexts, explicitly focusing on formal assessments, evaluation procedures, and performance-related concerns.

TABLE 2: PERCEPTIONS OF BS LEVEL STUDENTS ABOUT TEST ANXIETY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPEAKING

S. No	Items	M	SD
1	I do not worry about making mistakes in language class	4.54	0.68
2	I am usually at ease during my tests in my language class	4.54	0.68
3	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class	4.38	0.69
4	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make	4.41	0.63
5	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get	4.37	0.66
Overall Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		4.45	0.65

Note: Mean scores interpreted as: 1-2 = sufficiently below average, 2-3 = below average, 3 = average, 3.1-4 = above average, 4.1-5 = sufficiently above average

The data demonstrate significantly elevated levels of test anxiety among undergraduate students—all five items received mean scores exceeding 4.0, indicating sufficiently above-average levels of agreement with anxiety-related statements. The highest mean scores (M = 4.54, SD = 0.68) were observed for items addressing worry about making mistakes and unease during language tests. The low standard deviations (0.63 to 0.69) indicate considerable consistency across participants, suggesting test anxiety is widespread rather than isolated within this population.

Item 3, addressing worry about consequences of failure (M = 4.38), suggests that anticipated adverse outcomes, including academic consequences and social embarrassment, drive students' test anxiety. The fear that teachers are prepared to correct every mistake (Item 4, M = 4.41) reflects anxiety related to



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evaluative scrutiny. Particularly noteworthy is Item 5 ($M = 4.37$), revealing a paradoxical relationship where increased study efforts resulted in greater confusion rather than enhanced confidence. This suggests that test anxiety involves cognitive interference mechanisms whereby heightened arousal disrupts information processing and retrieval. The grand mean of 4.45 confirms that test anxiety constitutes a pervasive concern for undergraduate English learners.

Anxiety About Foreign Language Classroom Environment

Table 3 presents data on students' experiences of anxiety specifically related to the foreign language classroom environment, including instructional procedures, classroom atmosphere, and teacher behaviors.

TABLE 3: PERCEPTIONS OF BS LEVEL STUDENTS ABOUT ANXIETY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

S. No	Items	M	SD
1	It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in a foreign language	4.34	0.73
2	It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes	4.33	0.66
3	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	4.26	0.72
4	I do not understand why some people get so upset over a foreign language class	4.46	0.61
5	In language class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know	4.39	0.64
6	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it	4.40	0.62
7	I often feel like not going to my language class	4.39	0.63
8	I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for language class	4.37	0.69
9	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes	4.40	0.68
10	When I am on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed	4.41	0.66
11	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language	4.43	0.65
Overall Grand Mean and Standard Deviation		4.38	0.62

The data reveal consistently high levels of classroom-related anxiety across all dimensions. The grand mean of 4.38 ($SD = 0.62$) indicates that anxiety about the foreign language classroom is nearly as pronounced as test anxiety. The highest mean ($M = 4.46$) was for Item 4, though this may reflect defensive rationalization. Item 11, addressing feeling overwhelmed by linguistic rules ($M = 4.43$), reveals



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cognitive overload as a prominent anxiety trigger. Items 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10 (means between 4.39-4.41) indicate multiple anxiety manifestations: nervousness-induced forgetting, anticipatory anxiety despite preparation, avoidance impulses, and comparative tension relative to other courses.

Item 1 ($M = 4.34$) highlights comprehension anxiety, where students experience fear when unable to understand teacher explanations. This can trigger cascading anxiety effects where initial confusion leads to worry, which further impairs cognitive processing. Item 3 ($M = 4.26$), the lowest within this construct, addresses cognitive distraction during class, representing an avoidance coping mechanism whereby learners mentally disengage from threatening situations.

Qualitative Analysis: Lived Experiences of Test and Classroom Anxiety

Semi-structured interviews with 24 purposively selected students revealed four primary themes: (1) paralyzing fear of formal assessments, (2) teacher behaviors as anxiety triggers, (3) classroom environment as a source of distress, and (4) physiological and cognitive manifestations.

Theme 1: Paralyzing Fear of Formal Assessments

Participants consistently described test situations as exceptionally anxiety-provoking. One high-achieving student stated: "When I know there is an oral test coming, I cannot sleep properly for days before. My mind keeps going to all the mistakes I might make." This anticipatory anxiety persisted despite thorough preparation, confirming the quantitative finding that preparation does not necessarily reduce test anxiety.

An average-performing student explained, "During the test, my mind goes blank. I have studied everything, I know the answers, but when the teacher asks me questions, I cannot remember anything." This aligns with cognitive interference theory, wherein anxiety consumes working memory resources. A low-performing female student shared: "I am so afraid during oral exams that I will fail and everyone will think I am stupid. This fear makes me actually perform worse than I can." This illustrates the self-fulfilling nature of debilitating test anxiety.

Theme 2: Teacher Behaviors as Anxiety Triggers

Participants identified specific teacher behaviors as significant anxiety contributors. Immediate error correction emerged as particularly problematic. One student explained: "When the teacher stops me in the middle of speaking to correct my grammar, I feel ashamed and lose my confidence completely. Then I make even more mistakes because I am thinking about not making mistakes instead of thinking about what I want to say."

Several participants characterized certain teachers as creating hostile atmospheres. One stated: "Some teachers have very strict faces and they look angry when we make mistakes. This makes me too scared to speak at all." Conversely, supportive teacher behaviors reduced anxiety significantly. A high-achieving student noted: "My favorite English teacher always encourages us and says making mistakes is part of learning. In her class, I feel brave enough to try speaking."



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Theme 3: Classroom Environment as Source of Distress

Participants identified structural aspects of language classrooms that intensified anxiety. Large class sizes were frequently mentioned: "In our class, there are 60 students. When I have to speak in front of so many people, I feel like I am on a stage and everyone is judging me." Traditional classroom arrangements reinforced hierarchical dynamics that many found intimidating. Classroom pacing also triggered anxiety: "The teacher asks a question and expects immediate answers. I need time to think in Urdu first, then translate to English in my mind, but there is no time for that. So, I panic and say nothing."

Theme 4: Physiological and Cognitive Manifestations

Interviews revealed diverse physiological symptoms, including rapid heartbeat, sweating, trembling, and nausea. One student described: "My hands shake so much that if I am holding paper, everyone can see it shaking. My voice also becomes shaky, and I feel like I cannot breathe properly." The cognitive symptoms were mind-blanking and intrusive negative thoughts. One of the students described it as follows: I am ready, however, in the classroom, my head is full of thoughts: You will fail, everyone will make fun of you. Such thoughts are so loud that I cannot focus.

Some of the participants explained the vicious cycle of anxiety. One replied: Since I am anxious, I do not speak. I do not talk and, therefore, I do not practice. I do not practice, and therefore, my speaking does not improve. The fact that it is not getting better makes me more nervous. It is like being trapped."

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Combining both quantitative and qualitative data, one can have strong reasons to assume that test anxiety and classroom anxiety are severe risks to undergraduate English learners. The quantitative data were used in the determination of prevalence and intensity, with the mean scores consistently higher than 4.0, indicating that the overwhelming majority experience much anxiety. Qualitative data revealed the processes of anxiety functioning, some of its causes, and influences on deep psychology. The congruence of quantitative trends and qualitative accounts suggests that test and classroom anxiety significantly influence the learning process and performance of students in English language learning.

CONCLUSION

This research provides evidence to demonstrate that test anxiety and classroom anxiety are the two formidable challenges to effective acquisition of the English language amongst Pakistani undergraduate students. The fact that quantitative and qualitative results have been combined means that these dimensions of anxiety are not peripheral problems but also significant psychological phenomena that significantly disrupt the cognitive processing of students, their language performance, and academic success. The data indicate that the vast majority of the learners are experiencing a great deal of distress in the context of the formal assessment test and regular classroom work, which is evidenced by the fact that the mean level of anxiety is in the range of 4.0 or more at all times, and the average level of anxiety in all the cases of the formal assessment test and regular classroom work is higher than the 4.0 mark. This is the perversely ironic



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finding that the more one is prepared to take tests, the more anxiety-inducing it becomes, and vice versa. This indicates the insidiousness of cognitive interference, where worry and self-doubt can consume the mental resources required to generate language efficiently.

The qualitative findings clarified the lived experiences of these statistics and the physiological manifestations of test and classroom anxiety, intrusive negative thoughts, and avoidance behaviors, which are debilitating and self-perpetuating cycles of underachievement. Of particular interest is the discovery of specific pedagogical strategies, such as correcting mistakes on the spot in publicly centered learning, rapid-fire interrogation, and an evaluative climate that systematically causes anxiety among learners. The consequences of such results are particularly relevant to Pakistani English language learning, as they indicate that current instructional approaches may inadvertently harm the very outcomes they are intended to support.

The study identifies the need for holistic pedagogical transformations that emphasize the affective side in addition to the acquisition of cognitive skills. Teachers ought to create psychologically safe learning environments, which are grounded on supportive teacher-student interactions, cooperative, rather than competitive interactions in the classroom, formative, rather than summative assessment practices, and manifest recognition of anxiety as a normal and even advantageous aspect of language learning. The teacher education programs should entail teaching the symptoms of anxiety, the techniques of curbing anxiety, and communicative methodology that diminishes threats and maximizes the opportunities of meaningful language practice. There is a need to conduct further research on the effectiveness of some of the anxiety-reduction programs in Pakistani contexts and longitudinal trends of anxiety levels among learners pursuing their academic programs.

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