

English Language Learning Anxiety among Foreign Language Learners in the Philippines

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Abstract

Several researches have revealed that anxiety can hinder success in second or foreign language learning (Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Young, 1991; Ohata, 2005; Pappamihel, 2002; Williams & Andrade, 2008). It was also found that language learning difficulties could predict anxiety best in foreign language settings (Chen & Chang, 2004). Using Horowitz et al.'s 1986 *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)* and Cohen Oxford and Chi's 2001 *Language Strategy Survey (LSS)*, the proposed study intends to investigate the causes of anxiety in English language learning of foreign students in the Philippines. It will also look into the different language strategies utilized by these students who may be experiencing anxieties in learning the English language. Specifically, the study would like to target foreign students studying in tertiary institutions in Manila where these students abound. Findings suggest that these type of learners used *vocabulary strategy* to efficiently learn the English language and to cope with their English class anxiety. It has been found that the employment of this strategy enables the learners to take charge of their own learning as this serves as their basic aid to learn other macro skills in the target language.

Keywords: Language learning anxiety, language learning

Introduction

Background of the Study

Language learning anxiety, specifically foreign language learning anxiety has attracted several researchers to examine this phenomenon as it affects language learners. Anxiety has been

considered as one of the most important affective factors that influence second language learning (Na, 2007).

Language anxiety, a type of anxiety specifically associated with learning the second language (L2), can arise from many kinds of sources (Skehan, 1989; Young, 1991 as cited in Ohata, 2005). For instance, the language classroom naturally presents itself as an anxiety-causing situation to some language learners, as it involves constant and periodic evaluation of the learners' performance and competence. In such linguistic situation, this evaluation might trigger anxiety on the part of the learners as they are reminded of their current L2 competence (Eharman, 1996 as cited in Ohata, 2005). Other factors that may contribute to the learners' anxiety in learning a second language are: difficulty coping in a mainstream English classroom, lack of teacher engagement (Verplaetse, 1998 as cited in Pappamihiel, 2002), and limited cognitive skills in English (Cummins, 1984).

In order to address these issues concerning language learning anxiety, the present study intends to examine the causes and levels of anxiety of foreign college students studying in the country.

Review of Related Literature

With the shift of research focus from to teachers to learners in second language acquisition and learning, affective factors such as attitude, motivation and anxiety were thought to account for successful language learning outcomes. Anxiety, considered as one of the most important affective factors, has been studied since the 1970s.

Bailey (1983) through the analyses of the diaries of 11 learners found that competitiveness can cause anxiety on the part of the learners. He found that students have the tendency to outperform each other to gain positive feedback from their teacher regarding their progress and competence. He also found that tests and the learners' perceived relationship with their teacher also contributed to the learners' language anxiety (Bailey, 1983 as cited in Na, 2007).

Moreover, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) in a study they conducted involving 97 college students learning French, found that those students with language anxiety find it more difficult to express their own views and tend to underestimate their own

abilities. They also discovered that in the process of three stages of language acquisition, that is, input, processing and output, anxiety and learning achievement are negatively correlated (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994 as cited in Pappamihiel, 2002).

Pappamihiel (2002) conducted a study on language anxiety among 178 middle-school Mexican immigrant students attending school in the US. Participants were subjected to the English Language Anxiety Scale to identify how levels of anxiety correlated with specific factors such as years of stay in the US, levels of academic achievement, listening and speaking skills, reading and writing skills and gender. Results show that interaction with Mexican students raised levels of anxiety and that such strategies such as avoidance were used to reduce anxiety.

In relation to Pappamihiel's study, Na in 2007, surveyed 115 Chinese high school students and found that these learners have high anxiety in learning the English language. Specifically she discovered that males have higher anxiety in learning English than their female counterparts. Moreover, she also found out that high anxiety plays a debilitating role in high school students' language learning. This type of language anxiety causes the learner to 'flee' from the learning task to avoid further anxiety (Na, 2007).

Moreover, Ohata (2005) examined the nature of language anxiety from the perspective of five Japanese learners of English studying in the US. With the use of self-reflective accounts of the emotional difficulties experienced by these language learners, she found that characteristics of language anxiety are influenced by Japanese cultural norms or expectations they have acquired through numerous socialization processes in Japan. It seems that their cultural practices such as hesitating to express one's own ideas or not being assertive, caused them anxieties in their interaction with others.

Williams and Andrade (2008) conducted a survey among 243 Japanese students in 31 English conversation classes at four universities in Japan. They found that language anxiety was often associated with the output and processing stages of the language learning process. Furthermore, they also discovered that students attributed their anxieties are caused by their teachers and classmates.

These studies conducted over the years have shown that language anxieties are caused by several factors. These factors may significantly contribute to the learners' success in learning the second language.

Research Problem

The current study intends to investigate the current affective states of foreign students studying in the Philippines. Specifically, this research would like to know if these foreign language learners are experiencing language anxieties in learning English as a foreign language. The study intends to address the following research questions:

1. Do foreign students learning English in the Philippines experience language anxiety?
2. What could be some preponderant causes of language anxiety among foreign students learning English in the country?
3. What language strategy predicts foreign students' coping with their language anxiety?

Theoretical Framework

Definition of Anxiety and Language Anxiety

In general, anxiety is defined as a psychological construct that is described as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object (Hilgard, Atkinson, & Atkinson, 1971).

Anxiety has been found to interfere with several types of learning but when it is associated with learning a second or foreign language it is coined as 'second/foreign language anxiety'. McIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined this linguistic phenomenon as a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system. Furthermore, McIntyre (1999) states that language anxiety as the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning a second language.

Types of Anxiety

Pekrun (1992) states that in situations where there is high anxiety, habitualized reactions can cause learners who have encountered many threatening situations in the past to perceive future situations as threatening. In the same vein, Vasey and Daleiden (1996) argue that highly anxious learners may have lower threshold of threat recognition, perceiving vague situations as potentially threatening more than moderately anxious persons. Due to the possibility that some learners are more prone to anxiety than others, it is important to differentiate between individuals who are often anxious and those who are not.

A distinction can be made between the various types of anxiety- *trait anxiety*, *state anxiety* and *situation-specific anxiety*. Drawing on work in psychology, Scovel (1978) defines *trait anxiety* as a permanent predisposition to be anxious. Those who are able to perceive situations as being threatening are said to have *state anxiety*, a social type of anxiety that occurs under certain conditions. *Situation-specific anxiety* is caused by specific situation or event such as public speaking, examinations or recitations.

Some experts further differentiate the concept of anxiety by distinguishing between *cognitive* (worry) and *affective* (emotional) components of anxiety (Deffenbacher, 1980; Schwarzer, 1986 as cited in Pappamihiel, 2002). As posited by Deffenbacher (1980), anxiety produced by cognitive interference (e.g. learning challenges) is due to extreme instances of worry and not the arousal of anxiety. Therefore, this cognitive anxiety type associated for instance, classroom learning is rarely facilitative that is the learners has to struggle in order to change their perspective with the new learning task.

However, some researchers like Scovel (1978) examine Alpert and Haber's observation (1960) between *facilitating* and *debilitating* anxiety. The first motivates learners to 'fight' the new learning task, making them to expend extra efforts to overcome their feelings of anxiety although according to Horwitz (1986), this only happens in the accomplishment of simple tasks learning task. The latter prompts the learners to 'flee' from the learning task to avoid feelings of anxiety. Williams (1991) argues that the distinction between these other two types of anxiety may correspond to the intensity of

anxiety with low anxiety state having a facilitating function and high anxiety state having a debilitating effect. Moreover, he also suggests that these two kinds of anxiety may sometimes cancel each other out which may result in no apparent effect on achievement.

Anxiety and Language Learning

Horwitz and his colleagues (1986) define foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process. They also found that foreign language anxiety can be related to the following: communication apprehension (the fear of communicating with other people), test anxiety (fear of exams, quizzes, and other activities used to evaluate one's competence) and fear of negative evaluation (the worry about how others view the speaker). On the other hand, MacIntyre and Gardner (1993) see language anxiety as a learned emotional response. At the earliest stages, the language learner may experience a form of state anxiety, a transient apprehensive experience. After repeated occurrence of state anxiety, the student will come to reliably associate anxiety with performance in the second language.

It has also been investigated that one-third of students learning a foreign language experience some kind of anxiety (Horwitz, et al., 1986). Young (1994) outlines the three sources of foreign language anxiety into three categories: sources associated with the *learner*, the *teacher* and the *institution*.

Anxieties related to the learner which eventually cause anxiety include low self-esteem, competitiveness, self-perceived low level of ability, communication apprehension, lack of group membership and attitudes and beliefs about language learning (Young, 1994).

As far as communication apprehension is concerned, Horwitz et al. (1986) found that anxious students reveal that speaking in the foreign language as the most anxiety-producing experience. In this linguistic situation, the language learner is placed in a position of communicating something without sufficient command of the language to do this task. Thus, the learner experiences anxiety as a result of fear of 'losing oneself' in the target culture. Moreover,

students' attitudes and beliefs can also be related with anxiety. Horwitz (1989) found that anxious learners, who judged language learning to be relatively difficult, possess relatively low levels of foreign language aptitude. On the other hand, Palacios (1998) also outlined faulty beliefs such as learning another language at an early age is easier, using translation facilitates learning and studying another language is an overwhelming task may cause the learners to have unrealistic expectations about the language learning process.

With teacher factors, judgmental teaching attitude (Samimy, 1994) and a harsh manner of teaching (Aida, 1994) are related to anxieties with the teacher. Palacios (1998) stated that factors such as lack of teacher's support, unsympathetic personality of the teacher and lack of time for personal attention does not help learners to cope in their new language learning environment. Ando (1999) also added that having a native speaker for a teacher can cause anxiety as the teacher may lack sensitivity of the learning process and difficulties of the non native learners. Moreover, Oxford (1999) posited that learning and teaching styles pose as potential sources of language anxiety. She found that if the instructor's teaching style and the students' learning styles are not compatible, 'style wars' can trigger more anxiety on the part of the learners.

Lastly, institutional anxiety can be traced to the list of classroom activities (activities 'suggested' by the curriculum) that the language learners perceive as anxiety-producing. These may include: (a) spontaneous role playing; (b) speaking in front of the class; (c) oral presentations and report; and (d) writing task on the board (Young, 1990; Palacios, 1998).

All these factors seem to account for the anxiety level a learner experiences in the language classroom. Thus, it is the hope of this present study to examine if indeed these factors found in previous studies are also manifested by foreign language learners studying in the country. Furthermore, this study will also give our educators an idea as to how to address the language concerns of these types of learners.

The current study will be guided by the following framework:

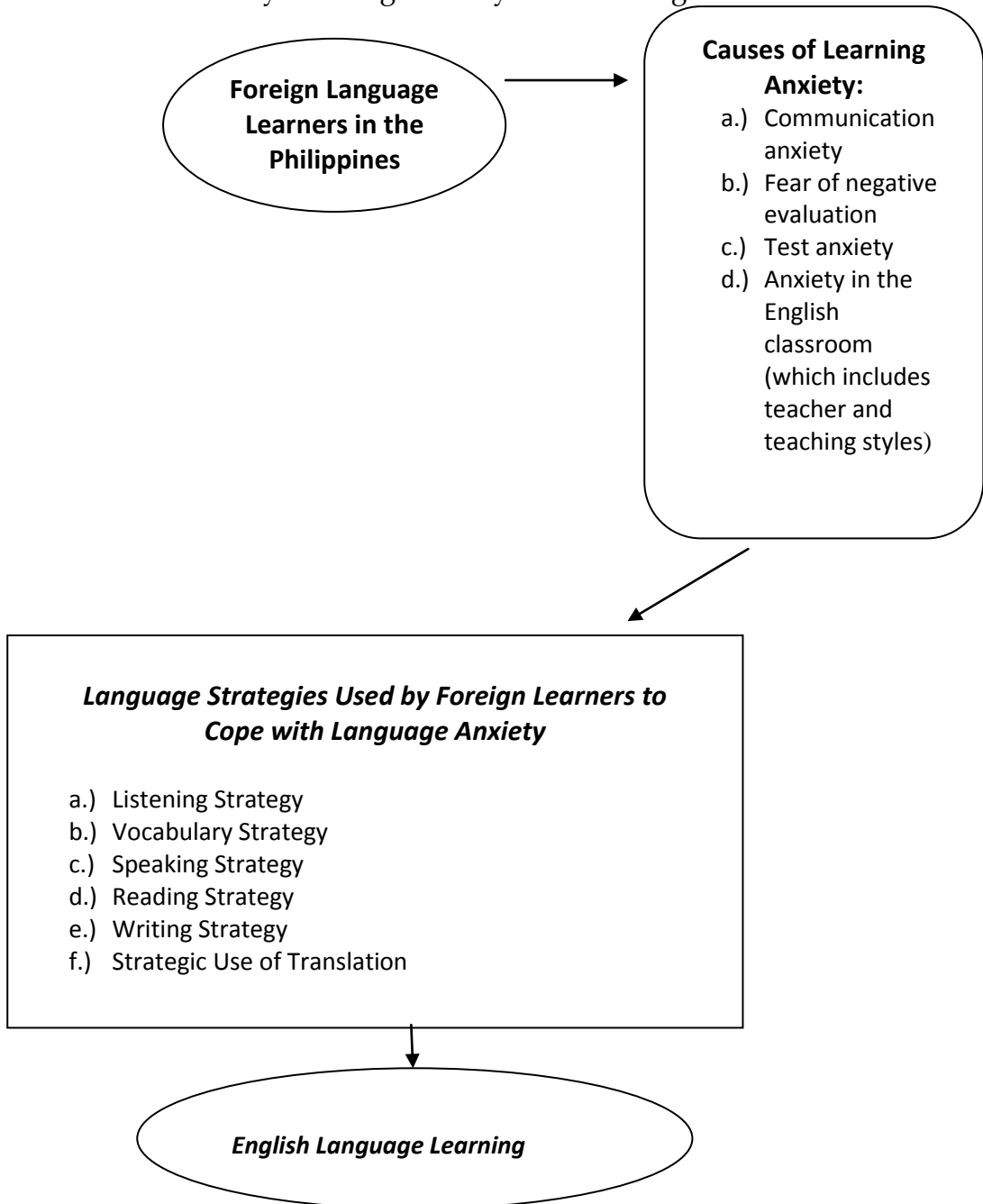


Figure 1. Anxiety and Language learning Strategies as Predictors of Language Learning

As previously mentioned, the present study will examine the causes of anxiety of students through the various types of anxiety that the student encounter in relation to learning English in a foreign land. Specifically, the research will look into language anxiety caused by the following factors: *communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, text anxiety* and anxiety caused by the learning environment (e.g. classroom as outlined by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986).

Communication apprehension is characterized by fear and anxiety in communicating with people. Difficulty in speaking in public, listening or learning a spoken utterance are all manifestations of communication apprehension. This type of anxiety in learning a second language is derived from the learners' personal knowledge that they will have difficulty understanding others and making themselves understood. Learners suffering from communication apprehension choose to keep silent in their English classes.

Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety which is caused by fear of failing a test. Test anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves. Test anxiety is considered to be one of the most important aspects of negative motivation which will affect learning. This type of fear is defined as an unpleasant feeling or emotional state that has both physiological and behavioral concomitants and that is experienced by the anxious learner when taking formal test or other evaluative situations.

Fear of negative evaluation is the apprehension about other people's evaluations. This may also include avoidance of evaluative situations and the expectations that others might evaluate them negatively. It may also include the student's fear inside the English classroom where factors such as learning activities, teacher's methodology and even peer pressure may contribute to novice language learners' anxieties.

Furthermore, the language strategies used by these learners in coping with their anxieties will also be examined. Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2001) have created the Language Strategy Survey (LSS). The measure consists of 89 language strategy items in six language skill areas: *listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading, writing, and translation*. Included in these skill areas are both strategies for language **use** and strategies for language **learning**. The former

strategy-type refers to strategies that one employs while actually speaking, listening, reading, or writing in a L2.

Methodology

Research Design

The current research was descriptive in nature. It seeks to determine the causes that might contribute to the anxiety of foreign language learners of English. It also examined the language strategies used by these type of learners to cope with their anxieties in learning the English language. Two survey questionnaires (Horwitz et al.'s Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale [FLCAS] and Cohen et al.'s Language Strategy Survey [LSS]) was administered to 250 foreign college students enrolled at De La Salle Manila-University, College of St. Benilde, St. Scholastica's College-Manila, University of Santo Tomas and Far Eastern University.

Setting and Participants

The research was conducted in various tertiary institutions in Manila such as DLSU-Manila, CSB, St. Scholastica's College-Manila, UST and FEU. Two hundred fifty foreign students were the respondents of this study. The target participants were foreign college students taking any course in these institutions provided that they are enrolled in any English course during the time of the administration of the questionnaires. These students should have stayed in the country for at least three years which means that they should be in their second/third year in the tertiary level.

Instrument

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) designed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was used to obtain data for this study. Horwitz and his colleagues made a unique contribution to the identification of the scope of foreign language anxiety by developing this systematic instrument.

The 33-item questionnaire is categorized by the causes of anxiety that may be prevalent among foreign language learners of

English. The factors are identified as *communication anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and anxiety in English classroom classes*. These are further classified in the following questionnaire items:

<i>Causes of Language Anxiety</i>	<i>Questionnaire Number</i>
Communication Anxiety	1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29 and 32
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31 and 33
Test Anxiety	2, 8, 10, 19 and 21
English Classroom anxiety	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 28 and 30

Horwitz et al. suggest that significant foreign language anxiety is experienced by many learners in response to at least some aspects of foreign language learning. This concept has been examined and used by several studies on language anxiety (Aida, 1994; Cheng, 1998; Liu, 2006; Saito, Garza & Horwitz, 1999; Yan, 1998).

The respondents of this study were asked to rate each of the statement in the FLCAS using the 5-point interval of which **1** refers to **strongly agree**, **2** as **agree**, **3** as **neutral**, **4** as **disagree**, and **5** as **strongly disagree**. The researchers rephrased items 6, 7, 10 and 13 in the FLCAS questionnaire and changed the term *foreign language class* to *English language class*.

The consistency measure for the internal reliability for the current study will be computed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Moreover, the *Language Strategy Survey (LSS)* by Cohen, Oxford and Chi (2001) were also used for this study. The instrument consists of 89 language strategy items in six language skill areas: listening, speaking, vocabulary, reading, writing, and translation. Included in these skill areas are both strategies for language **use** and strategies for language **learning**. The former strategy-type refers to strategies that one employs while actually speaking, listening, reading, or writing in the English language. The researchers have modified the instrument to assign numerical values to the responses of the subjects. The subjects were asked to rate each statement in the LSS using the 5-point interval of which **1** refers to **very often**, **2** as **often**, **3** as **sometimes**, **4** as **seldom** and **5** as **not applicable**. The data were subjected to exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to check its reliability and validity.

Procedure

The researchers sought the permission of the Chairs of the Department of English from various universities in Manila such as De la Salle University- Manila, College of St. Benilde, University of Santo Tomas, St. Scholastica's College-Manila and Far Eastern University to conduct the study in their English classes where the target foreign respondents are enrolled. The researchers wrote a letter of request to conduct the study. They also enclosed the copy of the research proposal and the FLCAS and LSS questionnaires so that the Chairs would get an idea of the importance of this study to their department.

After the approval of the request, the teachers sought an appointment with the Chairs to get the names of the teachers and the classes to be visited. The researchers coordinated with the teachers to explain to them the purpose of this current study. Moreover, the researchers got the convenient schedule of the teachers as to the administration of the questionnaire to the target foreign participants. The researchers requested the teachers to allow them to administer the questionnaires during sessions when they are having their writing activities to prevent the untimely disruption of their classes.

On the appointed day, the classroom teacher oriented their foreign students to explain the extra task they have to accomplish. They were requested to occupy the last row of the seats to complete the questionnaire. They were given 30-35 minutes to accomplish the questionnaires.

Once all the data have been completed, the questionnaires were classified, tallied and tabulated.

Method of Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was used in analyzing the data. Weighted mean was used to describe the overall anxiety factors of the participants. Standard Deviation (SD) is used to measure the variability of responses and Pearson correlation to examine the relation between the causes of anxiety and the language strategies used by these types of learners in coping with such learning anxieties. Multiple regression analysis was also used to

determine how language strategies predict foreign language learners' use of such strategies to cope with their language anxieties.

Results

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of the Language Anxieties Experienced by Students in Learning English and the Learning Strategies Used to cope with them

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Listening strategy	2.48	0.44
Vocabulary strategy	2.67	0.46
Speaking strategy	2.55	0.52
Reading strategy	2.48	0.4
Writing strategy	2.46	0.52
Translation strategy	2.53	0.79
Communication Anxiety	2.89	0.42
Fear of Negative Evaluation	3.15	0.69
Test Anxiety	3.17	0.29
Anxiety in the English Classroom	3.02	0.37

The results of the descriptive analyses indicated that foreign students generally had a feeling of anxiety in learning the English language. Table 1 show that they experience *Test Anxiety* ($M=3.176$) and *Fear of Negative Evaluation* ($M=3.158$). Furthermore, it can be noted that these learners maximize the use of *Vocabulary Strategy* ($M=2.672$), *Speaking Strategy* ($M=2.559$), and *Translation Strategy* ($M=2.538$) in coping with the language learning anxieties they are experiencing.

Table 2
Correlation between Strategies used and Language Anxiety

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
1 Listening Strategy	---									
2 Vocabulary Strategy	.80*	---								
3 speaking Strategy	.66*	.55*	---							
4 reading strategy	.64*	.56*	.62*	---						
5 writing Strategy	.72*	.64*	.78*	.76*	---					
6 translation Strategy	.22	.10	.60*	.40*	.28	---				
7 Comm. anxiety	.28	.17	.67*	.32	.37	.49*	---			
8 FNE	.10	.17	.41*	.17	.05	.58*	.61	---		
9 test anxiety	.21	.09	.45*	.35	.38	.49*	.48	.25	---	
10 English class anxiety	.12	.39*	.37	.29	.20	.33	.20	.38	.00	---

* $p < .05$

Table 2 suggests that strategies are significantly related except for translation strategy with listening, vocabulary, and writing strategy. *Vocabulary Strategy* significantly increases with coping in *English Class Anxiety*. *Speaking* and *Translation Strategies* significantly increases with all learning strategies except for English class anxiety. Reading and writing strategy do not significantly increase with any of the coping strategies for anxiety.

Table 3
Regression Summary for Dependent Variables (Communication Anxiety)

	Beta	SE	B	SE	t(19)	p-level
Intercept			1.83	0.47	3.88	0.00
Listening strategy	-0.07	0.30	-0.06	0.28	-0.23	0.82
Vocabulary strategy	-0.19	0.27	-0.17	0.24	-0.72	0.48
Speaking strategy	1.07*	0.34	0.87	0.28	3.14	0.01
Reading Strategy	0.11	0.26	0.11	0.28	0.40	0.70
Writing Strategy	-0.36	0.35	-0.29	0.28	-1.03	0.32
Translation Strategy	-0.06	0.23	-0.03	0.13	-0.27	0.79

Note. $R = .73$, $R^2 = .54$, Adjusted $R^2 = .39$, $F(6,19) = 3.74$, $p < .01$

The results in Table 3 show that *Speaking Strategy* significantly predicts coping in *Communication Anxiety*. All learning strategies if combined, significantly predict coping in communication anxiety.

Table 4
Regression Summary for Dependent Variable (English Classroom Anxiety)

	Beta	SE	B	SE	t(19)	p-level
Intercept			1.90	0.46	4.18	0.00
Listening strategy	-0.76*	0.33	-0.64	0.27	-2.33	0.03
Vocabulary strategy	0.83*	0.29	0.66	0.24	2.82	0.01
speaking strategy	0.44	0.38	0.31	0.27	1.17	0.26
Reading strategy	0.25	0.29	0.23	0.27	0.86	0.40
Writing strategy	-0.35	0.38	-0.26	0.27	-0.93	0.36
translation strategy	0.16	0.26	0.07	0.12	0.60	0.55

Note. $R = .66$, $R^2 = .44$, Adjusted $R^2 = .26$, $F(6,19) = 2.51$, $p < .01$

Finally, *Listening* and *Vocabulary Strategies* significantly predict coping in *English Class Anxiety* as shown in Table 6. However, listening strategy decreases coping in English class anxiety. All strategies combined significantly predict coping in English class anxiety.

Discussion

The findings revealed that the foreign students who participated in this study are experiencing language anxiety in learning English in the country. These learners experience *Test Anxiety* and *Fear of Negative Evaluation*.

Cabukcu (2007) sees Test Anxiety as one of the most important aspect of negative motivation in learning. This type of anxiety is described as an unpleasant feeling or emotional state that has physiological and behavioral concomitants and that is experienced in formal testing or other evaluative situations. Moreover, this type of anxiety emerges for some children during the preschool or elementary school years when parents begin to make some demands or hold overly high expectations for their children's performance (Hill & Wigfield, 1984). Through the years, some other factors such as parental, peer or self-induced aspirations, teachers'

attitudes and classroom atmosphere may enhance evaluation anxiety (Hill, Sarason & Zimbardo, 1964; Hill & Sarason, 1966; Hill & Nottelmann, 1977). By and large, test anxiety is a problem from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, for both genders and for middle and working class children from all major socio-cultural groups (Hill & Wigfield, 1984).

In the similar vein, Ohata (2005) found that learners feared taking tests, because test-taking situations would make them anxious about the negative consequences of getting a bad grade. This would lead to other psychological stresses, such as the fear of losing self-confidence or feeling inferior to others.

The results from the data also revealed that foreign participants of this study also experienced anxiety due to *Fear of Negative Evaluation* from their teachers and their peers as well. This may be due to the classroom activities or tasks that they have to fulfill in class. Young (1991) compiled a list of classroom activities which are perceived by students as anxiety-producing activities: (1) spontaneous role play in front of the class; (2) speaking in front of the class; (3) oral presentations or skits performed in the class; (4) presenting a prepared dialogue in front of the class; and (5) writing work on the board. Error correction also turned out to play an important role in contributing to a student's anxiety. Moreover, Palacios (1998) also found the following classroom tasks characteristics to be anxiety-producing: demands of oral production, feeling of being put on the spot, the pace of the class, and the element of being evaluated.

Although many learners feel that some error correction is necessary (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Horwitz, 1988), the manner of error correction is often cited as provoking anxiety. It has also been found that students are more concerned about how (*i.e., when, what, where or how often, etc.*) their mistakes are corrected rather than whether error correction should be administered in class.

In relation to the fear of negative evaluation from others, Ohata (2005) also suggests that fear of losing "face" in front of others was also found to be a shared anxious feeling by language learners. These students have expressed anxiety in evaluative situations in which their knowledge and performance of English were to be monitored by people around them. This fear of losing "face" may be particularly true for foreign students who may have the feeling of

being under critical evaluation as far as their utterances, grammar use and other communication means are concerned.

The data also suggest that foreign students made use of *Vocabulary strategies* to be able to cope with their language learning anxieties. Although the respondents of this study reported an anxiety towards being negatively evaluated, it seems that they were finding ways to assuage such fear. The results are in consonance with Wu and Wang (1998) who found that foreign language learners used a wide range of metacognitive and cognitive strategies for vocabulary learning.

Moreover, Graves (1987) suggested that, because students actually do most of their learning of new words independently, it makes sense to encourage them “to adopt personal plans to expand their vocabularies over time” (p. 177). It appears that learners would spontaneously develop or adopt effective vocabulary-learning practices as a result of their language learning experience.

Hamzah and Kafipour (2009) identifies several reasons why learners utilize the use of vocabulary strategies in coping with language learning anxieties. First, a vocabulary learning strategy, very broadly speaking, could be any action taken by the learner to aid the learning process of new vocabulary. Whenever a learner needs to study words, he/she uses strategy/strategies to do it. Second, a vocabulary learning strategy could be related to only such actions which improve the efficiency of vocabulary learning. Hence, there are actions which learners might employ but which do not enhance the learning process – a perfectly possible scenario with poor learners. Third, a vocabulary learning strategy might be connected to conscious (as opposed to unconscious) actions taken by the learner in order to study new words. Ideally, learners should be made aware of ‘good’, efficient strategies, so that they could freely and consciously choose the one(s) suitable for them.

The main benefit gained from all learning strategies, including strategies for vocabulary learning, is the fact that they enable learners to take more control of their own learning so that students can take more responsibility for their studies (Nation, 2001; Scharle & Szabó, 2000). Consequently, the strategies foster “learner autonomy, independence, and self-direction” (Oxford & Nyikos, 1989).

Examining the correlation between language anxiety and language learning strategies use, it can be gleaned from the results that again *Vocabulary strategy* significantly increases with coping with *English class anxiety*. The data is suggesting that by and large, foreign students would depend on the use of vocabulary strategy in dealing with their language learning process as earlier reported by Graves (1987), Hamzah, Kafipour and Abdullah (2009), Nation (2001), Scharle & Szabó (2000) and Oxford and Nyikos (1989).

Similarly, the use of both *Speaking* and *Translation strategies* are found to significantly increase as these types of learners cope with most of their language anxieties (*test, fear of negative evaluation and communication*) except for English class anxiety. Moriam (2005) found that although affective strategy was found to be the least frequently used category, it had a strong influence on the learners' whole process of speaking strategy use. Another significant finding of this study is that the learners showed the strongest correlations of affective with interpersonal strategies to evaluate their speaking skill. It implies that the use of these strategies gave them confidence about their proficiency in speaking English.

Similarly, Liao (2006) observed that translation is widely used in learners' foreign language learning process. He also believes that learners often use translation as a learning strategy to comprehend, remember, and produce a foreign language. In a similar vein, Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) found that foreign students who wrote English essays through their L1 translation were rated higher than those who wrote directly in English. As for the advantages of translating, the students felt that the ideas were easier to develop, thoughts and opinions could be expressed more clearly, and words could be more easily found through the use of dictionary. In addition, translation as a learning strategy can also help in vocabulary acquisition.

Multiple regression analyses of the data also showed that *Speaking strategy* significantly predicts coping with *Communication anxiety*. The results would suggest that the foreign language learners of this study would find an effective learning strategy that would best address the language anxiety they are experiencing in the course of their learning of the English language. It appears that several strategies in speaking help them in coping with communication anxiety.

Many researchers have pointed out that the skill producing most anxiety is speaking (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991). This anxiety comes in part from a lack of confidence in the learner's general linguistic knowledge but if only this factor were involved; all skills would be affected equally. What distinguishes speaking is the public nature of the skill, the embarrassment suffered from exposing the learner's language imperfections in front of others (Arnold, 2000).

Communication anxiety can also be triggered during intercultural or interethnic communication. When a person interacts with people of other cultures and encounters cultural differences, he or she inclines to view people as strangers. Situation of this kind may lead to intercultural communication apprehension; this can be defined as "the fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated interaction with people of different groups, especially cultural and ethnic and/or racial groups" (Neuliep & McCroskey, 1997).

However, it appears that the participants of this study would still prefer to use speaking strategies perhaps to compensate for the communication anxiety that they are experiencing.

The Regression analysis also showed that the use of both *Listening* and *Vocabulary strategies* predict the learners' ability to cope with *English class anxiety*. It can be gleaned from the data that these foreign learners find listening and vocabulary strategies as the most effective learning strategy they could use to cope with the anxiety they are experiencing while they are attending their English classes. It has been found that English Language Classroom Anxiety, a type of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA), is considered to be a situational anxiety experienced in the well-defined situation of the foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994). As such, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) view this anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process (Horwitz & Young, 1991). Moreover, according to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) possible causes of FLCA are communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) describe this anxiety stemming from the negative expectations in foreign language learning.

Conclusions

The current study clearly showed that foreign language learners would equip themselves with learning strategies that would help them not only to learn the target language but also to cope with their language learning anxieties.

The findings suggested that these type of learners used *vocabulary strategy* to efficiently learn the English language and to cope with their English class anxiety. It has been found that the employment of *vocabulary strategy* enables the learners to take charge of their own learning as this serves as their basic aid to learn other macro skills in the target language.

It was also found that *test anxiety* and *fear of negative evaluation* constitute the type of learning anxieties these were students experiencing. It can be gleaned from the results that foreign learners experience anxiety if they are being evaluated by both their peers and their teachers as to their performance in using the target language. This is rooted perhaps because of the negative affective experience when they were learning the language and also, they would like to avoid 'losing face' in their English language class.

The correlation results also suggest that *vocabulary strategy* is significantly correlated with *English class anxiety*. This would mean that this strategy is effectively used to cope with the class anxiety that these types of learners experienced in their English classes.

Multiple regression results also suggest that *speaking strategy* significantly predicts coping when learners experience *communication anxiety*. It can be noted that this strategy serves as a compensatory strategy employed by foreign language learners to be able to cope with *communication anxiety* that they are experiencing their English classes.

Implications to Language Teaching

The results of the current study would help language teachers in several ways as regard their teaching of foreign learners in their classes.

First, language teachers have to realize that their foreign learners are experiencing anxiety in their classes. Apart from the general anxiety that they are experiencing studying in a foreign

land, being away from their families and the like, teachers have to also understand that learning a foreign language is also their major struggle. Apart from the culture shock that they may be having living in a foreign country, they are also suffering from 'language shock' which may help account for their resistance and difficulty in learning the target language.

Second, language teachers must be able to understand the nature of their students' language anxieties. It may vary from one learner to another so it is pertinent that teachers be made aware of what language anxieties their students may be suffering from. As such, they may be able to design lessons and prepare activities and learning materials that will best address the strategies that can be effectively utilized by these types of learners to cope with their respective language anxieties.

Lastly, since foreign students are anxious for being negatively evaluated for their proficiency on the use of the target language, language teachers may opt for alternative assessment or evaluation schemes that may lessen the students' anxiety during their performance in class. Group evaluation may be utilized and general comments on their linguistic performance may be given instead of individual evaluation that eventually causes anxiety on the part of their learners.

By and large, language educators must be willing to understand not only the learning difficulties learners are encountering in their classes. These difficulties stem from a more deeply rooted problem which is caused by certain anxieties that they are experiencing once they are in their English language classes. These language anxieties are also caused by several affective and cognitive factors that make learning the target language very difficult and an excruciatingly painful learning process to the learners.

Language anxiety impedes successful language learning among second and foreign language learners. It is important that language teachers look at the affective state of the learners as this greatly affects their learning.

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