



Graduate School of Education

**An Exploratory Investigation of Foreign Language Classroom Speaking
Anxiety Amongst Pakistani EFL University Students**

Submitted by

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Abstract

Foreign language anxiety is a phenomenon specific to language learning contexts that can have seriously detrimental consequences on the ability of students to acquire, retain, and speak the language they are learning. To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first to be carried out on foreign language classroom speaking anxiety (SA) specifically in the Pakistani context. The overall purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Pakistani postgraduate (MA/MSc) non-major EFL (English as a foreign language) students about SA. It attempts to achieve the following four objectives: to explore whether speaking creates more anxiety than reading, writing, and listening; to identify the factors that may contribute to SA; to investigate the type of teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may alleviate SA; and to explore Pakistani EFL university teachers' perceptions of their students' SA along with the strategies used by teachers to reduce it. This study has been conducted using an interpretive approach. It employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (open-ended questions in the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observations) to collect data from five universities in Pakistan. The questionnaire was completed by 170 Pakistani EFL students. In order to achieve a deep understanding of their SA, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 students. 14 Pakistani EFL teachers were also interviewed and 12 classes taught by three teachers were observed. Quantitative data were analysed to obtain descriptive statistics. Qualitative data were analysed using exploratory content analysis. The study suggests that of the four skills, speaking produces the most anxiety. Findings also highlight a number of sources of SA which have been classified into five main categories: individual learner-related sources, classroom-related sources, linguistic-related sources, teacher-student interaction, and socio-cultural-related sources. The study highlights some possible sources of SA such as: lack of student voice; teacher bias; fear of saying anything socially unacceptable or against religion; cultural alienation; and mixed-gender classrooms, all of which do not appear to have been reported earlier in the field of language anxiety. Moreover, only a few studies have reported socio-cultural factors as contributors to students' SA; as such, this study reinforces the idea that certain socio-cultural factors may also influence students' SA. Further, the students suggest that a variety of teacher

behaviours could both reduce their SA and encourage their spoken English in class. These include: having a friendly, supportive, and relaxed attitude towards students; providing them with a sociable classroom environment; using positive reinforcement; involving them in the learning process, and correcting their mistakes gently. In addition, the data reveal a number of classroom activities which may reduce SA. These include allowing students: to prepare oral tasks in advance; to work in groups; to use some Urdu when they cannot express themselves in English; voluntary participation in oral tasks, and providing students with adequate wait-time. Finally, the findings indicate that most of the teachers were not fully aware of SA and its potentially debilitating effects on language learning. As a consequence, they did not take students' SA into account when they were teaching. In addition, a model of identifying factors, initiatives and behaviours required to address the sources of Pakistani EFL learners' speaking anxiety has been proposed. The theoretical implications of the study are offered. Implications and suggestions for teachers and educational/language policy-makers are discussed. Finally, suggestions for further research are provided.

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Dedication

To the loving memory of my mother who passed away during the first year of my PhD. I miss you very very much mom, you left me so silently. I wish you were here...

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the present study. An explanation of the research problem is followed by the rationale for carrying out this study together with a presentation of the relevant background. The aims and research questions of the study are also outlined, as well as the significance of the study within this field of enquiry. Finally, a definition of terms and an overview of the thesis are given.

The English language constitutes one of the main mediums of communication across the globe. Due to the important role played by English, especially in communicating scientific and technological information, proficiency in the English language is viewed by many as a prerequisite for economic development at national as well as international levels. As a consequence, the acquisition of English communication skills is given special attention in almost every country (Crystal, 2003).

Following this trend, in Pakistan, English is regarded as, “the language for development at both the individual and national levels” (Shamim, 2011:293). In the words of Rahman (2007:5), it is, “firmly entrenched in the domains of power in Pakistan”. Many writers consider that proficiency in English plays an important role in seeking better-paid employment with it being perceived as a symbol of high status in society. Shamim & Tribble (2005) note that there is a recognition of the importance of English and a clear desire for learning it amongst all sections of the population in Pakistan, particularly in higher education institutions. Thus, all stakeholders put effort, time and money into achieving proficiency. Zubeda Jalal, Pakistan’s former Federal Minister of Education, considered English to be “an urgent public requirement” (Jalal, 2004:24). There seems to exist a high instrumental motivation, i.e. learning for utilitarian purposes, such as advancing in one’s career or education, for acquiring English in Pakistan.

The development of spoken proficiency is considered by Pakistani students and parents a very important reason for studying English (Ahmad & Rao, 2013). This could be due to the fact that, in Pakistan, proficiency in spoken English is a requirement for employment in high-status careers in the civil service, armed forces and multinational organisations (Shamim & Tribble, 2005). Hafeez (2004) notes that, in Pakistan, fluency in English helps applicants gain prestigious jobs because all interviews for such posts are conducted in English. In addition, Ghani (2003) considers that those who can speak English are regarded as socially and intellectually superior. Moreover, in 2008, the chairman of the Higher Education Commission in Pakistan wrote to the vice-chancellors of all universities to inform them that their primary role should be to promote students' English speaking skills and to also ensure that newly-recruited faculty members should have mastery of the English language (Ahmad & Rao, 2013). This indicates the importance that is given in higher education policy to the development of communicative competence in English.

Despite the reasons for motivation and effort described, the current speaking proficiency level of most university students in Pakistan is not considered to be satisfactory (Shamim & Tribble, 2005; Shahbaz, 2012). Hafeez (2004) asserts that, despite several years of studying English, many Pakistani students hesitate to speak English and they are, "hardly able to use English for different communicative purposes" (p.1). The writer further states that these students report feelings of uneasiness when speaking English in the classroom. Therefore, in view of its usefulness for Pakistani students, it seems imperative to identify and tackle the factors that may affect and interfere with their spoken English skills.

Several factors may contribute to the poor speaking skills of Pakistani EFL students. However, there are two main factors, affective and cognitive, which may influence the success of the language learning process (Alghothani, 2010). According to some language researchers (such as Stern, 1983, cited in Wong, 2009), affective factors are more influential than cognitive factors. Affective factors include variables such as anxiety, motivation, and self-esteem. Following Arnold & Brown (1999:8), an individual's, "anxiety is quite possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process". Similarly, Liu &

Huang (2011) assert that foreign language anxiety (FLA) is the most significant predictor of learners' performance among the affective variables. In accordance with its aims, therefore, this present study will take into account only the affective aspect of FLA.

There are many studies reporting that anxiety has detrimental effects on foreign language learning and speaking. For example, Krashen (1982) asserts that anxiety raises what he terms the 'affective filter' which inhibits and interferes with students' ability to acquire and produce the language. Gardner (1991: vii) also notes that, "language anxiety is a pervasive and prominent force in the language learning context". Similarly, Horwitz (2000) and Von Worde (2003) believe that as many as one half of all foreign language students may experience debilitating levels of speaking anxiety. Likewise, Zheng (2008:1) highlights that speaking in the foreign language class, "can sometimes be a traumatic experience" for learners due to anxiety. Moreover, MacIntyre (1999) states that anxiety has debilitating effects on foreign language students' speaking skills.

Pakistani EFL students might also experience speaking anxiety (SA) due to factors such as teacher-centred classrooms, test-oriented learning, and their own lack of speaking proficiency. These factors have also been reported as sources of SA in other contexts (Ewald, 2007; Tóth, 2010). Additionally, due to the current emphasis on developing university students' speaking proficiency in Pakistan, teachers often involve them in practice speaking and oral evaluation to improve their oral competence. However, the activities that encourage oral communication may also in themselves produce anxiety (Young, 1990; Price, 1991). Thus, the current study attempts to investigate anxiety as a possible factor interfering with Pakistani students' English speaking. Its scope has been narrowed down to focus upon foreign language classroom speaking anxiety (SA).

1.2 Rationale for the Study

There are a number of reasons for conducting this study. Firstly, as an English language teacher at three different universities in Pakistan, I have observed on many occasions feelings of discomfort and nervousness in some students in the

classroom. I have found too that their anxiety increased particularly when they were required to participate in fluency-based activities. I have also noticed that they were afraid of speaking, avoided oral tests, lost confidence after making a single mistake, and at times some even refused to participate in oral activities. Some students also openly admitted that they do not feel comfortable when speaking English in class. As a teacher, this represented a serious problem for me, with my responsibility being to ensure that students feel comfortable in the classroom. Why is it that some students are afraid of speaking or are unwilling to participate in the class? What are the things that make them anxious about speaking English and how could I make them feel more comfortable? These kinds of questions used to come to mind and gave me a strong urge to address them in order to modify my teaching and provide my students with a more favourable and successful language learning experience. However answers to such questions were not readily available due to a) the lack of research in English language teaching (ELT) in Pakistan and b) my own lack of understanding of foreign language speaking anxiety and of a proper methodology required to examine this phenomenon. This motivated me to carry out this study.

Many Pakistani ELT professionals have noted that English language teaching in general remains an under-developed and under-researched area in Pakistan (e.g. Shamim & Tribble, 2005; Mansoor, 2003; Shahbaz, 2012; Islam, 2013). Following this, even fewer studies have been conducted to explore foreign language anxiety (FLA) in Pakistan; it is a relatively new and under-researched area. To the best of my knowledge, the following studies on the topic of FLA have been carried out in Pakistan: Sultan (2012), Hussain et al. (2011), Rustom (2011), Khattak et al. (2011), and Adeel (2011). It is noteworthy that these studies focused on general FLA and are outlined and considered in more detail in section 3.7. Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, no study so far on foreign language classroom speaking anxiety has been conducted in the Pakistani context. The present study attempts to fill the gap that currently exists concerning the understanding of SA in the Pakistani context, which is important for the development of English language acquisition and proficiency in this country and beyond.

A considerable amount of research has been carried out on the subject of SA in other countries, mostly in the United States and Canada (Tóth, 2010; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). However, each context is likely to have different reasons for SA due both to different individual approaches to language teaching and learning practices and also to varying students' attitudes towards and motivation for language learning. The theoretical framework adopted in this study is interpretive and perceives that 'reality' exists in the minds of the participants; it is thus affected by the socio-cultural milieu of a particular context. Various authors (such as Aida, 1994; Llina's & Garau, 2009; Koch & Terrell, 1991) note that studies carried out in different settings reach different conclusions about language anxiety; there is thus a need for research in new contexts such as Pakistan. In addition, much existing research focuses on beginning and intermediate level students' anxiety, with relatively little conducted with university students (Ewald, 2007). Therefore, this study was carried out with the aims of examining Pakistani university students' SA and adding new research data to the literature.

Another rationale for conducting this study is that it was designed to respond to the gaps and lack of research in a specific area in the field of anxiety. Although some studies have generally concluded that, of the four skill areas (writing, speaking, listening and reading), students consider speaking as the most anxiety-inducing, according to Ohata (2005:149-150), "there is still little research available that has investigated which of the four skill areas would contribute to student anxiety the most"; indeed any of these skills can be the most anxiety-causing for students, due to factors such as learning aims and individual differences (ibid). This highlights further the need to investigate which language skill causes the most language anxiety, according to Pakistani students.

There is also a shortage of studies exploring the factors that contribute to SA and offering ways to address it (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). This present study, therefore, has explored these areas in order to enrich the literature. Moreover, it appears that there is generally a lack of studies exploring students' perceptions of classroom practices and teacher behaviour that help to reduce SA. Some researchers such as Aydin (2008) and Rodriguez & Abreu (2003)

have suggested examining this particular area of enquiry and by exploring these aspects, it is therefore hoped to contribute to the existing literature.

Finally, scant attention has been paid to teachers' awareness and understanding of their students' SA and the methods they as teachers could use to reduce it (Ohata, 2005). Alghothani (2010) stresses that since teachers play a vital role in affecting students' anxiety, their own awareness of students' anxiety together with teachers' views about its role should be examined.

1.3 Background to the Problem

Language researchers, teachers and students themselves have long been aware of the possibility that anxiety impedes language learning. Over the past three decades, there has been an upsurge of interest in examining anxiety as a potential factor affecting second and foreign language learning and speaking. However, early anxiety studies presented mixed and confusing results regarding the relationship between anxiety and language achievement (Scovel, 1978).

Horwitz et al. (1986) made an important contribution to theorising FLA (Tóth, 2011). They conceptualised it as a separate and distinct type of anxiety specific to the language learning process. They further identified three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, as well as developing an anxiety measure known as the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Horwitz et al.'s conceptualisation of FLA has played a key role in promoting research in this field (Tóth, 2008). Several studies have adopted this conceptualisation and have consistently revealed a link between anxiety and language achievement.

Subsequently, numerous researchers have contributed to and expanded FLA research (for example, Young, 1990; Koch & Terrell, 1991; Price, 1991; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999; Sparks et al., 2000). More recently, studies have shifted their focus from establishing a relationship between anxiety and language achievement to examining anxiety in relation to various other factors such as: learner characteristics (Tóth, 2010); tests (Huang & Hung, 2013); gender (Mersi, 2012); students' beliefs about language learning (Wang, 2005) and motivation (Lim, 2004). Other studies have focused on examining

language-skill-specific anxiety.

Despite the evidence which suggests that FLA impairs language learning, there is still a lack of agreement over whether language anxiety is indeed the cause (Horwitz, 2000), or whether it is a consequence of poor language learning (Sparks & Ganschow, 2007).

1.4 Aims of the Study

This study will investigate anxiety as a possible factor which interferes with Pakistani students' English speaking in class. The aims of the study are:

- To explore whether speaking creates more anxiety than reading, writing and listening for Pakistani EFL university learners.
- To identify the factors that may contribute to their SA.
- To identify the type of teacher behaviour and classroom activities that might alleviate students' SA.
- To investigate Pakistani EFL university teachers' views about their students' SA and the methods teachers currently use to address it.

These aims have a logical sequence. If students do experience speaking anxiety (SA) then it is important to investigate why, how to address it and to understand the viewpoints regarding SA of teachers who manage the class and teach speaking.

To achieve the aims a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, was adopted to collect the data. The quantitative aspect took the form of a questionnaire and the qualitative aspect consisted of open-ended questions in the questionnaire, together with in-depth semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observations. The questionnaire was administered to 170 postgraduate non-major EFL Pakistani students and interviews were conducted with 20 students. In addition, 14 Pakistani EFL teachers were interviewed and 12 sessions of classes of three teachers were observed.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to achieve the aims of the study, the research questions of this study are as follows:

1. Are Pakistani EFL students more anxious about speaking than about reading, writing, and listening?
2. What factors do students believe contribute to foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?
3. What kinds of teacher behaviour and classroom activities may help to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?
4. What are Pakistani EFL university teachers' perceptions of their students' foreign language speaking anxiety and what are the teachers' current strategies to reduce it?

1.6 Potential Significance of the Study

Anxiety can affect foreign language students' speaking proficiency and performance and it can even cause them to abandon their language study (Liu & Jackson, 2008). Therefore, it is important to conduct studies on the subject of SA to provide students with a comfortable and facilitating classroom environment to improve their speaking skills. As Dörnyei (2007:18) observes, "research is not done for its own sake, but to generate knowledge and to further our understanding". This study could be of significant importance in Pakistan since, as noted above, there is a lack of research into FLA and this current study is the first one to explore Pakistani students' perceptions of SA.

There are clear pedagogical implications to be drawn from this study. Due to a lack of general awareness of SA, teachers might attribute their students' reluctance when asked to speak or their poor oral performance to various other factors such as lack of motivation, interest, and ability (Gregersen, 2003). Similarly, teachers may unintentionally produce or increase students' SA by incorporating anxiety-provoking oral activities and materials. This study has the

potential to advise Pakistani EFL teachers that some of their students may not be able to perform in the class due to SA, and it may serve to inform teachers about the sources of this anxiety. It is also the intention of this study to provide useful recommendations to enable Pakistani teachers to respond to their students' SA and to help teachers to organise their classes in a manner which may reduce their students' SA and promote students' speaking.

It is hoped that the results of this research may provide valuable insights to educational/language policy-makers and designers of educational materials in Pakistan, enabling them to plan, design, manage, and assess programmes in such a way as to further reduce students' SA. Moreover, this study may highlight the need to develop teacher-training programmes.

Some authors (for example, Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Yang, 2012) have noted that students' immediate, local, socio-cultural contexts or regional background can cause their anxiety; suggesting, therefore, that this would be a useful aspect to examine. For example, Yan and Horwitz (2008) conclude that future studies of anxiety "should direct clear attention to the socio-cultural factors associated with language learning" (p.175). Very little attention has been paid to date in examining anxiety in relation to such socio-cultural factors. From a theoretical perspective, an important contribution of this study to the existing knowledge may be that it reveals various socio-cultural factors as constituting eventual sources of SA and thus it reinforces the concept that these factors may indeed influence students' SA.

It is hoped that the current research will highlight certain sources of speaking anxiety (SA) which appear to never been previously reported upon in the literature. Thus, it may contribute to the literature and open the field to further enquiry, therefore promoting other studies on SA in Pakistan as well as in other contexts.

Studies in the field of education in Pakistan still favour quantitative methods and they tend to neglect the use of interpretive-constructivist research frameworks. However, this study is significant because it uses this kind of framework and highlights the potential and worth of its use in educational research. Thus, it

may provide motivation for future studies in education in Pakistan. Additionally, it paves the ground for mixed-methods research design in Pakistan since this approach has not been extensively utilised in this context.

Most studies in the international context have employed a quantitative approach to the examination of language anxiety (Tóth, 2010). While there is a scarcity of studies investigating anxiety from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives (ibid). Hence, this study attempts to contribute to the literature by employing both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a deeper and more comprehensive account of SA. Finally, classroom observation has been rarely used in language anxiety studies as a means to collect data (Tóth, 2011). This study uses this method of data collection with the hope of exploring SA more comprehensively and contributing to the literature.

1.7 Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in this study:

Anxiety has been defined as, “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (Spielberger, 1983:1).

English as a foreign language (EFL) refers to English learning by non-native speakers living in a non-English-speaking country (Richards et al., 1992, cited in Zhang, 2010), for example, a Pakistani learning English in Pakistan.

Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) refers to anxiety specific to foreign language learning situations. A detailed definition and discussion is given in the literature review, Chapter 3.

Foreign Language Classroom Speaking Anxiety (SA) refers to the specific anxiety students experience when speaking in the foreign language in the classroom.

1.8 Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. This introductory chapter, Chapter 1, sets the scene for the current research by providing the background to the research problem, the rationale for and the potential significance of this study and stating its aims and the research questions which support it. Chapter 2 introduces the context of the study, providing: background information about Pakistan; its educational structure; its ELT profile and stages of education; the status of the English language in Pakistan; the various drawbacks within the educational system and within ELT in Pakistan, and a profile of Pakistani EFL university teachers.

The following chapter, Chapter 3 is the literature review. This explains the concepts of affect and anxiety and describes various approaches to the study of anxiety in language learning, including the one followed in the current study. The facilitating and debilitating aspects of FLA are discussed and various scales for measuring FLA are examined. Studies about language learning anxiety together with those which specifically focus on speaking anxiety are then reviewed and the debate over whether language anxiety is a cause or a consequence of poor language performance is considered. Finally, pedagogical implications, including factors which may contribute to anxiety and methods and classroom activities that may help alleviate anxiety, are all reviewed.

Chapter 4 describes the research methodology of the current study, including its research paradigm, together with ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions made. The research participants and sites are described, and the justifications for and development of data collection tools used in this study are all outlined. The data collection and data analysis procedures followed in the study, and assessment of its trustworthiness, the ethical considerations and the limitations of the study are likewise considered in this chapter.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data is presented in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6 the results are discussed, with particular reference to the context and the literature. In the last chapter, Chapter 7, the theoretical and pedagogical implications are presented, together with the implications of the study for

educational/language policy-makers. Suggestions for further research are also made.

Chapter 2

Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with establishing the context and background of this study. It starts by providing background information about Pakistan and continues with an account of the Pakistani educational system. The role and status of English in Pakistan is examined, and Pakistan's ELT profile and stages of education are described. An analysis of the drawbacks in both the Pakistan's educational system in general and in ELT is followed by the profile of Pakistani EFL university teachers.

2.2 Country Profile

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which is the context of the present study, is situated in South Asia covering an area of about 796,095 km². It is bordered by Iran to the southwest, Afghanistan to the west, China to the northeast, India to the east, and the Arabian Sea to the south. The Central Asian states are also close to Pakistan; thus, it is situated at the crossroads between South Asia, Central Asia and the Middle East.

According to the 2013 estimate of the Population Census Organization of the government of Pakistan, the country's population was approximately 182 million, making it the sixth most populous country of the world (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Statistics, 2013). Sixty-eight percent of its population lives in rural areas while 32% is urban. In 2014, it was estimated by the Finance Minister of Pakistan, Ishaq Dar, that 54% of the country's population is poor (*Dawn Newspaper Pakistan*, 2014). Pakistan has one of the lowest literacy rates globally and is spending less than 2% of its GDP on education. The literacy rate is estimated as 43.9%, a figure that does not meet world standards (Ministry of Education, 2009).

Pakistan came into being on 14th August 1947 following the freedom of the Indian subcontinent from British rule. Administratively, it is divided into four provinces: Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhaw (previously called NWFP), Balochistan, and Sindh.

Pakistan is a multicultural and multilingual country (Rassool & Mansoor, 2007; Rahman, 2003); thus, the nation is divided in terms of various races, cultures, and languages. (Mansoor, 2002; Shahbaz, 2012). Almost 72 languages are spoken in Pakistan; however, the main regional languages are Punjabi, Pashto, Saraiki, Sindhi, and Balochi (Coleman, 2010). The national language of Pakistan is Urdu, which is considered as a symbol of national unity in the multilingual society of Pakistan. The next section outlines the system of education in Pakistan.

2.3 The System of Education of Pakistan

Pakistan does not have a single education system at national level; rather there are two parallel systems of formal education differentiated by the medium of instruction: the English-medium and the Urdu-medium (Shamim, 2011; Rahman, 2007, 2009; Ministry of Education, 2009).

English-medium schools are privately owned and mainly serve the upper and upper middle classes. Thus, they are known for providing a high quality English education in well-resourced classrooms. Such schools are expensive and it is hard for lower and lower middle class families to send their children to these institutions. Private institutions cater to all levels of education.

Urdu-medium schools, on the other hand, are state-run and provide education for working, poor and lower middle class children. They are also known as government or public schools. Education is free and Urdu is the medium of instruction. The quality of English taught at these public sector schools is considered to be of a low standard. The majority of children in Pakistan attend this stream of education. It caters to all levels, including higher education.

It would be simplistic, however, to assume that all private schools provide a high quality education and all government schools are poor. There are weak and strong institutions in both streams of education.

The private schools are regarded as better providers of English education than the government schools in terms of their syllabi, qualified and trained teachers, ambiance, language learning facilities, and learner achievement in English

(Islam, 2013). Shamim (2008:237) asserts that currently English-medium schools are “synonymous with a quality education”. The students of these institutions are offered adequate opportunities for learning and practising English, not only in class but also in their communities and homes. Thus, they have better speaking skills and therefore better career prospects compared with their counterparts studying in government schools (Rahman, 2004). As a result, they occupy the positions of power in the country.

In contrast, government schools in general do not provide a good standard of English language teaching since they lack well-developed syllabi, materials and other language learning facilities (Islam, 2013). The students have little or no exposure to English outside their English class in the school (Shamim, 2008). The situation is compounded by the teachers’ own limited proficiency in English, which in turn limits their use of English (ibid). The graduates of these institutions are not favoured for key posts; rather they are dubbed ‘Urdu-medium’ which implies a lack of sophistication (Rahman, 2003). Inayat (2004) gives an account of her observation on the condition of government schools as follows:

The physical condition of some of the government schools I visited was very poor, with small dark rooms without ventilation ... some of the classes were being conducted outside under the trees, on the bare earth ... no blackboards and no other teaching aids were available (Inayat, 2004:193-194).

Private educational institutions mostly exist in urban areas of Pakistan, where the most affluent sections of the population live, while government schools are mostly located in rural areas of Pakistan, where the poor and lower middle class are generally concentrated (Inayat, 2004; Capstick, 2011). Islam (2013) also agrees that rural sectors of Pakistan lack access to quality English education, however, this is contrary to the government’s policy of education for all without discrimination amongst the rich and poor. Moreover, it reflects the stratification of Pakistani society on socio-economic levels (Shamim, 2008). This social and educational divide invokes negative attitudes among less privileged students (Shamim, 2011) since very few students of Urdu-medium institutions have the potential to secure white-collar jobs and hence capture a place in the upper classes of society (Ministry of Education, 2009).

This private-public educational divide also exists at the level of higher education in Pakistan. At this level, the number of public sector universities (state-run) is much greater than private institutions (Shamim & Tribble, 2005). Moreover, the number of students in public sector universities is also greater than in private institutions (ibid). Private universities focus on one or two disciplines such as Health Sciences, Information technology and/or Business and Management Studies. On the other hand, public sector universities offer programmes in various disciplines including arts and humanities, Islamic and oriental studies, numerical and physical sciences, life and environmental sciences, management and information sciences, and social sciences (ibid.).

In public sector universities, the students of both private and public systems of schools and colleges and of urban and rural backgrounds meet together (Islam, 2013). Indeed, almost all institutions of higher education are located in cities; therefore, students from rural areas and towns move to the larger urban areas for higher education. Zafar (2006) states that at this level, the medium of instruction is English and Urdu-medium school students realise that they are at a disadvantage, for example, in terms of better future prospects, due to their poor standard of English; they find it hard to use English in university classes.

2.4 The Role and Status of English in Pakistan

English is perceived as the language of the elite and a symbol of dominance in Pakistan (Shamim, 2008; Coleman & Capstick, 2012). Kachru (2005) argues that English has significant role in the official, social, and educational spheres of countries, such as Pakistan, that were previously part of united India. Even Urdu, the symbol of national unity, could not replace English as a medium of instruction in the field of education in Pakistan despite the constitutional provisions and strict policy decisions (Shamim, 2008). Due to its pervasive role in Pakistan, Kachru's (2005) concentric model places Pakistan in the 'outer circle' of countries, in which English has an important position in society and institutions due to historical reasons (Crystal, 1997:43).

In Pakistan the English language is seen as a means to achieve scientific advancement and economic development for the country. Likewise, according to the International Crisis Group (2004:13), English is the "most fundamental

advantage for Pakistani youth seeking attractive employments abroad and in Pakistan". Furthermore, Mansoor's (2003) study of Pakistani college and university teachers, students, and parents concludes that English is regarded as a ladder to personal progress and prosperity. Due to the powerful role of English in Pakistan, a local variety of English has emerged with its own specific lexical material and grammatical structures, based on Urdu borrowings (Mahboob, 2009). Moreover, English is a compulsory subject from primary to higher education level and the medium of instruction for higher education in Pakistan. It is also used as the official language.

2.5 ELT Profile and Stages of Education in Pakistan

The Ministry of Education oversees the entire education system of the country. Similarly, the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, a federally administered organisation, supervises higher education institutions (universities) and offers its assistance in various fields such as policy-making and accreditation. There are five stages in the formal education system of Pakistan, as described below. English is an integral part of each stage (Abbas, 1993:152; Khan, 2007) and it is taught as a foreign language in Pakistan (Sultan, 2012; Ahmad & Rao, 2013).

2.5.1 Primary Level

Primary education spans grades 1-5 (ages 5-10). English has been recently introduced as a school subject at primary level and its teaching aims to motivate the pupils towards learning a foreign language and familiarise them with the rudiments of English.

2.5.2 Secondary Level

Secondary level education is subdivided into further two stages: middle school and high school. Middle school covers grades 6-8 (ages 11-13), while high school comprises grades 9 and 10 (ages 14-15). English is taught as a compulsory subject at both stages. At high school level the curriculum begins to specialise and students choose either science or humanities. Upon successful completion of this level, students are awarded the Secondary School Certificate. Some private institutions offer alternative qualifications such as the Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate exam and the London University 'O' levels.

2.5.3 Higher-Secondary Level

This level is also referred to as the “intermediate stage” and is part of college education. It comprises grades 11-12 (ages 16-17). At this level, students select pre-engineering, pre-medical or humanities strands. English is a compulsory subject and all science subjects are taught in it. This level culminates in the Higher Secondary School Certificate examination, or ‘A’ level. Many students stop their education at this stage due to various issues, often financial.

2.5.4 Graduate Level

This level of education is called BA/BSc and lasts for two years (ages 18-19). English is taught as a compulsory subject and it is also available as an elective subject for those who want to earn their MA in English. All the science subjects are taught in English while some humanities subjects are optionally taught in English. The students are awarded a Bachelor’s degree in arts or science.

2.5.5 Postgraduate Level

Postgraduate level, culminating in an award of MA/MSc, lasts for two years (ages 20+). A wide range of areas are available to choose for Masters. The universities comprise of a number of faculties such as physical sciences, social sciences, environmental sciences, and humanities. English is the medium of instruction; however, some humanities subjects are available in Urdu. At this stage, students can specialise in English language and literature in the English department.

Besides studies in the English department itself, aspects of English language such as English communication skills and functional English are taught as compulsory subjects in various other departments such as Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics. Staff from the department of English are responsible for teaching these courses.

It is useful to have an insight into the problems and issues that the general educational system and ELT are facing in Pakistan as well as an understanding of the background and training of Pakistani EFL university teachers; this will help contextualise the results of the current study. Thus, the next three sections attempt to fulfil these aims. Although the accounts given below mostly represent general trends in the public sector institutions in Pakistan, private institutions

may also have a number of drawbacks. Moreover, although private institutions are considered better in Pakistan, their standard is much lower than educational institutions in developed countries. One caveat is that the trends described below may not be generalised across the whole country.

2.6 Drawbacks in the Education System of Pakistan

Pakistan's education system is fraught with a variety of problems. Shah (2003) sums up the issues facing education in Pakistan including shortage of teachers, dropouts of students, absence of accountability, and politically-driven appointments and promotion of staff.

Latif (2009) found a further problem to be inappropriate curricula, which are used to propagate ideologies and Islamic doctrine rather than to educate students. Latif (2009) and Zafar (2006) note that the examination system discourages creative thinking and rewards those who can 'cram' content from the textbooks. Furthermore, bribery takes place during the examination process and in marking papers. Thus, the results of exams are not seen as real indicators of student performance.

With reference to the physical condition of educational institutions, Farah (2007) reports that in most schools there is a shortage of furniture, buildings are in bad condition and there is no proper system of ventilation or heating in the classrooms. Most classrooms lack audio-visual aids and other resources such as computers, projectors and internet access.

The higher education sector, in particular, can play a central role in the social and economic development of a country and Pakistan has lagged behind other developing countries in this respect (Mansoor, 2002). Mansoor further notes that Pakistan is not allocating adequate resources to higher education; thus, universities are heavily underfunded. Eighty percent of the university budget is spent on salaries; as a result other areas such as research, libraries and faculty development are neglected. This is the reason that currently, the majority of universities do not have well-trained staff, good libraries or research facilities (ibid). Twenty-four years ago the World Bank Report on the Higher Education in Pakistan (1990) revealed that Pakistani universities are in sharp decline; it

predicted that MA/MSc degrees would in future be of an equivalent standard to the secondary school diploma in other countries. Unfortunately, the relevant authorities did not address this issue and more recently many Pakistani educationists (e.g. Hussain 2004; Iqbal, 2004) again warned that the quality of the higher education sector is deteriorating. According to an estimate in 2011, only 5.1% of young people in Pakistan were enrolled in higher education (*Aaj Newspaper Pakistan*, 23 Feb. 2011).

In 2002, a report presented by the Task Force on Higher Education to President Musharraf identified various areas that needed consideration, such as 1) lack of funding; 2) ineffective governance and management structures and practices; 3) misuse of available resources; 4) faulty recruitment policies; and 5) politicised faculty and students (Mansoor, 2002). During the term of office of President Musharraf (1999-2008), the higher education sector was given considerable attention; unfortunately however subsequent governments have reduced the budget for this sector. There are indications that this sector has been poor since the inception of Pakistan; according to Sedgwick (2005), the country had only one institution of higher education in 1947 and later on, this sector has not been paid due attention. It is ironical that Pakistan, which is an atomic power, appears so near the bottom of the global higher education rankings; indeed Shahbaz (2012) refers to a recent report of the Global Competitiveness Index which shows that only 12% of countries are ranked below Pakistan in the fields of higher education.

The above-mentioned poor status of education can be related to a number of factors such as an increasing population, education not being the government priority, and low salary and poor incentives for teachers. In conclusion, there is an urgent need to reform the education system in Pakistan in order to assure the country's progress.

2.7 Problems with English Teaching in Pakistan

English language teaching is facing a number of problems in Pakistan. For example, Warsi (2004) states that the curriculum is outdated and English is mostly taught without any clear curricular objectives. Similarly, the majority of Pakistani colleges and schools teach English through Grammar Translation

Method (GTM), which does not fulfil the future academic and professional communication needs of students (Akram & Mahmood, 2007; Islam, 2013; Hafeez, 2004). Another reason for the ineffectiveness of ELT in Pakistan may be the teaching of English through literature. In Pakistani schools and colleges most of the English textbooks are literature-based, thus focusing least on speaking and listening skills (Siddiqui, 2007; Mansoor, 2002). Such literary language might not help learners to use English creatively and meaningfully in contemporary situations. Additionally, most of the materials for ELT are imported from the UK or USA (Mansoor, 1993, cited in Khattak et al., 2011) and therefore may not suit the proficiency level or learning needs of Pakistani students. Thus, there is a need to develop materials in Pakistan that reflect students' local culture and address their learning needs. Furthermore large classes, examination-oriented language learning, an infrequent use of pair and group work, and lack of opportunities for using English in class are some drawbacks observed in ELT in the universities of Pakistan (Shamim & Tribble, 2005).

According to Shamim (2008), the ineffectiveness of ELT results in a high rate of failure in English at graduate and postgraduate levels. Similarly, Shamim (2011) states that the current proficiency level in English of university graduates does not match the popular demand for English in Pakistan. This indicates that the current provision for English teaching and learning is not appropriate to meet the English learning needs in Pakistan.

Shamim (2008) believes that the root cause of the problems in ELT is the absence of effective and practical language planning in higher education in Pakistan. Moreover, she claimed that the government showed a serious lack of commitment to the implementation of policies to promote English among the general population (ibid). It seems essential to reform ELT sector in Pakistan, otherwise the current situation will not improve. For example, there is an urgent need for realistic national language policy and planning that should address the requirements of all stakeholders, including students, teachers and parents, in order to improve the quality of ELT in Pakistan.

2.8 Profile of Pakistani EFL University Teachers

Teachers can affect every aspect of the classroom and high quality instruction is essential for effective language learning. Effective teaching seems to correspond to adequate professional training. Unfortunately, however, most Pakistani EFL teachers are not adequately trained. In 1996, Malik's study in Pakistan reported that 77% of the teacher participants had received no training at all to teach English; the remaining 23% had received very little training. More recently, Shamim's (2011) study with 84 teachers from 21 public sector universities located in various regions of Pakistan concludes that "the majority of teachers do not have formal qualifications or training in English language teaching" (p.7). The drawback in the system is that "in Pakistan teacher training is not a prerequisite for entering higher education institutions" (Mansoor, 2002:34). Anyone who holds a Masters in English language and literature is considered eligible to teach at the university level without any training in ELT. Many Pakistani writers consider the teachers' lack of training to be one of the main reasons for the low standard of English at university level (for example Kasi, 2010; Iqbal, 2004). Although there are some institutions which offer English teacher training programmes, they have been found to be ineffective and not to fulfil the requirements of modern language teaching and learning (Kasi, 2010; Hussain, 2004; Shahbaz, 2012). This places the onus on the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan to arrange regular and effective training programmes for university teachers to equip them with effective ELT methodologies, in order to enhance learning and literacy and eventually boost Pakistan's economy.

Linguistic qualification represents a further difficulty for many teachers. In most universities of Pakistan, the MA in English focuses on English literature rather than language. According to Warsi (2004), most ELT teachers have their Master's degree in English literature. Thus, they lack linguistic competence and fail to teach language effectively (Shahbaz, 2012). Moreover, the majority of university teachers are qualified to MA level and the number of MPhil and PhDs in English is low. Furthermore, many teachers are unaware of modern ELT research and they use outdated pedagogical practices which may result in the poor standards of English (Behlol, 2009). Shamim's (2011) study reports:

Few teachers engage in ongoing professional development activities or dialogue with the wider ELT community through membership of teachers' organisations or by presenting papers at ELT conferences at home and abroad. Fewer than one quarter of the teachers in the sample had one or more publications in the field (ibid: 7).

Pakistani teachers are sensitive to their status. Inamullah et al. (2008) observed 50 Pakistani English classrooms and concluded that what to teach and how to teach depends on the teacher and more than two thirds of the class time was taken by him/her. Moreover, most of the teachers did not facilitate their students, ask them about their linguistic needs, encourage them, or show personal interest in their learning. Inamullah et al. (2008) further reported that students seemed uncomfortable and uninterested; their job was to sit passively, note down what the teacher wrote or said and memorise it. However, some students may prefer to sit in silence since the concept of 'face' is important in Pakistani society and culture (Javaid, 2011) and they may be afraid of making mistakes and losing face. Similarly, Shamim & Tribble (2005) note that most teachers prefer to use class time for delivering lectures rather than involving students in activities such as group-work. Likewise, there is a big power difference between the teacher and students; students are not allowed to challenge the authority and knowledge of their teacher who is regarded with great deference (Behlol, 2009). Furthermore, some teachers do not show respect for the students and their opinions. In my personal experience and observation, both as a student and an English teacher, some teachers at university level even insult their students and use abusive language.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter familiarised the reader with the context of the study. It provided information about Pakistan along with its educational system, stages of education, and ELT profile. In addition, it spotlighted the role and status of English in Pakistan, the drawbacks in the educational system and in ELT and also presented a profile of Pakistani EFL university teachers. The next chapter is concerned with a review of the pertinent literature.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is a review of the research literature relevant to the current study. It is divided into nine sections, the first of which discusses the notion of 'affect', and its importance in language learning. The second section explains 'anxiety' in general terms, in order to better understand its association with language learning. Next, various approaches to the study of language learning anxiety are considered, including the one followed by the current research; in addition, three related performance anxieties of foreign language anxiety (FLA) are discussed. The subsequent, fourth section deals with the facilitating and debilitating aspects of language anxiety. This is followed by an examination of various scales for measuring language anxiety. Research studies dealing with language learning anxiety, and those which specifically focus on speaking anxiety (SA), are then reviewed. The penultimate section considers the debate about whether language anxiety is a cause or consequence of poor language performance. The last part of this chapter reviews the pedagogical implications, including the sources of anxiety and the methods, classroom practices and techniques that may help reduce it.

3.2 Affect

Since anxiety is an affective factor, this section sheds light on the concept of affect and its role in language learning in order better to understand the phenomenon of FLA.

According to Arnold and Brown (1999:1), affective factors are "aspects of our emotional being". Dörnyei (2005, cited in Alghothani, 2010:19) sums them up as "individual differences". However, an individual does not work in isolation but rather interacts with other social variables, particularly in a language classroom. Thus, Gass & Selinker (2008, cited in Alghothani, 2010) believe that Dörnyei's view of the affective domain is limited since it does not consider the influential part of society. However, Arnold & Brown (1999) take into account both perspectives of affective variables in language learning and maintain that one aspect is "concerned with the language learner as an individual" and the second

perspective “focuses on the learner as a participant in a socio-cultural situation, an individual who inevitably relates to others” (p. 8).

Another broad and perhaps comprehensive definition of affective variables is offered by Scovel (1991:15) who believes that “everything which impinges on language learning which is unrelated to cognition” is called affect. This may subsume motivation, anxiety, personality and attitude, which can influence the students’ language performance in class. It can be argued that affective factors are important characteristics of our personality and they can be influenced positively or negatively according to the given situation.

3.2.1 Importance of Affect in Language Learning

Researchers and scholars have long been aware of the important role of affective factors in language learning, along with cognitive abilities (e.g. Maslow, 1968; Brown, 1971; Castillo, 1973, cited in Wang, 2005). They maintain that affective aspects need to be studied and integrated into language learning for successful language acquisition to take place. In this regard, Hilgard (1963, cited in Yamini & Tahriri, 2006:102) states “purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity”. Similarly, many contemporary language learning and teaching theories, for example Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, and Communicative Language Teaching, also recognize the influential role of the affective domain in the process of language learning. Indeed, Krashen (1982) stressed that affective factors such as anxiety do impede the language learning process. Similarly, Krashen & Terrell’s (1983) Natural Approach (a language teaching method that focuses on developing students’ communicative competence and maintaining a social classroom atmosphere) took affective factors into account and offered ways to alleviate anxiety in the language classroom.

It can be argued therefore that the affective domain may play an influential role in the language learning process. In this complex process which can be affected by both cognitive and affective variables, it is possible that affective factors may influence learners’ cognitive abilities. For example, if some learners are anxious in the language class or they are not motivated to learn the target language,

they might not perform up to their mental capacity. Hence, I suggest that language teachers could pay thorough attention to these variables in order to replace their debilitating effects with facilitating ones and thus, promote their students' language acquisition. Currently, anxiety, as an important affective factor, is considered one of the key elements affecting the language learning process (Horwitz, 2013; Tóth, 2011). Having discussed affect and its influence on language learning, the next section explains the notion of anxiety, the focus of this study.

3.3 Anxiety

The current study focuses on one unique anxiety that is related to learning and using a foreign language. However, before focusing specifically on FLA it would be useful to examine the concept of anxiety in general psychological terms in order to better understand the anxiety language students may feel when learning and using a foreign language.

Anxiety can generally be regarded as an apprehension or nervousness about what may happen. It is a complex and multidimensional construct; thus, it can be defined from many aspects. For example, according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, it is "the state of feeling nervous or worried that something bad is going to happen" (cited in Tóth, 2010:5). Similarly, Scovel (1978) views anxiety as an emotional state of "apprehension, a vague fear that is only directly associated with an object" (p. 134). However, Spielberger (1976, cited in Wang 2005:13) distinguishes anxiety from fear, which is usually derived from a "real, objective danger in the external environment", while the threatening stimulus of anxiety might not be real. Thus, Spielberger defined anxiety as, "the subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry that are experienced by an individual" (cited in Wang 2005:13). Similarly, Horwitz et al., (1986) define it as, "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system" (p. 125). More recently, Hewitt (2011, cited in Yoon, 2012:1100) described anxiety by referring to its symptoms and accompanying lack of confidence:

An abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physiological signs (as sweating, tension, and

increased pulse), by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat, and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it.

As evidenced by the above definitions, anxiety seems to subsume some basic elements such as fear, worry, uneasiness and an unpleasant state which may debilitate the performance and abilities of an individual in a given situation. Its feelings may be attached to real or even to unreal objects. The next section considers anxiety in the language learning context.

3.4 Approaches to the Study of Anxiety in Language Learning

This section includes various approaches to the study of language anxiety, including the language anxiety perspective followed by the current study, and three components of FLA: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Trait, state, and situation-specific perspectives are three approaches to the study of anxiety in the language learning domain (Horwitz & Young, 1991; MacIntyre, 1999). Each of these is explained briefly in turn.

3.4.1 Trait Anxiety Approach

From this perspective, anxiety is regarded as a permanent trait of human personality and it is not restricted to any particular situation. MacIntyre (1999) defines trait anxiety as, "a feature of an individual's personality and therefore is both stable over time and applicable to a wide range of situations" (p. 28). It may be called an inbuilt anxiety, since it is a permanent characteristic of one's personality. Moreover, an individual with high trait anxiety can experience stress more frequently than other people do, and he/she is likely to become anxious in any situation. It can have detrimental effects on the personality since, due to the frequent experience of anxiety, one may even perceive non-threatening situations as threatening. This approach cannot explain anxiety in term of language learning, since language acquisition is restricted to a specific context. Thus, MacIntyre & Gardner (1991b) argue that trait anxiety cannot explain the topic of language learning unless it interacts with a particular situation.

3.4.2 State Anxiety Approach

State anxiety is an unpleasant emotional condition or temporary state; in other words, anxiety experienced at a particular moment in time can be called state anxiety. MacIntyre (1999:28) defines it as a "moment-to-moment experience of

anxiety; it is the transient emotional state of feeling nervous that can fluctuate over time and vary in intensity". Such a temporary anxious condition can be experienced in reaction to a specific event and it can increase or decrease in time. State anxiety happens under certain conditions and individuals with this anxiety, unlike trait anxiety, can judge occasions as threatening (Spielberger, 1983). For example, a language student may be in a relaxed state but he/she can become anxious when asked to speak in front of the whole class or to take oral tests. Moreover, it can be argued that if the triggers of anxiety are removed (if students improve their language performance, for example) state anxiety levels may reduce. However, its frequent experience may turn into trait anxiety.

This perspective of language anxiety has been criticised for "skirting the issue of the source of the reported anxiety" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a:10). It means that the subjects are not asked to assign anxiety to particular sources. Similarly, Von Worde (2003) highlights that it does not allow the subjects to mention the source of their nervousness clearly and specifically.

According to Horwitz & Young (1991) and MacIntyre (1999), the above two approaches assume that language anxiety is merely the transfer of other more general types of anxiety into foreign language learning. For instance, if a student experiences anxiety in certain situations, he/she would have a tendency to also feel nervous in the language classroom. However, the two approaches to language anxiety outlined above could not present a clear picture of how anxiety is related to the language learning context, as studies adopting these perspectives produced contradictory, inconsistent, and inconclusive results about the effects of FLA on language performance and achievement (Trang, 2012; Horwitz, 2010). This suggests the need to analyse anxiety specific to language learning. Thus, in contrast, it is believed that language learning situations produce a unique form of anxiety, and it is distinguishable from its other perspectives, as explained below.

3.4.3 Situation-Specific Anxiety Approach

Horwitz et al. (1986) conducted a pioneering piece of research about language learning anxiety with foreign language students at the University of Texas, USA. They observed the physiological and psychological symptoms of anxiety in their

participants and found them “freezing in class, going blank before exams, and feeling reticence about entering the class” (p.128). Moreover, their participants experienced worry, dread, palpitations, lack of concentration and forgetfulness; moreover they missed classes and postponed their homework. On the basis of these results, Horwitz et al. (1986) argued that language learning contexts produce a unique type of anxiety which is different from its other types. This perspective provided a theoretical basis to future FLA studies (Tóth, 2010).

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), therefore, FLA should not be simply regarded as “fears transferred to foreign language learning” but rather conceptualised as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986:128). Thus, they suggested that foreign language anxiety (FLA) should be identified as a conceptually distinct variable, well characterized by the uniqueness of dynamic features of language learning and using it in the classroom. In other words, this approach examines the specific type of anxiety in a well defined situation (Horwitz, 2001); such as communication apprehension, stage fright, and role play. The literature suggests that FLA should be distinguished from other general performance and academic anxieties. In this reference, Horwitz & Young (1991) state that “probably no other field of study implicates self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does” (p. 31). In a language classroom often intelligent and socially-adept adults, who are competent communicators in their own language, may find themselves unable to speak due to their limited range of communicative abilities and it leads to self-consciousness, frustration and even panic (ibid).

Besides Horwitz et al.’s (1986) definition, anxiety in the language learning context has been defined by many researchers. For example, according to Ellis (1994:480) it is “a type of situation-specific anxiety associated with attempts to learn a second language and communicate in it”. Similarly, MacIntyre & Gardner (1994:284) view it “as the feeling of tension and apprehension associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning”. Subsequently, MacIntyre (1999:27) defined language anxiety “as the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second

language”.

Researchers (such as Horwitz, 2010; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b and Tóth, 2011) claim that the situation-specific anxiety approach provides a better understanding of language anxiety, compared with state and trait anxieties, since it limits the assumptions and requires participants to attribute their language anxiety to a particular source. On the other hand, this approach may also be criticised. For example, the situation under investigation might be defined very broadly (e.g. taking a test), quite narrowly (such as communication apprehension), or extremely specifically (for example, stage fright).

The concept of FLA as a unique type of anxiety specific to foreign language learning has been supported by many research studies which reviewed this theory and discussed the criticisms that have been levelled against it (for example, Trang, 2012; Zheng, 2008; and Cao, 2011). Moreover, this is a concept which has gained credence among FLA researchers; for example, in the words of Trang (2012:73), “Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope’s theory of foreign language anxiety has played a vital role in language anxiety research with a large number of studies using it as the theoretical framework”. Similarly, according to Arnold (2007) and Tóth (2011), this theory has been used by many language anxiety studies across various contexts, including in Asia, and the studies have yielded meaningful and consistent results (e.g. Frantzen & Magnan, 2005; Aida, 1994; Trang et al., 2013; Huang & Hung, 2013; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). The present study is also informed by the situation-specific approach of language anxiety presented by Horwitz et al. (1986).

Horwitz et al. (1986) also introduced a construct known as Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) as an instrument to measure FLA. A more detailed description of this instrument is provided below in section 3.6. This construct shows that three related performance anxieties: communication apprehension (CA), test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (FNE) “provide useful conceptual building blocks for a description of foreign language anxiety” (Horwitz et al., 1986:128). These are considered below.

3.4.3.1 Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) is an important component of FLA and speaking anxiety (Horwitz, 2013). It generally refers to a type of anxiety experienced before or during interaction with other people. According to Jung & McCroskey (2004), it is an individual's fear or anxiety caused by real or anticipated communication with another person or persons. In addition, Horwitz, et al., (1986), in the light of their conceptualisation of FLA, state that it is in fact a type of shyness characterised by fear or anxiety about communicating with people. They mention the following manifestations of CA: students' difficulties speaking with their peers or teachers in the class, stage fright, and problems in understanding others. They further believe that CA related to foreign language classrooms is different from that in other contexts. In a language classroom, while the main focus is on interpersonal interactions (speaking and listening), students are performing two tasks simultaneously: they have to learn the language as well as perform in it in the classroom. In addition, a typical language class requires learners to participate in various speaking activities which can make them the centre of others' attention; thus, they can frequently experience CA in class. For instance, when a student communicates with his/her peers or the teacher, he/she might become anxious due to the fear that he/she may be unable to comprehend others or make himself/herself understood. Thus, individuals who feel anxiety when speaking in dyads or in public may experience higher CA in a foreign language class "where they have little control of the communication and their performance is constantly monitored" (Horwitz, et al., 1986:127). Thus, the modern language classroom's emphasis on oral activities and the frequent assessment of speaking skills could be particularly anxiety inducing for students who are apprehensive about speaking.

CA might also have disruptive effects on students' achievement and performance. There are studies indicating that students with CA participate less in the class (e.g. Arnold, 2007). This underscores a significant problem as output plays a key part in language learning (Swain, 1985), so it appears that anxious students' lack of participation in speaking activities may negatively influence their oral progress. Finding solutions to these problems, therefore, may be key to improving their proficiency. Teachers' ability to reduce students'

CA is likely to promote a willingness to communicate in the foreign language and, as a consequence, improve their speaking skills.

In large classes CA can put students at a particular disadvantage (Chan & Wu, 2004) and this is a context that often applies in Pakistan. Moreover, increase in CA in students might result from their surroundings. For example, in most Asian cultures silence is preferred over speech (Lim, 2002). With reference to the context of this study, there are cultural proverbs emphasising the value of silence and discouraging improper communication. For instance, 'speak less; think more' and 'silence is golden'. Similarly, learners' personality traits, such as shyness and reticence, can stimulate feelings of CA (Horwitz et al., 1986). Pakistani students may be afraid of speaking in classroom due to certain specific socio-cultural factors. For example, in the Pakistani culture, improper communication usually attracts negative reactions and respectful language is used for people senior in age and status. These factors can also lead students to apprehension about future attempts to communicate.

3.4.3.2 Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is the second component of FLA. This stems from fear of failure in evaluative situations such as oral tests and presentations. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991b) view it as apprehension over academic evaluation. This definition, however, does not seem to take account the fear associated with the negative consequences of getting a bad grade. Sarason (1978, cited in Tóth, 2010:18) does include this aspect and points out that some students experience test anxiety due to the fear of the consequences of poor performance; this is defined as "the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of inadequate performance in an evaluative situation". It implies that some language learners can feel test anxiety in evaluative situations where they see any possibility of failure. It could also be argued that it is an apprehension experienced before or during taking exams.

Unfortunately, students with test anxiety may experience considerable stress in foreign language classrooms where tests, quizzes and daily evaluation are common activities and "even the brightest and most prepared students often make errors" (Horwitz et al., 1986:128). Thus, test anxiety may also mean

foreign language students' worry over the frequent evaluation of skills, particularly when these are still being acquired. It is also important to note that oral tests could be more difficult and anxiety-provoking than written tests, since in some students they can induce both CA and test anxiety simultaneously (ibid). Due to apprehension about tests, some students may consider oral tasks as an evaluation rather than a strategy to enhance their speaking skills.

It is worthy of note that a large volume of published studies agree with the hypothesis of Horwitz et al., (1986) that test anxiety is one of the three elements of FLA (e.g. Lucas et al., 2011; Cao, 2011; Mersi, 2012; Huang & Hung, 2013). While results in the current research also support this hypothesis, the review of the literature found studies which dispute the stances of other researchers and claim that test anxiety is a general anxiety problem which is not conceptually related to other components of FLA (see for example, MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Aida, 1994; In'nami, 2006).

As Young (1986:443, cited in Wilson, 2006:275) argues, if in an official test "anxiety were to have a significant negative correlation with subjects' oral performance, then we would have evidence to believe that this could be due to test anxiety and not necessarily due to anxiety from speaking in a foreign language". Moreover, Horwitz et al. (1986) proposed that FLA is related to test anxiety rather than being composed of it. As a final comment, in the Pakistani context, test anxiety can contribute to students' speaking anxiety (SA) due to the exam-oriented teaching and learning system. The divided opinions regarding test anxiety as an element of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) theory warrant more in-depth and longitudinal studies to re-examine and clarify the association of test anxiety with language anxiety.

3.4.3.3 Fear of Negative Evaluation

The third component of FLA and SA is fear of negative evaluation (FNE), which is defined as an "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (Horwitz et al., 1986:128). Young (1990) supports Horwitz et al.'s concept, arguing that since students are exposed to various evaluative situations in the classroom such as speaking with their teachers or peers, or

giving a presentation in front of the whole class, FNE can be a situational variable contributing to SA. It is noteworthy that FNE is similar to test anxiety; however, its broader scope differentiates it from test anxiety. Horwitz et al., (1986) argue that, unlike test anxiety, FNE is not dependent only on test-taking situations; rather it may happen in any social and/or evaluative situation. For instance, it can occur in group discussion, or speaking in a foreign language class.

Moreover, it is worth noting that FNE can be more prevalent and greater in cultures where the concept of 'face' is important. As far as the Pakistani context of this study is concerned, it is a culture which places a high value on saving face in social interactions. Moreover, particularly, in the language classroom, the teacher's positive remarks, students' competency, and intelligence bring praise for students while mistakes bring humiliation and embarrassment. Hence, it could be concluded that the participants in the current study may experience FNE.

It is to note that although most researchers generally agree that FLA is associated with three factors: CA, test anxiety and FNE, some studies using factor analysis to reveal the components of FLA report different results. For example, Aida (1994) found four underlying factors: speech anxiety and FNE, comfortableness in speaking with Japanese people, fear of failing in class, and negative attitudes toward the Japanese class. Similarly, Cheng et al. (1999) found two underlying factors: low self-confidence in English speaking, and general English classroom performance anxiety. In addition, Wu (1994) noted three underlying factors: low self-esteem, fear of communication and negative evaluation, and anxiety about the English class.

3.5 Facilitating and Debilitating Language Anxiety

Analyses of the consequences of language anxiety have concluded that it may either facilitate or debilitate language learning and performance, a debate which is summarised below.

3.5.1 Facilitating Language Anxiety

Facilitating language anxiety motivates language students to accept new learning tasks and challenges them to improve their performance. Gardner & MacIntyre (1993b) believe that facilitating language anxiety and motivation have similarities in their conceptual definitions. According to Young (1986, cited in Llinás & Garau, 2009:440), facilitating language anxiety is “an increase in drive level which results in improved performance”. It can be argued that it may encourage learners to enhance their efforts and take risks to perform better and overcome their language anxiety. The positive role of anxiety in foreign language learning has been reported by two often cited FLA studies by Chastain (1975) and Kleinmann (1977). However, Chastain (1975) speculated that some concern about performance is “a plus” while “too much anxiety can produce negative results” (p. 160), a conclusion that implies that lower levels of language anxiety may better language proficiency, whereas its higher levels can interfere with students’ performance. However, it could be difficult to demarcate between the facilitating and debilitating levels of language anxiety. Additionally Cha (2006) conditions the motivating role of language anxiety with the nature of the task, arguing that anxiety can only facilitate learning when the task is relatively easy; otherwise it may hinder learning. If the task is complicated, therefore, language anxiety can have detrimental effects on language acquisition, which would indicate that the facilitating or debilitating effects of language anxiety seem to depend upon the level of the task.

3.5.2 Debilitating Language Anxiety

Debilitating anxiety impedes language learning and negatively affects learners’ performance and achievement. It motivates learners to adopt avoidance behaviour and flee the new learning task (Wang, 2005). As a result, students might not participate actively in class activities since they feel fear and insecurity (Llinás & Garau, 2009). This implies that debilitating language anxiety may produce a vicious circle; the more students avoid participation in classes to evade anxiety the less they would improve their performance, which, in turn, could produce more anxiety.

In summary, facilitating language anxiety may improve performance and debilitating language anxiety might obstruct performance. The effects of both

types of anxiety may vary from student to student in terms of, for example, how they view anxiety, their strategies to cope with it, and how motivated they are to learn the target language. It is possible that highly anxious students can take anxiety as their strength and eventually they could be successful language learners, while students with lower levels of language anxiety might not react positively to anxiety and might even abandon attempts to learn the language. Thus, one theoretical implication could be that language anxiety may be 'response-specific' as well as 'situation-specific' since its effects on performance might be determined by the student's response towards it. Moreover, while anxiety exists in language classrooms, language teachers can play a key role in helping their students manage their anxiety and use it positively. The role of the teacher can become extremely important in contexts such as Pakistan where teachers' opinions and behaviour can directly affect students' language learning.

Although some studies have noticed a facilitating effect of anxiety on language learning, language anxiety researchers to date have mostly reported its debilitating role, and have reported that mostly anxiety has detrimental effects on the language learning process (Tóth, 2010). Indeed, Horwitz (1990) claimed that all anxiety in the language learning process is debilitating and there is no such thing as facilitating anxiety. Similarly, MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a:302) state that "language anxiety consistently, negatively affects language learning and production". The present study also considers anxiety from its debilitating aspect.

3.6 Instruments for Measuring Language Anxiety

While there are various scales used in the field of FLA reviewed in this section, the focus will be on two instruments: the FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986) and the questionnaire developed by Young (1990). Both follow the situation-specific approach of language anxiety which has provided more consistent findings than other perspectives in FLA studies (Horwitz, 2010). Moreover, many SA studies have employed both scales (Cheng, 2005). Finally, some items from the FLCAS and some from second section of Young's (1990) scale will be adapted and modified for use in the present study.

Various instruments have been developed to examine foreign language anxiety (FLA). Some studied the personality traits of anxiety, such as the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (1953) and Spielberger's State Trait Anxiety Inventory (1983). However, studies applying trait or state types of scale could not explain language anxiety and provide consistent results. (Horwitz, 2010). One reason could be that they do not ask subjects to associate their language anxiety with a particular source. Therefore, many FLA studies started using measures which were specific to language learning; these studies yielded rich and consistent conclusions (ibid). MacIntyre & Gardner (1991b) assert that the first scale identified to measure language anxiety was the French Class Anxiety Scale used by Gardner & Smythe (1975). Other instruments, such as English USE Anxiety (Clément et al., 1977, cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999) and English Test Anxiety (Clément et al., 1980, cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), have also been designed.

According to Tóth (2009), a more current scale to measure FLA is the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). It is a self-report instrument that assesses students' FLA in terms of the three potential factors that are regarded as conceptually important aspects of FLA theory: CA, test anxiety, and FNE. It is a 33-item, Likert-type scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. Possible scores on the FLCAS range from 33 to 165. Horwitz et al. developed this instrument on the basis of anxious students' self-reports, interviews with counsellors at the Learning Skills Centre at the University of Texas at Austin, personal experiences with anxious foreign language students, clinical experiences, and a review of related instruments.

The validity of the FLCAS has been confirmed "... via significant correlations with communication apprehension ... and with test anxiety" (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999:223). Similarly, Horwitz et al. (1986) reported that the scale is both reliable and valid, with an "alpha coefficient of .93 with all items producing significant corrected item-total scale correlations" (p. 129). The test-retest-reliability over eight weeks yielded an $r = .83$ ($p < .001$) (ibid). Similarly, Cao (2011) states that this scale has been pervasively used in FLA studies (e.g. Aida, 1994; Sila, 2010; Tallon, 2009; Tóth, 2010; Truitt, 1995; Trang et al., 2013) and these studies have also provided high reliability scores. For example, Aida

(1994) reported internal consistency of .94, measured on 96 subjects. Tóth's (2010) was .93, measured on 117 English major subjects, and Truitt's (1995) was .95, measured on 198 subjects.

However, the FLCAS has been criticised. For example, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) found that test anxiety is a general issue and not one specific to foreign language learning. Similarly, Aida (1994) supported their claim and proposed that items about test anxiety should be eliminated from the scale. However, Tóth (2009) rejects Aida's suggestion, arguing that test anxiety is itself an important element of language anxiety. Another criticism of the FLCAS is that it tends to measure anxiety primarily related to speaking situations; this, therefore, raises doubts over whether the FLCAS is capable of identifying students who are anxious about performance and skills other than speaking (Aida, 1994; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003). In addition, Sparks & Ganschow (1991; 2007) criticise the validity of the FLCAS on the grounds of its not including items about native language deficits as possible sources of language anxiety and poor performance. This criticism may be based on Sparks and Ganschow's (1991; 2007) view of language anxiety as, unlike Horwitz et al. (1986), they view anxiety as a consequence, not a cause, of poor language learning.

Having considered the FLCAS, the discussion turns to the instrument developed by Young (1990) and used in her article 'An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking'. Young's (1990) instrument consists of three sections. The first section asks students to agree or disagree with 24 questions about sources of SA. The second section asks students to indicate their levels of SA about certain in-class activities. The final section aims to identify certain teacher characteristics and practices that could alleviate students' anxiety in class.

The present study has adapted some items from the second section of Young's questionnaire. She developed 20 'In-Class Activities' on the bases of the "kinds of activities observed and recorded by this researcher [Young] over a two-year period as supervisor of high school student teachers and as a supervisor of first-year Spanish courses at the university level" (1990:542). Students were asked to identify their level of SA for each activity using a five-point Likert scale

ranging from 'Very Relaxed' to 'Very Anxious'.

The next section is about language learning anxiety research.

3.7 Language Learning Anxiety Research

First, language anxiety studies about factors besides speaking are considered in order to have a systematic review of studies on language learning anxiety. Those studies particularly focusing on language speaking anxiety (SA) will be reviewed in section 3.8 below.

Although studies examining language anxiety and other variables are considered, the focus will be on those studies which have included anxiety as a main and an independent affective factor in the language learning process.

Since the 1970s researchers have been hypothesising that anxiety may have debilitating effects on second/foreign language learning and performance (Horwitz, 2010). However, as already noted, early language anxiety studies provided "mixed and confusing results" (Scovel, 1978:132), with some studies indicating a negative relationship between FLA and achievement (Clément et al., 1977, 1980, cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), whereas others suggested no relationship or a positive relationship (Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977). For example, Chastain (1975) found positive, negative, and non-significant correlations between anxiety and second language achievement in French, German, and Spanish. Such perplexing results could not draw a clear picture of how anxiety affects language performance and achievement. These inconsistencies between results may be attributed to the lack of a valid and reliable measure specific to language learning (Scovel, 1978). Another reason might be the existence of a wide variety of anxiety types, such as trait-anxiety, state-anxiety, debilitating anxiety, facilitative anxiety; different studies followed different perspectives (Horwitz, 2010). Moreover, the complex nature of anxiety might also be a reason for the mixed results. However after the establishment of FLA specific to language learning situations and the development of the FLCAS, a valid and reliable instrument for measuring language anxiety, "findings concerning anxiety and language achievement have been relatively

uniform, indicating a consistent moderate negative relationship between anxiety and achievement” (Horwitz, 2001:112).

In the 1980s anxiety was acknowledged as an independent affective factor influencing the language learning process (Von Worde, 2003). For example, Trylong (1987) used written tests, oral quizzes and semester grades in a French language class to examine the relationship of student aptitude, attitude and anxiety to language achievement. The results showed a negative correlation of anxiety with all areas of achievement. Moreover, although aptitude and attitude played their role, anxiety affected language performance as an independent variable. Likewise, Ely (1986) examined the language anxiety of Spanish language learners and found that it impedes students’ class participation which, in turn, affects their overall achievement. Regarding the cognitive effects of anxiety on language learning, MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) theorised that anxiety interferes with learning at each of the three stages of foreign language acquisition proposed by Tobias (1986): input, processing and output. At the input stage it may cause attention deficit and poor processing of information. At the processing stage it can interfere with the organisation of information, and at the final output stage it may interfere with the retrieval of previously learned information. In other words, anxiety may affect language learning when students are introduced to new material, when they are storing it, and when they attempt to speak in the target language by using the learned material. However, the final stage might be more anxiety-provoking, where students have to show their competence.

Similarly, Krashen (1982; 2003) explains the negative effects of anxiety on foreign language performance using his ‘affective filter’ hypothesis, according to which anxiety influences students’ affective filter, the mental block that obstructs the full use of comprehensible input. A high affective filter impedes language learning, whereas a low affective filter facilitates it. Consequently, higher levels of language anxiety may impede the information reaching the students and, as a result, they may learn less. Consequently, they may fail to show good performance which, in turn, could intensify their anxiety. This hypothesis may imply that anxiety is an independent affective factor which can impair students’ cognitive processing of language input; it is also possible that a friendly teacher

and a comfortable classroom environment would help students to process input more effectively and hence to acquire more knowledge.

Horwitz et al. (1986) administered the FLCAS to foreign language students at the University of Texas at Austin. They found a significant moderate negative correlation between FLA and the grades students expected, as well as those they received. Moreover, highly anxious students both expected and received lower grades than their less anxious counterparts, suggesting that anxious students may lack confidence and may have low self-perceived competence. Similarly, in a study to explore the sources of language anxiety and to examine its relationship with language achievement, Aida (1994) administered the FLCAS to 96 American students learning Japanese as a foreign language. She found a significant negative correlation between language anxiety and students' course grades. Speech anxiety, FNE, negative attitudes towards the class, and fear of failing the class were the main sources of students' language anxiety. Aida's results are in line with Saito & Samimy's (1996) quantitative study with beginning, intermediate, and advanced college learners of Japanese in the US.

Furthermore, Saito & Samimy's (1996) study challenged the hypothesis of MacIntyre & Gardner (1991b:111), who suggest that "as experience and proficiency increase, anxiety declines in a fairly consistent manner". This suggests that language anxiety is more prevalent in the beginning stages of language learning and may decrease as students advance to higher proficiency levels. However, Saito & Samimy (1996) found contrary results, noting that anxiety was more characteristic at the advanced stages. More recently, Llinás & Garau's (2009) quantitative study reiterated that advanced learners experienced more anxiety than intermediate and beginner students. Hence, it could be argued that anxiety levels may increase as students become more familiar with the language. It may also imply that university students experience higher levels of language anxiety than college or school students, and it should be noted that the participants in the current research study are also university students. Thus, language teachers should not believe that experienced and proficient students will not feel anxious; rather they should also expect anxious learners at the advanced levels. The above mentioned contradictory findings may underscore the need for a closer re-examination of the role of proficiency levels in FLA and

also in making advanced students anxious. The levels of language anxiety in students with higher or lower proficiency may depend upon their desire for self-esteem and positive image, motivation, classroom environment, and expectations from the course. Although the studies mentioned in the previous paragraph produced insightful results, they totally relied on questionnaires. It is possible that results would have been different had these studies made use of qualitative methods, such as interviews or observations.

Chan & Wu's (2004) research focused on the language anxiety of beginning (EFL elementary school) students. The data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, and document collection. The subjects were 601 students from 18 classes selected from nine educational districts. Additionally, nine English teachers were interviewed. The results showed a significant negative correlation between FLA levels and English learning achievement. Low proficiency, speaking in front of others, tests, fear of negative evaluation (FNE), anxious personality and pressure from peers were the main sources of FLA. The study also emphasised the role of the language teacher in making the language learning process an enjoyable experience. Chan & Wu's (2004) study has significant implications for the current study. For example, in terms of the research methods used, it suggests that questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations may be suitable data collection techniques to explore anxiety. Similarly, Abu-Rabia's (2004) quantitative study with EFL 7th grade students in Israel found a significant negative correlation between FLA and students' achievement in various foreign language tests. Furthermore, one of the main anxiety predictors was teacher attitude, a result which is in line with the work of Huang et al. (2010). Thus, it appears that teachers can play a vital role in affecting their students' anxiety levels.

Additionally, Ferdous (2012) administered questionnaires, including the FLCAS, to Bangladeshi undergraduate non-English university students to investigate their language anxiety. He found that some sources were related to learners, some to teachers and others to classroom procedures. Moreover, a friendly teacher, sociable classroom environment, reinforcing students' confidence,

group work, and gentle error correction were found to be helpful in alleviating students' language anxiety.

Zhang (2010) explored language anxiety among 147 high school students in China. The study used several questionnaires including the FLCAS and section 2 (in-class activities) of Young's (1990) questionnaire. The study found that personality, CA, oral tests, and self-perceived proficiency had significant correlation with students' SA. Additionally, speaking-oriented activities provoked the most anxiety, whereas group work lessened the levels of SA. Moreover, teachers who are friendly, patient, humorous, and who compliment and encourage students were noted as helpful in reducing language anxiety. Zhang's (2010) study could inform the current study in terms of the instruments it used; the latter also adapted some items from the FLCAS to examine SA sources and some items from section 2 (in-class activities) of Young's (1990) questionnaire to explore classroom activities that may help alleviate SA.

Cubukcu (2007) conducted interviews with Turkish students to examine the effects of anxiety on their foreign language learning. The study found that making a presentation to the class, making mistakes, losing face, a high standard of performance, and teachers were the main contributors to students' language anxiety. The study emphasised that teachers should consider the possibility that anxiety could be responsible for students' poor performance before attaching it to lack of motivation, ability, or interest.

Horwitz (1988) investigated foreign language university students' beliefs about language learning. Although the study did not focus on language anxiety, it suggested that students' predetermined beliefs-such as that learning English is difficult-could create anxiety for them and eventually might influence their language achievement. Thus, teachers are recommended to take into account their students' beliefs about language learning. The study also indicated that language students who believe in their abilities can be more successful than those who do not. There have been other attempts to examine the link between language anxiety and students' self-perceived competence. For example, Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) conducted a study with university students of French, Spanish, German and Japanese and found that students' expectations

of their overall achievement, their perceived self-worth, and perceived scholastic competence were three predictors of language anxiety. Similarly, MacIntyre et al. (1997) found a negative relationship between language anxiety and students' self-perception of their language ability. It could be suggested that students who underestimate their language abilities may not have confidence to participate actively in various classroom activities and as a result, their language skills might not develop rapidly and they may experience more language anxiety. However, the question could be to what extent students' perception of their own competence may truly reflect their actual competence, since some learners may underestimate or overestimate their abilities.

Some studies have included teachers in order to investigate their perceptions of the phenomenon of language anxiety and its role in language learning. For example, Trang et al. (2013) examined the awareness of and attitudes towards language anxiety of 419 English-major students and 8 EFL teachers in a university in Vietnam. The data were gathered by questionnaires, interviews and student autobiographies. The authors found that most of the teachers could not understand the effects of anxiety on students and believed that anxiety exists only in a small number of students. Moreover, they believed that anxiety is not a serious problem and it could facilitate learning. In contrast, the majority of the students regarded anxiety as a serious problem affecting their performance. Similarly, Ohata (2005) conducted interviews with seven experienced ESL/EFL teachers at the University of Pennsylvania, US, to identify any gaps between the viewpoints of teachers and students on the role of anxiety in language classes. Ohata noted some gaps and differences between the perceptions of students and teachers on the function of anxiety in language learning. This result also agrees with Azarfam & Baki's (2012) study, which was conducted in Iran.

Thus, it could be concluded that there might be discrepancies between students' and teachers' views about the role and severity of anxiety. Moreover, many language teachers may lack knowledge of the effects of anxiety on language learning. Hence, it underscores the need to examine teachers' views of the role of anxiety in the language class; however, far too little attention has been paid to this topic (Ohata, 2005). Some anxiety researchers have

recommended that this topic should be investigated (e.g. Algothani, 2010). Therefore, one of the aims of the current study was to explore Pakistani EFL teachers' perceptions of their students' SA along with the strategies used by teachers to reduce it. It also noted gaps between teachers' and students' perceptions and understanding of the role of anxiety in the class. On the other hand, as noted above, studies report that teachers can strongly affect students' anxiety levels; therefore, it seems important that teachers may have adequate knowledge of anxiety and of its ramifications for language learning.

Attention has also been paid to examining language anxiety in relation to various other areas, such as learning difficulties (Chen & Chang, 2004); gender (Mersi, 2012; Cheng, 2002); and tests (Huang & Hung, 2013). Similarly, some studies have examined language anxiety in association with listening (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Kim, 2000); reading (Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000); and writing (Cheng et al., 1999; Abu-Rabia & Argaman, 2002) and reported that language anxiety affects students' performance and achievement in all these three areas.

As far as the Pakistani context is concerned, research has revealed the following studies conducted on FLA. First, Sultan (2012) administered the Perceived Competence Scale (Williams & Deci, 1996) and the FLCAS to Pakistani EFL undergraduate students to examine the relationship between their language anxiety and perceived competence. He noted that the students with low self-perceived competence were more anxious than those who had higher perceived competence.

Hussain et al. (2011) examined the language anxiety of 10th grade Pakistani students and their attitudes towards foreign language learning. The data were collected through questionnaires. The study found that many students experienced anxiety and some had positive and others negative attitudes towards learning English. Moreover, it found a significant correlation between language anxiety and students' attitudes towards language learning. It may be suggested that students with positive attitudes towards foreign language learning could be more successful than those with negative attitudes.

Rustam (2011) explored the strategies used by anxious students to overcome their anxiety when speaking English. The participants included 50 undergraduate first semester Pakistani students who were administered a questionnaire. The most frequently used strategies included: positive self-talk, encouraging oneself, sharing anxious feelings with peers, and imagining that speaking English is not difficult.

Khattak et al. (2011) aimed to investigate the sources of students' language anxiety at Abdul Wali Khan University, Pakistan and to devise ways to reduce it. The FLCAS was administered to 62 students and interviews were conducted with ten students. The data showed that contributors to students' language anxiety included fear of: making mistakes, of failing the exam, the teacher's manner of error correction, strict classrooms, and lack of confidence. The study suggested that teachers should provide students with a friendly and sociable classroom environment to reduce their feelings of anxiety. Finally, Adeel's (2011) study in Pakistan noted that two main contributors to language anxiety included students' perceptions and beliefs about themselves and learning, and a formal classroom environment. The results suggested that a supportive teacher, gentle error correction, reinforcing students' confidence, and students' reasonable beliefs could reduce their language anxiety.

These studies are valuable as they reveal that Pakistani students may experience language anxiety. Moreover, they have highlighted various sources of students' language anxiety and methods to reduce it. However, there seems to be a shortage of anxiety research in Pakistan. Although the focus of the present study is on SA, in order to highlight its significance if I compare it with the above mentioned studies on general FLA conducted in Pakistan, the following differences could be noted. For instance, first, only two studies (Khattak et al. and Adeel) examined the sources of general FLA, the present study attempts to explore the sources of SA in-depth, including the socio-cultural-related sources of SA which do not appear to have been reported previously in the Pakistani context. Second, other areas that have not been specifically and comprehensively investigated include classroom practices and teacher behaviour that may alleviate anxiety whereas, the current study

identified various teacher characteristics and classroom practices that may help reduce students' SA and promote their spoken proficiency.

Third, apart from Khattak et al. (2011) and Adeel (2011), the other three studies mentioned above do not seem to focus directly on the role of anxiety in language learning as Sultan (2012) explored language anxiety and self-perceived competence, Hussain et al. (2011) investigated language anxiety and attitudes towards English learning, and Rustam (2011) investigated strategies to cope with anxiety when speaking. The focus of this study, however, is on anxiety. Moreover, previous studies have not explored Pakistani EFL teachers' perceptions of their students' anxiety and the teachers' potential strategies to manage it. Similarly, there has been no investigation to determine which of the English language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) creates the most anxiety. It is hoped that the current work exploring these areas will have thorough and insightful results. Furthermore, other studies have been quantitative in nature and none used classroom observation as a tool. This study, on the other hand, did not simply rely on questionnaires but rather used qualitative tools in addition (semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations) to gather rich data. Most previous pieces of research were conducted with intermediate and undergraduate students, while this study involved university students. Finally, they appear to be small scale studies in terms of participants and research sites, whereas the current research is wider in scope as it collected the quantitative data from 170 students from five universities in Pakistan and interviewed 20 students.

However, it is clear that there is a need for a more in-depth consideration of FLA as a whole in this context, with specific attention being paid to SA in the English language classroom.

The following section reviews studies investigating speaking anxiety (SA).

3.8 Language Speaking Anxiety Research

Numerous studies report that much of the anxiety expressed by language students is associated with speaking the foreign language (Wilson, 2006; Horwitz et al., 1986; Lucas et al., 2011; Liu & Jackson, 2008). For example,

Horwitz & Young (1991:29) state that “difficulty in speaking in class is probably the most frequently cited concern of the anxious foreign language students seeking help”. Similarly, MacIntyre (1999:33) contends that students regard speaking in class as “the single most important source of language anxiety”. In addition, unlike most of the quantitative SA studies, Price (1991) followed a qualitative approach, conducting interviews with ten subjects selected as high-anxiety students of French at the University of Texas at Austin. She reported that the majority of the subjects experienced anxiety the most when required to speak in front on their peers. Moreover, she further reported that two personality variables, “perfectionism and fear of public speaking” (p. 106), might also interact with SA. Likewise, Koch & Terrell (1991) conducted interviews with learners of Spanish at the University of California. Their subjects regarded various speaking activities (e.g. role plays, skits and oral presentations) as a major source of language anxiety. On the other hand, students stated that small groups, and relevant and interesting oral topics would make them feel comfortable. One implication that could be drawn from the studies of Price and of Koch & Terrell is that interviews could be used to gain insightful data about SA.

However, speaking can be particularly anxiety-provoking when oral activities put students at display. For example, Young (1990) investigated the sources of Spanish learners’ SA and clarified that simply speaking does not generate the most anxiety; rather, it is speaking in front of the class. The reason could be “the stressful, competitive nature of oral public performance” (Bailey, 1983:27, cited in Young, 1990:541), moreover, SA may threaten students’ self-concept and confidence and some studies have shown a negative relationship between confidence in speaking and FLA (e.g. Ewald, 2007).

Regarding the relationship between language anxiety and oral performance, studies have shown that anxiety may negatively affect students’ performance in oral exams. For example Phillips (1992) attempted to examine the impact of language anxiety on students’ performance in an oral test of French and also to explore the attitudes of the most anxious students towards the exam. She used the FLCAS, interviews, and an oral exam to collect data. The study showed a significant negative relationship between language anxiety and oral

performance. Moreover, high-anxious students tended to speak less, give shorter answers, and use fewer target structures than the less anxious peers. Additionally, most anxious students' reactions towards their oral exam included descriptors such as "nervous, intimated, tense, confused, worried, and dumb-founded" (p. 19). Similarly, Young (1986, cited in Wilson, 2006) reported that FLA has negative effects on student' oral performance.

Cheng (2005) administered the FLCAS and section 2 (in-class activities) of Young's (1990) questionnaire to English oral conversation course students in a university in Taiwan. The study found that students with higher levels of SA tended to have a lower semester achievement in the English conversation course, while those with less SA had a higher level of achievement. Moreover, students ranked those activities which required them to speak in front of the whole class as being most anxiety-provoking. The results suggested that classroom activities such as group-work, advance preparation, practice speaking and a relaxed, friendly, humorous, and supportive teacher would help reduce students' SA and promote their speaking. It may mean that students might feel comfortable and confident when they have adequate time to prepare themselves for oral tasks and when their teacher is friendly with them. This study has parallels with the current work in terms of the instruments it used to collect data and findings about classroom activities and teacher behaviour that may alleviate students' SA.

Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) conducted a classroom-based case study in order to investigate the SA of 15 students in a lower secondary school in Greece, as well as to offer some solutions to teachers to reduce their students' SA. The study utilised three techniques to collect data: semi-structured interviews, group discussion, and classroom observations. The researchers found that speaking in class was potentially a stressful situation for many students. The three main contributors to SA included FNE, fear of making mistakes (FMM), and perceptions of low ability. Tsiplakides & Keramida suggested that teachers should ensure project work and maximum speaking opportunities in a friendly and non-threatening classroom environment to reduce their students' SA. Similar results were found by Liu's (2007) case study in oral English classes in a Chinese university. The study by Tsiplakides & Keramida is

insightful as it can justify the use of interviews and classroom observations to investigate students' SA. It also confirms the important role of a friendly and sociable classroom to reduce students' SA.

Focusing on the interaction between SA and students' personality, Tianjian (2010) examined the SA of Chinese EFL learners and its relationship with other factors such as unwillingness to communicate, trait anxiety, speaking self-efficacy, risk-taking, language achievement, and language class sociability. The study revealed that almost half the participants experienced moderate or high levels of SA; secondly, that SA has a complex relationship with other variables; that mutual impacts existed between language achievement and SA; and lastly that personality factors were the basic sources of SA. Another study examining SA and personal characteristics was carried out by Oya et al. (2004). This study investigated the relationship between the personality, oral performance in English, and anxiety characteristics of 73 Japanese students. The researchers administered the Maudsley Personality Inventory, the Spielberger State Anxiety Inventory, and a story-retelling task. The study reported that extrovert students showed better global impressions in their oral performance while students having a considerable amount of state anxiety made more mistakes in their communication. Moreover, Dewaele & Thirtle (2009:373) report that "introverts tend to suffer more from communicative anxiety than extroverts". It is possibly due to their unwillingness to participate in communicative tasks in class, which are necessary for oral development.

Some studies indicate that students who have more opportunities to communicate feel less SA. For example, Abdullah & Rahman (2010) investigated the perspectives of Malaysian students' anxiety when speaking English in class. They found that the majority of the subjects were confident speakers. According to them, this could be due to the fact that their participants were from English Language Communication Works where they had adequate exposure to English. However, the study noted that some students felt anxious due to the number of grammatical rules that needed to be mastered in order to learn to speak English. It suggests that grammar-oriented classes could be SA-provoking for some students, whereas communication-oriented classes may make students more competent and confident speakers. Similarly, Liu (2006)

reported that more exposure to oral English reduces students' fear of using the language in class. These results imply that in contexts where speaking is mainly taught through grammar - including Pakistan - students would not develop their speaking skills rapidly and might not feel comfortable when speaking English. However, more use of speaking activities might also induce anxiety for some students.

In their mixed-methods study of Chinese university-level students to examine how speaking anxiety (SA) interacts with personal and instructional factors and influences students' achievement, Yan & Horwitz (2008) found that personal factors strongly affected students' anxiety. Moreover, they suggested that students' immediate socio-cultural contexts may also produce SA for them and they highlighted two relevant socio-cultural factors: students' regional differences and parental influence. Other contributors to anxiety included aspects such as language aptitude, gender, class arrangements, and teacher characteristics. This study is insightful and can inform the present research in many ways. For example, there are similarities both in terms of the level of the participants and of research methodology, that is the mixed-methods approach. Similarly, it builds a link between factors which stem from the classroom (such as class arrangements) and those which exist outside the class (such as parental influence) and shows both that they can interact and that they may affect students' anxiety and, eventually, their performance. The research in this thesis has also shown anxiety interacting with variables in the class and out of the class. It is noteworthy that Yan & Horwitz's (2008) study highlighted only two socio-cultural factors, students' regional differences and parental influence, as anxiety-provoking factors. The current study, however, reported a number of socio-cultural factors that could contribute to student SA.

Tanveer (2007) investigated the causes of SA both within and outside the classroom environment. The 20 subjects in the EFL Unit and Department of Education at the University of Glasgow who participated in the study included six ESL/EFL students, three experienced ESL/EFL teachers, and eleven ESL/EFL practitioners (i.e. students enrolled in M.Ed. in English Language Teaching and who had been practicing teaching English in their home countries). The study utilised semi-structured interviews and focus group

discussions to explore the topic. The results showed that in addition to often-cited SA sources related to classroom procedures (such as strict classroom) and linguistic-related sources (such as pronunciation and vocabulary) there were socio-cultural factors which were found to affect students' speaking performance in class, for example students' cultural backgrounds, differences in the students' and the target language's cultures, and differences in the social status of the speakers and interlocutors.

Kitano (2001) explored anxiety and inhibitive factors in the oral communication of English language students in a university in Viseu, Portugal. Kitano stated, "If one factor can be said to be decisive in oral communication, however, it is the sense of being academically evaluated, with social evaluation almost as influential" (p. 305). This finding spotlights the need for a learning atmosphere where mistakes are considered as a natural part of learning and speaking a foreign language and students are not constantly evaluated.

It can be seen therefore that the literature shows that studies on anxiety have been conducted in varying contexts, target languages, and proficiency levels, and that it further indicates that anxiety may strongly affect L2/foreign language performance. A number of insights can be drawn from the studies discussed above. First, although anxiety can disrupt students' development in listening, reading, and writing, studies mostly associate anxiety with speaking-oriented activities. This calls for the examination of the factors that could be responsible for students' anxiety in oral activities and also for classroom activities that may reduce students' SA and improve their oral proficiency. However, there seems to be a relative paucity of studies focusing on the sources of SA in particular (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). In addition, a number of recent studies have recommended the investigation of activities that reduce SA (for example, Aydin, 2008; Kojima, 2007; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003). A second insight is that teachers could play a vital role in affecting students' SA levels by means of their methodology and behaviour. This therefore highlights the need to investigate aspects of teacher behaviour that may help reduce students' SA, and also to explore teachers' views about their students' SA. Thirdly, studies conducted in different contexts could result in different, new, and useful conclusions; this underscores the need for continued research into anxiety in different contexts,

such as Pakistan. The final conclusion is that a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches can provide anxiety researchers with in-depth, reliable and rich data about the complex psychological construct of anxiety.

The current study found much remaining scope for further research into the above mentioned areas. The concerns and voices of Pakistani EFL students are yet to be heard systematically and comprehensively in this field of investigation. Thus, the current mixed-methods study took the insights mentioned above into consideration, with the aim of adding more empirical data to the literature, and also devising strategies for teachers to reduce their students' SA and facilitate the learning process.

Despite the agreement of the studies, mentioned in earlier sections, over the interaction between language anxiety and performance, some researchers are sharply divided on the relationship between language anxiety and performance. This controversial issue is discussed in the subsequent section.

3.9 Is Language Anxiety a Cause or Result of Poor Language Achievement?

A number of studies have consistently concluded that language anxiety impairs language performance; thus, language anxiety is viewed as a cause of poor language acquisition (see, for example, Young, 1990; Aida, 1994; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Cheng et al., 1999; Gregersen, 2005; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Kim, 2009; Cutrone, 2009; Tóth, 2010; 2011; Trang et al., 2013; Huang & Hung, 2013). Indeed, Gardner & MacIntyre (1993a:183) argue that language anxiety is “the best single correlate of achievement”. It is, however, interesting to note that several studies have challenged this concept and suggest that language anxiety is a consequence, not a cause of poor learning ability.

One such study, by Sparks & Ganschow (1991), proposed the Linguistic Coding Difference Hypothesis (LCDH) which postulates that “native language factors are likely to be implicated as the main variable in foreign language learning” (p. 10). They claim that learners' difficulties in their native language, not affective factors, cause foreign language learning problems which can eventually result in anxiety. This implies that students' L1 abilities can determine or influence

their success in foreign language acquisition. According to Sparks & Ganschow (1991), therefore, anxiety functions as a result not a cause: for example if language learners perform well in class, they will feel confident and comfortable and if they fail to do well they may experience language anxiety. Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues continued their research and conducted a series of studies to extend and support their claims (Ganschow et al., 1994; Sparks & Ganschow, 1995, 1996, 2007; Sparks et al., 2000). Some of these studies are discussed below.

In their theoretical article, Sparks & Ganschow (1996) confirmed the hypothesis described above although slightly changed their stance and reported that L1 difficulties are not the only source of poor language achievement. Nevertheless, there seem to be some problems with this study such as the failure to consider the possibility that anxiety can be a source of poor language learning, since the LCDH views anxiety solely as a reason for poor achievement in a new language. Similarly, Sparks et al. (2000) reiterated this claim and argued that some kind of cognitive handicap is responsible for poor language learning and accompanying anxiety. Hence, they discounted language anxiety as a major factor affecting language learning and focused on the cognitive capacity. They argued that previous language anxiety studies suggested a negative association between anxiety and language achievement since they did not investigate the subtle cognitive linguistic disability which causes poor learning and leads to language anxiety. More recently, Sparks & Ganschow (2007) investigated the role of L1 abilities in foreign language learning and supported their LCDH theory by suggesting that low-anxious students performed well in L1 skills and foreign language grades, while high-anxious students had poor L1 skills and course grades.

On the other hand, many researchers have rejected the hypothesis devised by Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues. For example, responding to their arguments, Horwitz (2000) does not totally rule out the possibility of cognitive issues as sources of poor language achievement and acknowledges that some learners might not perform well as a result of “cognitive or first language disabilities or both” (p. 256). However, she stresses that “some people are anxious of language learning independent of processing deficits and that such

anxiety reactions can interfere with language learning” (ibid:256). This latter statement has been verified by several research studies (e.g. Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). To further support her argument, Horwitz (2000) asserts that many students at prestigious American colleges and universities, who were selected “on the basis of rigorous SAT and grade point average entrance requirements”, experience language anxiety (p. 257). She, therefore, assumes that these students have at least average cognitive and L1 abilities. It can be posited that although cognitive disabilities might harm some students’ language learning, it cannot be applied as a cause of language anxiety to all learners. Moreover, it could be detrimental to ignore the role of anxiety in language learning: in the words of Horwitz (2000:257), “there is a great deal of harm in denying anxiety reactions”. In conclusion, she dismisses Sparks et al.’s conclusions by arguing that language learning cannot be taken only as sound-symbol correspondences and that their concept is based on a simplified view of language learning.

It is possible that native language abilities could influence the development of skills in a new language. It seems, however, unlikely that L1 difficulties are the sole cause of problems in acquiring a foreign language and of anxiety, as many successful language students report experiencing anxiety. Moreover, several language anxiety studies, as noted above, have reported that the majority of foreign language learners feel anxious in class. Thus, it could be argued that not all of them have cognitive problems. Additionally, many participants in the current study reported feeling anxious; however, all of them might not have poor L1 skills. Likewise, experimental language anxiety studies (e.g. Duff, 2001) reveal that when the reported sources of FLA were controlled, students made progress in their language learning. Finally, as was noted above in section 3.2.1, affective factors play a significant part in influencing language learning.

MacIntyre (1995) also agrees with Horwitz (2000) and challenges the LCDH, arguing that it underestimates the influence of language anxiety in the recursive relationship that exists between anxiety, cognition, and behaviour. He maintains that FLA has a social dimension which is produced by the social and communicative aspects of learning. Thus, he attributes an important role to FLA as a social cognitive activity in language learning. MacIntyre (1995) further

points out that Sparks et al. (2000) focused entirely on cognitive factors and ignored the social context where foreign language is learnt, such as students' interaction with teachers and peers. Thus, he suggests that language anxiety should be investigated from a contextual point of view to ameliorate language learning and performance.

MacIntyre's view appears convincing since it takes into account the influential role that affect (e.g. anxiety) can play in cognition. Moreover since, as Scovel (1978) argues, foreign language learning may mean encountering a foreign culture, a potential threat to one's identity, the LCDH could be regarded as placing an undue emphasis on cognitive abilities and acquiring the sound system of the language. Hence, it could be argued that it might have overlooked the differences between L1 learning and foreign language acquisition, particularly the characteristics of the setting that makes language anxiety specific to a situation.

Another study that challenges the LCDH and assigns an important role to FLA in language learning is that of Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000), who found that after controlling the factors of L1 issues, FLA still played a considerable role in the language learning process. Similarly, other studies have noted that L1 learning history is not the best predictor of FLA (e.g. Chen & Chang, 2004). Thus, it could be argued that affect may not be taken as an alternative to aptitude because anxiety may interfere with all three stages of language learning: input, storage and retrieval. Hence, anxious students may feel cognitive anxiety when anxiety obstructs the production stage and social anxiety when students take into account the social implications when answering a question. Therefore, it appears that understanding anxiety in regard to context could widen our understanding of language learning. It could be argued, therefore, that Sparks & Ganschow did not thoroughly consider the complex ramifications of anxiety.

This discussion of the role of language anxiety seems to highlight various areas that merit further attention. For example, the LCDH suggests a thorough investigation of the complex link between foreign language anxiety (FLA) and language performance, and also between FLA and language aptitude. Similarly, Horwitz's (2000) and MacIntyre's (1995) arguments have suggested exploring

associations between and among FLA and other learner characteristics, as well as the achievement and socio-cultural baggage of students. However, far too little attention has been paid to the socio-cultural factors that interact with students' anxiety, although this is an area that has been highlighted as a potentially fruitful topic for investigation. For example, Yan & Horwitz (2008) propose that further anxiety studies should explore socio-cultural factors related to language learning. Similarly, Yang (2012) emphasises that socio-cultural background is worth examining as a source of learner anxiety. The current study revealed that certain socio-cultural factors can also produce anxiety for some students.

Since it appears that language anxiety can cause poor performance, teachers would benefit from knowing the situations that provoke anxiety and being aware of ways of lowering student anxiety reactions. Thus, the next section considers the possible sources of language anxiety and the techniques and methods that may minimise it.

3.10 Pedagogical Implications

As has been seen, it seems clear from the literature that anxiety does not work in isolation; in light of its deleterious effects on foreign language learning and speaking, therefore, many studies have sought to highlight the factors that may contribute to it. Moreover, many techniques and methods have been developed to alleviate anxiety and to facilitate language acquisition.

3.10.1 Possible Sources of Anxiety

A review of the literature suggests that sources of anxiety range from personal (for example, self-confidence) to procedural (for example, classroom activities). Therefore, it seems useful to follow the classification suggested by Young (1991) in order to consider the sources in an organised manner. After reviewing numerous qualitative and quantitative anxiety studies, Young (1991) classified the sources of anxiety into six categories: 1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3) teacher beliefs about language teaching; 4) teacher-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedures; and 6) language testing. Young further clarified that these sources are not necessarily independent, but may be deeply interrelated. Each category is

addressed below in turn.

3.10.1.1 Personal and Interpersonal Anxieties

Personal and interpersonal issues have been extensively reported and discussed as sources of anxiety (Young, 1991). Communication apprehension (CA), fear of negative evaluation (FNE), self-esteem and competitiveness are significant sources of learner anxiety within this category. It should be noted that CA and FNE were discussed earlier, in section 3.4, as components of FLA. At this point, they will be considered as sources of anxiety.

Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension is one of the primary sources of language anxiety and SA (Adeel, 2011; Hussain et al., 2011; Horwitz, 2010; Kim, 2009; Trang, 2012; Trang et al., 2013). It may be experienced due to many factors, for instance when students cannot speak effectively because of poor speaking skills (Tóth, 2011) and when they perceive themselves as unable to communicate in the foreign language (Arnold, 2007). It could be argued that if students doubt their ability to communicate successfully in the class this may escalate their SA, as well as discourage them from communication. According to Young (1990), CA increases when students have to perform in front of the whole class. Von Worde (2003) argues that the cause may be students not wanting to be the focus of others' attention. Moreover, they might worry that if they do not do well, their peers and teacher would form a negative impression of them. Therefore, it could be argued that CA can have deleterious effects on students' language learning and particularly speaking, since communicatively apprehensive students will avoid speaking in class. It is suggested that teachers may incorporate activities such as group-work that do not spotlight students as the lone performer. Similarly, they may discourage factors such as formal classrooms and competitiveness to reduce students' FNE. According to Horwitz et al. (1986) the higher status of the teacher may also contribute to students' CA. Since in Pakistan teachers have a high status while students have a subordinate role (Inamullah et al., 2008), Pakistani EFL teachers may particularly benefit from having open and positive relations with their students, in order to encourage participation in class.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

FNE (fear of negative evaluation) is another source of interpersonal anxiety. It is also considered to be one of the major contributors to students' SA (Horwitz, 2013; Wang, 2005; Ewald, 2007; Alghothani, 2010). Price (1991) conducted interviews with highly anxious students and found that several students preferred to sit silently in the class due to the fear "of being laughed at by others, of making a fool of themselves in public" (p.105). It means they might avoid participating in oral tasks which would improve their speaking. Likewise, Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) conclude that the majority of their subjects experienced SA due to the fear that their peers and the teacher would judge them negatively and make fun of them. This result is consistent with other studies (for instance, Ferdous, 2012; Lucas et al., 2011; Tóth, 2011; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Huang, 2009; Alghothani, 2010; Cao, 2011). The findings of the current study also revealed that most of the students were unwilling to participate in the oral tasks due to the fear of appearing awkward and foolish in the eyes of the teacher and their peers. FNE may be particularly harmful for those who lack confidence and have low self-esteem since they may barely try to speak or respond in the class due to the fear of peers' derision.

Additionally, although students can experience FNE due to both teachers and peers, in some contexts, peers can be more anxiety-provoking than teachers. For example, Ay's (2010) EFL Turkish students regarded their classmates' negative evaluation to be more stressful than that of their teachers. It is possible that some students may not want to appear less proficient than fellow students who are supposedly at the same level. Moreover, students may experience more FNE in large classes than in small groups. For instance, Neer & Kircher (1990) noted that students felt more fear of being judged negatively when speaking in front of the whole class and less when speaking before half the class. Hence, one point to make is that SA could be higher in contexts, including Pakistan, where classes are large. Thus, teachers may be encouraged to allow students to perform oral tasks in groups rather than before the whole class.

Kitano's (2001) study about anxiety in students of Japanese as a foreign language noted that advanced students were more concerned about FNE than elementary and intermediate students. On the basis of this finding, if it is

assumed that advanced students care more about their positive image than those at a lower academic level, then it could be argued that the more concern about positive image, the more FNE. Similarly, students who are over-conscious about maintaining a positive impression could experience frequent SA in language classes where tests, speaking tasks and other evaluative activities are common practices. Such students would try to avoid the evaluative situations or remain silent, to reduce the possibility of negative evaluation.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem could be termed an individual's judgement of his/her worth and ability to execute the given task. Studies reveal that students' perceptions of their ability affect their SA which, in turn, may influence their language acquisition. For example, Aida (1994) found that students with high perception of their speaking ability received higher final grades than those with low perception of their speaking ability. In the same vein, Foss & Reitzel (1988) noted that students who were anxious during oral activities in the class had low self-esteem and they considered their performance poorer than that of their peers, a finding that agrees with that of Sultan (2012).

Furthermore, MacIntyre et al. (1997) found that students with low self-esteem lack confidence. It may mean students who lack confidence are more likely to doubt their abilities. Many studies have highlighted the negative effects of low confidence and the positive effects of self-confidence in the language learning process. For example, Ito's (2008) research claims that there exists a negative correlation between students' self confidence and their levels of speaking anxiety (SA). On the other hand, Matsuda & Gobel (2004) claimed that self-confidence increased students' willingness to communicate in the class. Moreover, Alghothani (2010) reports that the more confidence students have in their abilities, the less nervous they feel. There could be many factors affecting students' self-confidence such as their prior learning experience, teachers' methodology (Casado & Dereshiwsy, 2004), FNE, and personal predispositions. Another reason could be the demands of a new language in which one might not be competent.

It appears that students' self-perceived competence is closely associated with their SA. Moreover, those students with a low perceived self ability who perform in class could be the likeliest candidates for SA. If they perform poorly, their self-esteem might be threatened, which could, in turn, aggravate their levels of SA. Furthermore, they could be afraid of taking risks and of volunteering to participate, thus reducing the chances for promoting their language skills. It could, in turn, begin a vicious circle, where anxiety can cause low self-esteem and low self-esteem can produce even higher levels of anxiety. It might be possible that students with poor knowledge of the foreign language but with high self-esteem may be eventually better language learners than those with good knowledge of the language but with low self-esteem. According to Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999), high levels of self-esteem may protect students from anxiety. Thus, there is a strong call for teachers to support students with low-self esteem; for example, by encouraging them and providing them with a friendly classroom atmosphere.

Competitiveness

Competitiveness is the last source of interpersonal anxieties. It has been frequently reported as a factor contributing to students' SA (Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Hilleson, 1996; Tóth, 2011; Cheng, 2005; Kitano, 2001). Bailey (1983, cited in Young, 1990) analysed the diary entries of 11 students and found that their competitive natures were an important predictor of their SA, as they perceived themselves less proficient than others. It may mean that students' perception of their speaking skills as poorer than those of their peers could induce, as well as escalate, their SA. Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) also report similar results. One of their respondents states, "You listened to them [fellow students], didn't you? They speak English as if it's Greek. They're so much better than me. It's better if I just listen and not speak" (p.41). However, it is not necessary that the object of comparison must always be peers but rather the learners themselves, when they set high standards for their performance (Gregersen, 2005). It could be particularly difficult to achieve high standard performance by those who believe that they are not competent enough.

It is, however, interesting to note that in contrast to the above studies, Ewald's (2007) research with students of Spanish found that competitiveness was not a

cause of their SA. Competitiveness, therefore, cannot be generalised to all contexts as a source of SA; in some contexts competitiveness might motivate students to increase their efforts and overcome their weaknesses. Moreover, it spotlights the need to explore the topic of anxiety from different aspects in different contexts, such as in Pakistan, to better understand it. According to Oxford (1992), SA stemming from competitiveness might depend upon students' learning styles and the demands of the environment. As far as the Pakistani context is concerned, competitiveness could be SA-provoking for students due to a number of reasons. For example, competent students are praised while less competent are chided in front of the class. Second, parents do not expect their children to be less competent than others. Third, due to competitive job market, students may think that they will not be able to obtain a good job if they are less proficient than others, and this realisation might make them nervous.

3.10.1.2 Learner Beliefs about Language Learning

Students' unrealistic beliefs and expectations about language learning and speaking have been reported as sources of SA (Wang, 2005; Adeel, 2011; Ferdous, 2012; Young, 1991; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999; Dewaele, & Thirtle, 2009). For example, students in Horwitz's (1988) study expressed great concern over the accuracy of their utterances; believed that two years are sufficient to achieve native-like fluency; and believed that not everyone is capable of learning a foreign language. The current study also reported that certain beliefs expressed by students, such as that speaking English fluently needs special abilities, can provoke SA. In the same vein, Wang (2005) adds some other learner beliefs, such as that memorising vocabulary and grammar are necessary to learn a foreign language. Moreover, some students may hold a belief that learning a new language is a very difficult task while others may perceive this process as very easy.

Such conceptions have been called baseless, erroneous, and faulty (Price, 1991; Horwitz, 1988). They can cause greater anger and stress, particularly "when beliefs and reality clash" (Young, 1991:428). For example, if students start learning a foreign language with the belief that native-like accent is essential and can be acquired within two years of study, they would end up frustrated and depressed if they cannot live to this standard. Similarly, if some

students believe that learning speaking is simply memorising grammatical rules, they may meet with disappointment in modern classrooms that mostly favour communicative language teaching. Considering the detrimental effects of irrational beliefs on language learning, Horwitz (1988) stressed the need to dismiss them to facilitate language learning.

3.10.1.3 Teacher Beliefs about Language Teaching

Just like learners' beliefs about language learning, teachers' beliefs about language teaching can also provoke SA for some students. For example, Brandal's (1987, cited in Young 1991) study found that many teachers believed that a little intimidation helps promote students' performance. Similarly, some teachers considered their role to be "less a counsellor and friend and objected to a too friendly and inauthoritative student-teacher relationship" (ibid: 429). Some other teacher beliefs include: students get out of control if they study in groups; the teacher should correct every error students make; the teacher should be a dominant participator in the class; and the teacher's role is "more like a drill sergeant's than a facilitator's" (Young, 1991:428).

It could be argued that such beliefs can affect teachers' philosophy of teaching. For example, if a language teacher believes that classes should be conducted strictly, he/she could create a threatening environment in the class which could, in turn, evoke students' SA. In contexts, including Pakistan, where teachers are considered to be an authority and the main source of knowledge, these beliefs can strongly affect students' language performance and anxiety. However, one caution might be that in some cultures a stricter attitude might motivate students to work hard and improve their learning. Otherwise they might take an unfair benefit of the teacher's friendly behaviour; for example, they may miss classes and may not take assignments seriously.

3.10.1.4 Teacher-Student Interaction

Many researchers associate SA with teacher-student interactions (e.g. Mersi, 2012; Khattak et al., 2011; Ewald, 2007; Arnold, 2007; Tóth, 2011). Classroom procedures may be viewed differently by teachers and students (Horwitz, 1989), and any incompatibility between teachers' teaching styles and learners' learning styles may trigger anxiety for some students (Oxford, 1999). It implies that

understanding the interaction between students' and teachers' views about the classroom may explain students' anxiety. Teacher-student interactions include anxieties such as harsh error correction, students' fear of being corrected publicly, students' concern over how their mistakes would be evaluated, and the type of teacher (Aida, 1994; Samimy, 1994).

A review of many studies reveals that teachers' harsh manner of correcting mistakes is one of the main contributors to SA (Pappamihiel, 2002; Liu, 2007; Gregersen, 2005). Although students may experience SA due to error correction, others might feel frustrated due to the lack of error correction (Young, 1990). Students, therefore, may realise the importance of error correction but be concerned about the way this is done. As Young (1991) points out, the problem for students is "not necessarily error correction but the manner of error correction – when, how often, and most importantly, how errors are corrected" (p. 429). It could be argued that students may take error correction as a part of the language learning process as long as they are not belittled because of their mistakes.

In addition, the type of teacher is another cause of students' SA (Aida, 1994; Daubney, 2002; Lucas et al., 2011; Williams & Andrade, 2008). For example, Cutrone (2009) notes that teachers' negative demeanour may be one of the major contributors to SA. Palacios (1998, cited in Lim, 2004) noted the following teacher characteristics which can contribute to learner anxiety: unsupportive, unsympathetic personality, unfriendly behaviour, and lack of personal attention. Moreover, Von Worde (2003) reports that her subjects used various descriptors about teachers such as "very intimidating", "apathetic", "condescending", "very stern", "mean", "obnoxious", and "one who tries to scare students" (p. 3). Furthermore, Ewald (2007) believes that the unkind behaviour on the part of the teacher can aggravate SA. One of her interviewees states "I know I can speak well; it is just the professor that frightens me" (p. 130). Additionally, "the teacher's intolerance of silence" can also provoke SA for a student (Tsui, 1996:158). The student may not be able to give a quick reply to the teacher's question as he/she might need time to process the answer. However, impatient teachers may ask the same question of other students, the student may perceive it as a failure and may feel frustrated. Similarly, teachers'

incomprehensible input and paying attention to certain students but ignoring others may also produce SA.

Moreover, there is the possibility of mismatches between instructional practices and students' learning preferences; if the class is not taught the way students expected, they may feel tense and disappointed. Spielmann & Radnofsky (2001) in their study of American students of French found that students who were previously taught through GTM became frustrated when they were not taught grammar. It implies that even various SA reducing methods, such as a relaxed classroom environment and a sociable teacher, might not work if students' learning preferences are not considered. It could be argued that students may experience SA in contexts, including Pakistan, where there is a lack of learner autonomy and their learning choices, needs and styles are not taken into account.

In summary, the studies indicate that students might experience SA when their teachers deal with them strictly and when their learning expectations are not met. The above studies seem to emphasise the need to investigate SA stemming from teachers' teaching practices and personal characteristics.

3.10.1.5 Classroom Procedures

Various classroom activities and teaching methods, particularly those that require students to speak in front of the class, seem to affect the levels of learner SA. Young (1990) listed the following SA-provoking classroom activities: spontaneous role play in front of the class; speaking in front of the class; and oral presentations and skits in front of the class. Similarly, Palacios (1998, cited in Lim, 2004) adds fear of being put on the spot, the pace of the class, and demands of oral production as other SA-provoking classroom activities. Koch & Terrell (1991) attempted to identify the possible SA-producing activities of the Natural Approach. They noted that more than half of their participants reported oral quizzes, large group discussion, and being called on individually as the most stressful activities. This suggests that approaches which are designed to provide students with a social and communicative environment might also generate SA for some students.

In addition, some students can feel tense if the teacher calls on them one after another in order of seating. In this regard, an interesting comment was put forward by one of Von Worde's (2003) subjects: "I think that builds tension, builds anxiety, just sitting there knowing that in a few minutes you're about to be called, and it's almost execution style" (p. 3). Moreover, Von Worde's (2003) study showed that the subjects reported feelings such as language classes progressing too quickly, the difficulty of covering too much material, the teacher speaking too fast, and insufficient time to memorise grammar rules. Likewise, seating arrangements in the class might also affect students' anxiety. For example, Ewald (2007) notes that students sitting in long rows and the teacher sitting in the chair near the board creates a strict and formal atmosphere in the class. Similarly, Shamim (1996) carried out observations and interviews in Pakistan examining the effects of seat arrangements on language learning in large classes. She found that front benchers are seen as more efficient and active students than back benchers. However, students sitting in the back zones might not necessarily be anxious or incapable; the seating arrangements might merely have deprived them of the opportunity to participate actively in class. The researcher's personal experience as a student in Pakistan is that back benchers are sometimes totally ignored by the teacher, as well as by the students sitting in the front rows. It seems necessary for effective teaching and learning to rearrange the seating system to involve the back benchers in the learning process.

However, caution must be exercised when regarding certain classroom activities as sources of SA. For example, Koch & Terrell's (1991) results suggested that some activities considered as comfortable by some might be judged as stressful by others. For instance, 40% of their participants did not experience much SA when being called on individually, while 57% did.

In sum, the above studies seem to suggest that fluency-based activities may generate the most SA and students can particularly be intimidated when they are exposed to the whole class. Various factors such as FNE, fear of making mistakes (FMM), lack of preparation, of practice, and of confidence may be the seeds for students' SA.

3.10.1.6 Language Testing

The final category of anxiety sources is language testing. Several studies report that tests in class incur anxiety (for instance, Hussain et al., 2011; Kim, 1998; Young, 1994; Al-Sibai, 2005; Chan & Wu, 2004; Huang & Hung, 2013; Lucas et al., 2011). This occurs particularly when tests are unfamiliar, unclear, highly evaluative, and do not match the material taught in the class (Young, 1991; Daly, 1991). It suggests that the more confusing and novel the tests are, the more anxiety they produce. Similarly, tests which involve greater degree of students' evaluation or determine their advancement in studies could affect the levels of anxiety. Moreover, if a teacher focuses on oral skills but includes grammatical components in tests, it could raise students' SA levels. It appears that teachers need to be careful regarding the format, language, and questions of the tests.

Test anxiety may occur for various reasons such as students' past negative experiences regarding exams (Wang, 2005; Cubukcu, 2007). Consequently, they might develop a negative stereotype about exams in language classrooms. This conception, in turn, could lead them to hold irrational beliefs. For example, it has been found that nervous students try to perform better than their previous poor performance and, as a consequence, they "often put unrealistic demands on themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure" (Horwitz et al., 1986:128), suggesting that they could be more concerned about giving a flawless performance rather than improving and enhancing their skills. It may also mean that any grade less than excellent would be a poor performance for them. In consequence, they can become anxious and frustrated and this would hamper their performance.

In the Pakistani context, test anxiety can specifically stem from students' negative past experiences, since Pakistani EFL teachers mostly show a harsh attitude towards students' poor test performance (Latif, 2009). Moreover, parents' high expectations of students' performance may also make students fearful of tests. Some other factors such as lack of preparation, lack of proficiency, and a short time being allowed for tests can also be associated with test anxiety.

This section shed light on the sources of students' anxiety. Most of the sources, such as teachers' harsh manners of error correction, students' beliefs about language learning, and FNE seem to inform the current study as they have been identified by it. It may be noted that some of the above mentioned sources of anxiety might be highly related to each other. For example, competitiveness can be linked with test anxiety since students often compare their grades with others'. Similarly, some sources may vary from culture to culture, such as competitiveness, and others from student to student, such as error correction. In addition, the above studies seem to suggest that teachers can play a central role in increasing or reducing their students' SA. Thus, providing them with solutions to SA could be an important step in responding to SA in class. Hence, the following sub-section sheds light on various methods and classroom activities thought to reduce students' anxiety and promote their speaking performance in class.

3.10.2 Methods, Classroom Practices and Techniques to Reduce Anxiety

Perhaps the most important step towards reducing students' anxiety may be to enable them to cope with it. This can be achieved by explaining to them the role of anxiety in language learning and by providing them with anxiety managing strategies (Phillips, 1999). Once students gain knowledge of anxiety and its effects on performance, teachers should help them to set achievable expectations from their learning (Horwitz, 2008).

Similarly, boosting students' confidence could also help them manage their anxiety (Ewald, 2007). This can be achieved by equipping them with effective learning strategies (Oxford, 1999), giving them adequate time for the preparation of speaking tasks (Cheng, 2005), positive feedback, and praising their achievements.

In addition, teachers' professional qualities have been found helpful in lessening students' frustration. For instance, Duff's (2001) two year observational study of 1300 foreign language students examined the relationship between students' anxiety levels and teachers' instructions. The study found that students performed better in the class of teachers who explained the materials in detail, had a command of the subject, were creative, and showed a concern for

students' learning and progress. In contrast, students whose teachers lacked the above qualities performed less well. If teachers show concern towards students' learning; for example, by listening to their academic problems, paying attention to their answers, questions, and concerns, students may feel relaxed when they feel that the teacher takes interest in their performance. Likewise, Cheng (2005) found that teachers can reduce their students' SA if they have good knowledge of the subject and conduct their classes effectively. Similarly, Huang et al. (2010) examined the relationship between anxiety and various types of support from teachers. The results indicated that if students feel academically supported by their teachers, they experience less speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (FNE). A number of other studies also report similar results (e.g. Hurd & Xiao, 2010). Teachers' academic support may enhance students' proficiency and, when proficiency increases, anxiety might decrease. It implies that teachers may develop themselves professionally and academically to make their teaching effective and relieve students of frustration. Unfortunately, the majority of Pakistani EFL teachers lack ELT qualifications (Shamim, 2008; Shah, 2009), thus, there is a need for professional development and training programmes in Pakistan to equip teachers with current language teaching methods and to improve their teaching strategies.

Some researchers advocate that teachers' personal support might be more helpful than their academic support in reducing students' anxiety (e.g. Cutrone, 2009; Abu-Rabia, 2004). For example, Phillips (1999) believes that teachers' "concern and empathy for the negative affect students may experience" (p. 127) plays a major role in tackling their anxiety. Similarly, Cohen & Norst's (1989) diary study indicated that students preferred teachers' personal qualities over their professional skills. Huang et al.'s (2010) results suggest that students enhance their efforts and worry less in class when they perceive that they are emotionally supported by their teachers. Furthermore, Steinberg & Horwitz's (1986) study found that students experienced more SA when teachers maintained a cold and formal attitude with them; on the other hand, students whose teachers were warm, encouraging, and humorous felt motivated and comfortable. In addition, Zhang (2010) notes that a teacher who is patient, friendly, understanding, uses positive gestures, and compliments students can play a key role in making them comfortable in the class. It is suggested that the

teacher may be “like a friend helping them [students] to learn and less like an authority figure making them perform” (Price, 1991:107).

In addition, a warm, sociable, open, and relaxing learning environment has been cited helpful in alleviating students' SA. For example, Crookall & Oxford (1991) claim that teachers can minimise SA by making the classroom friendly and comfortable. Similarly, Tsui (1996) stressed that teachers should be well aware of the fact that an open classroom environment reduces students' fears. Similarly, Warsi's (2004) study in Pakistan also found that a positive classroom atmosphere positively affects language learning, and Dewaele & Thirtle (2009) emphasised that an informal and caring classroom climate encourages students to take risks without fear of peer derision. It appears that a sense of community in class might facilitate the language learning and speaking. This team-like environment can be attained by building friendship among students and positive teacher-student interactions (Price, 1991). Such a climate in the class discourages competitiveness (Kitano, 2001), reduces FMM and FNE (Gregersen, 2003), encourages students to volunteer answers, and may increase their interest and motivation. Many other studies have spotlighted the importance of a comfortable environment in reducing SA (for example, Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2004; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Tóth, 2011). However, it seems difficult to provide every student with a perfect and an ideal classroom environment.

The incorporation of various techniques and activities in the class can reduce SA as well as create a sense of community in the class. For example, students feel relaxed when working in pairs or groups (Crookall & Oxford, 1991; Cheng, 2005). This may be due to the feeling that they are not the sole object of others' attention. Moreover, group work may allow more student interaction, thus discouraging competition and encouraging cooperation.

In addition, students may feel relaxed when they realize that they are not alone in their fear of SA. In this respect, one suggested technique is asking students to write their fears or beliefs on the board (Foss & Reitzel, 1991). Similarly, Crookall & Oxford (1991) propose an “Agony Column” (p. 145) through which students find solutions to their language problems collectively.

While students may be afraid of mistakes, perhaps due to the belief that these show incompetence, the reality is that mistakes are unavoidable when speaking in a foreign language class. Therefore, teachers could assure students that mistakes are an essential part of the language learning process (Young, 1990; Ewald, 2007; Tóth, 2011; Horwitz, 2013). Similarly, they may be careful about their mode of error correction. They should correct students' errors gently (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002), and indirectly (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). One technique of error correction could be 'modelling' which means that the teacher does not spotlight students' mistakes but rather repeats the correct version of their answers or statements (Young, 1991). Another activity is a 'Mistakes Panel' which presents errors as an enjoyable activity in the class (Crookall & Oxford, 1991). Thus, students might not be afraid of making mistakes since they may perceive them as a way to improve. Moreover, tolerating students' mistakes (Zhang, 2010), giving them adequate time to respond (Cheng, 2005), and encouraging them when they make errors could be helpful in decreasing anxiety stemming from errors. Classroom activities such as games, songs, parties, and interesting oral topics can also be helpful in breaking the monotony in the class and making students feel relaxed.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the research literature relevant to the current study. It started with discussing the concepts of 'affect' and 'anxiety'. Then, various approaches to the study of language anxiety were reviewed, including the situation-specific approach which is followed by the present study. It was noted that language learning contexts produce a unique type of anxiety which is different from other types. This chapter also looked at the positive and negative influences of anxiety on the language learning process. In addition, various scales to measure language anxiety were examined, and studies of language learning anxiety and speaking anxiety (SA) were reviewed. The literature throughout clearly indicated that anxiety is a serious and pervasive phenomenon in foreign language classes, which can interfere with the acquisition and production of language. Whether anxiety is a cause or consequence of poor language learning was also discussed. Finally, pedagogical implications were presented, including sources of anxiety and the methods and classroom activities which may decrease it. The studies showed

that teachers can play a central role in the level of anxiety students experience in class, and that high student exposure activities were seen as most anxiety-provoking. In terms of ways to reduce anxiety, a friendly teaching style, gentle error correction, group-work, and a sociable classroom environment were found to be potentially helpful. In addition, this chapter informed the current research study in various ways, explained throughout the chapter. The next chapter is on the methodology of the investigation.

Chapter 4

Methodology and Research Design

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research methodology that was followed to conduct this study. A statement of the aims and research questions of the study are followed by a discussion of the study's research paradigm, along with the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying it. Then, the methodology and mixed-methods design incorporated in the current study are described. The next section gives a detailed account of the research sites and participants, which is followed by the justification, construction and administration procedures for each of the data collection instruments utilised in this study. In the sixth section the detailed data analysis procedures are elucidated. A detailed account of the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of this research is followed by a reflection on the ethical considerations and limitations of this study.

4.2 Aims and Research Questions

This study aims to explore whether or not speaking creates more anxiety than reading, writing, and listening for Pakistani EFL university learners, then to identify the factors, as perceived by students, that are responsible for their speaking anxiety (SA), and also the teacher behaviour and classroom practices that may alleviate it. Pakistani EFL university teachers' perceptions of their students' SA and the methods teachers currently use to address it are also investigated. In order to fulfil these aims, the following four research questions were formulated:

1. Are Pakistani EFL students more anxious about speaking than about reading, writing, and listening?
2. What factors do students believe contribute to foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?
3. What kinds of teacher behaviour and classroom activities may help to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?

4. What are Pakistani EFL university teachers' perceptions of their students' foreign language speaking anxiety and what are the teachers' current strategies to reduce it?

The first three research questions were answered only by students and, to this end, the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used for research question 1 and the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured classroom observations for research questions 2 and 3. The fourth research question was answered only by the teachers, through semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observations.

4.3 Research Paradigm

Historically two research stances, positivistic and interpretive, have been widely used in the field of educational enquiry. The adoption of a particular framework is guided by the aims of the study.

The positivist paradigm is a scientific research paradigm because positivists study a subject scientifically, from the factual data. Its key assumptions include that knowledge is objective and predictable, that reality is external to the participants and it is context-free (Wellington, 2000). This implies that positivist researchers stay neutral and apart from the researched because they believe that knowledge is an independently verifiable fact. The use of this mode of enquiry is not advocated in investigating human behaviour, attitudes and perceptions because human behaviour is complex and subject to change (Crotty, 1998).

In contrast, the interpretive paradigm is about "human understanding, subjectivity and lived truth" (Cohen et al., 2000:22). It is a process of understanding a social or human problem (Creswell, 1994), and suggests that this problem can be best understood through human perspective. This enquiry believes that meaning is socially constructed in the minds of the participants because social reality is meaningless until human minds make sense of it (Crotty, 1998). In addition, it "is sensitive to context" (Neuman, 2003:80); therefore, the researcher understands multiple constructions of reality subjectively, in a social context (Cohen et al., 2000).

However, the interpretive paradigm has limitations. The researcher's own bias and world-view may influence the interpretation of the issue due to his/her subjectivity. Second, there is a narrow scope for generalising the findings, since this approach is restricted to a particular context. Thirdly, the reliability of the data may be questioned. However, to a great extent, these issues can be addressed through the use of triangulation and establishing the reliability and validity of methods.

This study aims to unearth and understand the participants' experiences, understanding, and perceptions of SA. Therefore reality will not be 'out there' rather it will be multiple, subjective and constructed in their minds. Moreover, it might be richly affected by the social context where participants live and form their meanings. Therefore, it is important to understand what SA means to the participants from their own perspective, in the given context. They did not interpret SA according to facts and rules but rather they were guided by their unique experiences and views about it.

The positivist approach would not have allowed the researcher to explore and understand the complex, subjective and multiple interpretations of SA as an insider. On the other hand, the interpretive approach does give an insider view (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) which offers the opportunity to understand participants' own descriptions and expressions of what is true to them in their own setting, where they experience SA. Many researchers (for example, Cohen et al., 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) advocate the use of this stance in exploring participants' individual perceptions on educational issues. Therefore, the interpretive approach appeared to be the most suitable choice for the investigation of the reality that the research questions aimed to seek because "at the heart of interpretive inquiry is a passion to understand the meaning that people are constructing in their everyday situated actions" (Walsh et al., 1993:465). This paradigm helped to understand how participants make sense of their world and they gave helpful insights into their situations. Therefore, this study followed the interpretive research framework.

4.3.1 Ontological Assumptions

Ontology is a particular understanding of the nature of reality. Crotty (1998:10) defines it as “the study of being. It is concerned with ‘what is’, with the nature of existence, with the structure of reality as such”. In simple words, it may mean what people believe and understand to be the nature of reality. The interpretive paradigm asserts that “realities are social construction of the mind and there exist as many constructions as there are individuals” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:43). This socially constructed reality is multifaceted (Pring, 2000) and it is “ungoverned by any natural laws” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994:84). Thus, it is formed in an individual’s mind according to his/her personal perception and interpretation of a social phenomenon. Therefore, reality is subjective, abstract, constructed in a particular context and achieved by understanding the participants’ particular meanings (Nunan, 1986).

The aim of the current study is to understand the meaning and knowledge shared by the participants in the Pakistani context about a personal and psychological phenomenon, SA. The reality of this issue will not be factual, rather it will be constructed and interpreted in humans’ (participants’) minds according to their individual experiences. Although they may have similar experiences of SA, different participants might construct different perspectives about it because they view it and cope with it differently, according to their particular understanding. Therefore, this reality depends upon the participants’ own minds, as it is socially constructed. This study leads ontologically to a view that reality is subjective, context based, multifaceted and socially constructed. Every participant could offer multiple perspectives of their experiences about SA.

4.3.2. Epistemological Stance

Epistemology explains how it is possible to know about reality and whether or not that reality is legitimate. Wellington (2000:196) defines epistemology as “the study of the nature and validity of human knowledge”. In Crotty’s words (1998:3), it is “a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know”. Epistemology, therefore, is the philosophy of knowledge and it answers how that knowledge is obtained.

The ontological assumptions of a study may determine its epistemological position. Since the meaning in this study is interpreted in the participants' minds and reality is socially constructed, the epistemology must work within the subjective data received from the expressed value perceptions of the participants in a social context. Thus, the epistemological stance of this study is social constructionism, which explains the nature of knowledge and the way human beings learn. This perspective emphasises that knowledge is not discovered, rather constructed subjectively in a specific social context (Cohen et al., 2000) and "different people may construct meaning in different ways" (Crotty, 1998:9). This new knowledge comes through dialogic acts between human beings (the researcher and the participants) in a social context (Crotty, 1998; Radnor, 1994). It suggests that participants' meaning about a phenomenon is subjectively constructed in their minds and understood through an interaction between them and the researcher.

In summary, there are three main constructionist tenets: reality is generated due to the communication between the inquirer and the inquired into; there is no one and absolute reality; and the nature of reality depends upon the perceptions of people. The current study follows this stance in the following ways. Firstly, the researcher made contact with the participants. Then, he investigated their multiple views about SA, believing that meaning is constructed in their minds. Finally, the researcher tried to understand their perceptions about SA through using questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations as tools.

4.4 Research Methodology

Research methodology is "the study of the methods, design and procedures used in research" (Wellington, 2000:198). Compatible with the assumptions of the interpretive paradigm of this study, the methodology of this research project is exploratory in nature.

4.4.1 Research Methods

The determining factor in the choice of the study's research methods can be the research aims of the study (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Punch, 2009). In other words, the methods used should be appropriate to answer the research questions. In the light of the research questions posed in this study, a mixed-

methods approach seems appropriate for it. Mixed methods refer to mixing qualitative and quantitative research instruments in the same enquiry.

The majority of empirical studies have examined language anxiety quantitatively, using correlational methods of analysis (Algothani, 2010; Horwitz, 2001). Thus, they could not explore students' perceptions of anxiety thoroughly (ibid). Similarly, according to Yan & Horwitz (2008), previous studies' reliance on questionnaires could not explain the role of anxiety in language learning in depth. This suggests the need to use qualitative methods such as interviews and observations when exploring students' anxiety. A number of studies have suggested exploring anxiety through interviews and observations (such as Liu & Jackson, 2008; Dewaele & Thirtle, 2009). There appears however to be a scarcity of research combining both approaches to examine language anxiety (Tóth, 2010). The issue of language anxiety is complex and multi-dimensional and it needs to be investigated from different standpoints (Price, 1991; Pappamihiel, 1999; Yan & Horwitz, 2008). Indeed, Wang (2005) recommends combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a better understanding of SA. Therefore, the current study adopted both research approaches, quantitative and qualitative, to find breadth and depth of the complex phenomenon of anxiety.

4.4.2 Methods of Data Collection

The research tools used in the current study included both qualitative methods (open-ended questions in the questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured observations) and quantitative tools (questionnaire) to answer the research questions posed. There were two sets of semi-structured interviews, one for students and the other for teachers.

Many researchers support the use of mixed-methods approach in the field of social sciences, including the field of Applied Linguistics, and consider it as a legitimate research design in its own right (e.g. Dörnyei, 2007; Creswell, 2003). Mixing quantitative and qualitative methods in one study is not contradictory; they complement each other and overcome the potential drawbacks of any single method (Verma & Mallick, 1999). However, some researchers have criticised this approach. For example, Barbour (1998) argues that each method

has its own assumptions in “terms of theoretical frameworks we bring to bear on our research” (p. 353); she believes therefore that the use of a quantitative component is inappropriate in a qualitative study. However, incorporating both methods in one study could be helpful in many ways. For example, they can provide the researchers with new findings and allow them to explain contradictory results. Similarly, they can make the results more valid and meaningful and, in turn, can add rigour to the findings. Moreover, since every research instrument has some downsides and some strengths (Creswell, 2003), mixed methods might compensate for the possible weakness of one method with the strength of another.

Reliance on one method alone in the current research might prove to be a weak strategy, as it could not offer a broader and clearer understanding of the complex issue of anxiety. For example, interviews alone would not have allowed data to be gathered from a large sample. Likewise, questionnaires alone might give a flawed account of participants’ views about a particular situation (Pring, 2000). The use of mixed methods enabled the questionnaire data to provide the initial results, which were further examined and confirmed through interviews. Observational data also supported the other data and gave the chance to see students in their own classrooms. The use of mixed methods therefore offered the opportunity to gain a more complete picture by investigating the issue from various dimensions. Thus, both methods validate each other and, in Dörnyei’s (2007:62) words, “a mixed method inquiry offers a potentially more comprehensive means of legitimizing findings than do either QUAL or QUAN methods alone”. The objectives and justification of each instrument is explained in section 4.7 below. The next section gives an account of the research sites and research participants.

4.5 Research Sites

The data were collected from five university departments, each in a different public sector university in Pakistan. The criteria for the selection of the universities were research aims, convenience, availability, and easy and safe access. The latter two were extremely important when selecting the sites given the current situation (terrorism, kidnapping) in the country. The universities were given pseudonyms in order to maintain the anonymity of the participants

(Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Fitzgerald, 1992) and in the study are known as: Al-Faisal University, Al-Abbas University, Indus University, Al-Hamra University and Capital University.

The reasons for choosing public sector universities were that first they are the major source of higher education in Pakistan. Mangi et al. (2011) state that more than 80% of university students are enrolled in public universities. Second, they offer a better mixture of students from various systems of education and sections of society (Islam, 2013), a claim which the researcher's personal experience as a teacher at two public and one private university also supports. Therefore, public universities were selected with the aim of collecting rich, varied, and insightful data.

4.6 Sample of the Study

4.6.1 Questionnaire Sample

The sample for the questionnaire consisted of 170 postgraduate non-English major Pakistani students. In each of the five universities between 30 and 40 male and female students, aged between 19 and 24, completed the questionnaire. They were enrolled in the first year of their postgraduate studies (Master's) and were studying English as a compulsory subject. The teaching of English aims to develop students' speaking skills in order to enable them to use the language in formal and informal situations. Moreover, it aims to develop their reading, writing, and listening skills.

The reasons for selecting postgraduate students were twofold: since they had studied English for a long period they are likely to be well aware of the complex issue of SA and, in turn, they may provide rich and comprehensive information about it. Second, since fluency in English helps students find good jobs in Pakistan, teachers and students pay considerable attention to oral skills at university level as, after this degree, most students search for jobs (Mansoor et al., 2005). It seemed likely that due to students' concern about the implications of their speaking skills for their future careers they would provide good data about their anxiety in speaking.

4.6.2 Interview Sample

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students as well as with teachers. The sample of student interviewees comprised 20 students, four from each university in order to represent students from all research sites. The sample consisted of both male and female students. Sampling is a crucial step in any research. Morrison (1993) states that the quality of a research study is not only affected by the suitability of methodology and instruments but also by the appropriateness of the adopted sampling strategy. Thus, selection of a suitable sampling strategy is extremely important to all qualitative researchers (Cohen et al., 2007). Borg & Gall (1994) recommend that researchers may interview participants who should have the desired information. Similarly, Given (2008) and Creswell (2003) believe that one of the main objectives of sampling is to select people who may enrich and explain the phenomenon under investigation to expand our understanding about that topic.

The present study used criterion sampling strategy to choose student and teacher interviewees, which seems a dominant approach in qualitative research. According to this strategy, all cases that are willing to participate and meet some particular criteria of usefulness and importance for the research are selected (Patton, 1990; Kuzel, 1992). The criteria for student interviewees were any student who filled in the first section of the questionnaire, elaborated on their answers to the open-ended question in the first section of the questionnaire and were willing and available to be interviewed. The majority of students fulfilled these criteria. At the end of the questionnaire students were asked to provide their contact details if they wished to be interviewed, if chosen. In the event, many participants agreed to be interviewed. I was therefore able to contact and interview students based on their availability and convenience (Babbie, 1990).

I also interviewed 14 Pakistani EFL teachers from five universities (research sites) in order to investigate their views about their students' SA and their current strategies to reduce it. The sample consisted of both male and female teachers. Their teaching experience ranged from 6 to 19 years. Five of the 14 teachers were the current English teachers of the students I collected data from. All of the teachers had gained minimum of a master's degree in English

language and literature. The involvement of teachers was necessary for answering the research question 4: What are Pakistani EFL teachers' perceptions of their students' foreign language speaking anxiety and what are the teachers' current strategies to reduce it?

The selection criteria for teacher interviewees were that those who were teaching English at various departments, had more than 5 years of teaching experience, were available, and were willing to be interviewed. The next section concerns data collection procedures.

4.7 Data Collection Procedures

This section reports in detail the justification, construction and data collection process of each of the data collection tools. The study began with the administration of the questionnaire. Administering the quantitative phase first had various benefits; for example, first, since students may be nervous at the first stage, a questionnaire is generally easier and simpler to complete, and it can motivate the subjects to participate in further research stages. Second, the questionnaire highlighted some significant issues which were explored in more depth in the interviews (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2003). The administration of the questionnaire was followed by interviews with the participants and finally, semi-structured observations were conducted.

4.7.1 Collecting Quantitative Data

Quantitative data were collected by means of a questionnaire, administered only to students.

A questionnaire is an extensively employed descriptive data collection instrument in educational research that has the potential to analyse large quantities of data in a short time (Cohen et al., 2007). It has considerable advantages in that it can be unbiased, inexpensive, easy, anonymous, and can be administered and collected quickly (Dörnyei, 2007). Moreover, if the participants are assured of the confidentiality of their responses, the questionnaire can also produce sensitive information (ibid). Previous speaking anxiety (SA) studies had also utilised questionnaires which yielded insightful results (e.g. Young, 1990; Cheng, 2005).

However, questionnaires are not without drawbacks. For example, it is hard to confirm that the participants have responded honestly, and questionnaires might not give a deeper understanding of the issue. Moreover, the construction of a valid and reliable questionnaire is a complex and painstaking task (Patton, 1990). However, the researcher can adapt a previously developed questionnaire with confirmed validity and reliability (Toth, 2010).

Questionnaire was used in the present study as a data collection instrument, and it fulfilled the following objectives. First, the questionnaire enabled the collection of information from a large sample relatively economically and quickly (Dörnyei, 2003). It provided a valuable descriptive account of the perceptions of Pakistani EFL students and gave a composite and versatile picture of the topic (Cohen et al., 2000). Second, it must be recognised that language anxiety is a sensitive issue (Horwitz, 2001) and according to Dörnyei, (2007), questionnaire can be helpful in collecting sensitive information. Third, it allowed the interpretation of the findings from another angle, and additionally it triangulated the data resulting from other tools (Oppenheim, 2001). Finally, the questionnaire data highlighted some areas which were further explored in greater depth during interviews.

4.7.1.1 Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire for this study aimed to explore whether or not speaking creates more anxiety than reading, writing, and listening; to identify factors that generate SA, and also the teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may alleviate it. The creation of this instrument was principally informed by three sources: a comprehensive review of the literature and similar instruments, suggestions from experts in the field of language anxiety, and the researcher's own perceptions as a university teacher.

All sections of the questionnaire were synthesised into one coherent questionnaire covering the core dimensions of the research aims. It consisted of 61 close-ended items and four open-ended questions. The open-ended questions were put at the end of each section. A blank space was left to give the participants the opportunity to write additional thoughts, which might not be covered in the closed items. These open-ended questions aimed to offer

qualitative data and possibly to identify certain factors not previously expected (Dornyei, 2003). For sections two, three and part one of section four, the items were rated by the participants on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree). The students were asked to tick the option that best suited their choice.

Completing a questionnaire on the topic of anxiety is probably a sensitive and difficult task for the participants. Therefore, the following measures were taken to arouse participants' interest and motivate them to complete the questionnaire. First, the questionnaire was divided into sections. Secondly, the questionnaire started with relatively easy, simple and less challenging section. Thirdly, to maintain the smooth flow of the questionnaire, the sequence of sections was guided by the sequence of study's research questions (Cohen et al., 2007). Finally, there is logic among the order of sections (Judd et al., 1991) as the second section establishes the problem; the third one explains the sources of that problem; and the final section looks for the solutions to that problem.

Some important items were asked more than once in the same section and some were included in more than one section for the purpose of cross-referencing (for example, items asking about fear of negative evaluation (FNE), lack of confidence, mistakes, preparation in advance, voluntary speaking). The aim was to confirm that the participants' choices were consistent throughout the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections (see appendix 1). Bryman (2001) suggests that the participants should be clearly informed of the aims of the research. Therefore, the questionnaire began by informing the participants about its objectives and assuring them of the confidentiality of their responses. Additionally, a clear explanation of how to fill out the questionnaire was provided. Each section is described in detail below.

The section one intended to acquire general information about the participants (e.g. age, gender, and faculty).

The second section asked the participants that how they feel about reading, writing, speaking and listening to English in the classroom. This section aimed to identify that which of the four skills (speaking, reading, listening, and writing) creates most anxiety for them. It contained 16 items. Four statements (5, 6, 7, and 8) were negatively ordered. This technique serves as a cross-check and it reduces the participants' bias (DeVellis, 2003). Four questions were asked for each of the skills. Since the aim was to investigate which skill is the most anxiety-provoking, the items were brief, simple and their wording was almost identical. In the initial draft of the questionnaire, this section contained 24 items; however, my supervisor suggested reducing it to 20. In the light of the pilot study the final number was reduced to 16, which could easily fulfil the objectives. Other researchers, for example Hurd & Xiao (2010), Sila (2010) and Brantmeier (2005) have also used 15, 20 and 10 items respectively for their studies. Although their studies did not mainly focus on exploring the most anxiety-provoking skill, they had relevant aims.

The researcher could not locate a specific scale in the literature to measure anxiety in all four skills, so experts in the field of language anxiety such as Dolly Jesusita Young, Elaine K. Horwitz and Tammy Gregersen were contacted for their advice. They suggested reviewing Cheng's (2004) writing anxiety scale, Elkhafaifi's (2005) listening anxiety scale, Horwitz et al.'s (1986) FLCAS and Saito et al.'s (1999) reading anxiety scale to develop a new scale specifically to fulfil the aims of this study. These scales have been found valid and reliable and have yielded fruitful results. Therefore, section 1 of the questionnaire was developed after a thorough review of the writers' instruments suggested above.

Section three consisted of 22 items and was intended to identify the factors that could create anxiety for students when speaking English in class. Thirteen items (17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 and 33) were adapted and modified from the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). A full description of this scale, including its validity and reliability, can be found in section 3.6 above. The FLCAS is included as appendix 2. The rest of the items in this section were developed for the present study since Tóth (2010) reassures that it is acceptable to mix adapted and newly developed items in the same questionnaire. Two items (18 and 27) in this section represent a lack of SA while

the rest represent a high SA. The items in this section focused on various areas such as lack of confidence, competitiveness, fear of making mistakes, FNE, oral test anxiety, and error correction.

Only those items which were directly related to the present study were adapted from the FLCAS. Several alterations were made to the borrowed items in order to suit the study's settings and aims and to save the participants from any ambiguities. For example, the original item in the FLCAS is "I don't worry about making mistakes in language class" and it was modified as "I don't worry about making mistakes when I am speaking in my English class". After the pilot study, the terms "language" and "foreign language" from the original items were replaced with "English", in order not to create any confusion for the participants.

Items were adapted from the FLCAS for several reasons. First, it is an appropriate measure of anxiety related to speaking situations (Aida, 1994; Cheng et al., 1999; Rodríguez & Abreu, 2003). Similarly, the modified version of this scale has been utilised by many SA studies and has yielded consistent and fruitful results (Subasi, 2010; Wilson, 2006; Cheng, 2005). Moreover, the present study views language anxiety as situation-specific and this scale is regarded as the most comprehensive and reliable scale to measure situation-specific anxiety (Tóth, 2010). Finally, it has been found highly valid and reliable (ibid) and in the words of Horwitz (2010:1), it "has become the standard measure of language anxiety".

The last section, section four, was itself subdivided into two parts. Part one asked the participants to specify any teacher behaviour and characteristics that could reduce their SA in class and, in turn, promote their speaking. The 12 items in this part addressed aspects such as teachers' attitudes towards mistakes, their attitudes towards students, their professional characteristics and their personal manners. This section was developed from two sources: a review of similar instruments used in previous studies such as Oppenheim (1996), Zhang (2010) and Cheng (2005), and the researcher's own observation as a university teacher in Pakistan. Additionally, the findings of Young (1990) also proved insightful and helpful.

Part two of section four asked the participants to rate their SA levels in respect of eleven different in-class activities using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from Very Relaxed, Moderately Relaxed, Neither Relaxed Nor Anxious, Moderately Anxious, to Very Anxious. The items in this part were addressing activities such as preparedness and making presentations in groups...etc. Items (51, 52, 53 and 56) were adapted and modified from section 2 of Young's (1990) questionnaire which is fully discussed in section 3.6 above (see appendix 3 for section 2 of this questionnaire). For example, the original item in section 2 of Young's questionnaire is "Work in groups of 3 or 4" and it was modified as "Work in groups of 3 or 4 and prepare an oral presentation."

Those items were adapted which are directly related to the present study. Many studies which have adapted Young's activities section (section 2) have yielded consistent results (Cheng, 2005; Zhang, 2010). The rest of the items in this part were developed by the researcher to meet the specific context of the Pakistani classrooms. It is important to highlight that this list of activities is neither exhaustive nor reflective of any specific second language teaching method.

It should be noted that teacher behaviour and activities that may tend to provoke SA were not included in the section four. This was partly because the aim of research question 3 was to identify teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may help reduce students' SA, but also because section 2 of the questionnaire had explored sources of SA.

4.7.1.2 Piloting the Questionnaire

I ensured the content validity of my questionnaire. Content validity is defined as "the extent to which an instrument gives us the information we want" (Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001: 86). To do this, first, I selected valid and reliable questionnaires to adapt items from after an extensive search in the literature. Secondly, the questionnaire was reviewed by some colleagues, final year PhD candidates, and five experienced Pakistani EFL teachers to examine the appropriateness, quality, form, and the content of items. Their feedback was helpful in refining and strengthening the questionnaire. For example, I reworded, rephrased and reorganised some items, and made items direct, simple and brief. Moreover, I had put one open-ended question for both parts (part 1 and 2) of section 4 at the end of part 2 of section 4 in the preliminary form of the questionnaire.

However, as advised, I put a separate open-ended question at the end of part 1 of section 4 in the final questionnaire. Fourthly, my supervisors kept on evaluating and suggesting recommendations to improve the questionnaire throughout the process of its construction and piloting.

Prior to the formal investigation, a pilot study was conducted with 50 Pakistani EFL university students. The main aim of the pilot study was to examine the questionnaire thoroughly, highlight any misunderstandings, misreading and ambiguities, assess its suitability for the objectives of the study and provide understanding and insights about the real process of the research. It also aimed to make the questionnaire manageable for the participants in order to obtain accurate responses (Dörnyei, 2003). The pilot study revealed some areas for improvement for example, some confusing words were replaced with simple words, some terms and phrases were reworded, repetition was discarded, the number of items was reduced, other items were included, the language of some statements was changed and some other minor ambiguities were resolved. The pilot study allowed the instrument to be trialled before the full study and gave important knowledge about formal procedures. It also showed that some of the participants did not write much in some of the open-ended questions. This might be due to the fact that writing answers to the open-ended questions ask for a lot of time and reflection. Therefore, in the main study this point was considered and the importance of these items was explained to the participants; they were advised and encouraged to answer to them. Modifications were carried out following the feedback gained from the pilot study and the final shape of the questionnaire was ready for the formal investigation.

Cronbach's alpha reliability scale is commonly used to examine the reliability of the scales and internal consistency of the items. A scale is considered reliable if the value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.7 or above (DeVellis, 2003). This scale was used to check the reliability of the questionnaire used in the current study and it proved reliable (0.72).

4.7.1.3 Administration of the Questionnaire

Before any research was carried out, permission was gained from the head of each university department and from the English teacher of the relevant class to

conduct the study. They were informed about the objectives and importance of the study, and were kind enough to welcome and cooperate with the researcher. In order to approach the target participants at a convenient time, an appointment was made for the administration of the questionnaire in consultation with the English teacher.

The target participants were visited according to the plan to administer the questionnaire. To increase the response rate and motivate the participants to answer honestly, the aims of the study were first explained briefly to the participants, while being careful not to influence their responses. They were informed both verbally and on the consent form that their participation was totally voluntary, and that they could refuse or withdraw from the study at any stage without negative repercussions. Since participants give real answers and extend full cooperation if they are sure that they will not be identified (Fitzgerald, 1992), they were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses and informed that only the researcher would have access to the data. After gaining participants' permission, the questionnaire was distributed.

Before the participants started to complete the questionnaire, the aims of each section were explained to them and they were informed of the importance of giving honest answers. The participants were also encouraged to ask for clarification if they could not comprehend any items or instructions. The questionnaire was conducted during their English class time in a non-distracting and non-threatening environment. The participants seemed excited; they cooperated and completed the questionnaire attentively. The questionnaire was completed within approximately 30-35 minutes and the participants put them in the envelopes provided. A total of 240 questionnaires were distributed in all five selected universities, and 199 were returned. Twenty-nine incomplete questionnaires were then excluded so the final questionnaire sample became 170. The questionnaire data were collected from all research sites following the procedure outlined above. The close-ended items were analysed quantitatively through SPSS and the open-ended questions were analysed qualitatively.

4.7.2 Collecting Qualitative Data: the Semi-Structured Interview

The main body of qualitative data were collected through In-depth semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observations.

Through an interview the researcher aims to obtain distinctive information from the participants who have the opportunity to interpret their world and use their experiences to contribute to original research. It is “a meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses” (Janesick, 1998:30); consequently, the interviewer gains understanding of a particular phenomenon from the interviewee’s point of view.

Robson (2006) divides interviews into three formats: a fully structured interview in which the questions are predefined, with fixed order and wording; a semi-structured interview in which, while the researcher has a set of predetermined themes and questions, he/she can modify, omit or add questions within the objectives and overall limits of the interview because it is guided by the participants’ responses and not by the researcher’s agenda; and finally, an unstructured interview where the communication flows freely around the given topic (see also Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003 and Merriam, 1998).

The majority of qualitative studies use the semi-structured type of interview (Bell, 1993; Flick, 2006). The current study likewise utilised semi-structured, in-depth interviews as a data collection instrument. Radnor (2002; 1994) notes that semi-structured interviews give freedom of expression to the participants and allow the researcher to probe in order to clarify or get more information if needed. Similarly, Dowsett (1986) justifies the use of semi-structured interviews, stating that in them “the interactions are incredibly rich and the data indicate that you can produce extraordinary evidence about life that you do not get in structured interviews” (p. 53). Another advantage of this format is that it is adaptable and flexible; therefore, the researcher can achieve rich data (Bell, 1993).

The selection of a particular type of interview depends on the aims of the study (Merriam, 1998). In the current research semi-structured interviews were used for the following reasons. First, they enabled the interviewees to dig deep into

their minds to express themselves freely and according to their priorities without the researcher's interference. Second, they were flexible, with the ability to change or modify the question or wording whenever needed and gain in-depth data. Third, they are exploratory (Robson, 2006), so suitable for this exploratory study. In consequence, they provided new dimensions to the topic which had not been anticipated (Merriam, 1998; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). Lastly, the researcher's agenda is not imposed on participants, as it is in a structured interview; the main question is asked, the interviewees reflect, are listened to and, if needed, they are asked some probes (Patton, 1990).

The interview technique was used in this study since first, this technique can validate the data gained through other tools. It also allows the researcher to gain information about unobservable factors such as beliefs, feelings, values, and prejudices (Wellington, 2000) an aspect that is particularly relevant since the study focuses on students' perceptions on SA. Moreover, although previous studies have provided valuable results about anxiety they have, as noted above, mainly relied on questionnaires. Thus, they do not allow for a thorough investigation of interaction between language anxiety and other personal, instructional and situational factors (Yan & Horwitz, 2008) and it is suggested that "one promising means to better understand the role of anxiety in language learning would be to interview learners about their feelings about language learning, an approach seldom used previously" (ibid:153). Similarly, Young (1994) advocates the use of qualitative methods and states that they "can offer insights into language learners' anxiety that may often be undetected in a quantitative approach" (p. 30). Interviews, therefore, were utilised in tandem with other tools in the hope of obtaining a richer and clearer understanding of the topic. Finally, the use of interviews was coherent with the study's epistemological and ontological assumptions that knowledge is jointly created due to the interaction between the researcher and the researched. Moreover, as reality is constructed differently by different participants, interviews allowed access to this reality constructed by those who live it.

However, as with all research instruments, interviews have potential weaknesses. For example, they are time-consuming both when collecting and analysing the data. The process of making appointments, rearranging in case of

cancellation and visiting interviewees can be onerous. There is a chance that the interviewee may lie to please the interviewer. Similarly, personal biases may intrude, from the researcher's side as well as the participants'. To minimise this risk, the researcher was careful not to allow personal opinions to interfere and to let the meaning come out from the participants.

4.7.2.1 Construction of the Interview Protocol

The interview questions for student interviewees were informed by the study research questions, questionnaire, previous studies' interview guides, discussions with Pakistani students at the University of Exeter, and the researcher's own understanding of the topic of SA. A number of in-depth and open-ended main questions were asked, to explore the most anxiety-generating language skill, factors that produce SA, and teacher behaviour and classroom practices that may help reduce it. Some of the main questions had some alternative forms or potential probes to use if little or no response was forthcoming, in order to investigate the problem in depth (see appendix 4 for full details of the questions and their probes). After completing the interview schedule, it was passed to the research supervisors; in this way it was revised and refined many times.

Before conducting the interviews a trial run, or pilot, was conducted, as recommended by Dörnyei (2007), because "what seems straightforward to the researcher may be baffling to another person not fully in the picture" (Wragg, 1978:15). To pilot the students' interview guide, interviews were conducted with three volunteer Pakistani EFL university students. The aims were to take into account any problems that might arise during formal interviews and to ensure that the questions were easy to understand for the target interviewees, convey the intended meanings, and yield adequately rich data (Dörnyei, 2007). The students' comments were considered and modifications were made accordingly. This process revealed that probes can be significantly helpful in gaining in-depth and rich information; more probes were therefore added. Moreover, during one of the pilot interviews two other students entered the interview room. Although they left the room very quickly, the importance of a non-distracting environment during formal interviews was made clear. In short, trialling the interview increased researcher confidence and preparation for the actual

interviews, for example in terms of building rapport with target interviewees, managing the interview, phrasing questions, encouraging students to share more, and allowing them to share their perceptions freely. Once the final form of the interview protocol was settled upon, I proceeded to conduct the actual interviews.

The teachers' semi-structured interview protocol was informed by the fourth research question, previous studies and the researcher's own understanding of the study's topic (see appendix 5). The schedule comprised six main questions and it mainly asked teachers about their perceptions of their students' SA and the teachers' current strategies to reduce it. Piloting was done with two Pakistani EFL teachers. Changes were made accordingly. The final shape was settled upon and formal interviews were conducted.

4.7.2.2 Conducting Interviews with Students

The researcher contacted the students and informed them of the objectives and usefulness of the interview and assured that all information would be kept strictly anonymous and confidential throughout. It was further explained that their speaking proficiency was not being assessed, neither were their teachers being evaluated; the sole purpose was to obtain their accounts regarding speaking anxiety (SA). In addition, they were clearly informed that their participation in interviews was totally voluntary. Many students not only showed their willingness to be interviewed but also seemed excited and they were grateful that for the first time someone was asking for their views. Finally, appointments were arranged with the students according to their convenience.

Prior to the interviews, participants were introduced to the themes to be discussed in the interview, both in the hope of minimising their anxiousness and curiosity and obtaining well-considered responses (Radnor, 2002). All such details proved helpful and participants seemed excited, warm, and relaxed.

A high quality digital voice-recorder was used to record all the interviews for accuracy and transcription purposes. Interviewees' consent was gained with respect to participating in and recording the interviews. The date, time, and some information about the interviewee were spoken into the recorder before

the beginning of each interview. The interviews commenced and ended with thanks to the participants for giving their time and sharing their experiences. Each interview began with a short casual conversation with the interviewee, for instance, asking about his/her favourite subject, in order to build rapport and make him/her feel relaxed. Questions were asked in a simple and clear way, so that the participants could easily understand and answer accurately. They shared their stories in detail, encouraged by interjections such as 'yes', 'right', 'ok', 'please tell me more' and 'explain please'. Responses were sometimes summarised for accuracy and understanding.

Although a general list of topics to cover had been prepared, the nature of semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to interview participants without strictly adhering to the same wording, questions, and order of questions, because a good qualitative interviewer follows the situation (Radnor, 2002). This format of interview usually takes a conversational style and may introduce new topics (*ibid*).

The interviews were conducted face to face in the students' national language, Urdu. This was to allow them to express their experiences, feelings, and thoughts freely and accurately without any language impediments. Each interview session lasted approximately 35-45 minutes. The interviewees were informed about the approximate length of time interviews could take. All interviews were conducted in relaxed, secure, quiet, and convenient places and in a non-threatening way (Radnor, 2002). The door and windows of the interview rooms were closed to avoid any possible distractions, to make students feel comfortable, and to give them a sense of privacy.

Interestingly and fortunately, all interviewees were helpful, open and thankful for the chance to express their views. They were listened to intently, with attention paid to their expressions like confusion, smiles, anger, hesitations, and body language; reflective notes were taken during and after interviews in order not to face any ambiguity in the analysis stage (Radnor, 2002). Before concluding the interviews, the participants were asked if they wished to add anything else. The interviews were transcribed, and then translated from Urdu into English and analysed.

4.7.2.3 Conducting Interviews with Teachers

Interviews with 14 teachers were conducted in English, tape-recorded and finally transcribed. Interviewees' permission was gained to conduct and record the interviews and they were assured that the interviews were not for their evaluation. They were also assured of the strict confidentiality of their responses. The duration of each interview session was approximately from 28-40 minutes.

Eight teachers were interviewed face-to-face following the same procedures as for students' interviews and 6 were interviewed via Skype. After the data collection tour in Pakistan, the researcher's supervisor recommended additional interviews to obtain more data. Basically, I contacted 7 teachers and fixed appointments with them for interviews via Skype but one teacher could not turn up on the day of interview due to medical reasons. Thus, I could only conduct interviews with 6 more teachers.

It was unfeasible due to lack of resources, time and distance to visit Pakistan physically and conduct more interviews face-to-face. Therefore dates and time for Skype sessions were arranged with the target interviewees, according to their convenience. Two colleagues also helped with the process of arranging and managing the interviews. A number of resources provided useful information with regard to conducting Skype interviews (e.g. Cater, 2011; King & Horrocks, 2010; Bertrand & Bourdeau, 2010). In order to conduct the interviews successfully, smoothly, and without any major problems, various factors were taken into account, such as ethical and technical issues, ensuring that the researcher and researched sit in quiet and comfortable settings, and establishing a reliable internet connection. Before the actual interviews a pilot Skype interview was carried out with a colleague to rehearse the whole process and address any possible issues before the formal interviews.

The interviews were carried out on the fixed date and time. After being assured that the interviewees could hear me clearly, the interviews proceeded as for the face-to-face interviews, including the preambles described above. It is worth noting that the Skype technology offers interviewees the option to turn off the video, keep audio only or stop the interview whenever they like. Hence,

interviews via Skype give interviewees a chance of voluntary participation just like face-to-face interviews. The formal interviews were recorded using a separate digital audio recorder (Bertrand & Bourdeau, 2010). The interviewees seemed excited and they expressed themselves freely and happily. Skype interviews proved to be convenient, smooth, enjoyable, and a useful method of collecting qualitative data.

In social science research, Skype interviewing is an important data collection method. Cater (2011) points out that Skype offers interviewers the technology to simulate face-to-face interviews without losing the quality of data collection. In the same vein, Bertrand & Bourdeau (2010) and Hanna (2012) argue that the Skype interview is a potential and successful alternative to face-to-face interviews. Additionally, King & Horrocks (2010) highlight that it provides the researchers with visual cues and creates an experience as both the interviewer and interviewee are in the same room. Moreover, “both the researcher and the researched are able to remain in a ‘safe location’ without imposing on each other’s personal space” (Hanna, 2012:241). Skype technology could be a most convenient alternative to face-to-face interviews since it is time saving, inexpensive, easy to access and record, offers real time interaction, and allows the researcher to build rapport with the participants. Despite the usefulness of Skype interviewing, it has various potential disadvantages; for example, the technology may fail or internet disconnection problems may disrupt the flow of an interview.

4.7.3 Collecting Qualitative Data: Classroom Observations

In addition to interviews, classroom observation was used as a supportive qualitative data collection tool. It is the most frequently used data collection technique in qualitative research (Cha, 2005). Angrosino (2007:54) defines observation as “the act of noting a phenomenon, often with instruments, and recording it for scientific purposes”.

Many researchers advocate the use of observation in educational research to gather live and rich data about participants’ behaviour in the actual situation. For example, Cohen et al., (2007:396) argue that it offers an opportunity to “gather ‘live’ data from naturally occurring social situations”. Burns (1999) highlights that

it enables the researcher to understand the “classroom interactions and events, as they actually occur rather than as we think they occur” (p. 80). Likewise, it gives the researcher an opportunity to attain data that pertain directly to the typical behaviour situations (Merriam, 1998) and to look at what is taking place in situ rather than at second hand (Ruane, 2005). It could be argued that observation enables the researcher to get close to the participants, observe what is actually happening regarding the phenomenon under study, and record the participants’ patterns of behaviour in their real situation.

Moreover, observation can yield more valid and authentic data than mediated or inferential methods (Cohen et al., 2007). Also, it provides a reality check (ibid.), as according to Robson (2002), there may be inconsistencies between what people say they do and what they actually do. Thus, the observational data enables the researcher to cross-check the results found through other data collection tools (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995), such as interviews. Moreover, through observation the researcher can explore issues about which participants may not freely talk about in their interviews (Cohen et al., 2007). It may mean that observation enables the researcher to see things and attain information that might not be gained by other methods. For example, some interviewees may be shy or may not trust the interviewer; therefore, they may hide sensitive information. However, observation has the potential to capture such information (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Through observation the researcher may get a better and deeper understanding of the issue under study by observing the real context (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995) than interviews alone. Thus, observation may have the potential to offer unexpected dimensions on the topic and hence may help generate a holistic picture of that issue. Moreover, researchers’ personal reflections, feelings and ideas play an important role in a qualitative study (Ruane, 2005), and observation has the capability to help the researcher form such opinions.

Furthermore, observation is utilised to collect information about classroom practices such as how teachers put their ideas into practice (Vasey, 1996), to investigate the extent of consistency between EFL teachers’ beliefs and their classroom practices (Johnson, 1992) and aspects of teacher effectiveness and characteristics of 'good teachers' (Moskowitz, 1978); and the relationship

between teachers' attitudes and beliefs and their observed classroom teaching behaviours (Johnson, 1992).

Observation is a rarely-used tool in examining language anxiety, but studies which employed it yielded fruitful results (Cha, 2006). Researchers maintain that anxiety is exhibited in various ways, such as through physiological and behavioural cues (Horwitz et al., 1986). Similarly, Gregersen (2005) suggests that in reference to language anxiety, it is important to observe non-verbal cues such as physical movements, smiles, interaction, and eye contact. Bailey (1996) argues that observations are helpful for recording non-verbal behaviour. Moreover, observation can be used in educational research if the study's ontological stance assumes that behaviours, interaction, and actions and the way participants interpret them are vital for it (Mason, 2002). Also, it can be employed when the study's epistemological position assumes that meaningful knowledge cannot be produced without observing the phenomenon under study (ibid). These points are particularly pertinent for the present study.

Therefore, observation was used alongside questionnaires and interviews in order to observe the various processes related to SA. This data collection method proved helpful and gave me a firsthand account of the context, events, actions, interactions, behaviours, actual classroom activities, teacher teaching practices and other important events to answer the posed research questions (Patton, 1990). In short, observation may allow the researcher to observe SA in operational form in the classroom and give an insider view of students' SA.

There are three main types of observation in the field of education: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Cohen et al., 2007). In structured observation, the researcher has certain categories determined beforehand as he/she knows what he/she is looking for. In semi-structured observation, the researcher will have an "agenda of issues but will gather data to illuminate these issues in a far less predetermined or systematic manner" (ibid: 397). In other words, this type of observation, unlike structured observation, does not have its categories determined beforehand. However, the researcher has an observation plan but the data are collected in a less systematic way. Thus, the researcher has adequate freedom in collecting data. Finally, the unstructured

observation will be far less clear what the researcher is looking for and he/she is needed to go into a situation to observe what is happening before deciding on its significance to the research (Patton, 1990).

I believe that highly structured observation may not have the capacity to fully capture the complexity of human behaviour and interaction in language learning and teaching process. In qualitative studies semi-structured observation is common (Ruane, 2005), as it provides a greater flexibility for the researcher in approaching a complex phenomena. I decided to use this type of observation in my study and this allowed me to collect data in a less systematic way to address the research questions in the present study.

Mainly, there are two kinds of observational approaches: participant and non-participant observation (Wellington, 2000). Participant observers involve in the situations they observe, while non participant observers remain neutral and unobtrusive and keep themselves detached as much as possible from the happenings in the classroom (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). It implies that the participant observer participates in the classroom events being observed, whereas the non-participant observer although remains present in the actual setting, he/she does not interact with and remains aloof from the community of that study. I decided to be a non-participant observer. This observational strategy was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, it did not seem practical and workable for the researcher to become part of a class and behave and experience everything like the study group. Similarly, there was a danger of diverting students' attention and influencing the situation under investigation by being involved in it (Ruane, 2005), as well as risking missing important events, interactions, and behaviours. Finally, the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this study are that participants will create reality differently, and observation could enrich the knowledge about this reality.

Classroom observations were conducted after the interviews. Each classroom was visited according to the appointments arranged beforehand and permission was formally obtained from the class teacher and students. In order to remain almost unnoticed by the students, the researcher sat at the back of the classroom from where the lessons could easily be witnessed. Classroom

activities were allowed to occur in their normal and natural way. I remained unobtrusive and avoided any interaction or eye contact with the participants, so that they may behave in their natural way (Ruane, 2005). Some teachers may become nervous due to the presence of a stranger in the classroom (Verma & Mallick, 1999), and in order to offset this it was stressed that the observations were not aimed at assessing or evaluating their teaching.

It had been planned to observe the classes from all five selected universities, but two teachers were not willing to permit observation of their classes. Twelve sessions were observed in total: four for Al-Faisal University (60 minutes each session), four for Al-Abbas University (55 minutes each session) and four for Indus University (60 minutes each session).

Observations were carried out using a semi-structured observation sheet that I had prepared in advance. I took into account four aspects following the study's research questions: factors that may induce SA in students, teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may make students feel comfortable in class, teachers' teaching practices and their attitude towards students, and unexpected emerging events. The field notes were concerned with issues such as: the physical environment of the classroom, classroom activities, the teacher's attitude towards students, classroom practices, the manner of error correction, interaction between the teacher and the students and between the students themselves, students' participation level in class, how students behave after making mistakes, and how other students and the teacher react to their mistakes, and the teacher's instructional style and instructional strategies. All of these elements may affect the whole process of language teaching and learning.

However, it is important to note that in accordance with the semi-structured nature of my observation, I did not restrict myself to the agenda of issues to be observed, but rather I kept an open mind and noted any emerging event, action, behaviour, or episode which could be helpful in understanding the phenomenon and which could address the study's research questions. Thus, I collected the data less systematically but kept detailed notes of observed classroom environment. For example, I noted subtle factors and non-verbal behaviours, for

instance, body position of students, such as leaning forward towards the teacher or backward, gestures, eye contact, head nodding, adjusting clothing, scratching facial areas, striking hair, rubbing hands, fake smiles, raising hand hesitantly, taking big breaths while speaking, eyes blinking repeatedly, biting nails, sweating, avoidance, etc. These behaviours contain a symbolic meaning and enable the researcher to detect and understand students' language anxiety (Gregersen, 2005).

Bailey (1996) suggested that observers should use all their senses when carrying out a classroom observation. I also used my senses fully and I recorded what I saw and heard (Ruane, 2005), and noted any personal reflections, feelings, and hunches that emerged (Merriam, 1998). These written accounts gained during classroom observation are called field notes, defined as "the words, or images used to record one's field observation" (Ruane, 2005:170). My semi-structured observation sheet contained an introductory part in which various contextual details were noted, such as the date, the name of the teacher, the university and the department, and the duration of the lecture. My field notes contained two kinds of material: descriptive and reflective (see appendix 7 for an example of field notes). In the descriptive part, I provided an objective record of what happened (events and issues as mentioned above) in the class during my observation. These descriptive accounts can provide rich data that could reveal unique patterns and themes (ibid.). Thus, these accounts offered me the data necessary to answer the study's research questions.

Reflective notes are a personal record of events. In the reflective part, I recorded my personal thoughts, feelings, insights, questions, concerns and impressions about the underlying meaning of what is occurring in the observation to better explain the sequences and patterns of events recorded in the field notes (Ruane, 2005). However, my reflective notes did not affect my objectivity as I tried not to manipulate the issues to suit my aims. These notes play a significant part in the research process as they enable the researcher to clarify connections and patterns between pieces of data (Merriam, 1998) and particularly may explain any emerging possible patterns during the analysis stage. Thus, they may help the researcher understand and interpret the events and behaviours in a comprehensive perspective.

It is suggested in the research literature that field notes should be expanded as soon as possible before one's memory of the details fades, in order to provide a clear picture of the phenomenon months later (Cohen et al., 2007). Therefore, after each observation session, I immediately organised and expanded my observation notes. This step may help the researcher understand and interpret the notes later more easily. However, I was careful not to clutter my notes with irrelevant information. These steps may be taken as a preliminary analysis of observational data as I highlighted some possible themes and sub-themes. Through my observational data I was able to cross-check students' responses shared with me during the interviews. Care was taken to describe the situation as exactly as possible without being biased.

4.8 Data Analysis Procedures

This section describes the data analysis procedures for the quantitative data obtained through the questionnaires and also for the qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The data were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Qualitative findings and statistical results were integrated and are presented together in the analysis, in chapter 5, to provide a comprehensive picture of the topic under study.

4.8.1 Analysis of the Quantitative Data

SPSS has been widely used for the analysis of close-ended questionnaires which allows the researcher "to score and to analyze quantitative data very quickly and in many different ways" (Bryman & Cramer 2001:15). The data obtained through close-ended items of the questionnaire were carefully fed into the SPSS programme to gain percentages and frequencies of students' responses to each item of the questionnaire. The data are shown in tables in the analysis chapter.

4.8.2 Analysis of the Qualitative Data

Although now computer software analytical tools such as Nvivo or NUD*IST can be used to manage and analyse the qualitative data, the analysis was carried out manually, for several reasons. First, it suits the researcher's temperament; secondly, qualitative data consist of words, which are context bound and can give various meanings (Neuman, 2000). Thirdly, such analytical tools are not

capable of capturing issues such as stress, laughter, pauses and hesitations during interviews which are, in view the nature of the research topic, worth recording. Finally, manual analysis allowed immersion in the data; thus, the researcher was able to write personal reflections and find new insights and concepts.

The process of data analysis is perhaps aptly explained by Jorgensen (1989:107):

Analysis is a breaking up, separating, or disassembling of research materials into pieces, parts, elements, or units. With facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data in a meaningful or comprehensible fashion.

There is no single absolutely correct or best method of carrying out qualitative data analysis; rather there are various approaches and strategies to conduct it in a systematic and insightful way (Creswell, 1994). For example, Miles & Huberman (1994) state that qualitative data analysis consists of "three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" (p. 10). Data reduction involves the process of reading the large data several times to reduce and organise them through writing summaries and memos, and preparing an initial code list. Data display refers to displaying the data by means of tables, diagrams, matrices, graphs, and thematic charts in an organised and compressed form. The final activity means drawing conclusions and answering the research questions on the basis of identified categories and sub-categories of the data.

The study's qualitative data were huge and unorganised. Thus, it was important to process and reconstruct the data (Holliday, 2002) to give meaning to the fuzzy data (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Although this process proved complex and time consuming, it may have the capability to explain and interpret the topic under research in an insightful way. Since data analysis starts with data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994), personal reflections were noted, minor coding was done and some concepts developed during data collection. This

step was useful for further analysis procedures.

All the qualitative data collected through interviews with teachers and students, semi-structured observations, and open-ended questions in the questionnaire were coded and analysed through exploratory content analysis. First, the data were transcribed, translated, where necessary, and codified. The transcripts were coded and labelled, reading line by line. The transcripts were read multiple times to make an initial list of themes and sub-themes. A constant comparison method of the whole data was used by reading and rereading within and across the data. Microsoft Word was also used to cut and paste packets of data and categorise them under a specific theme. According to Miles & Huberman (1994), data analysis is an on-going process and the researcher should endeavour to find more aspects of the situation. Following this, although many themes emerged from the data, it was read and re-read minutely in order to find some hidden, unfamiliar and unrecognised themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). This step helped to refine the initial categories, identify new and relevant categories, drop irrelevant categories, combine categories, and enrich the interpretation of data. The research questions were used as lens on what to code and categorise. It was found that some data were interrelated, as they could fit into more than one category or theme. Similarly, some themes emerged out of the data.

4.8.2.1 Analysis of Interviews

Analysis of interviews was guided by the procedures recommended by Miles & Huberman (1994): data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. In order to become thoroughly familiar with the data, the recorded interviews were listened to repeatedly and scrupulously. Then, the whole recorded data were transcribed and translated from Urdu into English, wherever necessary, as carefully as possible. This whole process was extremely time consuming (see appendix 6 for a sample of a transcribed interview). The accuracy of the translation was validated and the transcripts were checked for respondent validation (see section 4.9.1 below for more detail). The objective was to analyse the data as accurately, reflectively, and systematically as possible; therefore, the transcripts were read in their entirety over and over again to get “a sense of the interview as a whole” (Agar, 1980:28).

As a result of being immersed in the data, the irrelevant and meaningless parts of the data could be discarded (Spencer et al., 2003). The research questions guided the researcher what to keep and what to omit. However, care was taken not to miss any important, interesting or relevant information (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). In addition, the record of the edited data was retained in case they were needed for further analysis. The data was then broken down into smaller pieces by coding and labelling, to assign units of meaning to the data (Radnor, 2001). The codes comprised specific words, phrases or sentences. It was ensured that they could easily and actually represent the specific concept, be distinct, and that the relevant statement should go under the appropriate code (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This stage of data analysis made the data manageable and meaningful.

Next, the data were displayed by creating thematic charts; which were modified by combining similar categories and forming others. The data became more organised and could easily be accessed. Since data analysis is iterative, the process of refining and improving the analysis continued.

Finally, the data offered conclusions and answered the research questions. This stage was achieved by combining the data, commenting and developing arguments to generate a detailed description and insightful views about the participants regarding the topic under study (Holliday, 2002). There were contrary views about certain issues; these were interpreted to show the other possible aspects of the phenomenon. In view of the importance of this stage, all the categories were examined carefully in order to try to understand the inner meaning of the data. The analysis was guided by the data, adequate information was given for readers and interesting, meaningful, and varying statements were used (White et al., 2003).

4.8.2.2 Analysis of Open-Ended Questionnaire Questions

The data obtained from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were analysed qualitatively. These data were integrated with other qualitative data.

4.8.2.3 Analysis of Classroom Observations

The observation sheets contained a record of each observation session, data and personal reflections, thoughts and ideas about observed events and episodes (Emerson et al., 1995). To start the analysis, the field notes, which contained raw data, were read several times. Ruane (2005) recommends that the filed notes should be transformed into meaningful categories. Therefore the field notes were organised into the most obvious categories. In this way, all the information could be accessed easily and quickly. The data was then sifted to refine themes and sub-themes (Ruane, 2005). Thus, the observational data were analysed and matched against the data gathered through other qualitative tools: open-ended questions and interviews. Please see appendix 8 for an example of coding of field notes.

It is important that the study's data collection tools should be valid and reliable; therefore, the next section explains the trustworthiness of the data collection instruments.

4.9 Issues of Trustworthiness

The credibility of quantitative research is judged by the criteria of validity and reliability. However, the validity of qualitative research has been the subject of considerable debate. Some researchers argue that its credibility can also be determined by the concepts of validity and reliability (Patton, 2002), while others point out that these terms are not suitable and adequate to assess its quality (Lissitz & Samulsen, 2007). In reference to the validity of qualitative research, Lincoln & Guba (1985) introduced a new term, 'trustworthiness', as an alternative to reliability and validity. It means that the findings of the study are "worth paying attention to" (ibid: 290), implying that the study was conducted fairly and the participants' expressions were interpreted correctly; thus, its findings are trustworthy. Although the trustworthiness of a qualitative study can be established in many ways, the most popular indicators, proposed by Lincoln & Guba (1985), are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. The strategies used to enhance the trustworthiness of the current study are explained below.

4.9.1 Credibility

Credibility asks the question ‘how congruent are the findings with reality?’ (Merriam, 1998). It ensures that the realities in the researcher’s interpretation of data match the realities presented by the study participants. Various measures were taken to ensure the credibility of the data.

First, credible and consistent qualitative methods provide valid and accurate data (Robson, 2002). The interview questions were developed carefully and examined by the research supervisors. Additionally, a pilot study helped by clarifying and improving interview protocol. Furthermore, the interviewees were motivated and willing to be interviewed (Robson, 2002); therefore, they are likely to have shared true experiences. The interviews with students were conducted in Urdu, both to enable them to express themselves clearly and easily without any language difficulties and to ensure that the researcher could record accurate answers and consequently interpret reality correctly. The students’ Urdu interviews were translated into English with great care, and the process was repeated to check for any misunderstandings. Additionally, the accuracy of the translation was validated by three experienced translators in Pakistan.

Since the aim was to provide an account of SA from the participants’ point of view, the technique of member checking or what Silverman (2001) calls ‘respondent validation’ was used. It is an important technique for establishing credibility, where the researcher is required to send participants’ written transcripts back to them for verification of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, the researcher e-mailed the transcripts to the participants and requested them to check their responses (McCormick & James, 1983) and that they had not been misunderstood. Another technique for ensuring credibility is building trust and rapport with the interviewees in order to obtain honest responses. Radnor (2002:39) argues that the “establishment of a trustworthy basis” between the researcher and interviewees enhances the credibility of researcher’s data interpretation. The researcher took various steps (explained in sub-section 4.7.2.2 above) to build rapport with the interviewees.

The criterion of researcher 'involvement' can also be applied and brings additional credibility to the findings (Robson, 2002). The researcher has been an English teacher and a student in the community of the participants, and was therefore able to understand and interpret the expressions made by the participants (ibid). Moreover, the researcher's unbiased approach also ensures credibility of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and a conscious attempt was made to remain neutral throughout the research process, be it conducting interviews or analysis of data.

With reference to the classroom observations, credibility was enhanced by the researcher himself observing all the classes. If there was any implausible behaviour it was discussed with the respective English teacher and also checked against the existing literature.

4.9.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to "whether one can track the procedures and processes used to collect and interpret the data" (Lodico et al., 2006: 275). It suggests that the researcher is required to provide adequate details about the development of the study to show that research practices were followed logically and appropriately. In this respect, the research design and research procedures have been explained as clearly and comprehensively as possible. Moreover, the method for constructing, conducting and analysing the interviews and the classroom observations has been laid out.

Dependability can also be established through "overlapping methods" such as interviews and observations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To achieve this aim, the strategy of methodological triangulation was used (questionnaire, interviews, and observations) assuming that the "use of different sources of information will help both to confirm and improve the clarity, or precision, of research findings" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:275). Triangulation refers to investigating the same information through various types of evidence in order to verify and support the findings. It has many advantages. For example, while researchers' biases can influence the interpretation of the data, one strategy "to minimize the risk of being biased is to follow the principle of triangulation" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001:65). In addition, it explains the topic from different perspectives (Cohen et

al., 2007); thus, it can build new arguments. Triangulation can also help the researcher overcome the problem of 'method-boundedness' (Cohen & Manion, 1994:124). For example, interviews may explain the reasons for the occurrence of certain behaviours, while observation could allow the researcher to see how those behaviours actually happen in class (Esterberg, 2002). Therefore, the classes were observed after the interviews, in the hope of confirming students' views through observations. Methodological triangulation provided a considerably holistic and comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences about SA. Moreover, the researcher supported the results through different data collection instruments to establish the credibility of findings.

4.9.3 Confirmability

The concept of confirmability aims to ensure that the results of the inquiry match the original data (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). In other words, the claims or results of the research should be directed by the participants' data and not by the researcher's preferences. Perfect objectivity is impossible to attain because the research methods are developed and the data are collected and analysed by the researcher, therefore some effects of the researcher's biases are inevitable (Patton, 1990). The following provisions were made to ensure the genuineness of the study's findings.

Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest that researchers should admit their biases and justify the selection of employed research methods and instruments to establish the confirmability of that study. Thus, in the present case detailed justifications were given for using particular methods and instruments. In addition, throughout the study it was acknowledged that researcher consciousness might be involved in the interpretation of data; however, Patton (1990) argues that the trustworthiness of a qualitative study mainly depends on the "integrity of the researcher" (p. 11). Therefore, every attempt was made to present a true, exact, and neutral account of the participants' views as they were shared. Finally, the limitations of the study (section 4.11 below) and the data analysis procedures have also been described.

Merriam (1998) states that the confirmability of a study is approached through "the way in which the data were collected, analysed and interpreted" (p. 165). In

this reference, the researcher explained the data collection and analysis procedures. Similarly, an examination of the literature informed the choice of data analysis procedures, and ensured that they were valid. Moreover, the thesis supervisors reviewed and approved both the data collection and the analysis procedures. Furthermore, as reported above, methodological triangulation and member checking were used to reduce the influence of personal bias and to capture the participants' views accurately. An audit trail was carried out, where a competent and independent reviewer was invited to confirm that the research processes were consistent at both the literature and methodological stages (Patton, 1990). The reviewer has been an EFL university teacher for more than six years and is currently in the final year of his PhD in Education. Therefore, I believe he was well aware of how to review research documents impartially and appropriately.

4.9.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to whether the findings of the qualitative study can be applied or transferred to other similar contexts (Given, 2008). Some researchers argue that qualitative studies are rarely generalisable to other situations because they are context- and participant-focused (Lincoln, 1995). However, qualitative studies can be applied to a certain degree if the researcher provides an exhaustive description of research contexts, data collection, analysis and interpretation procedures (Cohen et al., 2007; Merriam, 1998) so that readers can "establish the degree of similarity between the case studied and the case to which findings might be transferred" (Schwandt, 2001:258). An attempt has been made, therefore, to supply a thick, comprehensive and accurate description of the research contexts, design, data collection and analysis procedures, limitations, and findings (supporting by the participants' statements) to maximise the transferability of the study and enable the reader to decide how far the results and conclusions can be applied to other contexts.

The possibility of theoretical generalisation can be increased if the researcher employs adequate and accurate measures for data collection and analysis procedures (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). To ensure this concern, the data collection and analysis procedures were consistent with previously conducted studies and also with research theories in the field of education. Similarly methodological

triangulation, which addresses threats to validity, was employed (Robson, 2002). Finally, the findings were supported by referring to participants' evidence, as well as to previous studies.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

Research ethics refer to the process of ensuring the privacy of the study participants, the confidentiality of their responses, and also ascertaining that no harm is done to them (Chilisa, 2005). The importance of ethics in research was highlighted by Wellington (2000) who suggests that they should be "at the forefront of any research project" (p. 3). Although every piece of research needs to take ethical issues into account, education research must consider them especially because it involves humans as participants, and the researcher investigates their personal views and perceptions (Robson, 2006). A number of ethical principles were followed to make this study as ethical as possible.

Obtaining the participants' consent to take part in the study has paramount importance in terms of ethical considerations. The ethical guidelines of British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) advise researchers to inform the participants of the objectives of the study and to obtain their formal permission before conducting the study. Similarly, Blaxter (1996) highlights that "ethical research involves getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from (p. 146)".

To meet the above guidelines, firstly, the researcher introduced himself as such to the participants and made clear that the data gathered would be used for research aims only and their participation would not affect them in any way. Moreover, they were informed of the goals and procedures of the study (Nolen & Putten, 2007) and any questions answered. It was explained that their participation was totally voluntary and that they had the right to refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time or at any stage if they wished, without any consequences. Furthermore, they were asked to sign a voluntary informed consent form prior to the start of the data collection (see appendix 9). Their permission was sought for administering the questionnaire, conducting interviews and classroom observations.

Following the guidelines of BERA (2004), a Certificate of Ethical Research Approval was obtained, signed by the chair of the Ethics Committee at the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter prior to data collection (see appendix 10). It offers a brief description of the research objectives, participants, research settings, and potential ethical issues, and confirms that the researcher had satisfied the Committee that the study would follow ethical principles.

Another important aspect is safeguarding the participants' confidentiality and anonymity. Anonymity means that the research participants, their responses and the research settings are not identifiable (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Therefore, participants' real names were not used when reporting the results, rather they were assigned pseudonyms (Pring, 2000; Miller & Brewer, 2003). Pseudonyms were also used for the universities from which the data were gathered. Moreover, the participants were informed of arrangements for the secure storage and disposal of the whole data. Furthermore, not only was permission gained from the participants to use their responses to support the results, but permission to carry out the study was also sought from the head of each selected university department, and each concerned English teacher. Before interviews, participants were informed of the aims of the interviews and approximate duration and also their permission was obtained to record the interviews. Hence, by considering these ethical steps, I tried to show respect for the participants (Bassegy, 1999).

In addition, measures were taken to make interviews less stressful for the participants. For example, participants themselves selected the venue and chose a time convenient for them (Frankael & Wallen, 2000). Similarly, all interviews were conducted in a comfortable and a non-threatening environment and the participants were given the freedom to stop if they felt uneasy. Moreover, the member checking was exercised and they were informed to highlight anything sensitive to them.

4.11 Limitations of the Study

The study has been made as comprehensive as possible and it is maintained that it makes a practical and a theoretical contribution to the field. However it

must be acknowledged that every piece of research has certain limitations. The following limitations posed by this study should be taken into account when interpreting the results.

This study was limited to 170 Pakistani EFL students. Although this sample is not too small for the purposes of the current study, it is not large enough to be automatically applicable in other contexts. Moreover, the meaning of speaking anxiety (SA) may be interpreted differently in other settings. Hence, the generalisation of results to other contexts should be handled with care. Similarly, the results achieved from teacher participants cannot be generalised to other Pakistani EFL teacher populations.

It is difficult to confirm in any research whether the interviewees gave honest and accurate accounts of the phenomenon (Pappamihel, 1999). The interviewees in this study could have overstated their experiences about SA to please the researcher (ibid) or indeed understated their levels of SA, thus giving a wrong or incomplete account of their feelings about SA. However, as stated above the strategy of methodological triangulation was used to validate the findings and various other steps were taken to motivate the interviewees to respond honestly and to make them feel relaxed. Another limitation of the study is that group interviews were not conducted. Discussion among the participants can offer new insights and arguments about the topic; had such been conducted, the results may have been more valid and varied.

There were also possible limitations regarding the classroom observations. Had these been conducted for a longer period of time, or been video recorded, the results may have offered new dimensions of the topic. Another limitation comes from the qualitative researcher's bias and subjectivity. Various data collection methods were used to reduce these effects but there always remains a certain degree of subjectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Moreover, the researcher is like an instrument and "no conventional investigator expects any instrument to be perfect" (ibid: 194); therefore, researcher subjectivity may have affected the study's interpretations to some extent.

Anxiety levels are influenced by the proficiency level of students (Llinás & Garau, 2009). This study was conducted with university students; thus, its results should be applied to intermediate and beginning students only with caution since they might have different experiences of SA, and results could be different. Finally, the study was carried out with students with English as a non-major; hence, the results should be transferred with caution to English as major students.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter described the procedures employed to conduct this study. Firstly, it reported the research paradigm along with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this study. It also demonstrated the mixed-methods research approach and the methods of data collection. Moreover, it gave an account of the research sites and participants. Then, a detailed description of the justification and construction of tools and data collection procedures was given, and data analysis procedures were pinpointed. Finally, the issues of trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study were provided. Although an attempt has been made to justify the accuracy and suitability of each research procedure, no work is flawless. Therefore, it is acknowledged, in spite of every effort being made, that there may be some drawbacks in the research design. The next chapter will present the findings of this research.

Chapter 5

Data Analysis and Research Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the present study into anxiety about speaking English in class, which was carried out among university students in Pakistan. The findings have been organised in four parts which correspond to the study's four research questions. The first part provides the results related to the first research question, which aims to explore whether speaking creates more anxiety than reading, writing, and listening for Pakistani EFL students. The second section highlights the factors contributing to students' speaking anxiety (SA). The third part of this chapter sheds light on teacher behaviour and classroom activities that would alleviate students' SA and may promote the use of spoken English in class. The last section is concerned with Pakistani EFL teachers' perceptions about their students' SA and the strategies teachers use to reduce their students' SA.

It should be noted that the first three research questions were answered by students, whereas the last research question was answered by the teachers.

Before and during the formal interviews it was apparent that the students seemed excited and eager; they had stories to tell about their SA. Many students made comments that left little doubt about the depth of their negative emotions surrounding SA, such as: *"I get extremely nervous and confused when speaking English"*; *"I want to hide myself from this trouble"*; *"I hate oral activities"*; *"Anxiety affects my mind and it does not let me do the best"*; and *"My English would have been better if I had studied at an English medium institution"*.

The interviews appeared to be an outlet for students to express their emotions and discuss their opinions with someone who was just there to listen to their perceptions on SA. Many said that they felt better after expressing their feelings. For instance, Javed reported, *"I feel really good. The teacher never talked about our speaking anxiety. It's good that someone is here to help us"*. Similarly, Shabnam stated, *"I feel very light because I have told you about my*

big problem". Likewise, Adil commented, *"It was hard to tell the teacher that I am afraid of speaking, I have told you everything about my anxiousness in class ... I enjoyed this interview"*. When Kashif was asked he said he had: *"Very pleasant feelings ... I feel like a big burden is out of my mind. I just say thanks for telling me that being anxious is usual when speaking in class ... and it is curable"*.

They further believed that the interviews had affected them positively. For example, Shabnam felt relaxed and she thought over using her own techniques to control her SA. Similarly, Tahir stated that *"the teacher never asked me"* about his SA and for the first time he had told someone about his misery when speaking and in future he would try to cope with his SA. Likewise, Noman was happy to know that he was not alone in his feelings of SA. He admitted, *"I was much worried that why I feel anxious when speaking ... I had started hating myself. You said, 'many students feel anxious' and now I know anxiety is common"*. These findings correspond with reports from the literature that students feel better when they know that they are not alone in their fears and beliefs (Foss & Reitzel, 1988).

5.2 Research Question 1: The Most Anxiety-Provoking Skill

The findings described in this section are those that help to answer the first research question of the current study:

Are Pakistani EFL students more anxious about speaking than about reading, writing, and listening?

This research question was answered by students through the questionnaire, the open-ended question in the questionnaire, and in-depth semi-structured interviews. Table 5.1 below presents the students' responses to the questionnaire items (section 2 of the questionnaire).

Table 5.1 Students' viewpoints about their anxiety in reading, writing, speaking, and listening

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to read a passage in English in class.	4.2%	30%	14.1%	40%	11.7%
2	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to write English compositions in class.	15.2%	40%	10%	24.1%	10.5%
3	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to speak English in class.	17%	56.4%	4.1%	17.6%	4.7%
4	I can feel my heart pounding when I have to listen to English in class.	11.7%	26.4%	14.7%	37%	10%
5	I am usually at ease when reading English in class.	11.7%	46.4%	9.4%	18.2%	14.1%
6	I am usually at ease when writing English compositions in class.	12.9%	21.7%	14.1%	37.6%	13.5%
7	I am usually at ease when speaking English in class.	6.4%	18.8%	5.2%	50%	19.4%
8	I am usually at ease when listening to English in class.	14.2%	38.8%	12.9%	24.7%	9.4%
9	Reading English makes me nervous and confused.	9.4%	25.8%	13.5%	37.6%	13.5%

10	Writing in English makes me nervous and confused.	9.4%	39.4%	13.5%	28.8%	8.8%
11	Speaking English makes me nervous and confused.	22.9%	49.4%	2.9%	20.5%	4.1%
12	Listening to English makes me nervous and confused.	8.8%	26.4%	9.4%	41.7%	13.5%
13	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I read in English in class.	10.5%	25.8%	14.7%	32.9%	15.8%
14	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write in English in class.	11.1%	44.1%	8.2%	24.7%	11.7%
15	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I speak English in class.	13.5%	54.1%	4.7%	22.9%	4.7%
16	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I listen to English in class.	14.7%	24.7%	13.5%	36.4%	10.5%

Analysis of the data revealed that of the four skills, speaking produces the most anxiety for these Pakistani EFL learners, followed by writing, listening and reading. This finding agrees with those of Al-Sibai (2005) and Kim (2009) who report that speaking skills provoke the most anxiety for foreign language learners.

The result is evident in Table 5.1 above, where the majority of participants endorsed items indicative of SA. As 73.4% of students either strongly agreed or agreed that they could feel their heart pounding when the teacher asked them to speak English in class (item 3), while 34.2% (item 1), 55.2% (item 2) and 38.1% (item 4) of students either strongly agreed or agreed that they experienced the same feelings when reading, writing and listening respectively. This corresponds with item 7, "I am usually at ease when speaking English in class"; 69.4% of students rejected this statement by either strongly disagreeing

or disagreeing. On the other hand, 32.3 % (item 5), 51.1% (item 6) and 34.1% (item 8) of students either strongly disagreed or disagreed that they feel at ease when reading, writing and listening respectively. Likewise, 72.3% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, "Speaking English makes me nervous and confused" (item 11). On the other hand, 35.2 % (item 9), 48.8% (item 10) and 35.2% (item 12) of students either strongly agreed or agreed that reading, writing and listening respectively make them nervous and confused. Correspondingly, 67.6% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement, "I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I speak English in class" (item 15), While 36.3 % (item 13), 55.2% (item 14) and 39.4% (item 16) of students either strongly agreed or agreed that they experienced the same feelings when reading, writing and listening respectively. The quantitative analysis suggests that students experience more anxiety in speaking skills than in reading, writing and listening.

The qualitative data also support the quantitative findings. The students were almost unanimous in citing speaking skills as more anxiety-producing than other skills. Since the main aim of this research question is to show whether or not speaking creates more anxiety than other skills, I will focus more on the data about speaking rather than about other three skills.

The following comments by Tahir are indicative of the feelings of many other students. When asked which language skill creates the most anxiety for him, he commented:

Speaking is the most stressful. I really do not enjoy the class during oral activities. It is not just speaking; in fact, the students and teacher know all about me - my personality, abilities, way of thinking and memory. I can say that people can know everything about me but I don't want my classmates and the teacher to know about my academic or other weaknesses.

He was then asked to provide an example of other weaknesses, and he responded:

Sometimes, I tremble, stutter or sweat while speaking so they [the other students and the teacher] know about my personality and

confidence. They laugh at me and some say I am a big loser.

Tahir, when asked his feelings about reading, writing and listening, replied:

Everyone sits in the same level during listening. No one looks at me. Sometimes, I cannot follow my teacher but if I am not listening very well, I can pretend that I am doing very well ... or if I know I could not understand the teacher today, the worry is limited to me but no one else knows about that.

He also said, *“I think reading is not a very difficult activity. Reading is good but sometimes, writing creates problems. I forget ideas when writing”.*

The above comments are revealing. Tahir feels more anxious when speaking because it may expose his weaknesses and shatter his image as a good student in class. However he feels less anxious when practising other skills as they involve less exposure. It appears that it is not just speaking that creates anxiety for students, rather it is speaking in front of other students that causes great anxiety. This finding is in line with Young (1990). Horwitz et al. (1986) also found that students feel self-conscious during speaking activities due to the fear that their inadequacies will be exposed.

Similarly, Javed was equally clear in his responses. When asked the question, he stated in his interview:

I do not like oral presentations and other such activities because I don't want everyone to look at me.

He continued:

It is really shameful and embarrassing for me when my classmates and the teacher know about my mistakes. My poor spoken English gives my rivals [other students] a chance to ridicule me.

When asked his feelings about other skills he said:

I am aware of the usefulness of strong speaking skills but I really wish we could do speaking activities less often. I wish we could always do activities related to other skills ... they don't threaten

me much and I go home happy because I feel I have saved myself.

Javed's comments seem to reveal that the students do not want to be the focus of others' attention. It is common in Pakistani classrooms that the teacher asks one student to stand up and speak in English and the other students will listen to him/her in absolute silence. The student may think, therefore, that he/she is an object of attention. Javed does not like speaking because everyone looks at him and notes his mistakes to mock him and he finds it embarrassing. It also seems worthy of note that although Javed knows the importance of speaking good English, the fear of exposure is so strong that he wishes to avoid oral activities. Tóth (2010) also reports that students do not feel comfortable when they think that other students are judging them.

The following excerpt from the interview with Imran seems to indicate that speaking can develop into a permanent fear in students; therefore, it could be more anxiety- provoking than other skills. He commented:

I am extremely afraid of speaking. I don't want to come to class when I know I have to make an oral presentation. I really feel stressful when other students are speaking and I feel the teacher may also ask me to speak. When the class is over I feel relaxed. Then, I think about the next day's class because I know I will have to spend one hour in big trouble ... I never felt about other skills [reading, writing and listening] like that ... even the fear of speaking keeps me uncomfortable in other classes. The weekend is a big blessing for me as I can spend some days happy.

Adil shared a similar concern, and his evidence also seems to show that lack of previous exposure to speaking could also be a source of SA:

... I miss my previous class because our teacher never asked us to speak English. Our job was just to listen to him and write. I knew that I was not good at speaking but I was free from tension. The tension which I feel this year ... our teacher likes oral activities such as, presentation, debates and discussions. I know my spoken English is weak, so I feel very much under stress during oral tasks ... I feel ok going to the class when we have to do reading, writing or just listen to English. Now I skip classes: I do not go to class just to save myself from speaking.

Similarly, Noman felt less anxiety in reading, writing and listening but he bitterly complained about speaking. He also projected negative thoughts onto the unpleasant behaviour of his teacher and other students. Moreover, it appears that students may abandon their classes if their SA is not addressed. Noman said in his interview:

I feel extremely nervous while speaking English. It starts with trouble and frustration. It is like putting you on a sword ... it is death-like [a Pakistani proverb meaning a horrible condition].

When asked why he felt so upset while speaking, he answered:

My body trembles, my breath is irregular, my tongue stutters, isn't it painful? And my condition gets worse when the teacher insults me or other students mock me. Sometimes, I think, forget about English and I want to go out of class.

When I asked about the other skills, he stated, “*They are manageable ... but sometimes writing in English becomes difficult ... speaking is more difficult than writing as people look at me when I am speaking.*”

Likewise, when Hussain was asked his views about the most anxiety producing skill, he said:

Speaking produces abundant nervousness and anxiousness for me and reading, writing and listening are simple and easy ... It is not easy to speak English. I try my best to speak correctly but if I make a single mistake, all [the other students] laugh at me. I find myself in a very difficult situation. Due to the speaking activities I have walked out of the class many times. When the teacher says ‘tomorrow we will write something’ or ‘I will teach you something’, I feel happy and when the teacher says ‘tomorrow I will give you topics to speak on’ I feel tense and uncomfortable. I feel the teacher is going to put me in big trouble tomorrow.

He was then asked to give more detail about reading, writing and listening, and he stated:

I like the class in which I just listen to the teacher and that is all. I also like writing as I have time to think and write and most of all

*because I do not think that other students are looking at me.
Reading is the easiest because I have just to read something.*

Students' responses to the open-ended question in the questionnaire also support the data gathered through the questionnaire and interviews. Various responses revealed that students believe that speaking activities create more anxiousness and difficulties for them than those related to reading, writing and listening. The sample responses gleaned from the open-ended section include, "*Speaking induces more anxiety than the other skills because it puts me on the spot*"; "*I do not like speaking. It is almost impossible for me to speak without fear*" and "*Speaking brings many other problems which make me anxious, whereas reading, writing and listening don't create many problems for me*".

It is, however, important to note that although the majority of students reported that speaking is the major anxiety-producing language skill, other skills can also create anxiety for some students. This finding agrees with Horwitz & Young (1991). Interviews and some responses to the open-ended question in the questionnaire revealed that some students can feel anxious about more than one skill.

For example Fariha reported in her interview that in addition to speaking, she feels uncomfortable when she is asked to write something in English. She stated:

If I have to write, I get anxious before writing. Sometimes, I can't understand what I am writing. I try to write quickly but I feel stuck ... it takes a lot of time and I make spelling mistakes.

Similarly, writing created feelings of uneasiness for Akbar, who said, "*... writing in English is also difficult ... I forget spellings and I feel I have no ideas ... then, I feel I am unable to write*".

Likewise, when she failed to follow her teacher listening produced anxiety for Neelam. She commented:

Sometimes, I can't understand the teacher and I feel I can't hear anything ... he explained an oral task but I could not understand him.

She further said, *"If I can't understand him [the teacher] then I can't answer or ask him a question and I feel upset"*.

Moreover, one sample response to the open-ended item regarding reading anxiety is: *"Reading in English makes me upset when I can't comprehend what I read ... also, I can't recall what I read"*.

The evidence provided by the data on the first research question, therefore, indicates clearly that speaking does indeed provoke more anxiety in these Pakistani university students than the other three skills.

Having analysed the data for the first research question, the next section explores the sources of this speaking anxiety.

5.3 Research Question 2: Factors Contributing to Students' Speaking Anxiety

The second research question aims to investigate the sources of Pakistani EFL students' SA, and asks:

What factors do students believe contribute to foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?

The data to answer this question were provided by students and were collected through the questionnaire, the open-ended question in the questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured classroom observations. Analysis of the data revealed five main categories representing various sources of SA: namely, individual learner-related sources, classroom-related sources, linguistic-related sources, teacher-student interaction, and socio-cultural-related sources. It should be noted that there could be overlaps among the categories, particularly between classroom-related sources and student-teacher interaction. Additionally, some sources of SA seem interlinked, for example, fear of making mistakes (FMM) and fear of negative evaluation (FNE); however, their classification was directed by the data.

Table 5.2 below presents the students' responses to the questionnaire items (section 3 of the questionnaire).

Table 5.2 Students' views about sources of SA

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
17	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.	14.7%	51.1%	6.4%	21.7%	5.8%
18	I don't worry about making mistakes when I am speaking in my English class.	4.1%	16.4%	8.8%	51.1%	19.4%
19	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on to speak in English class.	11.1%	40%	17.6%	24.7%	6.4%
20	I think speaking English fluently requires a special ability.	13.5%	51.7%	11.7%	16.4%	6.4%
21	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English.	20.5%	55.8%	4.1%	17%	2.3%
22	I feel overwhelmed by the number of grammar rules I have to learn to speak English.	5.8%	59.4%	11.1%	18.8%	4.7%
23	I get nervous during oral tests in my English class.	12.3%	44.1%	17.6%	17%	8.8%
24	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.	24.1%	52.9%	4.1%	14.7%	4.1%
25	I get upset when I feel that my classmates speak English better than I do.	10.5%	38.2%	21.1%	23.5%	6.4%
26	I start to panic when I don't have sufficient time to formulate my answer before speaking.	17%	37%	15.2%	22.9%	7.6%
27	I feel confident when I speak in English class.	7%	20.5%	8.2%	44.7%	19.4%
28	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	4.1%	40.5%	23.5%	22.3%	9.4%
29	I prefer to speak voluntarily instead of being called on to	20.5%	35.2%	16.4%	20%	7.6%

	speak in my English class.					
30	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of my classmates.	25.2%	49.4%	7%	16.4%	1.7%
31	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting me on when I am speaking English.	10%	48.2%	17.6%	15.2%	8.8%
32	I feel anxious about speaking English in a large class.	20.5%	40%	8.8%	22.3%	8.2%
33	Even if I am well prepared for oral tasks, I feel anxious about them.	8.2%	29.4%	8.8%	42.9%	10.5%
34	I am worried about my vocabulary.	17%	52.9%	6.4%	18.2%	5.2%
35	I feel uncomfortable speaking in class if the attitude of my English language teacher is strict.	26.4%	47%	7.6%	16.4%	2.3%
36	I feel that I should not speak English in class until I am sure that I can speak correctly.	10%	38.8%	14.1%	31.7%	5.2%
37	I am afraid of not having a well-paid job if I can't speak English well.	16.4%	48.8%	11.7%	17%	5.8%
38	I get upset if I pronounce words incorrectly when I am speaking in my English class.	10.5%	48.2%	12.3%	19.4%	9.4%

5.3.1 Individual Learner-Related Sources

The first category is related to the individual learner-related sources of Pakistani students' SA. According to the findings of this study, this category includes five sub-themes (or sources): personality, students' pre-university learning experience, students' beliefs, motivation, and lack of confidence.

5.3.1.1 Personality

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, interviews provided an outlet for students to express their feelings, views and concerns about their anxiety when speaking English. In the course of interviews, it appeared that some students may have an anxious personality and are therefore more likely to experience

apprehension in a variety of situations. Some other studies also report that some students have a tendency to experience SA (e.g. Tóth, 2010; Zhang, 2010). Interviews and students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended question revealed the following main personal characteristics inducing SA: over-concern about mistakes, failure, and social image, lack of trust in one's abilities, being easily carried away by others' opinions, easily becoming confused and nervous in any situation, and social fear.

Some students' interviews showed that they were shy and introvert; therefore, it was a difficult task for them to speak English in front of too many students in the class. Moreover, they sometimes did not feel comfortable even speaking their native language when many people were listening to them. The following comment was offered by Shaheen in her interview:

Sometimes, I feel uneasy speaking Urdu in front of people. However, speaking English is a much more difficult job. You can't imagine how hard it is for me to speak in class.

Moreover, a sample of the responses to the open-ended section in the questionnaire shows that personal traits may be mainly responsible for some students' SA:

After the class, my classmates go to the cafe and I prefer to go back to my home ... I want to hide. Sometimes, I really do not like many people around me ... I want to be alone but I am not alone in the class.

The following excerpt from Kashif's interview seems to indicate that students with an anxious personality may have false perceptions of anxiety. He stated:

Sometimes, I remain disturbed in class due to the fear that the teacher will only ask me to speak but sometimes the teacher even does not look at me and I feel anxious without any reason.

Some students could not forget their past failures and mistakes and, in turn, they became more nervous. Additionally, anxiety and fear could become a more dominant feature of their personality. The most explicit description is probably from Noman's interview:

They [other students] also receive negative feedback from the teacher. The next day, I find them confident and happy again. However, I take my mistakes very seriously which always pinch me. If I can't do well in any oral task, I lose faith in myself and remain stressed for many days ... I can't forget it.

5.3.1.2 Students' Pre-University Learning Experience

It was seen in the data that SA may also stem from students' past negative experiences regarding oral communication. According to MacIntyre & Gardner (1989), the majority of students enter a new learning environment with their previous language learning experiences. Moreover, Kim (2009) argues that it is not just the target language that produces anxiety for students; their early school experiences may also cause their anxiety. Sila (2010) argues that students with previous experience of SA are more likely to feel anxious in similar situations in later. If students have previous unpleasant learning experiences, they may develop anxiety in their new class and perform poorly, since it could be hard for them to change their negative perspective of foreign language speaking.

For example, Adnan explained:

My English teacher used to beat me when I was in school ... I was afraid of the teacher. Although in my current class the environment is much better than my school, sometimes I feel anxious without any reason. I am afraid of making mistakes when speaking ... I can't raise my hand confidently.

MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) argue that language students' past negative experiences may stem from the teacher. According to Inayat (2004) and Latif (2009), corporal punishment is still in practice in schools of Pakistan. This may develop a strong fear in students about the language teacher and classroom. Thus, they may experience SA in their university class.

5.3.1.3 Students' Beliefs

Another individual learner-related source of SA suggested by the data is that some students can attach unrealistic beliefs to learning and speaking a foreign language and they could feel frustrated if these impractical expectations do not turn into reality. This finding agrees with those of Wang (2005).

For example, Noor reported in her interview that she will not be able to speak until her *“mind is sharp enough to translate ideas from Urdu into English”*. Similarly, Huma believed that *“only grammar”* can help her speak error-free English, and Ali believed that *“It is difficult to talk in English ... I can never speak English well”*.

Some students had a belief that good speaking skills require certain abilities; for example, a *“sharp mind”* and a *“sharp memory”*. As Hashim said in his interview, *“I am not intelligent; thus, I cannot speak fluently. I know four students who are geniuses and they speak very well”*. Similarly, Fariha thought that language aptitude is a must for learning to speak English. She stated, *“They [the other students] have some special aptitude for learning English; therefore, speaking English is Halwa [meaning very easy] for them. I am unlucky; God has not made me like them”*. This finding is supported by the students’ responses to item 20 in Table 5.2: *“I think speaking English fluently requires a special ability”*; 65.2% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

If they hold such beliefs students can become perfectionists, and eventually be disappointed if they fail to achieve high standards. Some students thought that nothing less than a perfect performance was acceptable, and one should speak flawlessly. For example, Hashim reported that he made a commitment that *“in future I will not make a single mistake, but I do not succeed; thus, I feel discouraged”*. Similarly, Fariha commented, *“I wish I could speak English as I speak Urdu. I don’t want to make mistakes when speaking English otherwise, I feel upset. I think it is better to sit silently rather than to speak with grammatical or other errors”*.

The responses to item 36 in Table 5.2, *“I feel that I should not speak English in class until I am sure that I can speak correctly”* supports this finding, as 48.8% of students endorsed this statement by either strongly agreeing or agreeing.

The following response to the open-ended question in the questionnaire reveals that this sense of perfectionism could have been developed due to external expectations: *“After my Masters, I will start my professional life. If someone asks me anything about English I should satisfy him/her and it will be shame for*

me if I speak it incorrectly”.

5.3.1.4 Motivation

Although motivation can facilitate learning speaking, it may also be a source of some students' SA. Yan & Horwitz (2008) argue that it is unlikely to imagine an anxious student who has no motivation to learn the language. There exists a strong instrumental motivation to learn and speak English well in Pakistan (Rahman, 2007; Islam, 2013) and instrumentally motivated students could be anxious in class (Gardner et al., 1992).

It revealed in the course of interviews that a motivation for speaking English well can make some students worried in class. This finding was supported by the students' responses to item 37 in Table 5.2: “I am afraid of not having a well-paid job if I cannot speak English well”; 65.2% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with this item. Students believed that speaking creates anxiety but their anxiety escalated and they felt “*frustrated*” and “*dissatisfied*” when they found that their spoken English, which is important for their future, is poor. The most explicit description, perhaps, was given by Imran:

Everyone knows that good speaking skills are very helpful for finding prestigious jobs; for example, in the armed forces or civil service. Moreover, if you are good at English, you can gain admission to good institutions [academic] and can get a job offer quickly. Believe me, there is no bright future without English in Pakistan ... I should say your life is dependent on English. It's very painful when I think that my spoken English is not good. I feel I will not be a successful person. This thought haunts me and makes me depressed.

His further comment indicates the importance of English in Pakistani society, he added, “*If you can speak good English, you feel proud and superior. People around you respect you and consider you a capable and cultured person*”. Thus, students may feel pressure to be able to speak English well due to the high status of English in Pakistani society. For example, as Tahir put it:

Some people may think you are shodha [stupid] if you don't use English or switch from Urdu to English continually. If you use two, three sentences of English in your Urdu conversation then they regard you as an educated and a serious person. I have seen

many TV shows where every participant tries to speak English ... I am also a member of this society and my spoken English must be good ... if it is not good then I must worry.

Similarly, in the responses to the questionnaire open-ended question, one student wrote: *“I do not want to hear any conversation about the utility of English since I can’t speak well and I feel sense of deprivation and depression”*.

When I asked Javed why the importance of English and speaking skills is anxiety-provoking for him, he gave the following interesting answer:

English is like something precious and everyone is more concerned about precious things. If speaking is not good there is a fear that you might lose this precious thing that is important for your future: it makes you worried.

5.3.1.5 Lack of Confidence

The data also revealed that students can experience SA if they do not have confidence in their abilities and speaking skills. For example, the majority of students (65.8%) either strongly agreed or agreed with item 17 in Table 5.2, “I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class”. Correspondingly, 64.1% of students rejected, by strongly disagreeing or disagreeing, the statement 27 in Table 5.2, “I feel confident when I speak in English class”. The interviews also supported this finding. For example, Tahir did not want to speak because he imagined he could *“never be right”*; Shabnam thought, *“I know I can never speak like other students”* and Adnan perceived that *“I am sure I will make grammatical mistakes”*.

The interviews further revealed that a lack of confidence and the fear of being wrong can discourage students from going to class. For example, Javed stated:

I know I can’t make an oral presentation confidently. I really struggle going to the class but I know that I am not capable of doing a good presentation; thus, I don’t go to the class.

Similarly, some students may not answer the teacher’s questions due to the fear that they could be wrong; later on, though, the realisation that they were right may make them disappointed for not contributing. For instance, Imran

commented, *“Sometimes, I know the answer but I do not have the confidence to raise my hand. When I know that I was right, I get angry with myself”*. The absence of confidence appears to seriously interfere with students’ learning. Imran further added: *“The next time I do exactly the same and feel very stressed”*.

It is noteworthy that lack of confidence can be felt not only in anticipation of speaking, but can also occur at any stage. For example, Kashif stated, *“I start confidently but if I make a single mistake, I lose confidence. Then, I just slow down and can’t get on track again”*.

The following comment by Adil seems to reveal that students could be aware that lack of confidence affects their progress. Perhaps, they need some guidance and a positive reinforcement from the teacher. He reported in his interview, *“I know I should have the courage to participate. If I just think whether I will be right or wrong and I don’t try, I can never learn and improve”*.

Noor’s evidence indicates that giving an oral presentation can be one of the main sources of students’ SA, as well as an oral activity that could strongly affect their confidence. She revealed:

I can’t compose myself when giving an oral presentation. I think it is the most difficult activity in the class during which my thoughts jumble up.

In addition to interviews, students’ responses to the open-ended question of the questionnaire seemed to indicate that lack of confidence can be considered one of the main sources of their SA. It is noteworthy that some students’ responses revealed that the teacher could also influence their confidence. For example, one student wrote that she lost confidence when the teacher *“did not pay attention to me”* and made remarks such as, *“you will get old but you will never be able to speak”*. Moreover, a teacher’s harsh attitude and lack of positive reinforcement can also make some students underestimate their own competence.

During the classroom observation, it was apparent that there were many indications that lack of confidence can make students anxious. To name a few: one student started his presentation quite confidently and comfortably. He was speaking fairly well. After some time, he made a mistake about a tense and some students laughed at him. It was obvious that he did not have the confidence to forget this minor error and continue. He looked quite a different person from the one who started the presentation. He started adjusting his clothing and rubbing his eyes and he seemed confused and blushed.

I observed some students who sat up straight and looked at the teacher when he/she was writing something on the board but tried to hide themselves when he/she turned his/her face to the class. Moreover, when the teacher asked questions, some students struggled to raise their hands and some of them had half raised hands. It seemed apparent that they knew the answer but they were reluctant to speak, perhaps due to lack of confidence. In addition, there were two teachers who scolded the students for their mistakes. This behaviour on the part of the teacher can also affect students' confident participation in class.

The next category is about classroom-related sources of SA.

5.3.2 Classroom-Related Sources

The second theme covers sources related to the classroom. It includes five sub-themes: fear of negative evaluation, lack of preparation, a short time granted to formulate answers, unfamiliar topics, and oral tests.

5.3.2.1 Fear of Negative Evaluation

The first classroom-related source of SA is fear of negative evaluation (FNE). The data suggested that students believed that if they made any mistakes or failed to do well in oral tasks, their peers and the teacher would evaluate their performance negatively and consider them "*incapable student*". In addition, the teacher's opinion about them may affect their marks in the subject of English. This finding agrees with those of Kim (2009) and Tóth (2010).

In this study, students reported almost unanimously that speaking created anxiety when they had to perform in front of those who were judging them,

might laugh at their mistakes, and could form a negative opinion of them. They further believed that they are safe until they speak and expose their inadequacies and present themselves as incompetent students. This finding is supported by item 30 in Table 5.2, "I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of my classmates". The majority of students (74.6%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. This corresponds with item 21 in Table 5.2, "I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English". Again a large proportion of students (76.3%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this item. The following segment of dialogue with Javed seems revealing:

... If I make mistakes when speaking, all students laugh at me and some even make fun of me outside the class. They make me realise that 'you are an inefficient student'. The worse scenario is that the teacher regards me as an incompetent student and I am sure it affects my grades.

It is possible that if some students are seen as incompetent in class, they may not be given much consideration and attention by their competent counterparts. Thus, they may not take risks and participate actively since they have a fear of failure and do not want to be perceived as poor students. Tahir had experience of this:

I am not a proficient student and other students think that I am unable to help them in any assignments. Intelligent students form their own group and if I go to them they really ignore me and some do not even want to talk to me.

Students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended section also supported the finding revealed by interviews, that students felt that speaking exposed their inadequacies; thus, they preferred not to participate in oral activities to save face. In the Pakistani culture, it is shameful to lose face, so students may think that if they make mistakes, other people will doubt their abilities and, in turn, they will lose their respect. As one student wrote in the open-ended question:

If I make mistakes, they [the teacher and peers] will know that I could not understand the lessons. I fear that they will think I am stupid. This is the reason that usually I don't participate in oral activities.

Another student added:

My speech becomes disordered when I feel that they are judging me. I think it is better to sit passively than feel frustrated by being laughed at and evaluated negatively.

These students have less chances of improving their speaking and may therefore experience even more SA.

In contrast to these students who felt FNE on the part of both their teacher and their peers, three interviewees seemed to project their negative feelings only onto their peers. One was Imran, who said:

It is not that bad if the teacher forms a poor opinion of me because he knows that I am a learner and I know that he/she is my teacher. I do not want to be inferior to my peers and their opinions make me very uneasy.

This finding lends support to the conclusions of Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009). Their study reports that participants were “markedly more willing to participate and experiment with language” (p. 41) when their classmates were not present in class and only the teacher was listening to them.

Interestingly, FNE may be a source of motivation for some students. For example, Akbar was motivated by this concern and he took it “*as a challenge and I work harder to improve my image in the class ... we are all learners and we are in the same boat with the same aims. Therefore, we should take each others’ opinions positively*”. Thus, it appears that students’ criticism and opinions about each other may play a facilitating role if they consider each other as facilitators and not judges.

5.3.2.2 Lack of Preparation

Most student interviews referred to lack of preparation as a source of SA. This finding was supported by the majority of students’ responses to item 24 in Table 5.2, “I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class”; 77% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. While, 53.4% of students either strongly disagreed or disagreed with item 33 in Table

5.2, “Even if I am well prepared for oral tasks, I feel anxious about them”. Although students may feel less SA when prepared, speaking may still remain anxiety-provoking. The following comment by Adnan indicates that students may get confused, lose confidence, and fail to complete their task if asked to speak unprepared:

I remember once my teacher asked me to give a talk on a subject about which I was not prepared. I stood up; I stood silent for one minute. Finally, I said something and again I was quiet. Everything seemed very unfamiliar. I tried to concentrate but I felt my mind is not working. It was a kind of torture.

Hashim agreed: “*It’s their [the teachers’] habit to decide what to do during the class. It’s easy for them but not for us. You know it is not easy to speak on the spot. Speaking unprepared is difficult and discouraging*”. Due to the lack of preparation, students may make more mistakes and, in turn, they may feel the fear of being laughed at, a situation which is evident from Tahir’s remark:

When I am not prepared and the teacher forces me to speak, I know there is more possibility of being wrong. Because, I know my mind is empty as I did not have time to collect relevant ideas. The result is that other students laugh at me.

This finding was confirmed by the classroom observations. Once a teacher entered into the class and his mobile phone rang. He went outside and came back after four minutes. He looked at the students and said ‘so what we should do ... I give you a topic and you should speak turn by turn.’ He asked them to speak on “barking dogs seldom bite”. I noticed students looking at each other with surprise. Some students did very well; however, others seemed uninterested and confused. Some just murmured and some stood up, just repeated the topic and sat down. Their disappointment seemed obvious.

5.3.2.3 Short Time Granted to Formulate Answers

The data from this study revealed that being given only a short time to either respond to the teacher’s questions, or to speak English in general in front of the class produced anxiousness for some students. Item 26 in Table 5.2, “I start to panic when I don’t have sufficient time to formulate my answer before speaking” also supports this finding, as 54% of students either strongly agreed or agreed

with this statement. Students were not proficient enough to respond promptly and correctly; thus, they needed time. However, they were expected to respond promptly, in turn, they became flustered and made mistakes which in turn aggravated their SA. Moreover, on one hand, they could be thinking over the answer and on the other, they may worry that they might run out of time or the teacher could switch to another student. In this way, they could feel shame or insult as well as they could think that other students and the teacher would perceive them less competent. This echoes MacIntyre & Gardner's (1994) argument that inadequate time has debilitating effects on the production of speech.

Javed, for example, shared just such an experience:

I need time to think over things such as grammar, vocabulary and good ideas before answering or speaking. The teacher says 'do not waste time, reply promptly'. If I pause he/she switches to another student and it is insulting for me. Therefore, I try to speak quickly and usually I confuse tenses.

Similarly, Adnan required time to translate his thoughts from Urdu into English, and voiced his concern: *"First I think in Urdu and then translate into English and this process needs adequate time. The teacher says 'we don't have all day to wait for you.' But I can't speak quickly"*. He further believed that if he has no time pressure he *"will think well and do well"*.

Moreover, Imran's statement seems to reveal that short time to perform may also induce certain other fears in students such as FNE. He commented:

If the teacher asks me to sit down without allowing me to think and complete the answer, I get worried that the other students would think that I was just showing off and I did not know the answer.

Classroom observations also seem to support the above finding. In some sessions teachers did not give students enough time to think and speak. In one case, a teacher gave students a topic to give a talk on. She selected one student randomly and asked her to get up and speak. Then, she asked other students to speak turn by turn. I noticed that if a student could not start his/her

speech quickly or paused when speaking, perhaps to collect ideas, the teacher asked him/her to sit down and she went to another student. They seemed quiet and lost.

On the basis of classroom observations, it can be argued that teachers might be unable to give each and every student sufficient time for many reasons. For example, they had to take roll call, listen to students' issues, make announcements, assign homework and other tasks. Moreover, large classes, short lessons, and teachers' unawareness of the importance of waiting-time could be other constraints.

5.3.2.4 Unfamiliar Topics

Almost half of the students in the interviews reported strongly and perhaps rightly that they feel uneasy, confused, and uninterested when their teacher gives them far-fetched, boring, or difficult topics to discuss. For example, Huma shared her concern in the following way:

If the teacher assigns us topics about which we have never heard, they limit our communication ability and, in turn, we feel frustrated.

Similarly, Tahir did not like difficult topics, he said, *"...the present teacher sets topics from out of the Ark. Topics are mostly complicated proverbs ... I close my eyes and want to leave the class"*.

When asked about good and bad topics, Kashif stated, *"I like topics for example, my ambitions, university life, a favourite book but I do not like topics such as international media and the Second World War"*.

Another student wrote in the open-ended question of the questionnaire: *"... the teacher sets topics which are very dry and about which I don't have any previous knowledge. This practice makes me afraid of speaking and lessens my interest in class"*.

Classroom observations supported this evidence; one teacher gave students a topic that was perhaps difficult for them. He asked them to discuss the topic 'clash of civilisations'. They were silent, they appeared confused and some tried

to hide so that the teacher would not ask them to speak. Except a few, most students did not participate actively and confidently. In the previous observation sessions, I had noticed their excitement and interest when they were asked to speak about a simple event.

In conclusion, it appears that students favour interesting, easy, and familiar topics. It could be easier and more interesting for them to speak on topics such as 'university life' because they are more likely to have the vocabulary and knowledge of the topic due to their personal experience. On the other hand, speaking about 'international media' might be difficult for some Pakistani students who might not be aware of various dimensions of this topic due to lack of reading habits and resources. Moreover, it could be much less stressful for them to give a talk on simple topics than on difficult ones, which could be stressful for some students.

5.3.2.5 Oral Tests

Oral tests are the last classroom-related source of students' SA identified from the research. The data suggested that fluency-based activities such as oral presentations, interviews and discussions could be anxiety-inducing for some students when their performance is evaluated and graded. In relation to the analysis of the questionnaire, 56.4% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with item 23 in Table 5.2, "I get nervous during oral tests in my English class". The interviews produced similar data, as this statement from Adnan revealed:

I can't sleep well if I know that tomorrow my speaking performance will be evaluated through my oral presentation.

Similarly, Imran stated that the "fear of failure or getting less marks" makes him uneasy. Moreover, oral tests are more anxiety-provoking if the teacher includes unfamiliar material in oral tasks. For example, Hashim complained:

The teacher says 'don't worry; the test will be easy'. Next morning everything is different. He introduces new topics and assignments and it doubles the problems.

Moreover, Tahir stated that sometimes his *“mind goes blank during tests”* although he experienced more oral test anxiety when his peers were also listening to him; he suggested that since *“the teacher’s aim is to assess my speaking ability, only he should listen to me. I am sure I can speak better”*. Phillips (1999) found that some students feel more confident and relaxed when their speaking proficiency is tested in pairs or small groups. The data from this study also suggested other causes of oral test anxiety such as *“lack of vocabulary”* and *“grammar”*.

There are linguistic-related sources of SA, which are considered in the following section.

5.3.3 Linguistic-Related Sources

The third category of sources of Pakistani students’ SA revealed by the research data relates to linguistic-related sources including lack of vocabulary, grammar and incorrect pronunciation.

5.3.3.1 Lack of Vocabulary

Lack of vocabulary was seen as a source of SA among the students. According to Tóth (2010), smaller the vocabulary students have, the more stress and SA they may experience. In this study several students reported in their interviews that their scanty knowledge of vocabulary affected their performance in various oral tasks and consequently, they felt SA. In line with this finding, 69.9% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with item 34 in table 5.2, *“I am worried about my vocabulary”*.

Javed, for example, said in his interview that he feels disappointed when he cannot participate in oral activities due to his limited vocabulary:

... another drawback is my limited vocabulary. You may understand how frustrating it is when you have ideas but you can’t participate in various classroom practices because you have no words to express your ideas in English.

Adnan voiced a similar concern:

Many times I have brilliant ideas but I really feel tongue-tied just due to my narrow vocabulary. I wring my hands with grief.

Moreover, responses to the questionnaire open-ended section also reflected this view. One student wrote, *“I can’t speak spontaneously because my vocabulary is poor ...”* Another added, *“My small vocabulary hinders my participation in class and makes me upset”*.

The interview data revealed, moreover, that SA may affect the retrieval of vocabulary. For example, Shabnam said, *“Before my presentation, every word is in my mind but they disappear during the presentation and I can’t recall them”*. Similarly, Hashim forgot words during various oral activities but as *“I come out of class, they come to my mind”*.

Instances of this were also apparent during the classroom observations. One student got stuck during his talk, I saw him squint his eyes, with a raised hand, producing sounds like “aaaaa”, “ummmmm” and finally, he uttered the word, “nibble” very loudly and continued. After some time he became stuck again but this time he could not continue and was asked to go back to his chair.

5.3.3.2 Grammar

Another often-quoted source of SA mentioned in the interviews was grammar. This finding is supported by the students’ responses to item 22 in Table 5.2, “I feel overwhelmed by the number of grammar rules I have to learn to speak English” as 65.2% of students endorsed this statement.

The interviewees believed that they faced difficulties when participating in class due to problems with grammar. The following comment by Adnan seems to be indicative of the feelings of many other students, *“Grammar is my problem. There are many rules ... they are complicated and confusing ...”* Since there are some differences between the grammar patterns of English and Urdu, grammar can become more difficult when students think in Urdu and translate the thoughts into English. Adnan further added: *“I construct my ideas in Urdu*

and then translate them into English according to Urdu grammar and I use the incorrect form of verbs and tenses". Excessive concern about grammar can influence fluency and spontaneity, as Adnan found: *"I cannot speak fluently because I have to think about grammar rules as well as about my response"*.

Imran, on the other hand, found the exceptions to grammar rules confusing:

There are many exceptions in grammar rules. It is not easy to use them correctly. If you make a single grammatical mistake, the complete meaning is changed.

Similar concerns were shown in the responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire. For example, one student wrote, *"There are many regular and irregular verbs and their use baffles me ... I can't differentiate between adjectives and adverbs"*. Other comments in the interviews echoed this bafflement: *"I mix all grammar rules and mostly I use the incorrect form of the tense. Many times, I say, 'I did not went'", "I know them [rules] but I can't follow them"* and *"It is impossible for me to learn grammar"*.

During my classroom observations it was clear that students' deficiencies in grammar interfered with their speaking. The feelings of nervousness were apparent when they could not use grammatical elements correctly. For example, one student was using the wrong form of the verb and the teacher was correcting him repeatedly. Similarly, some students were making mistakes in the use of articles and prepositions.

5.3.3.3 Incorrect Pronunciation

Several studies report pronunciation as a source of students' SA (e.g. Tanveer, 2007; Toth, 2010). Interviews revealed that incorrect pronunciation can also provoke SA. This finding is supported by item 38 in table 5.2, "I get upset if I pronounce words incorrectly when I am speaking in my English class" as 58.7% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Tahir said in his interview, *"It is humiliating that I pronounce many words incorrectly"*. When asked why pronunciation is a problem for him, he said, *"English pronunciation is very strange"* and gave some examples: *"See the*

difference between 'put' and 'but' and why the letter K is silent in knife".

Similarly, Kashif said:

I pronounce the words as they are spelled. You will be surprised to know that I have learnt the right pronunciation of words such as 'congratulation', 'receipt' and 'debt' recently.

Noman reported that pronouncing words wrongly is *"insulting"* for him because other students repeat his mispronounced word in front of him *"to tease me"*. He further highlighted the reason for his poor pronunciation: *"We don't have opportunities to listen to recordings of native speakers of English"*.

The pitfalls of pronunciation were also evident during classroom observations; I noticed some students who mispronounced various words. For instance, one student pronounced the word *'mirage'* incorrectly. He pronounced the ending (ɑ:ʒ) as (dʒ) as in *'image'*. As a result, a few students laughed and then the whole class laughed. These difficulties could be attributed to various factors, for example, teachers not paying attention to improving their students' pronunciation or, as suggested by the data, not making opportunities for them to listen to recordings of native speakers' English.

Teachers themselves, though, can be the source of SA, as demonstrated in the following section on teacher-student interaction.

5.3.4 Teacher-Student Interaction

This theme outlines five sources of Pakistani students' SA as found in the data, which will be analysed in turn: strict teachers, teaching methodology, a formal classroom environment, concern about mistakes, and lack of student voice.

5.3.4.1 Strict Teachers

Many studies report that the teacher's personal manner directly influences students' anxiety levels (e.g. Ewald, 2007; Horwitz, 2001). For example, in her study with Spanish students Ewald (2007) concludes that her participants *"pointed to the key role of the teacher in producing and relieving anxiety"* (p. 122). It is apparent that teachers might be a significant source of anxiety since many important elements such as selecting teaching materials, managing the

class and teaching, and addressing students' affective, cognitive and linguistic needs depend on them.

In this study the interviewees seemed to be unanimous in reporting that they feel tense and uncomfortable in the class of a teacher who is strict, authoritative, judgemental and unfriendly. This finding is supported by the students' responses to item 35 in Table 5.2, "I feel uncomfortable speaking in class if the attitude of my English language teacher is strict"; 73.4% of students either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement.

Kashif expressed his concern in his interview in the following quote:

The fact is that I am not relaxed in the class because I know that the teacher is in front of me who is very strict. He shouts at us if we are a little late from the class and sometimes, does not let us enter ... we can't ask him to repeat the instructions about oral tasks. If we talk to each other in the class, he throws a pen or book at us.

Tahir told the following story during his interview, which indicates how teachers' negative attitude towards their students can seriously affect them:

... My friend abandoned the class due to the strict behaviour of the teacher. I think he got teacher phobia ... the same I am feeling ... sometimes, during my talk the teacher says to me, 'wrong wrong' very loudly. He seems all the time angry and serious.

The following comment by Kashif shows the gap between the teachers and students in Pakistani classrooms, and indicates that such a teacher-student relationship may not facilitate learning speaking skills:

Some teachers even don't want to shake hands with us as they consider themselves much superior to us. They will not talk to us outside the class as they think it is below their dignity. We have to call them 'sir' otherwise, they are unhappy.

Responses to the open-ended section of the questionnaire expressed the same view, as with this typical response:

Our teacher is unfriendly and mostly he is the cause of our worries. I am afraid of speaking English in front of him.

There seemed to be a lack of cordial and friendly relations between students and teachers in the classrooms observed during this research study. The attitude and the tone of two of the teachers were decidedly authoritative and reflected a sense of superiority. Moreover, the way teachers were addressing their students and the way they were responding reflected the perceived gap between them. For example, one teacher was asking students questions in an authoritative way but they were repeatedly saying 'gee' (Urdu word meaning, how may I help you sir?). In summary, the verbal and non-verbal cues of students indicated the SA they were experiencing due to their teachers. When I came to the UK, I met with many teachers and well-known researchers who were down to earth. It is difficult to expect such behaviour from Pakistani teachers.

5.3.4.2 Teaching Methodology

Several comments made by participants pointed to teachers' teaching practices and methods. For example, Kashif said in his interview that he did not like the teacher whose *"method of teaching is boring and he/she uses uninteresting materials"*. Javed added, *"If my teacher does not pay attention to my talk, I lose confidence as I feel I am wrong ..."* Students, therefore, may feel discouraged if the teacher does not pay attention to their performance. Likewise, Imran believed that the lack of encouragement from the teacher lessens his interest in the class.

Interviews further revealed that students may feel tense and anxious when they cannot understand their teacher. This finding is supported by item 28 in Table 5.2, "It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English"; 44.6% of students endorsed this statement. Neelam's quote from her interview indicates that she cannot understand her teacher when the teacher speaks very quickly and this, in turn, influences Neelam's performance: *"Sometimes, he [the teacher] speaks too fast; thus, I can't follow him. Then, it is hard for me to answer to his questions or participate confidently and actively in the class"*. Similarly, students may feel SA when they cannot understand their

teachers' instructions, perhaps due to the lack of clarity or detail. As Fariha complained, "... *the teacher doesn't explain the instructions clearly and in detail. Thus, I feel I will make mistakes*".

It was noted in Chapter 2 that the GTM is still in practice in Pakistan. Some students reported in their interviews that their teacher focused more on grammar and less on communicative activities to teach them speaking. Therefore, oral tasks produced difficulties for them due to their lack of practice in speaking. Noor clarified this, saying:

The teacher is fond of teaching us speaking through grammar. But our target is to be able to communicate with other people ... our speaking is weak and that's why we find problems with it.

Students' responses to the open-ended question expressed the same views. For example, one student wrote: "*The teacher's focus on grammar is responsible for our poor speaking ... if we speak, we make mistakes and feel anxiety*".

However, some students may wish to learn grammar for accuracy of language. For example, although during his interview Hussain emphasised the use of communicative activities in the class, he believed that grammar was also necessary "*to speak correct English, otherwise our English will be disordered*".

Moreover, it was noticeable in some sessions of my classroom observations that the teachers were paying more attention to grammar than communication. One example is that a student went to the podium to give an oral presentation. In the course of his presentation, he made mistakes in the past tense. The teacher forgot about the student's presentation and explained the past tense for ten minutes. Although the student was making grammatical mistakes, he was speaking fairly well. This seems to indicate how much attention and importance teachers give to grammar and how they approach teaching the language in general.

5.3.4.2.1 Forced Participation

The data collected for this study suggested that students feel uncomfortable when despite not being willing to participate in oral tasks, their teacher involves them all the same. According to Tóth (2010), this practice can make students afraid of the learning process. Likewise, Williams & Andrade (2008) note that “forcing the learners to respond before they are ready” creates SA for them (p. 187). This practice could encourage negative attitudes in students towards the language learning process.

Item 19 in table 5.2, “I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on to speak in English class” was endorsed by 51.1% of students; correspondingly 55.7% of students endorsed item 29 in table 5.2, “I prefer to speak voluntarily instead of being called on to speak in my English class”. Several students reported in their interviews that they felt uncomfortable when they did not know an answer, or were not ready to participate, but their teacher asked them to speak. As Adil stated:

The problem is that the teacher knows that I am not ready or don't want to participate ... he/she doesn't care and says, 'OK, your turn, speak' you can imagine my condition. You know nothing and you are expected. Something doesn't happen and something happens ... I can't speak but I am ridiculed.

Huma agreed that she wanted to speak when she knew the answer, otherwise she felt nervous:

It is OK if I know the answer. I don't look at the teacher to show that I am not willing but usually he does not forgive me ... it is like you don't know and a stone can hit your head anytime. He says, 'get up and speak'.

The classroom observations confirmed that mostly, except in a few cases, the teacher decided who will speak first, or next. Another common practice observed was that the teacher asked the first student on his right side to speak and then every student was supposed to participate, turn by turn. Although some students seemed excited when they were waiting for their turn, others appeared anxious. Von Worde (2003) also found that students' SA may escalate when their teacher calls on them in a predictable order and they wait for their

turn to speak.

5.3.4.3 A Formal Classroom Environment

The data revealed that a strict and formal classroom environment can frequently account for SA because it can encourage some of the key SA-provoking factors such as FMM, FNE, and fear of being laughed at. This finding is paralleled in a number of other studies (for example, Tóth, 2010; Crookall & Oxford, 1991). Aida (1994) reported that many students experienced anxiety when teachers created an atmosphere of terror in the class. In the current study, the interviewees confirmed that a “*strict*”, “*dry*”, “*formal*”, “*tense*” and “*judgemental*” classroom environment produces considerable SA for them. Huma reported:

Our classes are very formal ... the environment is very strict. Sometime, I feel I am in court and not in class. I try to be perfect as I feel self-conscious.

This quote suggests that due to self-consciousness students may not take risks and part actively in class.

Similarly, students may feel more self-conscious and concerned about wrong answers, if there is no sense of community in class. For example, Adil explained, “*We [students] are not like friends. I know some students who make fun of me in the class to disturb me. I wish they were not in class*”.

Moreover, students’ responses to the questionnaire open-ended question supported these results. In addition, some responses revealed that the teacher’s authoritative attitude can make the classroom environment formal: “*If the teacher is strict, the classroom is strict*”.

The findings from the interviews and open questionnaire question were confirmed by the classroom observations. Observational descriptions of various sources of SA, such as of a strict teacher (sub-section, 5.3.4.1), also indicate that the classes were strict and formal. Moreover, we have traditional classrooms in Pakistan where students sit in three or four rows and the teacher sits in his/her chair near the board. This seating arrangement seems to give the image of a formal classroom. It is rare to find a classroom where students sit in

groups or circles.

5.3.4.3.1 Large Classrooms

In Pakistan, most university classes comprise not less than 40 students and sometimes this number exceeds 100 (Shamim & Tribble, 2005; Sarwar, 2008 [in her interview reported to Smith, 2008]). The present study's interview data suggested that large classrooms can also contribute to students' SA. This finding derives its support from students' responses to item 32 in Table 5.2, "I feel anxious about speaking English in a large class", where 60.5% of students endorsed this statement.

For example, Tahir reported in his interview:

Our class is big. I think I could speak in front of a small number of people but not before too many people. Too many people listen to me ... I can't face them.

Similarly, Kashif stated:

Also, another issue is our large class. I find it more difficult when I have to speak in front of too many students in class.

During the classroom observations, I also noted that the classrooms were large. Furthermore, the physical condition of the classrooms was poor; for example they were congested and lacked proper ventilation, and the furniture was old. For instance, in one of my observation sessions, I noted that the teacher started the class and after a few moments the electricity cut out and we could not find it back till the end of the class. After the class, the teacher told me that electricity breakdowns are a routine matter. It is noteworthy that the classroom is the context where learning occurs; thus, physically and psychologically unsecure classrooms may affect students' language learning and speaking performance and make them uneasy.

5.3.4.4 Concern about Mistakes

The data in this study revealed mistakes to be a source of students' SA. This is a source that has frequently been reported in SA studies (Gregersen, 2005; Liu,

2007). Some interviewees complained that their teachers corrected their mistakes and they did not give them enough time to let them correct themselves. In consequence, they felt upset and also their social image was damaged. The following comment by Tahir is indicative of the feelings of many other students:

... If I am answering comfortably and I make any mistakes, the teacher quickly corrects me. He/she does not wait so that I can think and repeat the correct version. At this point, my worry and anxiousness starts as I really think I have failed and my peers will also think the same.

Such a practice from the teacher may compel students to correct their mistakes quickly before their teacher does it for them; because, perhaps, they want to have a sense of achievement. But, unfortunately, they may confuse everything, probably due to the lack of proficiency. For example, Tahir further added, “*Next time whenever I make a mistake, I try to correct that as soon as possible but then I make more mistakes*”.

Item 31 in Table 5.2, “I get upset when I don’t understand what the teacher is correcting me on when I am speaking English” was either strongly agreed or agreed by 58.2% of students. Similarly, several interviewees complained that their teacher interrupted them to correct their errors when they were speaking. This practice affected their concentration and made them uncomfortable. Furthermore, they remained unaware of their mistakes. The following statement made by Shabnam shows this concern:

He [the teacher] disrupts my speech and corrects my mistakes or explains my point without asking me to hold on. And usually I don’t have any idea where I made a mistake which he corrected. This affects my flow and ideas and then it gets hard for me to resume.

Similarly, Tahir reported that these interruptions “*divert my attention*” and Adnan admitted that he forgets what he was saying. It is suggested that the teacher could correct students once the task or the sentence is over.

Item 18 in Table 5.2, “I don’t worry about making mistakes when I am speaking in my English class” was rejected, strongly disagreed or disagreed with, by

70.5% of students. The interviews seemed to reveal that this fear of making mistakes might have negative effects on the students' learning because it can discourage their active participation and ultimately may influence their improvement. The following extract from the interview with Javed is revealing:

Because of the possibility of making mistakes I do not raise my hand. Similarly, I don't ask questions where I might be wrong. The fear of making mistakes is always in my mind and it affects my confidence.

This fear of making errors can have discouraging effects particularly when students are speaking. They may think about their answer and the possibility of being wrong simultaneously. In turn, they may get flustered and feel SA. For example, Noman reported:

On one hand, I think about the material and ideas and on the other, that whether I am right or wrong. In this mental battle I do make mistakes; for example, about grammar or anything.

It appears that the anxious students may develop the habit of paying more attention to the form rather than the content.

This fear regarding making mistakes could stem from or increase due to the fear of being laughed at. For example, Imran offered his thoughts: *"I am afraid of mistakes because they [other students] laugh at me"*. Similarly, Hashim did not want to speak and make mistakes as he did not like to be ridiculed and made fun of.

Students' responses to the open-ended section in the questionnaire not only supported the data gained through interviews, observations and questionnaire but they also referred to some other important factors. For example, although making mistakes and then feeling SA may be common in Pakistani language classrooms, some responses indicated that some students may be obsessed with mistakes. For instance, one student wrote: *"Mistake mistake and mistake, this is a kind of film that runs through my mind ... like a horrible dream"*.

Several interviewees made comments about the harshness of the teacher's error correction. Adil indicates that students may be aware that mistakes are unavoidable; moreover, they might want to be corrected, but gently. He said, "...*Many students make mistakes but he [the teacher] corrects our mistakes harshly. I am more afraid of his manner of correction than making a mistake*". In the same vein, Huma became anxious because "*if I am wrong the teacher says 'you always waste time, you just stand up to say something wrong, remember it is not like that'*".

It was surprising that although Akbar stated that mistakes make him anxious, he suggested that students should not be afraid of mistakes as they are unavoidable when learning and speaking a foreign language. He said:

Mistakes, of course, disturb us but I think we should admit that we will commit mistakes as learners. Therefore, we should not be much worried.

A similar attitude was voiced by Ather: "*Sometimes, I say to myself 'you are a learner so you can't save yourself from mistakes' and I feel relaxed*". It could be argued that if teachers help students have positive attitude towards mistakes, they may feel less FMM.

Classroom observation supported the findings of the other data collection instruments. It provided a chance to notice the students' discomfort stemming from mistakes. I saw how a single mistake made some students a laughing stock for other students, how the teacher discouraged students if they failed to answer correctly, and how students behaved and reacted after their mistakes. It was clear that mistakes made some students nervous and worried. For example, in one session, a student raised his hand to answer the teacher's question. In the course of his answer, he mispronounced the word 'echo' and other students, as well as the teacher, started laughing at him. Then, the teacher asked him to go ahead but he froze up and then he was asked to sit down. Some students kept on looking at him, his nervousness was apparent and he seemed lost; he did not raise his hand during the rest of the class, he was looking out of the window, resting his chin on his hand. It was obvious that he had lost his interest in the lesson. Moreover, he even tried to hide behind

other students when the teacher asked questions again.

In another observation, a student confused the past tense with the present tense. He gave a nervous smile, realising that a mistake has been made. The teacher gave him a serious look and corrected him in an angry tone. He then reminded him that he is a university student and he is not supposed to make such minor mistakes. Another student also made some grammatical mistakes and he was asked to sit down. Other students were looking at him and his nervousness was obvious. Sometimes, he played with his hair or scratched his face. Although the teacher corrected the students, they might not have properly understood as they seemed anxious.

5.3.4.5 Lack of Student Voice

Pakistani academic institutions are still following a traditional teaching system in which the teacher is regarded as an authority. It emerged in the course of interviews that some students can feel upset when their voices are ignored. The following excerpt from Ather's interview seems to reveal this issue:

... I feel bad because he [the teacher] does not ask our opinions about the exam, classroom, oral activities, and oral topics and if we say anything he does not give any importance to it.

Similarly, the following comment by Hussain also reveals how students' choices and preferences are constrained:

Some teachers don't like that we [students] should decide independently. I know a teacher who will change your group for the presentation if you didn't get his permission before joining that. I really feel unhappy ... we are Master's students and we should be free ...

Additionally, a response to the questionnaire open-ended question shows how teacher dominance can create frustration for some students:

It is disappointing that the teacher chooses the topics of our oral presentations. It is his decision who will present first ... when to start and when to finish.

It is noteworthy that this finding may be particular to the Pakistani context, due to the teacher-centred classrooms. Teachers should be encouraged to listen to students' learning needs and allow them to offer their opinions on various matters.

Having discussed the sources of SA related to teacher-student interaction, the next section sheds light on the socio-cultural-related sources of SA.

5.3.5 Socio-Cultural-Related Sources

The last category presents an analysis of the data on socio-cultural related sources of SA. It includes seven sub-themes: students' geographic background, students' pre-university English education, the role of students' parents, social and cultural trends, cultural alienation, competitiveness, and mixed-gender classrooms. All of these sub-themes, except for competitiveness, emerged during the process of data analysis. Moreover, most of these findings are new as, to the best of my knowledge, they have not been previously reported as sources of SA.

5.3.5.1 Students' Geographic Background

Most rural areas of Pakistan lack opportunities in terms of seeking good English education such as qualified teachers, good institutions, classroom facilities, and spoken English coaching academies. In contrast, cities offer good opportunities and facilities (Islam, 2013). This point will be explained in more detail in the discussion chapter. Some students from rural backgrounds reported in their interviews that they did not have the opportunity to seek better English training and speaking skills; therefore, they were worried about their success in their current class.

For example, Tahir explained:

I am from a small village and you know that our villages are deprived of good schools and colleges. Trust me, our teacher's English was very poor ... he taught us to pronounce 'niece' as 'nice' and just a few days ago in my class, I pronounced it as 'nice' and all other students laughed at me ... students from cities are lucky. They have studied at Beaconhouse and City Schools [English institutions of high repute]; therefore, their oral

communication is strong. I wish I had studied at such institutions....I am really much upset.

Similarly Hussain, who was also from a village, clearly believed that his rural background was responsible for not providing him with good training and a strong foundation in English; he could not therefore perform well in oral activities in the university class and, in turn, experienced frustration and SA:

When I came to this big city, I found that you can attend private spoken English courses about which I never heard in my village. Sometimes, I regret I was born in a village. I am worried about my speaking performance in my university class. I assure you, I am not an incompetent student ... the problem is I did not have the chance to go to good institutions.

5.3.5.2 Students' Pre-University English Education

In relation to the students' pre-university English education, the data revealed that the students who had studied English previously at Urdu-medium institutions believed that their "*foundation of English is weak*"; and their speaking skills are particularly poor. Consequently, they cannot perform well in various oral tasks in their university class and, in turn, experience frustration and SA. In Pakistan, English-medium institutions provide better English learning opportunities than Urdu-medium institutions (Shamim, 2008). Similarly, Islam's (2013) study conducted in Pakistan found that Urdu-medium institutions do not provide a good English education; therefore, students of these institutions mostly lack proficiency in speaking.

This concern was shown by the students in their responses to the questionnaire open-ended section and in their interviews. For example Hussain, who had studied English in Urdu-medium institutions, reported as follows:

... Our teacher's medium of instruction was Urdu when teaching us English and he never involved us in oral activities in the class. Therefore, my spoken English is poor from the beginning. Here in the university class, I have to take part in many oral tasks ... he [the teacher] expects me to speak English fluently, but I have not been taught ... is it possible for me to speak in English. Now speaking in English is a big problem for me.

Likewise Noman faced problems in speaking and he regretted for studying English at Urdu-medium institutions, he said in his interview:

When I entered the university I found that my spoken English is very poor as I was unable to say two, three sentences in English. I think I have started learning English from my university class as previously I was not taught well. Now I try but I can't do well ... it is like crying over spilled milk. I wish I had studied English in English-medium institutions.

Noman's further comment indicates that students in Urdu-medium institutions may become more conscious of their poor speaking skills and may experience more SA when they have to compete with their counterparts from English-medium institutions. It is to note that at the university level, students from both streams of education study in the same class. Noman commented:

Once the teacher put me in the tutorial group of students who had studied English at good institutions such as Edwards College [known for quality English education]. When they spoke English, I came to know how weak I am in speaking ... I felt depressed and uncomfortable.

Moreover, a response to an open-ended question reveals how poor previous English training could be SA-provoking for students:

I feel sorry for myself. Either I would have studied English from good institutions or I won't have come to the university. My spoken English is weak ... My English class is full of troubles for me.

5.3.5.3 The Role of Students' Parents

In Pakistani society parents play an important role (positive or negative) in their children's education since they are mostly dependent on their parents. The data revealed that students' parents can also affect their English acquisition. According to some students, their previous English education, particularly speaking proficiency, was poor because their parents were unaware of the usefulness of English for their future; therefore they did not send them to English-medium institutions. Moreover, they did not motivate them to pay attention to English. This was why, according to the students, they were facing difficulties in the oral aspects of English in their current class.

For example, the following comment from Noman's interview explains this phenomenon and moreover, it indicates that the parents' education can also affect their children's academic achievement:

My father was uneducated and he was completely unaware of the importance of English for his son; thus, he never cared about my English. He didn't send me to the English-medium school. My father and my school were the same; neither paid attention to my English. I am sure my spoken English would have been better if my father had sent me to prestigious English institutions ... perhaps, I would not have been facing many problems when speaking in my English class.

A further example was reported by Adnan, who stated:

I know many students whose parents arranged private tutors for them to improve their spoken English ... even now they encourage and motivate them. My father did not know the importance of English ... he never asked me about my progress report ... my previous English learning is from ordinary institutions and now I am paying in the form of poor speaking.

Another comment from Adnan's interview indicates that parents' socio-economic condition can also affect students' language learning and speaking skills. The parents may not be rich enough to send their children to expensive English institutions in their childhood; therefore, they may not be as competent in English. In consequence, it may be hard for them to do well in speaking activities at university. Adnan added:

In fact, my father did not have money to buy food for the family, how could he send me to expensive institutions?

It is interesting that on the other hand, parents' over-involvement in their offspring's English learning and their expectations of them can also make students anxious. Chan & Wu (2004) also report that sometimes, parents' expectations of their children's performance can exert pressure on them. The following excerpt from Ali's interview seems to indicate that parents' concern can make students feel more responsible and if they are not performing well, they may feel SA:

My parents keep reminding me the importance of English. My father says, 'remember son, you will face many problems in your future if your spoken English is poor.' Almost every day he asks me about the lessons or activities we do in our English class. I feel very worried as I feel a huge responsibility on my shoulders ... the problem is I am not good at speaking English.

In summary, parents' attitude to English can deprive students of early English learning opportunities which can create anxiety about lack of skill. However, it must be cautioned that these results are specifically for the Pakistani context, where parents can easily influence their offspring's lives, and results from other settings might be different.

5.3.5.4 Social and Cultural Trends

A number of issues related to social and cultural trends were revealed by the data. First, Pakistani society is culturally, socio-economically, and linguistically divided (Coleman & Capstick, 2012). At university level, students come from various regions of Pakistan and they study in the same class. The data from this study revealed that socio-cultural differences between rural and urban students can influence some rural students' willingness to participate in oral activities and induce SA for them. Tahir, who was from a village, stated in his interview:

Students from cities do not mix with us [village students]. We explain things according to our own culture and they laugh ... they say we are Paindoo [meaning stupid villagers] and they make fun of our clothes, our speaking, and our accent ... their presence in the class makes me depressed and tense.

He further added:

They [students from cities] are dominant in the class and we [students from villages] mostly sit silently in the class.

It must be cautioned, however, that Tahir's evidence cannot necessarily be generalised to all students from villages.

Second, speaking in front of socially and economically superior students could also be a difficult task for some students. Ali said:

... Another strange problem with me is that if students, who are socially and economically superior to me, are members of my group presentation, I don't feel comfortable and confident speaking in front of them ... I even can't talk to them ... I am from a humble background and I feel comfortable with students of the same background.

It could be suggested that the teacher should form groups, keeping in view the students' socio-cultural and educational background, so that they feel comfortable with each other.

Thirdly, a high status of teachers in Pakistani society could also be a source of SA for some students. In Pakistani culture people are taught to be obedient, respectful, and submissive in front of those who are senior in age and knowledge. Similarly, it is considered impolite to argue with them and one is expected to agree with whatever they say. Since teachers fulfil this criterion, students might hold them in high esteem and it could be difficult for them to argue or speak confidently in front of teachers. Pica's (1987) study on classroom interaction indicated that some students may feel tense in class due to the higher status of the teacher. As Kashif explained in his interview:

The teacher is like our father ... I have been taught to bow my head in front of him. He is like a big big tree and we [students] are like small trees under him.

Similarly, some of the students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended section expressed the same concern:

Our teacher is our guru. It is a big challenge for me to ask him a question, speak in front of him or talk to him. If I talk to him, I can't say whatever I want to say.

Additionally, findings of the current study indicated that the culture of rote learning can also make some students uncomfortable in various oral activities. In other words, the need to be perfect and accurate may produce stress for some students because they believe that they can pass their examination and impress the teacher if they answer perfectly. Moreover, students can also feel nervous when they forget their memorised materials. This result may be attributed to the prevalent teaching style because students are encouraged to

memorise the material needed to pass. Interviews and some students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended question supported this finding.

As Shabnam stated in her interview:

Sometime, I forget the memorised material ... I feel I never memorised. If I forget a word I forget everything and then I lose confidence and feel embarrassed.

Fifth, according to the students, some teachers may be biased and favour certain students and ignore others or give them a lower mark. This behaviour on the part of the teacher can make some students worried and uneasy. For example, Huma said in her interview:

They [teachers] have their choices. They have good relations with some students because they like them but they ignore other students because they do not like them.

She added: *"My teacher was unhappy with me and he gave me lower marks in English than those who were very close to him"*.

Similarly, Ali said in his interview, *"How would you feel if the teacher ignores you and pays attention to other students?"* Evidence from the open-ended question supported the interview data: *"The teacher doesn't treat us equally. His attitude to other students is friendly and supportive but he doesn't care about me"*.

Finally, the interview data analysis suggested that students may feel anxiety when speaking due to the fear, stress, and pressure that their views, opinions, and arguments might not be socially unacceptable or against religion (Islam). In Pakistani culture talking publicly, and particularly in front of females about topics such as relations between a husband and wife is not acceptable. The following comment by Kashif shows how he was dealt with and how he developed SA when he talked about this topic in his class:

... Once I selected the topic 'advantages of a married life' to speak about in class. In the course of my talk, I talked about romantic relations between a husband and wife and some female students left the class. Then, my teacher became angry and she insulted

me in front of all students for selecting such an inappropriate topic. She asked me not to come to her class for three days. Since then, I have developed a fear that I might say something bad.

It can be very dangerous in Pakistan to question religion or say anything against it. Adnan was afraid of saying anything against religion or other students' religious factions:

Whenever I make an oral presentation or discuss a topic, I have a fear in my mind that my ideas should be against religion or other students' religious sects because if so, I will get into trouble.

5.3.5.5 Cultural Alienation

Although Pakistani students have a strong instrumental motivation towards learning and speaking English, there are cultural issues that surround it. Some factions in Pakistani society oppose learning English, as they believe that students may forget their culture and civilisation (Behlol, 2009). Recently, Islam (2013) investigated Pakistani university students' motivation to learn English and reported that some participants regarded English as a threat to their religion and culture. Moreover, learning a new language is an act of inheriting social and cultural characteristics of another community (Scovel, 1978; Dörnyei, 2003) and it directly threatens learners' self-concept and views of world (Horwitz et al., 1986).

The data from this study indicated that although students are well aware of the value and utility of spoken English from social and economic aspects, they may have negative attitudes towards it. These negative attitudes could affect their oral performance as well as contribute to SA. Two students' comments in their interviews seemed to indicate that they regarded English as a language of usurpers and moreover, a threat to their self-identity, culture, and languages. This attitude could induce SA for some students. Adil stated:

I know I must be able to speak well as it is important for my future. But sometimes, I really hate learning and speaking English. English people dominated our country and their language is still dominating our national and regional languages. As you know that many people feel pride in speaking English and they think that Urdu is the language of common people. I think English is taking us away from our religion and culture.

A similar concern was voiced by Shaheen:

... However, it is painful that many people prefer English to Urdu ... English is dominant in every field. Why we don't use Urdu ... it means we are ignoring ourselves, our culture and values ... why do we follow the west blindly? Now people teach their children papa and mama and not aman and abba [Urdu words for mother and father respectively]. Many people will say 'hello' and not assalam-o-alaikum [Islamic way of greeting]. This is not good and everyone should be concerned about this.

Later she added:

It is hypocrisy, honestly, I don't accept English from my heart but I have to learn due to external pressure [the role of English in Pakistan].

Most books which are used to teach English in Pakistan are written by foreign writers from the UK or the USA. Therefore, these contain references to western religion and culture. According to Saito et al. (1999), unfamiliar cultural material could provoke anxiety for some students. The following comment by Shaheen suggests that such materials could create unrest in students as the lessons were about a culture that was different to their own:

I don't like when we do topics, excerpts, and examples which are about western culture and not in line with our society and culture ... it is also hard to comprehend them.

Islam's (2013) study about motivation for learning English also noted that some Pakistani EFL university students were afraid of assimilating to western culture. In summary, learning English could create feelings of unrest and cultural alienation for some students which, in turn, may lead to SA.

5.3.5.6 Competitiveness

Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) argue that a competitive learning environment in class provokes SA. The data from the current study also suggested that students may become worried and stressful when they compare their speaking proficiency with that of their peers and find that their spoken English is poorer. This result is supported by the students' responses to item 25 in table 5.2, "I get

upset when I feel that my classmates speak English better than I do”; 48.7% of students endorsed this statement. As Javed observed:

Some students in my class speak fluently. They do much better in oral tasks than I do and they rarely make mistakes. I feel stressed and I ask myself, ‘why are they better than me ... why I can’t perform as well as they do?’

Adnan said, *“The realisation that they are much better than me makes me sad”* and likewise, Imran added: *“Oh God, it’s painful when other students who are like you [they are also learners] are better than you”*.

Additionally, the data revealed that some students could become jealous of those who are better than them. Moreover, the data suggests that competitiveness can create a negative atmosphere in class and it highlights the need to address this problem.

For example, Imran said in his interview, *“I feel depressed when they [better students than him] understand the teacher and ask questions but I feel good when they get negative feedback”*. Similarly, one student wrote in the questionnaire open-ended question, *“I do not like it when other students raise their hands when I do not know the answer. I wish all the students may not perform well”*.

Students’ responses to the open-ended question not only supported the above findings but also some of them seemed to indicate that teachers can also be responsible for creating a competitive learning environment in class. For example, one student wrote, *“The teacher says, ‘you will never learn, see other students, they are much better than you”*. Another student wrote, *“She [the teacher] favours intelligent students ... she knows their names and appreciates them a lot but she ignores weak students”*.

On the other hand, more capable and better students in the class could be a source of motivation and inspiration for some students. For example, one student, Akbar, reported in his interview, *“When we all perform equally I become careless but when other students perform better than me I increase my efforts*

to improve". He added, "Sometimes, I don't want to study but when I see them studying, I come back to my dormitory and study enthusiastically".

5.3.5.7 Mixed-Gender Classrooms

In Pakistani culture, men and women mostly do not mix with each other. The data from this study suggested that mixed-gender classrooms can create stress for some students. For example, the following comment by Tahir indicates that the presence of female students in class could make some male students uncomfortable:

I am not used to studying with girls. I feel tense and become very self-conscious due to their presence in the class.

Hussain agreed:

I feel uneasy due to our female classmates ... when I make mistakes I feel much ashamed of myself due to the presence of girls in our class. I think I would not be as worried about mistakes or my poor presentation if there are all boys in my class.

In addition, the following response to the questionnaire open-ended question seems to indicate that some male students might not feel comfortable when talking to their female counterparts in class:

The class is divided into males and females. Most of the females wear veils and they sit together. I feel shy when I have to ask any female student about anything such as an assignment or presentation. Moreover, I feel a kind of pressure that I have to show myself a successful, competent and mature individual in front of girls.

Similarly, the data indicated that female students could also feel stressed due to the presence of male students in the class. For example, Shabnam felt uncomfortable and shy due to boys in the class:

I am studying with boys for the first time ... it is hard for me to speak or ask questions due to them. I think I would feel more active and confident if boys were not listening to me.

To conclude, the findings related to the second research question suggest that anxiety can influence students' speaking skills. This section presented the five main categories representing various sources of SA: namely, individual learner-related sources, classroom-related sources, linguistic related sources, teacher-student interaction, and socio-cultural related sources. The next section of data analysis spotlights the teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may help reduce Pakistani EFL students' SA.

5.4 Research Question 3: Teacher Behaviour and Classroom Activities that May Help to Reduce Students' Speaking Anxiety

This section explores the findings from the data that help to answer the third research question:

What kinds of teacher behaviour and classroom activities may help to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety in Pakistani EFL university classrooms?

This research question aims to investigate various teacher behaviour and classroom activities that can be helpful in reducing Pakistani EFL students' SA. To answer this research question, the data were collected from students through the questionnaire, two open-ended questions in the questionnaire, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured classroom observations. In their interviews, students reported various sources of their SA; therefore, it was anticipated that they themselves would suggest various teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may alleviate their SA. Indeed they reported various teacher behaviour and classroom activities, ranging from simple to complex. The following sub-section presents the findings related to teacher behaviour and the next sub-section highlights classroom activities that may help minimise students' SA.

5.4.1 Teacher Behaviour that may Help Reduce Students' Speaking Anxiety

The data analysis suggested the following teacher behaviour that the students perceived to be helpful in making them comfortable and promoting the use of spoken English in class: teachers' personal characteristics, providing students

with a sociable classroom environment, involving students in the learning process, teachers' positive reinforcement, teachers' professional characteristics, and teachers' attitudes towards mistakes.

Table 5.3 below shows the students' responses to the questionnaire items (section 4, part 1 of the questionnaire).

Table 5.3 Students' responses about the teacher behaviour that may help reduce their SA

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
39	The teacher explains material and oral tasks well.	18.2%	50%	10%	17.6%	4.1%
40	The teacher is friendly.	30.5%	48.8%	5.8%	12.3%	2.3%
41	The teacher encourages me to speak English.	18.2%	59.4%	3.5%	14.1%	4.7%
42	The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject.	13.5%	51.7%	7%	20.5%	7%
43	The teacher asks me about my learning preferences.	20.5%	50.5%	9.4%	14.7%	4.7%
44	The teacher believes that everyone makes mistakes when speaking English.	35.2%	45.8%	11.1%	6.4%	1.1%
45	The teacher makes me feel comfortable in class.	31.1%	47.6%	13.5%	5.8%	1.7%
46	The teacher compliments me to make me feel valued.	15.2%	52.3%	10.5%	16.4%	5.2%
47	The teacher corrects my mistakes in a gentle and supportive manner.	28.2%	51.1%	10%	8.8%	1.7%

48	The teacher allows students to work in groups or pairs.	15.8%	52.9%	8.2%	17.6%	5.2%
49	The teacher is relaxed and has a good sense of humour.	18.2%	62.9%	6.4%	10.5%	1.7%
50	The teacher has good speaking skills.	10%	52.9%	13.5%	18.8%	4.7%

5.4.1.1 Teachers' Personal Characteristics

The data highlighted various aspects of teachers' attitudes which might lower students' SA and consequently, motivate them to practise more English in class. The interviewees were almost unanimous in reporting that the teacher should be friendly, humorous, supportive, and a mentor. Moreover, he/she should care for their self-esteem and pay attention to their performance. They believed that such characteristics dispel many fears induced by speaking, such as fear of making mistakes (FMM) and, in turn, they would feel more active and relaxed in class. These findings are supported by item 40 in Table 5.3, "Teacher is friendly". The majority of students (79.3%) either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, suggesting that they would feel relaxed if their teacher is friendly. In the same line, the majority of students (81.1%) endorsed item 49 in Table 5.3 that they would feel comfortable if, "Teacher is relaxed and has a good sense of humour".

Kashif explicitly supported the findings of the questionnaire in his interview, saying *"I would enjoy the class and speak more comfortably and confidently if our teacher is more a friend than a teacher who looks for my mistakes and shows a bad mood"*. When asked the effects of such behaviour, he added, *"I feel that my mind and memory function better"*. On the same theme, Imran suggested that the teacher *"should have friendly relations with us"* because if *"there is no barrier between me and the teacher"* he can *"discuss any problem with him/her [the teacher] anytime"*. Likewise, Tahir reported, *"If the teacher is relaxed, entertaining and humorous, we feel relaxed"*. When I pointed out to Noor that the teacher cannot always be friendly and at times he/she may be strict, she responded, *"OK, if there is a need, but his/her gentle and sweet"*

words can produce better results than a harsh attitude”.

The students’ responses to the open-ended question of the questionnaire again reflected the other findings, including statements such as: *“If our teacher is friendly, we would feel encouraged”, and “I feel happy in the class of a humorous teacher”.*

Moreover, students favoured *“a supportive”* and an *“understanding”* teacher because according to Imran, *“... I would feel motivated if he [the teacher] is supportive, helps me when I need, and suggests how to improve grammar and oral communication”.* Similarly, Adnan’s comment indicated that the teacher should not only support students academically but also emotionally. He said, *“The teacher’s opinions or suggestions are very helpful ... as it is said that the teacher is like a father ... I would feel much relieved if I discuss my academic as well as personal problems with him/her”.* This finding agrees with those of Hurd and Xiao (2010).

Furthermore, several comments in the interviews indicated that the students would feel encouraged and comfortable if they feel that their teacher cares for their self-esteem. This finding is supported by item 46 in Table 5.3, to which 67.5% of students responded that they would feel good and valued if their teacher compliments them. For example, Javed felt valued and he tried to do better in class when his teacher complimented him. He said in his interview:

If the teacher knows my name and compliments me, I feel I am an important student ... I feel honoured. Thus, I work hard to improve my spoken English and perform better in class.

When asked whether this behaviour on the part of the teacher decreases his nervousness in class when speaking, he gave a resounding *“YES”*.

Likewise, Adil explained:

I am a grown up man and I have my self-respect. How can I feel comfortable in class if my teacher scorns me? If I know that my teacher will not insult me, I can voluntarily participate in oral tasks without the fear of making mistakes.

There were indications that the students feel more confident and interested when speaking if their teachers pay attention to their performance. For example, one student wrote in the open-ended question: *“When the teacher listens to my presentation carefully and says ‘OK’, ‘yes’, my mind gets clear and I feel confident because I think my ideas are brilliant”*.

It was acknowledged, however, that sometimes a strict teacher may be necessary for effective teaching. One student, Neelam said in her interview, *“... but the problem is that sometimes some students do not take friendly and lenient teachers seriously, while a stern teacher compels you to increase your efforts”*.

5.4.1.2 Providing Students with a Warm and Relaxed Classroom Environment

Dewaele & Thirtle (2009) emphasise that the establishment of a caring and an emotional classroom environment is an essential step to reduce students' SA. The data from this study also revealed that students consider a sociable and positive learning environment helpful in encouraging them to participate more in class and discouraging fears such as FNE and FMM. They believed that their teacher has the key role in class; therefore, the provision of a relaxed and encouraging classroom climate depends upon him/her. For example, Huma explicitly suggested in her interview:

The class should not be like a mosque where holy sermons are delivered and everyone must be silent. If the class is fun-like, not too formal, a place where learning should occur in a free and fresh environment, we would be encouraged to participate actively. Moreover, many fears especially fear of making mistakes will be reduced ... But we [students] can't do this ... only the teacher can maintain such an environment in the classroom.

Similarly, some comments indicated that such an environment could be established by creating a sense of community in the class. For instance, Adil commented:

... It's very, very important that the students should have friendly relations with each other. Then, our class will be a beautiful forum and not a prison. We can laugh ... have fun and I will not make

fear of negative evaluation and of being laughed at as a big headache.

Many benefits of a social and friendly classroom were mentioned in the interviews. For example, Adil referred to peer learning: *“If we are friends, we can learn from each other ... we can practice speaking outside the class”*. Additionally, he would *“not feel shame in asking for help”*. At the same time, the worst aspects of a competitive learning environment could be discouraged. As Kashif pointed out, *“If all students are friendly with each other, I think we will concentrate more on improving our spoken English because we will not have rivalry and competition”*.

The students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended question also revealed that a relaxed learning environment reduces their SA and promotes the use of spoken English. Moreover, some comments suggested that friendly relations among students may depend upon the teacher's friendly relations with them. For instance one student wrote: *“We [students] can have friendly relations with each other if our teacher is friendly with us”*.

Group-work can also be helpful in establishing a sociable and collaborative classroom climate. The interview data indicated that students favour a teacher who allows them to perform oral tasks in groups. This finding is supported by the students' responses to item 48 in Table 5.3. The majority of students (68.7%) agreed that they would feel relaxed if their teacher allows them to work in groups or pairs. For example, Noman suggested in his interview:

I think that the teacher should give us presentations or assignments in the form of groups. On one hand, we would be able to get to know each other and on the other, we would feel less pressure.

Adil also thought that working in groups could make the class more social and non-threatening:

The more we do oral activities together the more we get closer to each other. Additionally, we will help each other and will not ridicule each other.

5.4.1.3 Involving Students in the Learning Process

The third teacher behaviour suggested by the data that would help alleviate students' SA was involving them in the learning process. For example, the interview data indicated that students do not like teacher-centred classrooms. Moreover, they wanted their teacher to take their opinions, views and concerns about the class and teaching and their learning needs into consideration. In turn, they would feel more motivated and involved in the learning process. This finding is supported by the students' responses to item 43 in Table 5.3, to which 71% of students agreed that they would feel good if their teacher asked them about their learning preferences.

When asked in interview, Tahir objected to the teacher's dominance and suggested that students should be listened to, *"The teachers should not impose their decisions on us. They should ask us how we want to be taught"*. Ather also maintained that the teacher should ask them about their learning preferences, *"The teacher should also ask us the topics and activities which according to us can improve our oral communication ... the topics we feel comfortable with"*. Hussain added: *"It is not insult to teachers if they listen to our opinions. We would feel encouraged if the teacher gets our opinions about the time for preparation and presentation ..."*

A sample example of the responses to the open-ended question also supported this view:

We are learners so we must be asked what we want to learn and how we want to learn. I am sure many students have a lot to say about the classroom, assignments, and oral tasks.

5.4.1.4 Positive Reinforcement by the Teachers

The interview data revealed that the positive reinforcement on the part of the teacher can reduce students' SA and promote their oral English. Students reported that they would feel confident, encouraged and they would increase their efforts if their teachers praised their performance in class. This finding is

supported by item 41 in Table 5.3, which showed that 77.6% of students endorsed a statement that they would feel relaxed if their teacher encouraged them to speak English.

As Javed explained that he feels confident and motivated when his teacher encourages him:

The patient feels better if doctor says, 'you are getting better'. Similarly, the teacher's positive words about me give me energy. I really need some kind words when I can't perform well. If the teacher says, 'don't worry, you have improved' ... it is a big help at a difficult time. My worry and stress would reduce.

Similarly, Tahir needed support and backing from the teacher when he made mistakes during speaking in class. His comment reveals that teachers' positive words can encourage students to continue their efforts:

If I make a mistake when speaking in the class and the teacher says, 'good try, go ahead, it's a minor mistake' I would forget my mistake ... I won't feel embarrassed and I would continue.

Students also like to be encouraged and appreciated for their good performance. For example, Imran suggested that his teacher should praise him when he does well in the class and in this way, he can forget his past failures:

If I answer correctly or do well in the discussion, I would feel good if my teacher praises me. I feel I have won and I can forget many bad things done in past.

Similarly, Noor reported that she can forget the teacher's previous negative feedback on her work if the teacher praises her subsequent performance:

If the teacher says, 'you have done well, you are a brilliant student' I feel proud of myself. Moreover, I forget the teacher's previous negative comments on my performance.

The need for positive reinforcement by the teacher was not only reported in the questionnaire and interviews; students' responses to the open-ended question also expressed the same view. For instance, one student wrote: "*Teachers' appreciation is more important than teaching*". Another student wrote: "*I am*

sure I can improve my speaking skills if my teacher encourages me and does not ignore me”.

Likewise, during classroom observations I witnessed some events on the basis of which it could be argued that teachers’ positive and encouraging comments on the students’ performance can motivate them and make them confident and relaxed. For example, a teacher asked a student to come to the podium and give a talk on the topic ‘health is wealth’. The student made a good speech. He did not make any major grammatical or other mistakes and spoke fairly fluently. After finishing his talk, he looked towards the teacher and the teacher said, ‘*wonderful, very good*’. Moreover, he went to the student and touched his shoulder (in Pakistani culture, this is a sign of encouragement). Additionally, he himself applauded the student and asked the other students to do the same. The student was smiling and his happiness and satisfaction were clear from his expression. In the rest of the class, he appeared very active, for example, he was raising his hand again and again to respond to the teacher, possibly feeling confident due to the teacher’s positive words and having experienced success.

5.4.1.5 Teachers’ Professional Characteristics

The data highlighted three professional qualities of a teacher which could make students comfortable in class and strengthen their command of oral English. For example, one common thread running through the interviews was the teacher’s own linguistic competence. The students reported that they would feel satisfied that they are learning well if their teacher is competent in English. This finding is confirmed by item 42 in Table 5.3, where 65.2% of students responded that they would feel good if their teacher has a good knowledge of the subject. Correspondingly, 62.9% of students agreed with item 50 in Table 5.3, indicating that they would feel good if their teacher has good speaking skills. This finding agrees with Cheng (2005).

This concern was also expressed in interviews. Javed said, *“If our teacher is capable, I feel I am in good hands ... I will learn how to speak fluently and correctly”*. Similarly, Ali believed that a competent teacher *“improves me academically”* and he further reported that he feels motivated to attain his learning aims, *“The thought that I am a student of a good teacher makes you*

confident as well as motivates you to achieve your learning objectives". Moreover, in interviews students favoured a teacher who can speak well in English. For example, Akbar suggested that the teacher should speak fluently, as well as with a good accent and pronunciation, *"Some teachers' spoken English is not good ... teachers must have good accent, pronunciation and fluency because they are our main source of knowledge ... if they speak well, we will speak well"*.

The data collected through classroom observations also support the above finding. During my observations, one teacher observed had poor spoken English and she made mistakes when speaking. Furthermore, fluency in speaking was lacking.

In the context of the present study, students would have had several reasons to highlight the need for a competent teacher. For example, since students were aware of the importance of good speaking skills for their future success, they may want their teacher to be competent to teach them speaking in an effective way. Moreover, most of Pakistani EFL teachers who teach language at university level have an MA, mainly in English literature. Thus, they might not be able to teach speaking skills effectively. Moreover, since there is a lack of teacher training and professional development programmes in Pakistan, teachers may not be able to teach English using effective language teaching methods. Many Pakistani educators and writers lament about teachers' incompetence (such as Shamim, 2011; Mansoor, 2002; Kasi, 2010). This topic is covered in detail in sections 2.8 and 6.5.

The second professional characteristic of a teacher that would make interviewees comfortable was that he/she should teach lessons in a simple way and explain oral tasks and other assignments clearly and in detail. Some SA studies report that clear and detailed instructions enhance students' understanding and make them feel comfortable (e.g. Wilson, 2006). Moreover, teachers may use L1 if they think that students are not capable of learning in English (Norrish, 1997). The questionnaire data also support the interview data. As 68.2% of students agreed with item 39 in Table 5.3, that they would feel relaxed if their teacher explains material and oral tasks well. One interviewee,

Fariha, commented, *“If the teacher explains the instructions for oral activities in detail, I don’t feel confused as I know what I have to do. Similarly, if he/she asks questions clearly, I can try to answer”*. Adnan clearly agreed: *“The teacher should not explain the things just in two or three sentences ... he/she should deliver the lecture in a simple and easy language so that we should understand and learn”*.

Another professional attribute revealed by the interview data was that the teachers should address students’ anxiousness to make them feel relaxed in the class. This finding was confirmed by item 45 in Table 5.3. The majority of students (78.7%) agreed that they would feel good if their teacher makes them feel comfortable in class. For example, Imran complained in his interview that some teachers ignored students; he further suggested that as the researcher was asking about their SA, teachers too should pay attention to their anxiousness:

It seems that their [teachers’] sole duty is to deliver the lecture without caring whether we are comfortable in the class or not. I think they don’t consider it worth attention. I wish the teacher should ask like you why we don’t feel comfortable when speaking in the class.

Similarly, Tahir suggested that the teacher should pay attention to passive students in the class, *“.... I mean if a student is not participating actively in the class, the teacher should ask him/her the reasons in order to solve his/her problems”*. Another method of making students comfortable may be discouraging their fears. For example, Fariha said in her interview, *“I felt very relaxed when our teacher said, ‘I experienced anxiety as a student. Don’t worry it is normal’”*.

Horwitz (1990) urges teachers to share their language learning experiences with their students so that they may be aware of the fact that feeling nervous when speaking is normal and unavoidable in order to learn a new language.

5.4.1.6 Teachers’ Attitudes towards Mistakes

The majority of interviewees strongly believed that they would feel relaxed if the

teacher's attitudes towards mistakes were positive. This finding is supported by item 44 in Table 5.3. Eighty-one percent of students responded that they would feel comfortable if their teacher believed that everyone makes mistakes when speaking English.

Adil maintained in his interview:

God accepts our mistakes and forgives. The teacher should also accept our mistakes.

Similarly, Noman stated that he would have less fear of making mistakes if the teacher believes that mistakes are normal. His comment suggests that teachers may not highlight students' mistakes as a sign of failure or poor performance.

If the teacher views mistakes as an ordinary and common thing in the class, I will be less afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at.

Moreover, students reported in their interviews that they would have less fear of making mistakes if their teacher corrects their errors in a kind manner. This result is confirmed by item 47 in Table 5.3, where 79.3% of students agree that they would feel relaxed if their teacher corrects their mistakes in a gentle and supportive manner.

Adil confirmed this during his interview:

I know error correction is necessary for my learning and I want that my teacher should correct me but for God's sake gently.

Moreover, some responses to the open-ended question also confirmed the above findings:

My half trouble and stress disappears when the teacher corrects my mistakes in a positive and encouraging way.

It has already been mentioned in section 5.3.4.4 above that during the classroom observations, I noticed that some students were corrected harshly. This classroom observations data seem to explain why students highlighted the

need for gentle error-correction.

The next section of data analysis focuses on classroom activities that may help reduce students' SA and promote the use of spoken English in class.

5.4.2 Classroom Activities that may Help Reduce Students' Speaking Anxiety

Data analysis revealed eight types of classroom activities and practices that would help reduce students' SA and, in turn, encourage their oral English in class. The students cited activities that would be helpful in alleviating their SA; mainly those that would allow them to prepare before speaking, and those which involve little risk of exposure.

Table 5.4 below presents the students' responses to the questionnaire items (section 4, part 2 of the questionnaire).

Table 5.4 Students' views about the classroom activities that may help reduce their SA

No	Statement	Very Relaxed	Moderately Relaxed	Neither Relaxed nor Anxious	Moderately Anxious	Very Anxious
51	Voluntary participation in discussions and debates in class	14.1%	52.9%	5.2%	22.9%	4.7%
52	Work in groups of 3 or 4 and prepare an oral presentation.	10%	55.8%	4.1%	23.5%	6.4%
53	Repeat something as a class after the teacher.	17%	55.8%	2.9%	20%	4.1%
54	Make an oral presentation with 2 or 3 other students in front of the class.	9.4%	50%	8.8%	27%	4.7%
55	Participate in debates in my own seat.	11.1%	50%	7.6%	25.2%	5.8%
56	Interview each other in pairs.	12.9%	62.9%	7%	11.1%	5.8%

57	Learn speaking through interesting activities such as games.	22.9%	48.2%	4.1%	21.7%	2.9%
58	Make your oral presentation to a group instead of the whole class.	11.1%	44.7%	8.2%	28.8%	7%
59	Perform oral tasks in front of the class having prepared in advance.	10%	47%	5.8%	27.6%	9.4%
60	Called upon to answer when given a sufficient time to formulate the answer.	17%	50%	5.2%	23.5%	4.1%
61	Allowed to use some Urdu when I can't express myself in English.	17%	45.8%	12.9%	22.3%	1.7%

5.4.2.1 Preparation in Advance

Many studies (for example, Cheng, 2005; Liu, 2007) have found that advance preparation makes learners confident and improves their oral communication. In this study, the majority of students cited preparation before they are asked to speak in front of the class, as an important technique that may both alleviate their SA and motivate them to participate in class. They believed that they would feel less nervous and more secure when participating in various fluency-based activities after preparation. This finding is confirmed by item 59 in Table 5.4, where it can be seen that 57% of students reported that they would feel either very relaxed or moderately relaxed if they perform oral tasks in front of the class having prepared in advance.

Tahir's following statement reveals that preparation may allow students to collect ideas about the task. Moreover, they may experience less fear, both of making mistakes and of negative evaluation; therefore, they could feel confident and comfortable:

... because I have time to think over the topic and gather relevant ideas and materials. I speak in front of the mirror or with my brother ... I can address my grammatical, pronunciation or vocabulary problems. Therefore, I feel confident that I will do well.

Similarly, advance preparation can make students psychologically ready and strong. As Hashim commented:

It's like an earthquake if the teacher picks me up and says, 'OK come to the stage and do this'. If I am prepared for the class, I tell myself, 'I am ready and I can do this'. Thus, I feel relaxed.

Adil maintained:

Teachers should not surprise us. Sometimes, they inform us about tests just two days before ... If they inform us what we are expected to do, we can organise things.

Moreover, advance preparation can boost students' self-confidence. For example, one student wrote in the open-ended question, "I feel confident if I have some days to prepare my presentation or discussion topic".

5.4.2.2 Practising Speaking

Liu (2006) notes that more practice reduces students' anxiety about speaking in English. Comments from some of the interview participants also suggested that students may be less afraid of speaking if they have opportunities to practise their spoken English in class.

For example, Hussain thought that using English more would improve his oral English:

If we have more chances to speak English with each other [students] or with the teacher, we can overcome our weak areas such as grammar and we can improve our speaking proficiency.

Similarly, Imran declared that more familiarity with oral English would bolster his speaking and, in turn, he would feel less fear of speaking in class:

The more I speak the more I understand and learn ... if I get used to speaking English, I will feel less nervous when asked to speak in class.

Therefore, it is suggested that teachers incorporate activities into their lessons that help students practice their spoken English.

5.4.2.3 Adequate Wait-time

Many studies report that adequate wait-time reduces students' SA and helps them respond correctly (e.g. Zhang, 2010; Tóth, 2010). Several students who participated in this study reported in their interviews that they would feel more confident and comfortable if they were given sufficient wait-time to answer to the teacher's question or speak in class. This finding is confirmed by item 60 in Table 5.3, where it can be seen that 67% of students agreed that they would feel either very relaxed or moderately relaxed if they are called upon to answer when given a sufficient time to formulate the answer. This practice may allow students to think and put words and ideas together.

For example, Javed stated: *"I would be able to think and arrange words and ideas in my mind so that I may answer rightly"*. His further comment indicates that students may answer confidently, *"... I will not be very confused because I would have thought over the answer"*.

In addition, enough wait-time can reduce fear of making mistakes (FMM) and of negative evaluation (FNE). For example, Imran stated:

... if I have enough time for my presentation or if the teacher asks me to speak but gives me enough time, I will make fewer mistakes and I will be a good student.

Moreover, this technique can allow students to translate their ideas from Urdu into English and think over proper vocabulary and grammar. For example, Adnan reported:

I feel relaxed when the teacher says, 'no hurry'... I will be able to think in Urdu and then translate into English. Moreover, I will be able to find the right words and grammar patterns.

Classroom observation data also helped to explain the reasons behind the students' suggestion of giving them adequate wait-time. As already noted in section 5.3.2.3 above, I witnessed during observation sessions that teachers were not giving students sufficient time to answer or speak.

5.4.2.4 The Use of Urdu

Analysis of the interview data seemed to suggest that allowing students to use Urdu during their English speech may not only reduce their SA but also improve their spoken English. This finding is supported by item 61 in Table 5.4; 62.8% of students agreed that they would feel either very relaxed or moderately relaxed if they were allowed to use some Urdu when they cannot express themselves in English. Iqbal's (2004) study in Pakistan also suggested that students feel good if they are allowed to use some Urdu when speaking English in class. This is an interesting SA reducing technique as the use of L1 by students when speaking a foreign language appears not to have been previously reported upon as a strategy to alleviate SA.

Students may not be proficient in spoken English; thus, they may get stuck when speaking and, in turn, might feel embarrassed. However, if they are allowed to use some words of Urdu to explain their point, they may have sense of achievement which could make them confident and relaxed. Ali explained this, saying in his interview:

Sometimes, I know I have ideas but I don't know how to say in English ... the difficult time is when I get stuck during speaking as I feel I don't have words. Then, my tongue wants to say some Urdu words ... I think the teacher should not mind if I say some sentences in Urdu. I am sure when I will be out of trouble; I will again switch to English.

The strategy of mixing Urdu and English can increase students' willingness to speak. As Huma said:

Sometimes, I don't like to participate in class but I have to speak. However, I would feel good if I use some Urdu with English.

Similarly, Kashif's comment indicated that the use of Urdu can be helpful when students have to speak on the spot. Its use can help them develop their ideas and confidence and eventually, they may start speaking English. He declared:

If I am not ready and the teacher says, 'come on and speak' I think I will be able to do if I start my speech in Urdu.

Moreover, students' responses to the questionnaire open-ended question also suggested that they would feel less anxious when speaking in English if they could use some Urdu during oral activities such as presentation and discussion. For example one student wrote: *"One suggestion from my side is that we should use some Urdu sentences when discussing a topic ... it can help us continue"*.

5.4.2.5 Voluntary Participation

The interview data revealed that students do not feel comfortable when they are called on to speak. However, they feel relaxed when participation is voluntary. This finding is confirmed by item 51 in Table 5.4, where it can be seen that 67% of students agreed that they would feel relaxed if participation in discussions and debates were voluntary. Students in their interviews thought that it should be their decision whether to participate or not and the teacher should not force them to speak. This finding agrees with those of Young (1990) and Williams and Andrade (2008).

For example, Huma said, *"the teacher should not hold our ears to speak [compel us to speak]"*. She declared that she could concentrate in class if she could be sure that *"no one will drag me to speak"*.

Similarly, students may feel comfortable when they speak willingly. However, they may not perform well when they are forced to participate, perhaps because they were not ready. This practice might affect their future participation as well as performance. As Adnan confirmed:

I feel confident when my heart and mind allow me to participate or raise my hand to answer. However, I can't do well when I don't want to but I have to speak.

The students suggested that the teacher should not put them on the spot but rather accept and support volunteer participation in class. However, the onus cannot remain entirely with the teachers. The researcher's personal experience as a teacher is that some students will not participate until they are asked to do so. While sometimes teachers should leave it to students to decide whether to participate or not, therefore, if necessary non-participating students could be encouraged gently and kindly to speak.

5.4.2.6 Promoting Speaking through Interesting Activities

Young (1990) reported that the majority of students agreed that they would feel more comfortable and willing to participate in oral activities in the class if the discussion topics were interesting. In this reference, Young (1991) suggested that teachers should make oral activities so interesting that students forget that they are learning a foreign language.

One thread that ran through the interviews was that the use of interesting and enjoyable activities in class can reduce students' anxious feelings and promote their use of oral English. In students' responses to item 57 in Table 5.4, 71.1% of students agreed that they would feel relaxed if they learnt speaking through interesting activities. This result agrees with the findings of Cheng (2005) and Zhang (2010).

Akbar reported that such activities can remove students' boredom and stimulate their interest in class. Moreover, they can develop vocabulary and grammar in an easy way. He said: *"If oral activities are interesting, we would feel interested and not bored"*.

When asked for an example of such activity it was interesting that he suggested the story-telling:

There are many interesting activities which could improve our vocabulary and grammar. For example, I have seen a programme on TV where a teacher started the story and then he asked a student to develop that ahead and in this way, every student spoke turn by turn.

Students may like interesting activities such as story-telling perhaps because they can develop a story by relating it to their life experiences. It may also mean that students may experience less SA when they are asked to speak about topics or activities about which they have prior knowledge.

A comment by Kashif suggests that through interesting activities students can practice speaking in a less anxiety-provoking environment. He affirmed: *"I think interesting activities can make our class interesting and social. Thus, I would*

feel less afraid of speaking". Kashif further added that the *"discussion topics should be interesting"*. Students' responses to the open-ended question expressed the same opinion. One student wrote: *"I enjoy the class if the teacher teaches in an interesting way, or the material and tasks are interesting"*.

5.4.2.7 Adopting Activities that involve little risk of Exposure

The interview data indicated that students do not want to be singled out in front of the whole class. In other words, they are afraid of being in the spotlight in front of their peers. This finding is supported by the students' reactions to the following items in Table 5.4: 55.8% of students agreed with item 58, that they would feel less anxious if they make their oral presentations to a group instead of the whole class. This corresponds to item 55, to which 61.1% of students agreed that they would experience less SA if they are allowed to participate in debates in their own seats. Similarly, 72.8% of students agreed with item 53, indicating that they would feel relaxed if they repeat something as a class after the teacher. These three items have one feature in common: little or no risk of exposure is involved. It may mean that students are likely to feel less anxiety in speaking-oriented activities that do not focus their peers' attention on them.

The following quotation from Tahir's interview seems to indicate that students may feel less nervous in activities that involve little exposure:

I don't feel much nervousness when I speak individually with the teacher or with two, three students. And I feel I am not that person who is afraid of speaking in front of the class.

Similarly, Adnan stated:

I feel happy and confident when speaking if there are not too many students in class.

Kashif's comment also seems to indicate that students do not want to be overly exposed, *"I am sure many students feel nervous when they are asked to stand up and speak because speaking in a standing position becomes more difficult"*.

As already noted, classroom observation indicated that it seemed difficult for some students to go to the podium and give a presentation; they became confused and embarrassed when they did not do well or made mistakes, then they tried to speak but stuttered and murmured.

5.4.2.8 Group-Work

Working in groups is the last of the classroom activities suggested by the data that could reduce students' anxiety about speaking. Many studies report that students feel less communication apprehension when they participate in class in groups and pairs (e.g. Tóth, 2011; Young, 1990). In the current study several students also reported in their interviews that they would feel less fear of speaking if they perform in groups and pairs in class. They believed that they will have less FMM and FNE. These findings were supported by the students' responses to the following items in Table, 5.4: 65.8% of students agreed that they would feel either very relaxed or moderately relaxed by supporting item 52, "Work in groups of 3 or 4 and prepare an oral presentation". Correspondingly, 59.4% of students agreed that they would feel relaxed by supporting item 54, "Make an oral presentation with 2 or 3 other students in front of the class". Similarly, 75.8% of students agreed that they would feel relaxed by supporting item 56, "Interview each other in pairs".

One of the benefits of group-work in class could be that students may feel that they are not alone; thus, they may experience less speaking anxiety (SA). For example, Javed declared: *"I would feel protected when other students are with me during an oral presentation because I won't be the only student in front of the whole class"*. His further comment suggests that group-work can reduce SA stemming from FMM and poor performance, *"I would not feel as anxious if I can't do well or make mistakes in a group presentation"*.

Similarly, group-work could encourage students who are shy or lack confidence. As Noman commented, *"I feel self-conscious when I speak alone. However, my mind works better and I can speak better when two or three other students are with me because other students in class don't focus only on me"*.

Moreover, performing oral tasks in groups can create a collaborative classroom environment, as described by Noor: *“We would help each other because one’s success is others’ success”*. According to Samimy & Rardin (1994), a cooperative classroom environment also alleviates students’ anxious feelings.

Preparing or presenting oral tasks in groups can be a good opportunity for peer learning. If students’ speaking proficiency increases they may experience less SA. For example, Adil stated, *“They [other group members] are my helpers and I can learn from them”*.

Some responses to the questionnaire open-ended question also seemed to express the same view. For example, *“I think the teacher should divide us into groups to discuss a topic”*.

In most of the classroom observation sessions students were asked to perform individually. However, in some sessions, I noticed that students participated in oral activities in groups. There were some indications that students felt less SA in group-work as compared to open-class discussion. For example, they seemed more interested and relaxed in groups than speaking alone in front of the whole class. Moreover, the classroom environment seemed more social, encouraging and open during group performances than with individual performances.

Having presented teacher behaviour and classroom activities that would help alleviate Pakistani students’ SA, the next section of data analysis focuses on Pakistani EFL teachers’ perceptions of their students’ SA and teachers’ current strategies to reduce it.

5.5. Research Question 4: Teachers' Perceptions of their Students' Speaking Anxiety

The data explored in the following section are those informing fourth research question of the current study:

What are Pakistani EFL university teachers' perceptions of their students' foreign language speaking anxiety and what are the teachers' current strategies to reduce it?

This research question aims to explore Pakistani EFL university teachers' views about their students' speaking anxiety and the methods they currently use to reduce it. It was answered by teachers and the data were collected through semi-structured interviews and semi-structured classroom observations. The aim of this research question was not to explore students' SA, for example, sources of their SA, from their teachers' perspective, but rather to investigate teachers' awareness and personal views about their students' SA in class.

At the beginning of each interview, I asked teachers questions such as 'please share your feelings and experiences about your students' English learning and also about when they speak in the class'. During this conversation, they were almost unanimous in declaring that several students regard speaking as the most difficult activity in class. The formal semi-structured interviews revolved around the following four main questions: teachers' views about their students' speaking anxiety (SA), about their anxious students, their strategies to reduce their students' SA, and whether they had attended any formal training programmes to teach speaking in a less stressful classroom climate.

5.5.1 Teachers' Views on their Students' Speaking Anxiety

Ewald (2007) emphasises that it should not be assumed that all foreign language teachers are familiar with language anxiety. Similarly, several studies such as those by Lin (2009), Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009), and Chan & Wu (2004) note that some English teachers might not have adequate understanding of the influence of anxiety on their students' speaking performance.

When asked their views about their students' SA, several teachers in this study stated, in general, that they had not heard the term 'foreign language speaking

anxiety' or read about it. However, their interviews revealed that they knew about their students' general feelings of nervousness, uneasiness and frustration in class. Thus, after being introduced to the concept of SA, they agreed that many students try to avoid oral activities and do not feel relaxed when speaking in class. When asked their viewpoints about the impacts of anxiety on students' spoken English, several teachers presented potential and illustrative comments on the basis of their experience and observation. Their views can be divided into three categories.

5.5.1.1 Anxiety Affects Students' Speaking Skills

As mentioned above, some teachers did not have apparently enough knowledge of SA; however, since it is a common phenomenon in foreign language classes I explained the common problems, including SA, faced by students in a foreign language class. However, I took care not to impose my own subjective ideas on them or put my words into their mouths. Consequently, many interviewees reported that language anxiety does exist in their classes and it has debilitating effects on students' speaking.

For example, Jamal's following comment revealed the harmful effects of SA on students and suggested that anxiety can affect the main variables, motivation and confidence, which facilitate learning speaking. He confirmed:

Yes, I can say for sure that speaking anxiety kills the motivation and confidence of students. I know some students who behave like a fish out of water when they are asked to speak. They really tremble ... they don't want to participate in oral tasks.

Similarly, Aziz's following statement suggested that anxiety can impair students' cognitive processing of information and interfere with their performance, an observation also reported by Krashen (1982). Eventually, it may hinder their improvement. Aziz commented:

I don't know much about speaking anxiety but I think anxiousness blocks students' minds. They can't make progress. If they make a single mistake or other students laugh at them, they stutter and behave like a dumb person.

Nighat provided evidence that anxious students could become perfectionists. As Gregersen & Horwitz (2002) found, such students procrastinate with their assignments and are minimally involved in classroom activities. As a result, their participation may decrease, anxiety may increase, and improvement might not occur. The following quote from Nighat's interview reveals that SA can make students perfectionists, as well as affect their participation in oral activities:

Some students think that speaking in class is a big responsibility. Thus, they have to be perfect. I think speaking in class is something frightening for them ... some students really do not utter a word and they sit quiet. You ask them to go ahead and they will not utter a word.

Her further comment revealed the manifestations of anxiety:

Avoiding tasks is very common in such students. They keep their heads down all the time and show that they are busy. They will not look at the teacher, if you ask them something; it appears that they have not heard a word.

In the same vein, Umair suggested that SA is always present in foreign language classrooms, and it can affect students' willingness and confidence. In turn, they may be afraid of making mistakes and taking part in class. He commented thus:

I think speaking anxiety exists in every English classroom in Pakistan. Many students do not volunteer to present something. And they do not raise hands due to the fear that they might be wrong. Moreover, they do not ask questions and a lot more. Hence, I am not wrong in saying that language anxiety can derail the language learning process.

Rustam's statement echoed the conclusions of Horwitz (2001), who claims that the majority of foreign language learners experience anxiety, and language teachers are one of the main sources of their anxiety. Rustam had noticed that anxiety affects students' speaking skills, and also that teachers can also be a source of students' nervousness:

Students feel uncomfortable when speaking ... Some students are even afraid of the teacher and they think that he/she will not accept their wrong answers.

The interview data showed that SA can have cyclical effects. For example, if the teacher corrects students' errors harshly, they may grow afraid of making mistakes and reduce their participation. In turn, learning may not occur and they may experience more SA. Haroon highlighted this problem:

Many students are afraid of taking part in discussions or conversation in class due to speaking anxiety. But the trouble is that if they don't participate, they will not learn and in this way, they will increase their fears and difficulties.

5.5.1.2 Students do not Feel Speaking Anxiety

Some teachers, however, did not acknowledge the existence of SA and reported that students do not feel anxious when speaking English in class. They believed that some students are just uninterested, unintelligent and incompetent; therefore, they cannot perform well in class. Gregersen (2003) noticed similarly that although anxiety is a common phenomenon in foreign language classes, some teachers ascribe students' unwillingness to speak to factors such as lack of motivation and of interest.

One such teacher was Habib, who clearly stated:

I don't think students feel nervous or tense in oral activities. They are students and they have to be afraid of the teacher ... it is not speaking anxiety but as I said they have to lower their necks in front of the teacher to learn.

Habib's comment reflects his unawareness of SA and sense of authority, superiority and a negative attitude towards students. This mind-set about students could be detrimental to their language acquisition. Such an approach is not unexpected in the Pakistani context, where teachers consider themselves much superior to their students. Moreover, there are many proverbs in Pakistani culture which assert that learning can only come through sheer obedience to the teacher.

Similarly, Haneef believed that it is not anxiety which makes students evade oral activities, but rather a lack of interest in English:

I think some students don't want to speak. They don't like English class, teacher and speaking. Perhaps they have more interest in other subjects; therefore, they don't participate in oral tasks in class. You have to force them to get them involved in class.

In the same vein, Arif reported that some students may be incompetent; therefore they cannot speak:

They are not anxious. They can't speak because they are inefficient and they don't have the ability to speak well.

It is indeed possible that some students might not be interested in learning English; therefore, they might not take part actively in the class. However, attributing non-participation to lack of interest without any discussion or evidence of the real cause seems to indicate a negative attitude. Perhaps they are not interested in oral tasks due to SA or, as claimed by Jamal above, anxiety affects students' interest.

Lateef added:

Well I have never paid attention ... I have never asked them [students] about this [their SA]. They are adults ... I don't believe that they are afraid of speaking. Perhaps they are afraid of each other. They do not speak because they are not willing to speak. I think there is nothing which makes them afraid of speaking.

This comment seems to indicate that Lateef was unaware of the effects and sources of SA. Lateef himself admits that he never paid attention to the students' SA. Moreover, he seems uninterested in his teaching. Lateef's comment is self-revealing that anxiety may affect students' speaking. When asked that perhaps they are not willing to speak because of the fear of making mistakes, Lateef said, "Yes, it's possible" however, he remained consistent in saying that students do not feel anxious when speaking.

Teachers' beliefs that students do not feel SA and teachers' lack of concern towards anxious students are understandable. For example, many students in their interviews stated that their teachers did not ask them about their SA. For instance, one student, Javed reported, "...*the teacher never talked about our speaking anxiety.*" Such opinions of students have been explained in section 5.1 in this chapter.

Moreover, in relation to three teachers whose classes have been observed, I noticed that most of the time, except in some cases, teachers did not pay attention to students' SA or take any steps to make them feel comfortable. For example, if students made mistakes, they were asked to sit down and not to waste time. Then, they became passive and lost, but the teacher ignored them and did not encourage or involve them in the class. On the other hand, I noted down that teachers were responsible for major SA-inducing sources. For example, they were strict and authoritative, had negative attitude towards students' mistakes, and maintained a formal and stressful classroom environment. These sources have been explained in detail in section 5.3.4 above.

5.5.1.3 Anxiety Facilitates Speaking

Interestingly two teachers referred to the constructive aspects of anxiety. They believed that it can motivate students to increase their efforts to achieve their goals. For example, Mukhtiar's following comment suggests the facilitative role of anxiety:

Anxiety does not influence students' English speaking but encourages them to overcome their weaknesses. If they are worried about their speaking performance, they will work hard to do better ... this anxiousness is a key to improve.

In the same vein, although Aziz believed that anxiety may affect students' spoken English, he opined that it can also be a big push and stimulant for them:

... it [anxiety] can also be a blessing in disguise for some students. If they feel stressful and disappointed that they cannot speak well, they will try their best to improve themselves. I think

they get serious and they utilise their all abilities to perform better when they find that they are less competent than others.

When asked how much anxiety a student can manage in a positive way, he said, *"I can't tell but not too much"*.

Although anxiety might make students pay more attention to their spoken proficiency, teachers may not over-estimate the positive effects of anxiety on the oral aspects of English. Moreover, analysis presented above in this chapter seems to suggest that the majority of students experience debilitating anxiety. Similarly, MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a) state that "language anxiety consistently, negatively affects language learning and production" (p. 302).

5.5.2 Teachers' Views about Anxious Students

When asked whether they had ever noticed that some of their students experience anxiety in various situations or activities that require them to speak English, the teachers gave multiple answers. Their opinions can be divided into two categories: students do not feel good due to other problems; students do not feel good due to SA.

5.5.2.1 Students Do Not Feel Comfortable Due to Other Problems

Although the teachers admitted that speaking in front of the class is a challenging task for students, several of them had not taken students' discomfort into account from the perspective of SA. Moreover, they had noticed that students are afraid of speaking but had just ignored this or attached some other explanation to their SA. Young (1992) also argued that there can be gaps between the teachers' perceptions on anxiety and students' actual psychological needs.

One teacher in this study, Habib, thought that students do not feel good in the classroom due to their domestic or personal problems. Although such concerns can make students uneasy in the class, it may not always be the cause. They could be silent and worried in class due to SA. Teachers might not understand students' uneasy behaviour if they are not aware of their problems. Thus, these comments seem to emphasise the need for teachers to identify anxious students and discuss their problems with them, rather than leaving them alone

to suffer.

Habib stated:

Some students appear disturbed in the class ... a bit reluctant when asked to participate in speaking activities ... I think their domestic or personal problems might be disturbing them.

When asked if he had ever asked them about their discomfort or unwillingness to participate, he said:

I am sorry to say but I think my job is to come and deliver a lecture ... I don't need to be too personal with them as I am not their nurse or father.

However, he then commented more positively:

You have introduced me to speaking anxiety ... now I will read the articles on it. I really didn't see this side. Onwards, I will try to look at my students' condition from a different perspective".

Haneef thought that students do not want to speak because they are unable to speak. However, foreign language learning is a complex process and besides learners' mental capabilities, it may be affected by various other factors such as affective ones. It is possible that some intelligent students may not be successful language learners. Such teachers' views might affect students' learning. Haneef stated:

I think they [students] do not have the capability of speaking English or perhaps they are not gifted students. They do not have good ideas and that is the reason they are reluctant to speak.

Mureed had a different interpretation; he believed that some students are introverts and they cannot perform comfortably because being anxious is a part of their personality. Some students could be characteristically shy, however, providing them with a positive classroom environment and increasing their self-esteem can be helpful in motivating them to participate in class. Mureed believed that:

Some students are naturally anxious. They always try to hide themselves. I think they are not comfortable at their homes. Yes, I know some students who become extremely gloomy after making mistakes.

When asked how he could help such students in his class, he said, *“Well, I am not sure how I can help. I think it is difficult to change their habits and personality”*.

Lateef was also unaware of SA, he said, *“I did not know that anxiety is related to language learning, I simply know that this term is used in the medical field”*. He gave his view of students’ anxiousness in the class, stating *“I think students do not like English class and take interest in speaking activities due to the pressure of other subjects”*. He further added, *“They look a bit upset but I think not very anxious”*.

Although some students may not feel happy in class due to some of the issues mentioned above by the teachers, it is not a useful practice to ignore other possible causes of their discomfort, for example, SA. It is suggested that the teachers should meet with anxious students individually to address their problems.

My classroom observations were instrumental in reflecting the teachers’ approach of not identifying anxious students, their views that students were not anxious, and even their behaviours regarding intentionally ignoring anxious students. As already noted in section 5.5.1.2 above, I witnessed during my classroom observations that teachers had mostly negative and discouraging attitude towards students, for example, in terms of correcting their mistakes, of interacting with them, and towards their performance. Moreover, teachers did not address students’ anxiety and discomfort, and ignored students who were not participating, or were sitting quiet and lost.

5.5.2.2 Students Do Not Feel Comfortable Due to SA

On the other hand, some teachers stated that they had observed some of their students feeling anxious when asked to participate in oral activities in class. Humaira for example had noticed students’ SA through their facial expressions

and behaviour:

Yes, many times. You ask a question, look at the class ... you can see them easily. Their faces tell you everything. They appear very worried. Once the question is answered, you can see them relaxed.

Similarly, Umair had noticed students who had certain signs of SA such as they evade oral tasks, sit silent in class, and even leave the class due to apprehension that they could be asked to speak:

I remember some of my previous students who tried to avoid speaking. I have students in this class who would try to leave the class when they know that they might be asked to speak English. They will not speak a word ... they are mostly passive.

Jamal had not only identified anxious students but also had guided them to make them feel comfortable:

I know some students who shiver during their presentations. And you can guess by seeing their physical condition that how they are feeling ... I have discussed some students' speaking anxiety with them. For example, one student was afraid of making mistakes and I assured him that he should not worry about mistakes.

In the Pakistani context, it could be difficult for the students to share their SA with their teachers. Thus, the teachers could ask anxious students about their problems and difficulties in class. Furthermore, students may be encouraged to share their problems with their teachers if they are friendly and sympathetic.

Haroon had also noticed some of his students feeling uncomfortable in class, so, he read some research to address his students' SA.

I noticed some of my students frequently feeling upset when speaking. Therefore, I browsed topics on internet such as, why language students feel uncomfortable in class. And I came across some articles about foreign language anxiety which were very useful.

He further added, *"I think speaking anxiety is a serious issue and teachers must address it"*.

During my classroom observations, in a few cases, I noted the use of certain strategies, such as developing a positive social classroom environment, correcting students' mistakes gently, and giving a positive feedback, which may make students feel comfortable and promote their speaking. These strategies have been explained in detail in the following section.

5.5.3 Teachers' Strategies to Reduce Students' Anxiety About Speaking in Classroom

Although the teachers agreed that anxiety can have debilitating effects on students' speaking performance, when asked their strategies to reduce their students' SA, several teachers reported that they had not addressed it. For example, Aziz reported that he had not employed any strategies to mitigate his students' SA since he believed that his duty is just to teach students and not to ask about their problems or difficulties:

I have never thought of any formal strategies. My job is to go and teach them [students] ... we are together until the class is over and then, I have no concern.

Similarly, Habib believed that his job is solely to teach students speaking; it is not his responsibility to ask them about their problems and difficulties. His comment below indicates that some teachers may even intentionally ignore their students' SA. Likewise, they may believe that it is students' own concern if they are unmotivated or uncomfortable. I have already explained this behaviour of teachers in sections 5.5.1.2 and 5.5.2.1 above as observed in their classes. However, Horwitz (2001) reported that teachers can reduce students' anxiety by being considerate to them. Habib said in his interview:

If they don't feel OK it is their problem to manage ... if they are good learners they have to be motivated and ready for challenges. I never asked them about such things as I am not bound to ask.

Some teachers were not using any strategies to manage their students' SA because they were unaware of any strategies. For example, Rustam clearly stated, "I mean what kind of strategies ... I do not know any ways".

Likewise, Haneef showed his unawareness of SA managing strategies as well as a lack of discussion about academic topics among teachers:

I never thought in this way in class and I am unaware. Other teachers never discussed such things with me or told me about any methods to reduce students' speaking anxiety.

However, he further reported that he will ask students about their SA.

There are factors that may also discourage teachers from using any strategies to address their students' problems, including SA. For example, Humaira was willing to help her students but failed to do so due to large classes, since it was hard for her to pay attention to each student:

I wish to but I can't talk to too many students. I will have to spend many days talking to each student. I should know their problems but I do not know. However, I try to make them feel good.

In the same context, excess course material or the pressure of teaching the whole course can also minimise opportunities for consultation between students and the teacher. For instance, Mukhtiar admitted:

However, I don't have time to address students' problems. As a teacher my main target is to finish the course on time ... I can be a better teacher if I complete the course before other teachers do.

Additionally, Mureed exposed the weaknesses of Pakistani teachers and teaching culture. It appears that some teachers really may be unaware of SA or as said above, some just may ignore it intentionally. He explained:

All depends upon your philosophy of teaching. Some teachers like to show themselves as strict and an authority. They know that students are not feeling good but they will not notice them. If you like you can teach them [students] in a strict way or if you like in a friendly way ... no one complains or asks ...

He then added, "You [the researcher] also know about our classroom culture that some teachers have very negative attitudes towards students".

It appears that some teachers might be unaware of any strategies to counter students' SA or they may not pay attention to it intentionally in spite of knowing that students are anxious. There could be many explanations such as personal and socio-cultural for the above findings. These reasons will be discussed in detail in the discussion chapter.

On the other hand, some teachers reported that they had used, or would use, certain strategies to alleviate their students' SA. The following strategies were reported by the teachers.

1. Relaxed Classroom Environment

Three teachers reported that the provision of a sociable and secure classroom climate is a helpful strategy to alleviate students' anxious feelings and promote their speaking. Nighat stated that students feel relaxed and participate more actively and confidently in a warm and positive classroom environment; thus, she created a healthy climate in the class. She stated:

I think a comfortable classroom atmosphere is as important for students as oxygen for humans. I try to make my classroom open and relaxed. And I have found that students feel active and they are less afraid of speaking.

Jamal's strategy to reduce his students' SA was to create a sociable and friendly classroom atmosphere. Moreover, his statement indicates that activities such as telling jokes and allowing students to speak about their favourite topics could make the classroom environment relaxed. Jamal said:

Yes, one strategy is that I make my classroom a common room where students feel free to sit and chat. Sometimes, they tell jokes. I ask them to speak about anything they like and tell their experiences to others so that they should become friends. Thus, they feel secure and relaxed.

2. Friendly Behaviour

Three teachers believed that teachers' friendly relations with their students can reduce SA. Umair indicated that friendly behaviour on the part of the teacher lessens students' SA and encourages them to learn more:

My method is to behave like a friend with them. I do not show that I am superior to them. Sometimes, we tell funny stories ... I laugh with them. My positive attitude makes them comfortable as well as motivates them to ask me questions without any hesitation.

His further comment indicates that teachers' personal interest in students, shown by listening to their problems, could facilitate their learning to speak. Empathetic behaviour by the teacher can help students overcome their SA on one hand, and give teachers insight into managing their students' SA on the other. Umair continued:

I tell them that my door is always open for you and you are welcome to come and meet me. I ask them about their concerns to show my attachment with them and they look satisfied.

Similarly, Jamal maintained positive and friendly relations with his students. Moreover, he provided them with opportunities to socialise with each other out of the class:

I do not present myself as a judge and I try to lessen the distance between me and students. Sometimes, we go out for picnics or something like that ...

In the same vein, Nighat was caring towards her students. Her strategy was to ask herself how students can feel good. This practice of reflecting is helpful in the language learning process (Mullock, 2003). Nighat stated:

I place myself in my students' position and then I decide what I should do. I show them that I am always there to help them. I mean I show that I am concerned about them.

Although three of the teacher interviewees claimed that they provide students with a positive and sociable classroom environment and have friendly relations with them in order to lessen their SA and promote their speaking, unfortunately, my classroom observations do not appear to fully support the teachers' claims.

In relation to the three teachers whose classes have been observed, I have explained with examples in various sections (e.g. 5.3.4.1, 5.3.4.3 and 5.3.4.4) above that the attitude and tone of the two teachers were clearly strict and

authoritative, and reflected a sense of superiority. Moreover, I observed that the classroom environment was formal, strict and stressful.

So far the third teacher observed, was found showing a sociable and humorous behaviour and creating a relaxed and informal classroom climate. However, it was evident only in a couple of cases in one of his four observed classes. For example, in one case, a student used the proverb, "Don't count your chickens before they are hatched" during his oral presentation. Following this, the teacher told a humorous story to the students related to this proverb. Then, the teacher asked students to share any related joke or story. One student shared a joke and another one told a funny story. In turn, all students, including the teacher, laughed. I observed that this event created a sociable and open classroom environment as students seemed relaxed, happy, and interested. Also, I found that some students participated more willingly. Likewise, in another case, he showed a positive attitude towards a student's mistakes and explained the correct version to the whole class in a positive and encouraging way. However, overall this teacher's attitude observed in his three classes seemed authoritative and strict and he maintained a formal classroom environment. For example, in some cases, he scorned some students for their mistakes and scolded them. Similarly, he became angry with two students who were talking to each other during his lecture.

Some Pakistani EFL teachers, on the one hand, may want to have friendly relationships with their students, on the other hand, they may adopt a strict attitude due to various reasons. For example, it is part of a cultural behaviour that various teachers consider themselves superior to their students and teachers are sensitive to their status. Rehmani (2006) also highlights this behaviour stating that in the context of Pakistan, "learning is mostly passive and teacher-centred, and teachers have authority and control over their students" (p.512). In this regard, I think some teachers may have intentionally strict and authoritative attitude towards students. Perhaps, they are not fully ready to change this culture believing that they may lose their authority, power, and superiority. Another reason could be that there is no accountability, in real sense, for what teachers do and how they behave with their students in class.

It is also worth noting that students' accounts regarding classroom environment and teacher behaviour mentioned in various sub-sections of section 5.3 above do not appear to support teachers' claims about these two factors. For example, several students reported in their interviews that their teachers were strict and maintained a formal classroom climate. Moreover, my classroom observations also support these students' views. There could be several reasons for the inconsistencies between what teachers said in their interviews, and what I noted in sessions observed. For example, they might not have told me the truth due to the fear that they may lose face - an important cultural consideration in Pakistani context. Likewise, although I informed teachers of the aims of the interview, they might have thought that I was assessing their teaching practices.

3. Interesting Topics and Activities

Three teachers stated that they gave students interesting topics and used interesting activities in class in order to attract their interest and reduce their boredom. For example, Haroon's strategy was to give students interesting topics for oral tasks rather than complicated ones. Moreover, sometimes he allowed them to choose their own topics. In this way, he believed, students feel interested and participate more actively in class. He said:

Students feel interested and relaxed if the topics for presentation or discussion are interesting. Thus, I do not assign them political or religious topics but simple ones or I let them choose the topics.

Although it was hard for Humaira to give time to students for individual help, she did incorporate interesting, relevant, and suitable oral activities to maintain their interest in the class:

I select activities which are interesting as well as helpful to improve students' daily life communication needs. Moreover, those activities which suit their proficiency levels so that they should speak up.

Niaz was also using interesting activities and when asked about an example of such activities, he answered, "*Debates, asking students to give positive and negative comments about any topic for example, TV ... students get more involved ... and role plays*".

While some teachers explain in their interviews that they incorporate interesting oral activities in class, give students interesting and easy topics to speak on, and sometimes allow them to choose their own topics, my classroom observations do not appear to fully support the teachers' claims. Unfortunately, none of the three teachers observed asked students to choose their own topics for oral presentations or discussions; rather the topics were always given by the teachers. Moreover, as already explained in sections 5.3.2.2 and 5.3.2.4 above, I noted during my classroom observations that most of the time teachers gave students topics which did not seem appropriate to fulfil students' daily life communicative needs. For example, most of the topics were complicated English proverbs or far-fetched ideas. Moreover, I felt that the topics were difficult for students and they did not seem to have prior knowledge about them. For example, as mentioned above in section 5.3.2.4, students were asked to discuss the topic 'clash of civilisations'. They appeared confused and most students did not participate actively. Although such topics may not be difficult for some students and may improve their speaking, it could be difficult for some Pakistani EFL students to speak on difficult topics due to various reasons, such as lack of reading habits and resources, and stressful classroom environment.

However, in a few cases, students were given easy and simple topics. For example, one teacher asked students to speak on the topic, 'health is wealth'. I witnessed that many students participated and they seemed interested and excited. It could be easier for students to speak on such topics perhaps due to having relevant vocabulary and knowledge about such topics.

4. Group-Work

Some teachers used the activity of group-work to reduce their students' SA. For example, although it was difficult for Haroon to use and manage group-work in a large class, he had used it since it encouraged students to speak English:

Some students can't speak when alone but they can speak and feel less anxious when in groups. Thus, I divide my students into groups to perform speaking tasks. Sometimes, making groups and supervising them becomes difficult due to a large number of students in my class.

This finding seems to indicate that teachers who want to use group-work in their classes may be discouraged due to constraints such as large classes.

Humaira also used group-work in class, stating *“I divide my students into various groups for discussion activities”*.

Likewise, Jamal reported that group-work allows students to get to know each other on the one hand, and improves their learning on the other:

I assign oral presentations to three or four students to make. I think this technique is important to get them closer as well as allowing them to learn from each other. Moreover, they are not afraid of the fear of being ridiculed for their poor performance.

During my classroom observations, as already noted in section 5.4.2.8 above, I noticed that most of the time students were assigned oral tasks individually, and they were also asked to perform them, particularly oral presentations, individually. In some sessions observed, however, I found that students participated in oral activities in groups. Thus, it could be stated that to some extent my observation data supports teachers' claims. Shamim and Tribble (2005) also claimed that pair and group work are infrequently used in English classrooms at the university level in Pakistan. Thus, there is a need to make a frequent use of group work. I think over-crowded and inappropriate classrooms could be one of the obstacles due to which teachers may not use pair and group work in class.

5. Encouragement

Three teachers were utilising the approach of positive reinforcement to strengthen their students' confidence, lessen their stress, and increase their participation. Nighat encouraged poorly-performing students to do better. Moreover, she motivated them to speak without any fear of mistakes or of negative evaluation, in order to increase their confidence. She stated:

If my students' speaking performance is poor, I encourage them that they have the ability to do better. Moreover, I make any positive point out of their work and appreciate that. Similarly, I try to address their fears such as I ask them to speak without caring about mistakes or what other people think of them so that they should feel confident.

Umair's strategy was to ask weak students easy questions to encourage them and involve them in the learning process:

I ask weak students simple questions as I know they will be able to answer. My purpose is to reduce their fear of speaking and to encourage them to participate.

In reference to my classroom observations, most of the time observed teachers' attitude towards students' poor performance was discouraging. However, in a few cases, students were provided with a positive reinforcement. For example, one teacher used comments such as 'no problem, carry on', when a student made a mistake, and 'very good, excellent', when a student performed well. However, I noted this behaviour only in one of his four observed sessions. Overall, he corrected students' mistakes harshly and admonished them for their mistakes and did not praise students' good performance. In another case, as already noted in section 5.4.1.4 above, a student gave a good talk on a topic and the teacher appreciated his performance and used encouraging and positive comments for him. I noticed that the student seemed happy, relaxed and confident and he showed more interest in the rest of the class.

5.5.4 Formal Training on Teaching Speaking in a Comfortable and Facilitating Classroom Environment

Teachers were asked various questions about their formal training, for example, whether they had attended any teacher training programmes, ELT workshops/courses, or professional development programmes which could enable them to teach students speaking effectively, in a facilitating and comfortable classroom environment, how to behave with students and manage the class, and how to address students' fears, beliefs, and their other problems and difficulties associated with learning a foreign language. Professional development programmes enable the teachers to make their teaching more effective and productive and to motivate students and boost their confidence (Mullock, 2006). As a result, students may feel less stressful in class and their language learning and speaking may be a more pleasant experience. Moreover, Machida (2011) reports that if teachers are not formally trained they may not be able to understand and address students' anxiety.

In this study, all the teachers except four reported that they had not received

any formal training. However, three teachers had completed a B.Ed (Bachelor of Education) degree and one of them had been awarded an M.Ed (Master of Education).

Four teachers answered that they had undergone some training on teaching English or speaking. For example, Humaira said:

I have got a diploma in TEFL from Allama Iqbal Open University [a university in Pakistan]. The books were very good and I read them thoroughly. They helped me to know my weaknesses and improve my teaching.

Moreover, she had attended a programme conducted by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC), she said:

I attended a faculty development programme conducted by the HEC. It aimed to improve our language teaching skills. Moreover, we learnt about classroom management and reflective teaching. We were also taught how to teach and improve students' speaking skills ... also about various speaking activities. This programme overall helped me understand how to behave with students, discuss their problems with them, and make them feel good in the classroom.

Similarly, Umair had got a certificate in ELT and attended two teaching workshops conducted by the HEC. He reported:

I have a certificate in ELT and have attended two teaching workshops run by the HEC. They were helpful as I had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss various issues with the other participants. We were taught about classroom management and I got many ideas about common problems in a language classroom ... now I have developed my own strategies about how to encourage students to speak and volunteer answers and how to maintain their interest in the classroom.

His further comment seems to show that such programmes are rarely conducted in Pakistan, nor are they conducted effectively and productively:

The HEC doesn't have many resources; therefore, such projects are not conducted very often. But I must tell you that they are not

very effective because neither the administration nor the attendees [teachers] take them seriously.

As mentioned above, several teachers had not attended any training programmes. For example, Rustam reported that he had not received any training on how to address students' SA and other language learning problems. Moreover, he believed that he could make his teaching practices effective and address students' problems by using his personal experience as a student. He said:

No, I haven't received any training. I think without training one can teach speaking productively. My own past experience as a student guides me a lot on how to help students, teach them effectively, and supervise the class.

However, personal experiences may be biased and decisions and help guided by them may not be suitable for all students. On the other hand, training courses are usually designed on the basis of research; thus, training may better facilitate learning.

Similarly, Mureed had not sought any training to provide students with a comfortable classroom environment. Moreover, he had not heard about any such training from his colleagues. He commented:

I have not attended any courses or training to lessen students' stress and pressure in a language class and address students' other problems. Moreover, none of my colleagues ever talked about such seminars or workshops.

He further added, *"In fact there is no such requirement for university teachers"*.

Similarly, when asked whether he had attended any training programmes to inform him what kind of attitude can make students comfortable and how to address their difficulties and concerns, Aziz reported that he was unfamiliar with any such kind of programme. Moreover, he stated that how to behave with students depends on the teacher. He said, *"I am unaware. But it depends upon you; you can be gentle or stern"*.

Finally, Mukhtiar had not attended any training programme and moreover, he argued that most of the teachers are unaware of effective language teaching methods due to the lack of research in the field of ELT in Pakistan: *“Very little is known about classroom issues and effective English teaching since very little research in ELT exists”*. He further highlighted that some organisations are offering training programmes, *“I have heard that besides HEC, some universities such as Allama Iqbal Open University have started such programmes. Moreover, the British Council is also playing its role”*.

On the other hand, three teachers had not attended any teacher training or professional development programmes, however they had gained the degree of B.Ed and one of them had gained an M.Ed. For instance, Haneef stated:

I didn't get any training but I have sought the professional degree of B.Ed which helped me improve my teaching skills.

Jamal had also gained his B.Ed degree and it helped him understand students' various problems, since *“in my B.Ed course, I read a subject about psychology. I read different stories of students ... their views and problems regarding their peers, classroom and the teacher”*.

Haroon had undertaken an M. Ed and it gave him ideas about his teaching, *“I have got M.Ed and it is insightful for teaching speaking fruitfully”*.

In sum, many teachers were not trained to teach speaking in a comfortable classroom environment and address their problems and concerns regarding foreign language learning. Although teachers may follow such practices without any formal training, in contexts such as Pakistan formal training is important for many reasons such as teacher-centred classrooms and the gap between teachers and students. Moreover, many teachers in this study were unaware of SA and any strategies to reduce students' SA. Thus, formal training could inform them of students' problems, including SA.

Although various organisations such as HEC and Agha Khan University have conducted teacher training programmes, teachers may not be involved or

interested in such programmes for many reasons; for example, lack of evaluation and few incentives for professional development. Such reasons will be further explained in detail in the discussion chapter.

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented an analysis of the data based on the research questions of the present study. The data suggested many factors contributing to students' SA. It was found that teachers' friendly, encouraging, and positive attitude and a relaxed classroom environment can help reduce students' SA. Moreover, preparation in advance and activities that involve little risk of exposure can also lessen students' SA during oral tasks. In addition, it is suggested that teachers could be aware of the factors that might create SA for students. The following chapter will discuss the above findings.

Chapter 6

Discussion of the Research Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. Section one discusses the results of the study with a particular reference to the context and the literature. First, it discusses the anxiety experienced by students when asked to speak English and the factors contributing to that anxiety. Teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may reduce speaking anxiety (SA), together with Pakistani English as a foreign language (EFL), university teachers' views about their students' SA and the strategies teachers use to reduce their students' SA are then discussed. Section two presents a theoretical perspective of the findings of the present study with reference to some key issues in order to highlight the role of anxiety in language learning. First, it provides the discussion of the issue of facilitating and debilitating anxiety, which is followed by the discussion of the question about whether language anxiety is a cause or consequence of poor language achievement. Next, it presents a discussion of factors which may influence anxiety directly or indirectly. Finally, it discusses the findings according to three perspectives of anxiety: trait, state, and situation-specific, and also it discusses the findings which may also be related to classrooms of other subjects.

SECTION ONE: Discussion of the Results with a Particular Reference to the Context and the Literature

6.2 Speaking: the Most Anxiety-Provoking Skill

Most students studied agreed that, of all four skill areas, speaking contributes to their anxiety the most, followed by writing, then listening and reading. These results are consistent with those of Hurd & Xiao (2010) and Brantmeier (2005). This implies that students experience more stress in the productive skills of speaking and writing than in the receptive skills of listening and reading. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a) argue that the productive language skills require the active use of formulation, production and retention of language and also that anxiety obstructs these processes.

Speaking differs from other skills because of its public nature with oral activities often singling out learners, whereby they can become the centre of attention for the other students. According to Tóth (2010), foreign language learners feel uncomfortable when they become the object of attention in the class. SA may also be a feature of some students' personality; for example, they may not wish to face this exposure due to a general lack of confidence and a lack of faith in their speaking abilities. Furthermore, speaking could be significantly threatening for some students because it may expose their linguistic inadequacies.

The debilitating effects of students' anxiety upon speaking performance itself can be explained with reference to Tobias's (1986) model of how anxiety influences all three stages of learning: input, processing, and output. The findings of the current study suggested that some students become anxious before even starting their oral task; to such a degree that at the input stage anxiety can limit their concentration and they may not fully understand the teacher's instructions about the task. At the processing stage, anxiety may impair students' cognitive processing and at the output stage it might interfere with the organisation and retrieval of the material and ideas required for the task, resulting in poor speaking performance.

The data from this current study suggested that to produce correct spoken English during lessons, students have to consider linguistic patterns, such as grammar and vocabulary, ideas, and also whether they are making a positive impression upon the teacher and fellow students. This could result in fear of negative evaluation (FNE). Aida (1994) argues that foreign language learning poses threats both to students' self-concept and their self-esteem. Oxford (1999) suggests that students with high self-esteem manage their anxiety and perform better in language classes than their counterparts with low self-esteem. This is, perhaps, the reason that Young (1990) suggests examining socio-psychological concepts associated with language learning and anxiety such as Guiora's (1972) idea of "language ego" and Clarke's (1976) theory of "clash of consciousness" in order to fully understand the phenomenon of foreign language anxiety (FLA) (Young, 1990:550).

There is evidence in the data that if students' SA is not addressed, students may withdraw from communication or even abandon their classes altogether, a response similar to that of the students in Dewaele & Thirtle's (2009) study. This avoidance behaviour can have detrimental effects on students' achievement as it may cause them to fall behind in the class (Aida, 1994). It is also apparent in the findings that their own anxiety may create a permanent fear of speaking in students. They are often afraid of getting involved in oral activities in class. Sometimes, this fear can manifest itself as being strong and some students may even tremble when speaking. Similarly, Hewitt & Stephenson (2011) found that some of their university participants cried during oral tasks.

In the Pakistani context there could be many explanations for students' SA. For example, as suggested by the data, their lack of background knowledge about oral communication and of exposure to speaking in pre-university classes may be a cause of their speaking anxiety (SA). Shamim (2008) also argues that in Pakistan, students' speaking skills are usually not given due attention in pre-university classes and students then consequently face difficulties in comprehending and speaking English at university level. Furthermore, from the socio-economic point of view, strong speaking skills are helpful for finding better-paid jobs. Therefore, students are often more concerned about the oral aspects of English and may feel stress if they find that they are not performing well. Finally, negative past experiences with foreign language speaking, the test-oriented education system and the greater focus on grammar rather than speaking all may also cause SA for students. These factors are explained in detail in the discussion of research question number two below.

The present study further suggested that, although speaking is recognised as the single most anxiety-generating skill, any of the four skill areas can be anxiety-provoking for students. In other words, some students can become particularly nervous when speaking English in class, and others in writing, listening and reading. It is also possible that some students may experience anxiety in more than one skill simultaneously. However, it is important to stress that, course requirements, individual differences, and classroom tasks and procedures may all determine students' language anxiety levels in each individual skill. Many studies point to the existence of skill-specific anxiety, such

as Elkhafaifi (2005) on listening anxiety, Matsuda & Gobel (2004) on reading and Cheng et al. (1999) on writing anxiety. This development of a focus on skill-specific anxiety is a productive step in the field of language anxiety as it can provide language teachers with a more accurate and holistic picture of the nature of students' anxiety and indicate multiple approaches to address it in the classroom. According to Cheng et al. (1999), this trend would examine the underlying mechanisms, whether social or psychological, of language anxiety in all skills and help to understand the foundations of FLA. This understanding will hopefully lead to a more comprehensive theoretical model of FLA. Moreover, there appears to be a need to develop a comprehensive measuring tool to diagnose FLA more accurately in all four skills together, which could result in a better understanding and knowledge of it.

6.3 Factors Contributing to Students' Speaking Anxiety

Five areas of potential causes of students' speaking anxiety (SA) were identified: namely, individual learner-related sources, classroom-related sources, linguistic-related sources, teacher-student interaction, and socio-cultural-related sources (c.f. fig.6.1).

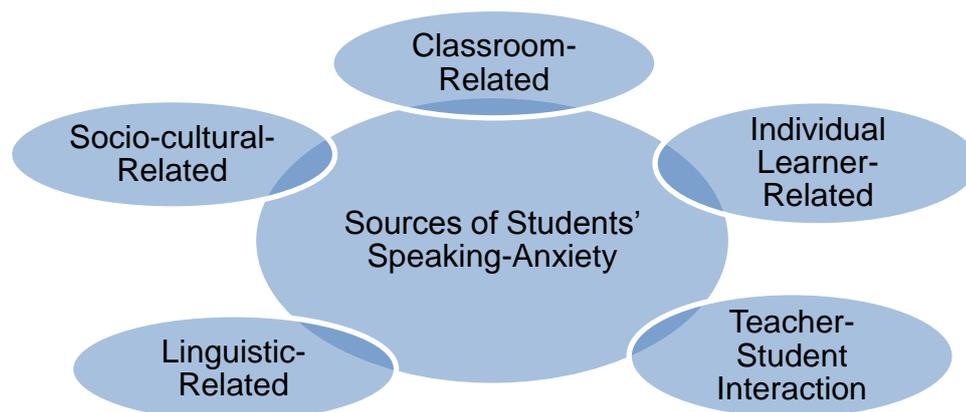


Figure 6.1 Sources of Students' Speaking Anxiety

6.3.1 Individual Learner-Related Sources

The individual learner-related factors include students' personality, students' beliefs, motivation, and lack of confidence. These are discussed individually in turn below.

6.3.1.1 Personality

Data analysis revealed that some students may have an anxious personality; therefore they are more prone to feeling anxiety. In addition, they appear to experience nervousness in a variety of situations. This finding is in agreement with previous research (e.g. Frantzen & Magnan, 2005). Similarly, Kim (2009:153) reports that language students "may experience some inherent levels of anxiety while taking part in oral activities".

The data from this study revealed that some students were found to be shy and introverted. Due to this introvert personality they were not even comfortable speaking their own language in front of other people. Therefore, speaking in English, in which they may not have been proficient and in front of the whole class was a more difficult task for them. It could be that this is the reason that language anxiety is specific to language-learning situations because in a language class students have to actively participate in classroom activities and in doing so their personality may be exposed. Moreover, mistakes are common in a foreign language classroom and the data indicated that students identified as 'introverts' may be over-concerned about their mistakes. They may find it difficult to forget their own poor performance and, in turn, they may lose faith in their abilities and develop unrealistic fears. As it is possible that so-called introverted students may not be very sociable, they may not form friendly relationships with other students. Therefore, they may interpret their teacher's and peers' opinions and criticism negatively and could actively decide not to participate in classroom activities any more. One important finding of the present study suggested that introverted students were quite aware that their fellow students also make mistakes and receive negative feedback, but that these other students could seemingly forget their perceived failure more easily. However, introverted students seemed unable to reconcile their own poor performance. It is possible that due to this over-concern about performance they might develop a phobia about the classroom, teacher or other students.

Studies such as Oya et al. (2004) have found that extroverted students perform better when speaking than introverted ones.

In reference to Pakistan, many socio-cultural explanations can be given as possible explanations for students to have an anxious personality. For example, the home environment is quite strict and parents place many restrictions on their children. Moreover, parents severely criticise children for their mistakes. This behaviour could lead to the development of an anxious personality. Similarly, past failures might make some students timid and less confident. Such students may not have faith in their abilities; instead they may even think that they are always wrong. Therefore, they may feel fear and anxiety even before going to the class or speaking in the class.

6.3.1.2 Students' Beliefs

There is evidence in the data that some students may have certain preconceived and irrational beliefs about language-learning and speaking which may not only hamper their efforts to learn, but additionally create frustration and fear. This result is consistent with the findings of Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) and Adeel (2011). Several students in this present study appeared to believe that good communication requires certain abilities; for example, a “sharp mind” and a “sharp memory” and they further expressed the thought that those who lack this talent might not be able to communicate in English. This belief is also reiterated in Wang's (2005) research which concluded that the majority of Chinese EFL students studied tended to believe that some students have a special ability for speaking a foreign language. Such beliefs might have detrimental effects on students' learning because, if they believe that they do not possess this ability to speak English, this could lessen the impulse to increase their efforts to improve. Such students may easily give up and could feel nervous. This belief could equally develop as a result of a lack of motivation. In addition, students might have further low expectations about their performance. As a consequence, they might be unreceptive to language input; potentially hampering the learning process.

Another belief held by the students in this study was that they should not speak until they are fully sure that they can speak correctly. Horwitz's (1988)

participants also appeared to believe that they should not speak until they are sure of the accuracy of the language output. This belief could put students in the middle of a vicious circle of anxiety. For example, if they do not want to speak until their utterance is fully accurate, they then will tend to participate less in oral tasks. As a result, they may not improve and may experience more SA. The data from this study also indicated that such beliefs could result in students' perfectionism, i.e. them thinking that they should speak flawlessly, often resulting in them being disappointed in their quest to achieve this standard. Students may develop this belief due to professional demands as, according to Shamim (2011), in Pakistan it is difficult to find a well-paid job due to a highly competitive job market and a high rate of unemployment. She adds that only the best candidates are recruited.

I would argue that the above beliefs could arise primarily because of certain fears such as fear of making mistakes (FMM). For example, if students make errors in class and the teacher gives them poor grades, or criticises their performance, this could result in them believing that nothing less than perfection is acceptable. Moreover, students' previous language learning and speaking experiences, lack of confidence, personality traits and especially lack of knowledge could motivate students to believe that they lack some special abilities which are essential for speaking English. Likewise, students' beliefs could also be influenced by their teachers' beliefs about language-learning and teaching. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers' beliefs should also be investigated.

6.3.1.3 Motivation

As in other countries, in Pakistan English plays a vital role in obtaining well-paid jobs (such as in the civil services and armed forces) and as such bestowing professional excellence and an honourable place in society. Consequently, Pakistani students attach an ever-increasing value to learning English. The data from this study revealed that the students had a high 'instrumental' motivation towards speaking English. They appeared to believe that competence in oral English plays a role as a gatekeeper to economic success and social status. According to Shamim (2011), the main driving force behind students' desire to learn English in Pakistan is its promise of economic success and personal

development. Moreover, Adeel (2011) notes that in Pakistani society speaking English is a status symbol.

However, evidence in the data suggests that when students find that they are not achieving their target learning objectives, they become frustrated and anxious. Interestingly they themselves explicitly explained the reasons for their stress stemming from motivation. According to them, English was considered as something precious and they appeared worried that they might lose this valuable thing, i.e. proficiency in spoken English.

It appears that the strength of their motivation can make some students anxious. Although no, “previous study has specifically inquired into the relationship between motivation and FLA” (Tóth, 2010:119), some researchers (for example, Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003; Clément et al., 1994; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b) have contended that there is a negative relationship between language anxiety and motivation. However, the current study illustrates a positive relationship between these two variables. These divided findings seem to suggest that future studies could usefully focus specifically on the association between the motivation for learning English and speaking anxiety (SA).

This finding is somewhat surprising because motivation appears not to have been previously specifically reported upon in the anxiety literature as a source of SA. However some studies, such as Kitano (2001) and Lim (2004) indicated that instrumental motivation for learning a foreign language could be a source of some students’ stress and frustration. Similarly, Yan & Horwitz (2008) state:

Although motivation is generally conceived of as a positive trait with respect to language learning, it would also seem to play a role in affecting anxiety. It is difficult, for example, to imagine an anxious learner who had no desire or need to learn the language (Yan & Horwitz, 2008:176).

Therefore, they suggest that, “further attention should be directed to understanding the relationship between motivation and anxiety in language learning” (ibid: 176). It is understandable that the more importance students give to speaking English well, the more SA they may experience. It is, however,

noteworthy that the effects of SA may vary from integrative to instrumental motivation.

Some reasons for students' SA caused by instrumental motivation could be as follows. Firstly that, in Pakistan, competence in spoken English is associated with prestige, power and lucrative professions, whereas poor English proficiency may mean lack of status and opportunities (Shamim, 2011). Therefore, students who are aware that English is an important tool of socio-economic gain may feel anxious when they fail to perform according to their goals. Secondly, according to Shamim & Tribble (2005), as in many other contexts, Pakistani parents want their children to be proficient in English. Thus, they invest in their English language education and nurture high hopes for their children. As a result, learning English could become a matter of vital importance for some students and, if they cannot do well in the class, they could possibly become anxious perhaps due to the feeling that they are not fulfilling their parents' expectations.

6.3.1.4 Lack of Confidence

The data from this study highlighted that lack of confidence may also contribute to students' SA. This factor has been consistently reported as an important source of SA in a number of studies (e.g. Sultan, 2012; Gregersen, 2003; William & Andrade, 2008; Ito, 2008; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004).

Students' lack of confidence could also be attributed to various socio-cultural reasons. For example, in Pakistani society the majority of students do not have freedom of expression and decision (Parveen, 2007). In most cases parents decide their children's profession or study subjects for them. For example, they are told that they have to become a doctor or an engineer. Due to this dependence on their parents it could be that students may doubt their own abilities and might lose confidence in any given situation. Moreover, it is mainly parents who control their children's opinions, behaviour and activities. Chiding, insulting or even punishing children is common in Pakistani culture. For example, there have been many cases in Pakistan where parents have confined their children to their rooms for many days and have restrained them

with ropes to punish them for their wrong attitude or perceived wrongdoing. Such acts could make children timid and apt to lose confidence. Although my student participants are adults, such above-mentioned childhood experiences may have caused them to lack in confidence. Other factors such as: authoritative teacher, past negative experiences, students' lack of speaking proficiency, past failures, negative attitudes towards English, and irrational expectations about performance could also influence students' confidence.

Furthermore, highly anxious students might be more prone to losing confidence; begging the question as to whether SA makes students less confident or vice versa; i.e. whether lack of confidence creates SA. However, lack of confidence affects oral performance and a psychologically supportive instructional environment and advance preparation can be helpful for encouraging students' self-confidence. Moreover, teachers are advised to train students to have faith in their abilities, so they are more motivated to approach frightening situations in the classroom with assertiveness (Dörnyei, 2001).

6.3.2 Classroom-Related Sources

The main classroom-related sources of students' SA revealed by the data include the following a) fear of negative evaluation, b) lack of preparation, and c) oral tests.

6.3.2.1 Fear of Negative Evaluation

The findings of the current study showed that students may experience SA because of the worry that their teacher and their peers are constantly judging them, and that they would evaluate other students' performance negatively if they do not do well. Fear of negative evaluation (FNE) has been well-documented in the literature as a source of SA (see, for example, Kitano, 2001; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Huang, 2009; and Hussain et al., 2011). For example, Ito (2008) interviewed university students from nine different countries and concluded that FNE was the most quoted source of the participants' SA.

FNE can exist in any social evaluative situations; however, Horwitz et al., (1986) argue that this fear could be stronger and more prevalent in foreign language classrooms where students' performance is continuously judged. Therefore, it

could be argued that if students are extremely concerned about giving a positive impression, they may not concentrate on the actual task and may only focus upon their feelings of nervousness. Indeed, Gregersen (2003:29) reports that “creating a positive image is the issue that seems to most preoccupy the anxious learner”. Consequently, such students may decide either to avoid oral activities permanently or to participate minimally in oral activities in which they think they would be evaluated unfavourably. Furthermore, the data from this study indicated that some students may consciously avoid the teacher’s questions altogether due to the concern that they may reply incorrectly. Aida (1994) suggests that students who doubt that they might make a positive impression withdraw from tasks which could otherwise improve their learning. I maintain that if these students persistently avoid oral activities due to FNE, they could make less progress which might, in turn, escalate their frustration.

The Pakistani context may provide a number of specific reasons for students’ FNE. For example, it is considered undesirable in Pakistani culture to be seen as less competent than others, and in turn be judged negatively (Parveen, 2007). Parveen further highlights that people who are perceived as intelligent are regarded as both respectable and important. Consequently, students could think that if they make mistakes, the people around them will doubt the students’ abilities and, in turn, these students could lose both respect and face. Similarly, as noted earlier, classrooms in Pakistan are particularly formal and, according to Horwitz (2001), FNE constitutes a common phenomenon in such an environment.

Furthermore, due to a lack of proficiency, students may not be sure of their performance; they could therefore think that they are unable to make a positive impression and, as a result, they might experience FNE. This fear may increase if they think that their teacher will evaluate them negatively and give them poor grades. Another reason suggested by the study data is that students’ level of FNE could increase if they are more concerned about making mistakes.

Finally, it is important to mention that the findings of this study suggested that for some students their peers’ opinions may not actually provoke speaking anxiety (SA) but rather motivate them. In this regard, Alghothani (2010) claims

that students feel less fear of negative evaluation (FNE) when they are well-acquainted with their classmates. I argue that the foreign language classroom is one of the main places where students' weaknesses are exposed and FNE is framed; therefore, teachers should be encouraged to provide students with a supportive classroom atmosphere which helps to reduce their FNE.

6.3.2.2 Lack of Preparation

Students may feel anxious when they have to speak without advance preparation. The students in the present study claimed that preparation would enhance their confidence and that as a result they would feel relaxed when speaking in class. This finding confirms the results of Liu's (2007) study with Chinese EFL university students which found that the majority of participants reported that their brain "went blank" when speaking English unprepared in class.

Some foreign language students may lack linguistic competence (Horwitz et al., 1986); therefore, they may require much more time to work on grammar patterns and speech content. If students are invited to participate in a task unprepared, they may not perform well and as a result, they may feel demotivated and disappointed. This could lead them to losing interest in learning to speak and avoiding taking part in classroom activities. Moreover, lack of preparation could provoke other sources of SA such as lack of confidence and FMM and students may experience higher levels of SA as a result.

There could be many explanations for this finding for example, it is not considered to be an ideal behaviour in Pakistani culture to argue with your teacher, students may not feel able to ask for information about any upcoming sessions.

6.3.2.3 Oral Tests

Another classroom-related cause of students' SA suggested by the study data are speaking tests. Students may experience oral test anxiety when their speaking performance is evaluated. This result is consistent with Hewitt & Stephenson (2011) who conducted a mixed-methods study with non-major

English university students to examine the effects of anxiety upon their performance in oral tests. They reported that students became nervous due to a fear of oral tests. Many other studies share similar results for other contexts (e.g. Hussain et al., 2011; Huang & Hung, 2013; Lucas et al., 2011; Liu & Jackson, 2008).

In addition, it was suggested by the students in this study that they would feel less anxious about oral tests if their teacher was the only audience. In this way, perhaps students may feel less fear of negative evaluation (FNE), which can be an important reason for SA. I suggest that the teacher could allow such students to take oral tests with other students being absent and later on, when students have gained enough practice and confidence, then they could be encouraged again to speak in front of other students. Moreover, students could be assured that tests constitute a positive way in which to improve their speaking proficiency.

There could be a number of explanations for students' SA stemming from tests. Firstly, the students may lack speaking proficiency, and according to Young (1991), low proficiency creates test anxiety. In addition, in the foreign language classroom, tests and evaluation appear common therefore some students could develop test phobia. Similarly, some students may have a jaundiced opinion of oral tests due to their own negative past experiences, such as unsuccessful test performance, and as a result they could have become nervous about tests. Likewise, perfectionism may cause test anxiety as, according to Horwitz et al. (1986), perfectionists believe that, "anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure" (p. 128). Finally, the data from this study suggested that a lack of vocabulary, grammar, and knowledge of unfamiliar topics could constitute other reasons for oral test anxiety.

6.3.3 Linguistic-Related Sources

Speaking anxiety (SA) is also comprised of two key linguistic-related sources, namely, a lack of both vocabulary and grammar.

6.3.3.1 Lack of Vocabulary

This study suggested that limited vocabulary can cause SA. This finding concurs with Liu's (2007) mixed-methods study, with Chinese non-major English university students, of their oral course, which reports that "lack of vocabulary was identified as a main cause for students' anxiety in oral English classrooms" (p. 128).

There is further evidence in the data that students were indeed willing to participate in speaking activities, if they knew the answers to questions and had some idea about the topic. However they remained passive due to their limited and inappropriate vocabulary and, in turn, experienced disappointment and worry. Horwitz (1988) argues that students experience SA when they have mature thoughts and ideas in their first language but fail to express themselves in the foreign language. If students cannot speak, in spite of having the required information, then it can have negative implications. For example, they may feel discouraged and might lose interest. It could be argued that the less vocabulary students have, the more they may hesitate to speak and the more they might become anxious.

In my own experience as both a student and a teacher of English, one possible explanation for students' SA stemming from vocabulary could be that vocabulary is not paid much attention in language teaching in Pakistan. Equally students themselves take little interest in enhancing and extending their vocabulary. At the same time, it is common to find students saying that they cannot speak English due to a lack of vocabulary. If they speak, they repeatedly get stuck and a lot of the time they resort to repetition of the same words. It is recommended that students could be taught some strategies to improve and widen their vocabulary to enable them to communicate well.

6.3.3.2 Grammar

Based on the results of this study, grammar knowledge also appeared to cause SA for some students. Some other studies also reported grammar as a source of anxiety when speaking (e.g. Wu, 2010; Tanveer, 2007). The data indicated that if students are over-concerned about grammar rules, they may not be able to transfer their message successfully and communicate fluently. If students pay

extra attention to grammar, it can distract attention from the message they are trying to convey. In the past, the emphasis, worldwide, has been on grammar based language teaching which has focused on students' linguistic competence and ignored the authentic use of language. However, in modern language teaching methods the focus has shifted from encouraging high *linguistic* competence in students to developing high *communicative* competence in students. It could be due to the fact that in these ever-increasingly global and international times, students have to visit other countries for academic and professional purposes, and successful communication often seems more important than language accuracy.

At the same time, students have their own learning styles and preferences. Some students like to learn grammar and they may feel disappointed if the whole classroom focus rests on communicative language teaching. For this reason it could be argued that an exaggerated focus on grammar may be neither good nor completely inevitable. Nonetheless, learners should be taught the authentic use of language. Therefore, perhaps a blend of both communicative and grammar based approaches could be helpful.

There could be many reasons for students' feeling apprehensive about grammar. Firstly one of the main explanations could be that in Pakistan, the majority of teachers follow grammar teaching method (GTM) to teach English (Shamim, 2008; Hafeez, 2004). For example, GTM involves explaining and analysing grammar rules, mostly in Urdu. Similarly, teachers instruct their students to memorise tenses and other grammar rules to produce grammatically-accurate speech. Examinations, moreover, test students' linguistic competence and consequently, students may attach a high value to grammatical accuracy. Therefore, they might get nervous and frustrated if they make any grammatical mistakes when speaking. Secondly, there is a disparity between English and Urdu grammar rules. Since the data from this study revealed that students think in Urdu and then translate their ideas into English, some students can make grammatical mistakes during this process, due to first language interference. Finally, certain exceptions and irregularities in English grammar rules may also be confusing for non-native speakers of English.

6.3.4 Teacher-Student Interaction

This category includes a) teachers, who are seen as 'strict'; b) language classroom; c) concern about mistakes; d) lack of student voice; and e) teaching methodology.

6.3.4.1 *Strict Teachers*

Teachers' harsh, negative, and strict behaviour was found to result in speaking anxiety (SA) for some students. This finding is reflected in a number of studies (for example, Khattak et al., 2011; Tóth, 2010; Ewald, 2007; Young, 1990). The data from this study suggested that due to a teacher's strict attitude, students may lose confidence, participate minimally in class, and may not feel comfortable sharing their language problems with their teacher. Teachers need to maintain a positive and supportive attitude towards their students, which will in turn motivate students and can provide an impetus for students' language achievement. However, it seems difficult to establish an absolute standard of teacher friendliness with students. In some academic cultures, a teacher's lack of authority with students can have negative repercussions in terms of achieving learning objectives. For example, some students may not focus on their performance, feeling that their teacher is being lenient. It is suggested that teachers should be judicious about behaving strictly only when it is necessary and appropriate.

In the Pakistani context, there could be various explanations for students' concern and worries about teachers' strict behaviour. Firstly, due to the traditional teaching model (i.e. teacher-centred classes) teachers themselves can create stress for their students. Secondly, some students' previous education and teachers may indeed be considered responsible for their SA at university level. This explanation is supported by Nabi's (1995) research conducted with Pakistani school students, which investigated students' views about their teachers and classrooms. One of the participants stated:

He [the teacher] comes in the class with a stick, beats the stick on the table forcefully and says, 'keep quiet'. I do not understand why he threatens us by stick, by his language and by his facial expressions; honestly we do not know what we did wrong (Nabi, 1995:150).

Nabi further commented that many of the study participants wanted to leave school due to the stressful environment. Schooldays can play an important role in shaping one's personality. Such behaviour on the part of the teacher can strongly affect students' self-confidence and self-esteem and its effects can be long-lasting. Therefore, some university students may be more susceptible to SA due to their past experiences. I would argue that the teacher's positive attitude towards students, language teaching, and the language classroom might be more important to students' learning than the actual teaching content and methodology.

6.3.4.2 Language Classroom

The findings of this study suggested that various aspects of the language classroom itself can also induce SA for students. For example, a class which is strict, formal and judgemental and where there is a lack of familiarity and openness among students can create a significant amount of SA for students. According to the data, a negative classroom environment such as this can make students self-conscious and lead to fears such as the fear of making mistakes (FMM) and that of negative evaluation (FNE). These results are in parallel with a number of studies (e.g. Tanveer, 2007; Khattak et al., 2011; Tóth, 2010; Hussain et al., 2011). However, some students may find disciplined and formal classrooms helpful for their learning. Therefore, teachers should be capable of judging what is suitable for particular individuals and groups of students.

In the Pakistani context, there could be a number of explanations for students' nervousness due to formal and strict classrooms. For example, according to Hussain (2004) and Shahbaz (2012), teachers are not well-paid in Pakistan. Therefore, most of them join this profession when they could not find other lucrative jobs such as in bureaucracy. This implies that they may not be entirely committed to this profession and additionally, that they might not be socially and economically satisfied. Therefore, they could be emotionally exhausted and such teachers tend to maintain a firm classroom environment (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

In addition, the findings of this study suggested that large classes may also produce SA for some students. Many Pakistani writers lament that English

classrooms are large in Pakistan and that this factor affects the language learning process (e.g. Rahman, 2007; Shahbaz, 2012; Shamim & Tribble, 2005). For example, Sarwar, a Pakistani English teacher and researcher, laments in her interview reported to Smith (2008):

I used to remember all their [students'] names, but then the numbers started growing, from about 40 to around 150. I started losing heart and even decided I would quit teaching (p.7).

Similarly, large classes could have negative impacts on teachers' efficiency and behaviour. For example, teachers may not be able to transfer linguistic input effectively. One reason for large classes is an increase in the population in Pakistan. For this reason, the government should build more universities to reduce the number of students per class to facilitate better learning.

6.3.4.3 Concern about Mistakes

The data collected for this study indicated that FMM was also one of the sources of students' SA. The results seemed to suggest a 'cause and effect' relationship. When students reported making mistakes, the teacher often corrected them without giving them time for self-correction. In turn, they could not feel a sense of accomplishment; as a result, they lost face and became worried. The next time these students tried to correct themselves quickly before their teacher did it for them, but in doing so they often made more mistakes.

Moreover, the data suggested that students may be afraid of making mistakes as they often believe that other students may ridicule them. As a consequence students may participate less and this might affect their progress. Gregersen (2003) claims that SA is cyclical; i.e. committing mistakes makes students anxious and the more nervous they are, the more mistakes they then make. Consequently, they may overestimate the seriousness of their mistakes and then often interpret their performance as being poor. Frost et al. (1995, cited in Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002) alleged that students who are over-concerned about mistakes: have low self-confidence, lament their mistakes to a greater degree, regret that they did not perform better in an oral task, and have an acute fear of negative evaluation (FNE). Such negative behaviours could eventually have debilitating effects on students' speaking performance.

Furthermore, it is important to note that there is evidence in the data that students may be afraid of making mistakes due to teachers' harsh way of correcting errors. Some students are able to respond to correction of their mistakes positively, and generally, students maintain that they want to be corrected in order to understand their mistakes. However, this must be done gently and prudently. It could be argued that although error correction can make some students anxious, not correcting mistakes can also frustrate others. However, the teacher has to be tactful when correcting students because this could in itself provoke SA, in spite of students' explicit desire to be corrected (Young, 1991).

The concept of fear of making mistakes (FMM) is perhaps one of the most reported reasons for speaking anxiety (SA) which highlights its strong interference with language learning. Jones (2004) reports that research, "both ethnographic and empirical, supports the notion that language anxiety, for untold numbers of learners, has its origin in the fear of making mistakes and attracting the derision of classmates" (p. 33). Similarly, Huang (2009) concludes that, "half of the participants in this study explicitly expressed a fear of making errors when speaking in class" (p. 255).

A number of reasons could be ascribed to students' fear about making mistakes (FMM). For example, students tend to make fun of each other's mistakes in Pakistani classrooms. According to Jones (2004), students do not want to commit mistakes due to, "a fear of appearing awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of learners, peers or others" (p. 31). Moreover, in Pakistani culture, children are mostly dependent on their parents. Their parents often tell them what is right and what is wrong for them. In some cases, they are punished if they make mistakes. Such behaviour could develop FMM in some students. Finally, perfectionism, beliefs, and lack of proficiency may also produce FMM.

6.3.4.4 Lack of Student Voice

Lack of student voice can also cause frustration and SA for some students. This is a new and interesting finding and it appears that no previous study has reported lack of student voice as a possible source of students' SA. Some studies conducted in Pakistan reveal that students' views and opinions are not

represented, i.e. students do not 'have a voice' and that their teachers do not involve them in the teaching and learning process. For example, Nabi (1995) states, "students wanted more control of their learning" (p. 106) but the teachers were not always ready to encourage students' independent learning. Moreover, Inamullah et al. (2008), who observed 50 Pakistani English classrooms, reported that teachers mostly take decisions on *what* and *how* to teach and that more than two-thirds of the class time was taken up by the teacher. They further stated that the students studied seemed passive, bored, and disinterested.

It is also possible that some students could be concerned about their proficiency and if their opinions are suppressed and their learning requirements are not addressed, they might want to get even more involved in the learning process. Similarly, there is a shortage of teachers and as previously noted, classes are large in Pakistan. Therefore, learner independence seems to suit Pakistani classrooms because teaching and learning might be easier and more effective if students become more independent learners.

6.3.4.5 Teaching Methodology

The findings of this study suggested that students could experience speaking anxiety (SA) as a result of certain teaching practices. For example, students sometimes feel anxious when their teacher forces them to participate in class. This finding follows Williams & Andrade (2008). Moreover, difficult and unfamiliar topics for oral tasks can also result in SA for some students. They may not be able to discuss difficult topics due to lack of prior knowledge about the topics. According to Heller (1999), prior knowledge helps students understand and respond to and do the task. The culture of reading books, either in Urdu or English, for pleasure or general knowledge is also not common amongst Pakistani students (Latif, 2009). Students rarely read any books which are not either included in their course or which do not help them directly in obtaining good grades. Therefore, they might lack ideas and knowledge about various unfamiliar topics.

6.3.5 Socio-Cultural-Related Sources

The discussion of socio-cultural-related sources of SA includes: a) students' geographic background; b) students' pre-university English education; c) the

role of students' parents; d) social and cultural trends; e) cultural alienation; f) competitiveness; and g) mixed-gender classrooms. It should be noted that the influence of students' pre-university English education, social and cultural trends, cultural alienation, and mixed-gender classrooms represent new findings as, to the best of my knowledge, these findings appear to never been previously reported upon in the literature, with regards to the latter contributing to students' speaking and language anxiety. However, these findings are supported and linked to other references from the field of ELT and education. As far as students' geographic background and the role of students' parents are concerned, only one anxiety study (Yan & Horwitz, 2008) appears to have reported these factors as possible sources of anxiety. Moreover, most of the following findings could be considered as being specific to the Pakistani context due to its particular socio-cultural milieu and nature.

6.3.5.1 Students' Geographic Background

In the Pakistani context, with regard to students' geographic backgrounds, students can be broadly divided into two types: students from rural areas and students from urban areas. There is evidence in the data that students' place of origin may influence their English language and speaking ability. This finding is consistent with Yan & Horwitz's (2008) study conducted with 21 non-English major university students in China. It suggests that regional differences in the English language education system in China affect students' speaking proficiency and can promote students to worry about their performance in their university class. The data from my study indicated that rural students' anxiety about speaking (SA) may stem from two factors. Firstly, some students from the countryside explained that they were facing difficulties in their current university class precisely because they came from the countryside and previously had not had enough opportunities to acquire a good English education. Secondly, they commented that they sometimes got upset when they discovered that their urban counterparts had studied English at better institutions and that the spoken English of some of their urban classmates was very good.

These findings can be explained against the backdrop of an unequal access to English in rural and urban areas of Pakistan. The towns of Pakistan provide better language learning conditions such as: dedicated language institutions,

spoken English academies, language labs, qualified teachers, classroom facilities and course materials (Inayat, 2004; Latif, 2009). In contrast, rural areas are mostly poor in terms of learning facilitators (ibid). According to Warsi (2004), most teachers in rural areas are unaware of effective pedagogical practices. Hence, he notes, students with rural backgrounds cannot communicate easily and successfully. Rural institutions have been consistently ignored by every Pakistani government. There are over 17,000 'ghost' schools in rural areas across the country and the majority of them do not have a boundary wall (Federal Bureau of Statistics and Academy of Educational Planning and Management, 2005). They may be turned into 'ghost' schools by design by feudal elites of that corresponding area because there have been many reports which show that these schools are being used for multiple purposes, e. g. for grain storage and as marriage halls (Latif, 2009). Moreover, there is often only one teacher in most of the primary schools in rural areas, who teaches all subjects, including English, and most of the teachers are untrained and inexperienced (ibid). This is, perhaps, the reason that the literacy rate in the villages in Pakistan is much lower than in the towns.

Taking into account the previous discussion and the data from this study, it could be argued that the government has failed to provide rural students with high-quality English language tuition and general education. Rural students, therefore, might experience SA due to poor spoken proficiency as well as the feeling that they are weak in English, which can provide enormous social and economic capital in Pakistan. However, it must be remembered that the majority of the population lives in villages in Pakistan (Inayat, 2004), so rural students can play a vital role in the development of the nation. Therefore, the question remains whether this system will continue in the same way or whether the government will bring students from rural areas into the mainstream by giving them English education facilities equal to those of students in the towns.

However, it cannot be claimed that all villages in Pakistan have bad schools, nor indeed that all cities have good ones. The data seem to reveal general trends. My aim was to unearth those factors in the data which could induce SA for students.

6.3.5.2 Students' Pre-University English Education

The data highlighted the educational divide in Pakistani society. There is evidence in the data that those students who had studied English previously at Urdu-medium schools may be at a disadvantage in their university English studies. The reason is that their speaking skills are considered poor; consequently they can often not do well in their current class and, as a result, they experience frustration and anxiety. Moreover, their anxiety may be exacerbated when they find that they have to compete with their more competent counterparts with English-medium educational backgrounds.

As noted in chapter 2 (section 2.3), in Pakistan Urdu-medium institutions are known for the poor quality of their English education. In contrast, English-medium institutions provide a better English language education. Moreover, the graduates of these institutions have better career prospects than their counterparts from Urdu-medium institutions (Rahman, 2004).

However at university level students from these both systems of education study together in the same class, with the same course contents, objectives, and examination system. Moreover, at this level the demands of English increase; namely that oral aspects are given significant attention, and expectations about performance are high (Adeel, 2011). Some of the students in this study perhaps rightly believe that they lack proficiency in speaking, since their schooling has not been at English-medium schools. Therefore, they find themselves unable to perform well in various oral tasks in their university class and, as a consequence, they experience SA. Moreover, an insufficient and short experience of learning good English and speaking (Wilson, 2006; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000) and the fear of not fulfilling the expectations of their families may also constitute reasons for students' SA. Some studies conducted in Pakistan also report that students with Urdu-medium backgrounds face difficulties when speaking English in their university class due to their poor educational background in general (Zafar, 2006).

However, this does not necessarily imply that all Urdu-medium institutions are bad nor that all English-medium institutions are good; rather that good and bad institutions may exist in both categories and that the same may apply to

students. The data seem to provide a general picture.

This system with uneven educational opportunities has been criticised as 'unjust' and 'dividing the nation' (Rahman 2004). Moreover, it is seen as a British legacy aiming to create two classes of people: the ruling elite and the masses (Shamim, 2008). This divided system of education also reflects socio-economic disparities since families belonging to poor social classes in Pakistan cannot send their children to English-medium institutions because they are expensive. The ruling elite of Pakistan maintains hegemony in education due to its wealth. In fact, this same elite has a solid rationale and an important stake in reserving good English institutions for its members because doing so differentiates the so-called 'elite' from and gives them an edge over the so-called 'poor' of the country. This, in turn, may widen the gap between the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. The country is already polarised due to ideology, ethnicity, religious sects, and culture. Consequently there is an urgent need for the government to provide its people with a single system of education which could help bridge the gaps and promote national unity. Moreover, it seems essential to devise policies to provide equal English-learning opportunities to all students in Pakistan. The more people are educated in English, the more the country may progress.

Added to which as the effects of different mediums of instruction on students' anxiety appear to constitute a previously-unexplored area in the field of language anxiety, increased attention being to paid to it, maybe in other contexts could be beneficial and further our understanding about anxiety.

6.3.5.3 The Role of Students' Parents

The data highlighted that students' parents can play a significant role in students' language learning and speaking anxiety (SA). Some students believed that their parents had been unaware of the importance of English, particularly spoken English, for their children's future; therefore, the parents had not sent their children to good English institutions in their childhood, nor taken any interest in their academic progress, nor motivated them to work hard. Consequently, their children often did not become proficient in speaking and were then worried about their success in their current class. Moreover, students

believed that they would have been proficient in speaking English if their parents had arranged a good English education for them. This belief on the one hand and their own poor performance on the other may make students both anxious and frustrated. Yan & Horwitz (2008) also found that some university students blamed their parents for not realising the importance of English in their childhood. Similarly, studies in the field of TESOL have suggested that parents' interest in students' education and progress facilitates students' learning. For example, Bennett et al. (2002) found that parents' involvement in students' English learning helps to develop their language skills. Similarly, Latif's (2009) study in Pakistan concludes that the children of involved parents tend to be more confident, interested, and relaxed students than those whose parents are not involved.

In the Pakistani context, one reason, as revealed by the data from this study, ascribed to the parents' lack of concern about their children's English education could be attributed to parents' own lack of education. Illiterate parents might not have a positive or supportive approach towards their children's English-learning. Therefore, they may not send them to good institutions nor provide them with a facilitative home environment, motivate them to work hard, nor suggest various strategies to improve their spoken English. On the other hand, studies report that having educated parents may also affect students' classroom performance. Shamim & Tribble's (2005) study in Pakistan found that EFL students with educated parents show higher academic achievement than that of their peers with uneducated parents. Similarly, in the Chinese EFL context, Wilson (2006:287) reports that, "the more highly educated students' fathers were, the better they tended to perform on the oral test".

However, the matter is not quite so simple, as some parents might be very much involved in their children's English learning. In fact, there is evidence in the data that parents who have high expectations of their offspring and frequently remind them of the importance of English may also create stress for students. Mansoor (2003) and Shamim & Tribble (2005) report that some Pakistani parents are indeed extremely concerned about their children's English education; e. g. sending their children to English coaching academies or hiring private tutors for them. This finding may be justified in Pakistani society where

some parents provide constant guidance to their children about their academic success. Moreover, as speaking English represents a gateway to economic benefits, Pakistani parents may advise their children to learn this language, not only for their own betterment, but also for the whole family, especially from the financial perspective. In addition, in Pakistan, mostly parents finance their children's studies possibly resulting in some students feeling a sense of responsibility. All these factors may exert a pressure on students which could lead to stress.

The data from this study also suggested that students' parents' poor socio-economic situations may also affect students' language achievement and SA. It is an interesting finding because this factor seems to have not previously appeared in the literature as a source of anxiety. Some studies in Pakistan suggest that the economic status of students' parents may affect students' English achievement as they do not have opportunities to go to good institutions (e.g. Parveen, 2007; Shamim, 2011). As already noted institutions providing a good standard of education in the medium of English are expensive in Pakistan, and poorer people cannot afford them. As noted in Chapter 2, 54% of the country's population is poor; therefore, it could be difficult for many people to send their children to expensive English-medium institutions. Therefore, students may not be proficient in English, particularly in speaking, and may experience SA in their university class.

6.3.5.4 Social and Cultural Trends

The data in this study highlighted various social and cultural trends which could cause speaking anxiety (SA) for some students.

Firstly, there is evidence in the data that students from rural areas of Pakistan may experience SA due to some of their urban counterparts making fun of their speaking and culture. Pakistan is a land of diverse languages, races and cultures (Grimes 2000; Rahman, 2004). Islam (2013) states that cultural, linguistic, socio-economic and geographical differences exist between urban and rural areas of Pakistan. In Pakistan, urban people enjoy facilities such as the internet, electricity, education and hospitals while rural people are mostly deprived of these (Javaid, 2011). Moreover, there are socio-cultural differences

between both areas in terms of dress code, manners, and traditions (ibid). Likewise, people from cities are commonly regarded as being civilised, cultured, and well-educated while the majority of rural people are considered to be poor, uneducated and they are commonly believed to be uncultured (ibid). Students from both areas enter the university with their 'cultural baggage'. Since the class system is still strong in Pakistan (Inayat, 2004), some urban students may regard themselves as socially superior, better-educated and more civilised than their peers from rural backgrounds. Thus, the former may not mix with the latter and the urban students may even make fun of their classmates from rural areas.

Another anxiety-provoking socio-cultural trend appears to be teacher bias and favouritism. There could be many explanations for it in the Pakistani context. For example, some teachers may take revenge on those students who say anything against them. This sometimes could result in a harsh reprisal; e.g. failing students' papers. On the other hand, teachers may favour those students who give them gifts. There have been cases where classroom teachers have not given good grades to students who had not previously had personal tuition with these same teachers. There have been allegations made in the Pakistani newspapers and on national TV that some teachers show the question papers to their favourite students prior to the examination. Such behaviour on the part of teachers could be frustrating for students who do not benefit from such perks.

Finally, there is evidence in the data that students have a fear when speaking, that their opinions might be in conflict with their religion. This finding does not seem surprising in a society such as Pakistan, which lacks freedom of expression and tolerance. There are certain topics, such as sex and religion, which are unacceptable subjects for discussion in Pakistani society. Religion, particularly, is a serious and sensitive issue in Pakistan and criticising it can be extremely harmful. There are many instances in Pakistan to support this. For example in 2010, the Punjab governor, Salman Taseer, spoke out in favour of a Christian girl who was accused of blasphemy. He was strongly criticised for helping a girl who had allegedly maligned Islam and consequently he was called an infidel by religious leaders. As a result, he was killed by one of his personal bodyguards. Similarly, those people who question religion (Islam) or say

anything against Islam are called 'atheists' by religious leaders and religious leaders issue Islamic rulings against them, which may lead to their extrajudicial killing. These examples illustrate how harmful it might be to say anything against Islam in Pakistan.

6.3.5.5 Cultural Alienation

Although the current study and several other Pakistani studies (e.g. Shamim, 2011; Rahman, 2007) report that Pakistani EFL students tend to be highly-motivated, the reality does not appear to be as simple and one-sided. The present study and various Pakistani studies highlight that some Pakistani students may regard English as a threat to their culture, religion, and identity. It is reported that some factions in Pakistani society, particularly Islamic religious leaders, have negative feelings towards the English language. These people sometimes believe that English is a tool to replace Pakistani culture and civilisation with western culture and traditions (Hussain, 2004; Inayat, 2004).

These negative perceptions about learning English date back to the era when the sub-continent was under British rule. At that time, Muslims used not to send their children to English institutions, believing English to be the language of infidels and, moreover, a tool for cultural imperialism (Hussain, 2005). There could be some reality in this perception as, according to Hickey (2004), during the British rule one of the main aims of, promoting English in the united India was to create a class of people who would be, "Indians in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions and morals and intellect" (p. 540).

Many studies in the field of ELT and education report that foreign language-learning may challenge one's identity and views of world. For example, Rardin states, "If I learn another language, I will somehow lose myself; as I know myself to be, will cease to exist" (as interviewed in Young, 1992, cited in Young, 1992:168). Similarly, Clément (1980) found that some language learners can be afraid of losing their cultural identity because, according to Guiora et al. (1972, cited in Tóth, 2009), second language learners sometimes take on a new identity.

Pakistani society is divided between liberals and fundamentalists and extremists. The extremist clerics give emotional sermons about heaven and hell. They are mostly blindly-followed and believed in Pakistan. It is my personal experience that some Pakistani religious scholars are against western education. Inayat, a Pakistani writer, met a Pakistani lady who had negative thoughts about English as follows:

Being Muslim you do not know that speaking the language of non-Muslims is a sin. Why are you dressed up in their dress (I was wearing jeans and a blouse)? Why do you work and talk with them, God will punish you for this (2004:13).

According to a poll conducted by the Pew Research Centre (2012), 74% of Pakistanis consider the USA to be their enemy. Schumann (1978) argued that if people have negative attitudes towards a specific community, they may have negative attitudes towards their culture and language too. I think such attitudes will have worsened since 9/11 because many Pakistanis think that NATO forces and the USA are interfering in their country in order to destabilise it. This might have influenced young Pakistanis' attitudes towards the English language. The majority of students do not have negative attitudes about English; however, the data suggests that there may be some students who may harbour such thoughts.

The mixed feelings described: on the one hand a social and economic need to learn and speak English well and on the other, learning the language with suspicion, may create inner turmoil for some students. However, it is important to address students' feelings and apprehensions so that they may learn a language with ease which is so important for the students themselves as well as for the progress of Pakistan. In this regard, one possible approach for the educators to take could be not to present English as an instrument of linguistic and cultural imperialism or associate it with the UK and USA exclusively (Brutt-Griffler, 2002), but to treat it as a global lingua franca (Jenkins, 2014; Seidlhofer, 2011). Jenkins (2015:98) argues that when non-native speakers of English use it as "an international lingua franca rather than as a traditional foreign language", they are more likely to have positive attitudes towards English. Thus, it is suggested that the English language might not be equated with colonial

language but could be considered as an international language which is an important channel to establish and maintain connections in this global world.

6.3.5.6 Competitiveness

In light of these study findings, it appears that Pakistani EFL classrooms tend to encourage a competitive culture rather than a culture of cooperative learning. There is evidence in the data that some students feel pressure and tension when they perceive that they are less competent than their peers. This result is consistent with Yan & Horwitz (2008) who investigated anxiety amongst Chinese EFL university students with an age range of 17 to 21 years, and concluded that competitiveness directly affected their participants' SA levels. Similarly, Kitano's (2001) research on Japanese learners reports that students' SA levels increased "when they perceive their own speaking ability as poorer than that of their peers" (p. 558).

In contrast, the data collected during the current study also suggested that competitiveness can play a facilitative role. For example, it may foster a motivation in some students to increase their efforts to do better or be as good as their peers. I think a certain level of pressure may motivate students but too much of it may reduce and dampen their enthusiasm and interest.

A number of explanations could be ascribed to students' competitiveness in class. For example, the data from this study suggested that teachers may also create a competitive culture in the classroom by, for example, favouring the better students and ignoring the weaker ones. It is my personal experience as a university student and then a teacher that students are assigned classroom roles like 'classroom representative' on the basis of their abilities. Similarly, teachers give responsibilities such as assigning and checking assignments to competent students. I argue that this situation may lead to a competitive environment in class. Finally, low self-esteem can also lead students to making unrealistic comparisons. Price (1991) argues that individuals with low self-esteem are usually dissatisfied with their performance and they are often engaged in self-comparison with others.

6.3.5.7 Mixed-Gender Classrooms

The findings of this study highlighted that the presence of the opposite sex in Pakistani EFL classrooms can create speaking anxiety (SA) for some students. It is my personal experience as an EFL university teacher that at times some female students, who mostly preferred to sit silently in class, used to come to my office after the session to ask questions. Even, some acknowledged that they could not ask questions or answer to various questions as they felt shy due to male students in class.

One suggestion could be that activities may be structured to involve both genders in order to eliminate students' fear and shyness and encourage collaboration and openness in all tasks. Men and women can work together in different fields of life for the betterment of the country. Therefore, it is also important to train these university students to work together at this level, so that in their future they may work together for the progress of the country.

This anxiety about the opposite sex may stem principally from students' lack of exposure to the opposite sex in Pakistani academic institutions and society. The culture of co-education is not common in most of the schools and colleges in Pakistan. Many students may experience it for the first time at university. Since students normally have not studied with the opposite sex for 14 years, co-education environment at university can be stressful for them. Moreover, Islam does not allow the mixing of females and males; therefore, some students might have a negative attitude towards co-education. There are some universities in Pakistan which are reserved only for females such as the International Islamic University Islamabad and the Fatima Jinnah Women University.

6.4 Teacher Behaviour and Classroom Activities

This section focuses on two aspects of helping to minimise students' speaking anxiety (SA), and it is divided into two parts. The first part discusses the findings related to various teacher behaviours and the second part sheds light on results about certain classroom activities that may alleviate students' SA.

6.4.1 Teacher Behaviour

6.4.1.1 Teachers' Personal Characteristics

The findings highlighted that students favour a teacher who is: friendly, supportive and humorous; who plays the role of facilitator and mentor, who shows interest in their performance and who treats the students with respect. All these personal traits of a teacher, according to the students, make students more confident and motivated and reduce their SA. These findings echo similar results reported in a number of studies (e.g. Daubney, 2002; Tóth, 2010; Khattak et al., 2011; Wong, 2009). For example, Abu Rabia (2004:719) concludes that, “the higher the students' evaluation of their teachers as supportive, encouraging, and understanding, the lower the students' level of anxiety in FL learning situations”.

I would argue that teachers' positive relationships with their students could in turn encourage students to have friendly relationships with each other. Moreover, as the teacher is regarded as one of the main sources of foreign language anxiety (FLA) (Tóth, 2010); a friendly student-teacher relationship might be helpful in making students feel comfortable. As a result, they may concentrate more on their performance instead of thinking of being made more anxious directly by the teacher. Similarly, they may participate more and in doing so, improve their speaking proficiency. Aida (1994) claimed that students learn better from teachers who are responsive to their needs, implying that teachers can maximise students' learning by empathising directly with them.

This 'counselling' type of approach and methodology could be particularly helpful in Pakistani classrooms where, according to Shamim & Tribble (2005), there is a lack of direct student-teacher communication. As a result of this guidance, students and teachers may feel more connected to each other and teachers may be able to address anxious students' concerns and problems better. However, the teacher is there for pedagogical purposes and is not in a position to solve all the students' problems, especially pastoral ones. Nonetheless, listening to students' concerns could give teachers important information about common issues in the class; and by listening, teachers can address problems and find workable solutions to promote good learning.

6.4.1.2 The Classroom Environment

The current study revealed that students' SA can be reduced if they are provided with a secure and friendly classroom environment. However, they assigned the role of creating a relaxed classroom atmosphere to the teacher. According to the data, teachers can achieve this aim firstly, by creating a sense of the classroom as a community. As a result, on one hand, the classroom and peer-related sources of SA such as FNE and competitiveness could be minimised and on the other, students may develop a supportive and collaborative learning climate. These outcomes are comparable to those reported by Crookall & Oxford (1991) that language teachers can reduce their students' nervousness by, "making the classroom as friendly and relaxed as possible" (p. 56). Similarly, Frantzen & Magnan (2005:180) found that one of the most often-quoted reasons, "for what made students comfortable was a sense of classroom community".

The teachers might constitute the main ingredient in establishing a positive learning classroom environment. However, this atmosphere could not be truly developed and maintained without teachers' rapport and interaction with the students. Therefore, as noted before, one of the main traits of effective teachers may be to build a cohesive and social relationship between themselves and the students to build a sense of community in the class. This can be achieved in many ways; for example, going on tours, having parties in the classroom, and playing games. These activities can offer students opportunities to interact with and understand each other's views and opinions. This feeling of community could give students a sense of unity and they could feel that they share the same characteristics and goals as other learners. Likewise, it could boost their confidence and encourage them to experience new aspects in language-learning. Troudi (2005) maintains that classrooms are not merely places for learning isolated chunks of language, they are also platforms where philosophies are developed and personalities are shaped.

6.4.1.3 Involving Students in the Learning Process

Another aspect of teacher behaviour revealed by this study was that students would feel interested and confident when speaking, if their teachers involved them in the learning process. According to the data in this study, this could be

done by giving students opportunities to have their say about various aspects of the classroom, such as about: teaching styles, oral activities, and their own learning needs. One explanation for students' desire to be involved in the learning process could be, as already noted above, the absence of the student voice in the Pakistani classrooms. Inamullah et al.'s (2008) study in Pakistan suggests that most of the teachers seldom ask students for their suggestions or take their opinions into account. Similarly, it has been my personal experience and observation throughout my student life that most of the teachers do not bother asking students about their learning problems nor encourage them to share their points of view.

Similarly, some teachers can even regard following students' suggestions as being unworthy of their consideration. My student participants shared their perceptions with me as a researcher, perhaps because I was an outsider and not their own teacher. I maintain that they would have done the same if their teachers had consulted them. One can feel their disappointment by imagining that on one hand, they are restrained in class and on the other hand, that they have a lot to say. I think awareness of students' opinions about the learning process could be helpful for teachers to select suitable materials and to teach effectively.

Recently, some writers have spoken out in Pakistan about the debilitating effects of teacher-centred classrooms and in favour of learner voice (such as, Shamim & Sarwar, 2007). There are many ways of involving the students, for example: the data suggested that teachers should ask students to give their feedback on their teaching methods.

6.4.1.4 Positive Reinforcement by the Teachers

There is evidence in the data that if students cannot perform well, or make mistakes and the teacher supports and encourages them, their SA may well reduce and they can increase their efforts to work on their weaknesses and improve. Moreover, praising and acknowledging students' good performance can boost their confidence and stimulate them to carry on. These results concur with several studies; for example, Price (1991), Hussain et al. (2011), and Tóth (2010). Similarly, Bandura's (1989, cited in Wilson, 2006) self-efficacy theory

also explains that those students who are positively-encouraged may consistently try until they achieve their aims.

Positive reinforcement plays an important role in almost every field of life. It gives a positive energy and strengthens one's faith in oneself. Having faith in one's abilities may constitute one of the basic ingredients to achieve one's intended targets. Students could lose their interest in speaking if their teachers are disdainful of students' performance. In contrast, positive behaviour reinforcement could boost their self-esteem. Teachers' encouragement could be verbal, e.g. saying 'good', 'fantastic', and, 'that's great' or it might comprise of non-verbal actions: for example, allocating students some roles in the classroom or awarding certificates, trophies, and extra marks. On the one hand, it could be an impetus for successful students to repeat the same performance with more enthusiasm and on the other hand, it could inspire other students to follow the same course of action.

In the Pakistani context, students may ask for teachers' positive reinforcement for a variety of different factors. Firstly, as noted above, children in Pakistan are constantly supervised and monitored by their family. They get approval and disapproval from the people around them. Therefore, it appears that due to such childhood experiences and social and cultural norms, some university students may actively seek out support or endorsement. Irrespective of whether right or wrong, they could look for teachers' approval because they may not have enough confidence in themselves to believe that they are right. Similarly, students may not be proactive in their endeavours; therefore, they may need someone to encourage and push them to go ahead.

6.4.1.5 Teachers' Attitudes towards Mistakes

The study suggested that students may feel less afraid of making mistakes when speaking if their teachers do not highlight and emphasise their students' mistakes but instead correct students' mistakes in a sympathetic and gentle manner. This finding reflects the conclusions drawn in many other studies; for example, Jones (2004), Adeel (2011), Tóth (2010), and Yan & Horwitz (2008).

It is possible that a positive way of teachers correcting student errors may encourage students to take risks without being afraid of making mistakes. In turn, they may improve their speaking. However, it seems important that the teacher should believe that mistakes are not bad or critical, and as such teachers should develop the skills needed to correct students' mistakes in a non-threatening and constructive way. If they humiliate students about their mistakes, students may believe that mistakes demonstrate incompetence and this belief can affect their willingness to speak further. In contrast, tolerating students' mistakes and reassuring students when they make errors may assuage students' levels of SA.

However, it is important to stress that SA may not be eliminated merely through gentle error correction. For example, the 'natural approach' which places little importance on error correction has not been entirely successful in providing students with a stress-free environment. For example, Comeau's (1992, cited in Aida, 1994) study found that there was no significant difference between anxiety levels of students studying under the natural approach and those using a proficiency-based approach.

The next section discusses the results as related to classroom activities that would reduce students' SA.

6.4.2 Classroom Activities

This section includes activities with little risk of self-exposure and those which give students time for preparation.

6.4.2.1 Activities that involve little risk of Exposure

The results of this current study of SA-reducing activities suggested that students feel relaxed in speaking activities that require little to low risk of exposure. For example, when students are allowed to a) make their oral presentation to the group instead of to the whole class, b) participate in oral tasks in the sitting position, and c) merely repeat something as a class after the teacher. These activities may not require a high learner exposure and students may feel secure owing to the feeling that they are not being individually placed in the spotlight. On the other hand, exposure to the whole class may involve

other stressful factors such as FNE and FMM. There is evidence in the data that high exposure in the classroom may interfere with students' cognitive processing since they reported that their minds "went blank" when they had to speak in front of too many other students. This may happen since students' mental capacity might be overloaded with factors such as FNE and as a result, they may not process the information effectively (Eysenck, 1979, cited in Ohata, 2005). The above findings corroborate the results of numerous other studies which found that oral activities with less exposure invoke less SA (e.g. Cheng, 2005; Young, 1990; MacIntyre, 1999). Similarly, Matsuda & Gobel (2004:32) confirm these results stating that, "students feel more comfortable about speaking with a small number of people than confronting the whole class".

In addition, according to the findings of the study, other in-class activities in which students may feel relaxed are related to both pair and group work. These activities do not involve single-student exposure, i.e. that individual students are not the sole object of others' focus. Apart from low exposure, data analysis revealed that involving students in pair or group-work could be helpful in many ways. For example, group-work may provide opportunities for peer learning and encouraging shy students to speak. Many studies of speaking anxiety (SA) emphasise, consistently with the findings of this study, that these type of activities maximise students' participation and mitigate their SA. For example, Wu (2010:181) notes that, "pair or group work activity certainly motivates and inspires them [students] to practice English in the classroom", and Liu (2006:312) states, "all of them [students] acknowledged that they did not feel nervous during pair work or group work".

Students often feel comfortable performing in a group because they are not working in isolation, and instead the responsibility is divided. This practice could be particularly relaxing for students who can avoid being singled-out. Furthermore, it can allow students to discuss and formulate their ideas before presenting the given activity to the whole class. Moreover, since group-work seems to involve a certain amount of exposure, it can prepare students to do tasks individually. Liu (2006) and Bailey (1983, cited in Young, 1990) found that gradual exposure prepares students for speaking in front of the class. In addition, students can work independently; so group-work may indeed develop

the learner independence that seems increasingly necessary in Pakistani classrooms. However, teachers should take two things into consideration. Firstly, some students may find pair or group-work stressful (Horwitz, 2001), and secondly, more proficient students might dominate weaker students in the group.

In conclusion, it could be argued that speaking in itself evokes anxiety; however, this may be exacerbated when it involves student exposure. Although some self-exposure seems inevitable in speaking-oriented activities, the use of activities that require little exposure may minimise anxious students' anxiety. Moreover, the teacher can employ activities which involve exposure but not speaking such as, asking students to write their work on the board. Such activities could reduce students' fear of exposure and can gradually prepare and motivate them to participate in activities that involve both speaking and increased exposure.

6.4.2.2 Adopting Activities that Give Students Time to Prepare and Practise Oral Tasks

The data revealed that the following three classroom activities: preparation in advance, practising speaking, and adequate wait-time may all be helpful in lessening students' SA. Although these activities may have different roles in language learning, their one common role as suggested by the study's findings could be that they provide students with the time and opportunity to: collect, formulate and reformulate the information and linguistic patterns and examine their utility, suitability and correctness before the given task or the answer is presented to the whole class. Additionally, these activities may help students to improve their weaker areas of competence. Each of the activities is discussed briefly in turn.

The data from this study suggested that preparation in advance for tasks to be performed in class may help to make students feel more confident. This finding is in keeping with Young (1990). I would argue that self-confidence may be one of the main factors which could support students' successful communication in the class. I maintain that starting speech confidently due to the feelings of assurance engendered by preparation seems much better than doing it with

fears and doubts about being unprepared. If a student starts speaking, there is always the possibility that he/she could eventually improve by working on increased participation in speaking. In contrast, an unprepared student may remain confused and may not utter a word. If students are informed of the classroom activities in advance they could work on home assignments, and in doing so they could feel motivated, clear, and participate with confidence when asked to speak in class. However, this does not necessarily entail that advance preparation may completely eliminate SA; but it could help to lower levels of SA. Moreover, sometimes students could be asked to participate unprepared in order to simulate real-life situations so that they should have practice in communicating confidently in unexpected settings and situations.

Similarly, extensive speaking practice can lessen students' SA and promote their spoken English. Liu (2006:313) reports that, "more students attributed the alleviation of anxiety to more practice". Practising speaking can be helpful in improving speaking skills as it may provide learners with auditory input. Moreover, due to consistent practice, students could feel surer of their abilities and performance, possibly resulting in them participating more in class. In turn their proficiency may improve. For Pakistani EFL students who have little contact with spoken English in their daily lives, practice would seem both useful and appropriate. There are numerous ways of practising speaking, for example, role-plays. The situation for the role-play should be interesting, relevant and appropriate to the learners' linguistic requirements. For example, students can play the roles of a bank manager and client. Although students suggested that more practise would reduce their SA, this begs the question of how students can practise speaking, if doing so necessitates getting involved with the very activities which may have always provoked speaking anxiety for them.

Finally, there is evidence in the data that when allowed adequate wait-time, students do not feel flustered when speaking or answering the teacher's question, because have time to guess the correct answer. Moreover, their well-thought-out answers may well give them a sense of achievement, which could promote their willingness to participate further in class. Several anxiety studies report that adequate wait-time reduces students' SA (e.g. Cheng, 2005; Zhang, 2010). Therefore, it is suggested that if some students pause to think or get

stuck when speaking, the teacher should let them finish their answer instead of interrupting them or turning to another student and perhaps leaving them feeling humiliated.

6.5 Teachers' Perceptions of their Students' Speaking Anxiety

The discussion will mainly focus on teachers' lack of awareness of SA since there is evidence in the data that most of the teachers were not very aware of the phenomenon of SA and the difficulties associated with it. Moreover, students' SA was not being taken into account appropriately. In addition, my aim is to highlight areas of teaching which could benefit from improvement.

Tsai (2008) notes that many foreign language teachers do not have a sufficient understanding of anxiety. In light of the data from this current study, teachers' unawareness of SA and of its ramifications can have various negative consequences. Firstly, teachers may not identify students' SA and may therefore believe that students are not actually anxious. Secondly, if teachers encounter students feeling uncomfortable in class when speaking, they may attribute other factors such as domestic problems and lack of interest as being responsible for their students' discomfiture. Thirdly, teachers may intentionally ignore students' SA and may leave students to solve the problem on their own. Finally, some teachers even claim that anxiety and worry play a part in motivating students to enhance and improve their speaking.

The last finding of the current study concerning the facilitative role of anxiety is consistent with Ohata (2005), Trang et al. (2013), and Azarfam & Baki (2012). Some teachers in these studies also believed that anxiety facilitates learning. Although anxiety can play a positive role by providing students with an inner drive to accept the challenge and achieve their targets, this may depend upon the amount of anxiety, nature of the task and the personality of the student. It is well-documented in the literature that higher levels of anxiety impede learning (Tóth, 2010). Similarly, Horwitz (1990) argues that in the language learning process there is no such thing as 'facilitating' anxiety and it is likely that all anxiety is debilitating. Therefore, teachers should be well aware of the levels of their students' SA. Moreover, teachers should help students to utilise their anxiety in a positive way rather than allowing it to hinder their speaking.

Additionally, teachers should not just assume that anxiety necessarily has a facilitative role and they should instead look at its negative role as well, particularly in Pakistan where findings of this study showed that many students experience SA.

Many explanations could be ascribed to the other three findings listed above: a) the belief that students are not anxious b) attaching other explanations to students' SA, and intentionally ignoring students' SA and leaving them to solve the problem on their own. The comparison of the findings of research question two and research question four of this study reveals that there could be discrepancies between teachers and students' views about the role of anxiety in affecting speaking skills. Such inconsistencies have also been reported by other studies. For example, Trang et al. (2013) investigated the awareness of students and teachers of anxiety in a university in Vietnam. The researchers report that "approximately two-thirds of the students suffered from FLA to some degree, yet the teachers did not attribute adequate importance to it" (p. 216). Similarly, Ohata (2005) reported that some of his teacher participants could not identify their students' anxiety; moreover, they did not consider it a serious problem. Likewise, several other researchers such as Brantmeier (2005), Cubukcu (2007) and Tsiplakides & Keramida (2009) also note that some English language teachers may be unaware of anxiety or fail to acknowledge its existence in their students.

In the Pakistani context, the first reason for not noticing students' SA could be that some teachers might themselves be successful language learners and perhaps they may not have experienced SA. Therefore, it may be difficult for them to understand their students' SA. Secondly, peer and student feedbacks are important to develop knowledge about classroom issues and know about inappropriate instructional practices. However, there is evidence in the data that teachers hardly ever discuss problems regarding their students and classroom with their colleagues or with students. On the part of students, it could be difficult for them, in a teacher-centred classroom, to inform their teachers about certain anxiety provoking teaching practices, perhaps due to the fear that teachers may perceive this as general criticism. Therefore, It is suggested that student-feedback techniques should be introduced in Pakistani universities as it

may help in the evaluation and improvement of teaching.

Thirdly, some teachers may not be well-qualified and experienced in teaching English and speaking nor in understanding classroom issues and tackling them. In the Pakistani context, many writers highlight the poor standard of English teaching at many universities. For example, Shamim & Tribble (2005) report that in most of the universities, “English language is taught by visiting teachers instead of a core ELT trained faculty” (p.15). They further state that ELT qualification, “is not a requirement for teaching English in higher education institutions in Pakistan” (p. 12). Similarly, Iqbal (2004:95) reports about Pakistani EFL university teachers that it is true that, “the university teachers have strongly resisted any effort to develop new teaching methods”. Moreover, some university teachers are not appointed on merit but rather on the personal choice of authorities (Shah, 2009). Therefore, it could be argued that such teachers might not have a clear vision of how to teach speaking in a supportive atmosphere. Additionally, they may not take a personal interest in addressing students’ concerns and problems about language learning and speaking.

Additionally, teachers may not be aware of new developments in their area of knowledge and other issues of students associated with learning a foreign language, since they may not be involved in academic research. There is further evidence in a Pakistani study (Shah, 2009) that the majority of university teachers have not published any research article or book. Likewise, Shamim’s (2011) study of 84 teachers from 21 public sector universities located in various regions of Pakistan reports that few teachers present papers at ELT conferences and that, “fewer than one quarter of the teachers in the sample had one or more publications in the field” (p. 7). It is perhaps due to the fact that in the Pakistani university system research publications hardly play any role in teacher promotion. Besides, it is my personal experience that most of the teachers do not have the habit of reading modern language research. Teachers may, perhaps pay attention to students’ SA only if they have any working knowledge of this. For example, in this study two teachers reported in their interviews that now they know more about the topic of anxiety, in the future, they will take it into account in their teaching.

Finally, teachers' pay is low and their "reported household income places them, at best, in the lower rung of the middle class in Pakistan" and "many university teachers do an additional job to make both ends meet" (Shamim & Tribble, 2005:12). It could be argued that economically, socially, and emotionally-dissatisfied teachers can hardly take a dedicated interest in their profession and professional development. Addressing students' speaking anxiety (SA) requires dedicating time, attention and motivation; however, teachers may not have the time to give individual help to their students since they may have to go to other universities or tuition centres to earn more money to fulfil their basic needs.

It was also seen in the data from this study that several teachers had not identified anxious students nor used any strategies to reduce their SA. On the other hand, some teachers had noticed these aspects and had addressed student SA by using strategies such as developing a sociable classroom environment; being a friendly teacher and introducing interesting activities, group-work, and positive reinforcement. However, these strategies do not include those which could reduce other major SA-provoking factors such as error correction, oral test anxiety, grammar, and students' beliefs about language learning and speaking. One reason for the absence of such strategies could be that, as already stated, teachers are not fully aware of SA. However, teacher training programmes can be helpful in developing teachers' understanding and awareness of students' problems stemming from language learning. Nevertheless the data indicated that the majority of teachers had not attended any formal training and professional development programmes to improve their teaching skills to teach speaking more effectively and also to provide students with a comfortable learning speaking experience. Only four teachers had been trained; three had done a B.Ed and one of them had done an M.Ed. These two courses do not seem an appropriate substitute for modern day teacher training programmes since they mainly focus on theory.

Shamim & Tribble's (2005) study on the current provision for the teaching and learning of English in higher education in Pakistan reports that the majority of teachers do not have formal qualification or training in ELT. Shahbaz (2012) reports that many EFL teachers in Pakistan do not receive any training, even after several years of practice. It is noteworthy that the lack of training is not an

issue associated only with ELT, but the same situation can be observed in other areas of teaching in Pakistan. Khan & Fatima (2008) investigated the opinions of 65 teachers at Gomal University, Pakistan, regarding various factors including teacher training. The sample was taken from all departments of the university. It is notable that Gomal University was ranked twelfth best in Pakistan in 2008 (ibid). The researchers report that 67% of the teachers had not attended any in-service training. This finding helps us understand the level of importance that is paid to teacher training at university level in Pakistan.

There could be a number of explanations for the findings of my study. Firstly, according to Cha (2006), professional training: equips teachers with the latest language teaching methods; develops positive attitudes towards teaching, and enables teachers to manage their students' anxiety. However, there is evidence in the data from this study that professional development opportunities offered to Pakistani EFL teachers are limited. Moreover, in the Pakistani context, Mansoor (2002:37) states that in universities, "pre-service training in language teaching is not a requirement. English teachers are inadequately equipped to teach language". Therefore, the universities complain about, "the difficulty of finding trained and well-qualified faculty for their institutions" (ibid: 265). Likewise, Shamim & Tribble (2005) and Shahbaz (2012) call university teachers' lack of qualifications in ELT one of the main reasons for the poor standard of English teaching in Pakistan. It could be that due to the absence of teacher training programmes, workshops and seminars, teachers may not be fully aware of factors such as SA that may hinder and inhibit students' speaking performance.

Recently, some international institutions such as the British Council Pakistan and the United States' Agency for International Development in Pakistan, and local institutions such as the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan have started university teacher training courses and workshops to improve the poor state of English teaching in Pakistan (Kasi, 2010). However, these programmes are not appropriately managed and do not, "cater for the needs of today's demand of learning and teaching English" (ibid: 110).

In addition, although teachers may have the above-mentioned training facilities, they may not be interested and motivated enough to develop themselves professionally. Due to the fact that, in most of the universities of Pakistan, teacher evaluation and accountability do not exist as such, nor are they practised and implemented effectively and strictly (Shamim, 2011). Moreover, Mansoor's (2002:37) study conducted in Pakistan reports:

Once teachers are employed, they are assured of continued service till retirement. The system tends to de-motivate teachers and [it] provides few incentives or opportunities for teachers to seek training or higher qualifications.

Therefore, teachers may not be interested in such courses due to an absence of incentives and professional benefits. Similarly, due to the lack of any accountability and motivation they may not go to the trouble of putting themselves in their students' position. Moreover, teachers may simply ignore students' problems and may choose inappropriate or unsuitable teaching practices or resources. The latter practices should, ideally, meet students' needs and preferences, as students' anxiety levels mainly depend upon their teacher's teaching approach (Azarfam & Baki, 2012). However, there is hardly any structure and procedure to follow for teaching in the majority of universities in Pakistan. Therefore, teachers may follow their own philosophy of teaching and in most of the cases it might not be compatible with students' preferences or expectations.

The final reason for not using any SA-reducing strategies as expressed by the teachers in this study could be their unawareness of any strategies to follow, due to the lack of ELT and language anxiety research in Pakistan. Shahbaz (2012) states that the majority of Pakistani EFL university teachers are not inclined towards research. He further states that only a few universities in Pakistan offer international standard research facilities and opportunities and as a consequence policy-makers and teachers remain unaware of modern trends in ELT.

In addition, the data from this study indicated that some teachers may use their own experience as a student when dealing with their students' problems.

Although personal experiences can be helpful, without proper professional training on language teaching, “even well-qualified mainstream teachers with common sense and good intentions” may not be able to appropriately understand and manage their students’ anxiety (Cha, 2006:138).

I suggest that teachers should pay due attention to their students’ SA, especially in the Pakistani classrooms where, due to teacher-centred teaching, they may strongly affect and constitute a major part of it. Similarly, they should not perceive SA as being merely a personal problem for the students to manage on their own, because, if it is not well-addressed, it can lead to drop-outs (Bailey et al., 2003). In addition, an effective teacher is never static, instead he/she continues learning. The more teachers are professionally-developed, the more they may teach effectively and Tóth (2010) argues that effective input lessens students’ anxiety. Moreover, if students are taught well, they may be able to serve efficiently in different departments and play their part in the progress of their country.

It seems important to mention that the case of teachers in this study may not reflect the general attitude and situation of all Pakistani EFL teachers. There could be teachers who may indeed address their students’ classroom problems, including SA, which may influence students’ language performance and achievement.

The next section, section two, discusses the results of the current study from a theoretical level.

SECTION TWO: Discussion of the Findings from a Theoretical Perspective

This section discusses the results in relation to some issues including facilitating and debilitating anxiety, whether anxiety is a cause or consequence of poor language learning, and factors which may influence anxiety directly or indirectly. Moreover, it presents the findings according to three approaches to anxiety and the findings which may also be related to classrooms of other subjects.

6.6 Facilitating and Debilitating Anxiety

Although most of the findings of the current study indicate that anxiety has debilitating effects on language learning, there is evidence in the data which suggests that anxiety may also facilitate this process. Please see section 3.5 (Chapter three) for the detailed discussion about facilitating and debilitating anxiety.

As noted in Chapter three (sections 3.7 and 3.8), numerous research studies have reported a negative relationship between anxiety and language achievement. In other words, many language anxiety researchers report that the majority of language students experience debilitating anxiety rather than facilitating anxiety (e.g. Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Horwitz, 2013). Horwitz (1990) argued that all anxiety in the language learning process is debilitating. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991a:302) claim that “language anxiety consistently, negatively affects language learning and production”. These findings are supported by the outcomes of the present study.

On the other hand, some studies report positive effects of anxiety on language learning. For example, Chastain (1975) investigated the relationship between anxiety and college students’ language achievement in French, German, and Spanish. Chastain found a positive correlation between anxiety and students’ scores. Similarly, Kleinmann’s (1977) study reported that anxiety helps students take more risks and use the normally avoided difficult English structures. Bailey (1983) found that facilitating anxiety was one of the keys to successful language learning. Likewise, Onwuegbuzie et al.’s (1999) survey-based study with 210 college students learning Japanese, French, and German at a university in the U.S found that “students with the highest levels of academic achievement also tend to have the highest level of foreign language anxiety,” implying that “facilitating anxiety may also be a factor in the acquisition of a foreign language” (pp. 230-231). Moreover, Llina’s & Garau, (2009) assert that anxiety can facilitate foreign language learning. More recently, Trang et al.’s (2013) mixed methods study with 419 students and eight teachers in a university in Vietnam found that the participants acknowledged that anxiety has debilitating as well as facilitating role in language learning.

It could be argued therefore that anxiety might have both facilitating and debilitating effects on language learning. Indeed, Scovel (1978) argued that facilitating and debilitating anxiety work together. However, it is generally believed that anxiety interferes with foreign language learning. Therefore, most studies have examined anxiety in relation to its debilitating aspect and its motivational side has been largely neglected (Trang et al., 2013). Facilitating anxiety motivates some students emotionally to accept the challenges and put more effort into improving their performance. This type of anxiety can keep students alert. For instance, it has been noted that anxious students pay more attention to the instructions of learning activities than others so that they may make the necessary preparation beforehand (Oxford, 1999). Anxiety is a part of our life and learning a foreign language does involve some kind of anxiety. Although efforts should be made to seek solutions to deal with the detrimental effects of anxiety on language learning, it is suggested that studies may examine the facilitating aspect of anxiety to seek ways to take benefits of its facilitating effects. Furthermore, there appears to be a need to develop a tool to investigate anxiety from its positive aspect. Moreover, since it is argued that facilitating anxiety is related to motivation (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993b), these both factors could be studied together. This understanding may lead to useful theoretical implications. It is also argued that teachers could make efforts to help students turn anxiety into a more motivational role. For example, every public speaker experiences some anxiety before the start of the talk, but it also helps the successful ones to be more alert, focused and to perform better as a result. Likewise, students should acknowledge that a certain level of tension and anxiousness can actually push them to improve their performance.

On the one hand, foreign language learning and communication involve complex mental processes and on the other, anxiety is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon (Horwitz et al., 1986). Therefore, the relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning is perhaps not a simple linear one. It may be affected by many factors such as cognitive, personal, academic, and cultural. In the light of this complex phenomenon, questions should be asked as to what extent debilitating anxiety may lead to poor achievement. Conversely, the extent to which facilitating anxiety may lead to better performance also needs a further examination. Another point to consider is to

what extent high anxiety students might experience facilitating anxiety. It is also possible that perhaps neither a lower anxiety nor a higher anxiety as such facilitates or debilitates performance. Rather, positive or negative effects may depend upon the strategy employed by a student to deal with anxiety provoking situations. For example, one student may increase his/her efforts due to anxiety and another one may adopt avoidance behavior. Thus, it could be argued that personality traits and social or cultural characteristics of a student may also determine whether anxiety will facilitate or impede his/her performance.

Likewise, it is believed that anxiety may facilitate language learning if the task is simple and easy in which case anxiety is negative (Scovel, 1978, Cha, 2006). It may mean that students may do well in a task if it is easy despite the fact that the situation is anxiety inducing. On the other hand, same levels of anxiety may debilitate students' performance if the task is difficult. Thus, it could be argued that effects of anxiety may depend on the level of the difficulty of the task. The level of the difficulty of the task may depend on the student's ability and intelligence, among other factors, such as the stage in the learning process, group composition, and the level of experience of a teacher. Since most tasks could be regarded as easy for students with higher intelligence than those with lower intelligence, some anxiety could be expected as a positive experience for higher intelligent students. Teachers have to exercise their professional judgement in introducing tasks to their students that are appropriate to their particular groups. There is arguably some danger that more advanced students may lose interest if the tasks are perceived as too easy, while the struggling students need some careful staging, or scaffolding, in the tasks. It is suggested that teachers could incorporate easy and simple learning activities in class to foster students' facilitating anxiety. In turn, this success may boost their confidence which could encourage them to get involved in more difficult tasks in future.

The following section concerns the discussion of the question about whether language anxiety is a cause or consequence of poor learning ability.

6.7 Is Language Anxiety a Cause or Result of Poor Language Achievement?

As noted in Chapter three, several studies view foreign language anxiety (FLA) as a cause of poor language learning and one of the best predictors of foreign language achievement (e.g. Horwitz et al., 1986; Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993a; Horwitz, 2013). In contrast, some studies (e.g. Sparks & Ganschow, 1991, 1995, 1996; Sparks et al., 2000) argued that learners' difficulties in their native language (L1) and their cognitive disability cause poor learning which can eventually result in anxiety. Sparks & Ganschow (1991) argued that difficulties in listening, speaking, writing, reading and speed of language processing cause anxiety. Thus, they claimed that FLA is a consequence of language learning problems rather than the cause. Recently, Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues reported that highly anxious students have poor L1 skills, weaker foreign language aptitude and course grades, while low-anxious learners have good L1 skills and course grades (Sparks & Ganschow, 2007; Sparks et al., 2009; Spraks et al., 2012). Thus, they suggested that not FLA but L1 literacy, verbal skills and foreign language aptitude are strong predictors of foreign language proficiency. More recently, Sparks & Patton (2013) assigned a less significant part to affective factors such as anxiety and a more vital role to students' L1 skills and foreign language aptitude in affecting their foreign language learning.

The findings of my study seem to indicate that FLA could be a result, cause, and part of a vicious cycle, which indicates that it could be both a result and cause of language learning problems. I briefly discuss below some of the findings which may show anxiety as a result, a cause, and both as a result and cause of language learning problems. However, it is important to clarify that the following discussion on the role of anxiety may not be accurate, as anxiety may be assigned different roles in one situation due to its complex nature. Moreover, since I have analysed the data about the following findings in Chapter 5 (particularly section, 5.3) and discussed them above in part 1 (particularly section, 6.3), following discussion will focus on the findings to highlight anxiety as a result, cause, and cycle.

There was evidence in the data that factors such as students' poor foreign language skills or language aptitude, oral tests, competitiveness, unfamiliar topics for oral tasks, insufficient preparation for oral activities, and poor general academic ability may result in their poor performance. Consequently, students may feel frustration and anxiety. Likewise, the data of this study suggests that students may perform poorly if they are weak in various linguistic components such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These foreign language difficulties and poor learning may result in students' anxiety.

Anxiety could cause poor performance and in this reference, I give two examples. First, there was evidence in the data that students may experience anxiety even before participating in oral activities. Before starting their oral tasks they have fears such as fear of being wrong, of making mistakes, of failure and of being evaluated negatively by their peers and the teacher. Thus, if they are overcome with these fears and doubts, their attention may be divided between the task and that whether they are right or wrong. This anxiety may raise students' affective filter which inhibits students' cognitive ability to produce the language (Krashen, 1982). Consequently, they may not perform well which, in turn, might escalate their anxiety. It may imply that anxiety may not be only a result of L1 coding deficits, but an important emotional state that may cause poor cognitive processing of information, which, in turn, may result in poor language development. In order to highlight the complex relationship between anxiety and language learning, the question could be raised whether students were afraid of participating in activities due to anxiety, poor language skills, or were influenced by both of these factors. These questions could also be applied to the above discussion where I have discussed anxiety as a result of poor language learning. However, it may be argued that many intelligent and successful students may have the above mentioned fears before speaking in front of the whole class. Therefore, anxiety seems to have a basic role in affecting language performance.

Second, the evidence in the data suggested that some students may feel stressed, shy, self-conscious and anxious when speaking in front of too many students in class, of socially and economically superior students, of a strict and judgemental teacher, and due to the presence of opposite sex in the class. The

students reported that due to these feelings they lose confidence and feel anxious, which in turn causes their poor performance. This apprehension may not be due to native language deficits, lack of foreign language aptitude or language learning difficulties, but may be due to anxiety. I believe that if the above mentioned sources of anxiety are removed, students may speak more willingly and confidently. For example, students in this study suggested that they would feel more relaxed and confident if their teacher was friendly, they performed tasks in groups, and they spoke in front of a small number of students. If students report feeling more relaxed when speaking in front of a small number of students or performing oral tasks in groups, it may not mean that these activities demand less cognitive abilities but rather that they are most possibly less anxiety inducing due to less exposure. Price (1991) reported that a number of students experienced severe anxiety in their current language class but had previously studied a language successfully. Most possibly and importantly, their L1 skills and cognitive abilities had not changed in that time.

Some experimental studies reveal that students' performance improved when the sources of anxiety were removed. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) used a video camera to experimentally induce state anxiety during L2 learning and communication. They found that there were deficits at input, processing and output stages. However, when the source of anxiety (video camera) had disappeared, students felt relaxed and their performance improved. Likewise, Duff (2001) found that when the reported causes of language anxiety were controlled, students' language learning developed better. On the other hand, Onwuegbuzie et al.'s (2000) study found that after controlling the factors of native language difficulties, language anxiety still played a significant role in students' language learning. Likewise, some studies such as Chen and Chang (2004) report that L1 skills are not the best predictor of FLA.

Horwitz (2000) acknowledges that some students may feel anxiety and experience language learning difficulties because of cognitive or native language problems, or both, and she highlights the findings that many successful language learners report experiencing anxiety. These learners might have average cognitive and L1 skills. Thus, she argues that some students

could be anxious about language learning independently of native language deficits and such anxious feelings may impede foreign language learning. One of the issues with the LCDH is that it cannot explain why successful, advanced and intelligent students report language anxiety (Horwitz, 2000). Moreover, studies (e.g. Ohata, 2005) report that some language teachers experienced high levels of anxiety as a student. It is therefore somewhat surprising that people struggling with linguistic processing during their studies would like to become language teachers. Thus, it could be argued that the concept that all language learning problems and anxiety stem from learning disabilities needs to be examined with caution.

Although the LCDH seems to have certain limitations, it has highlighted the complex relationship between anxiety and foreign language learning. For instance, it suggests investigating why some highly-anxious students eventually become successful language learners and why others, who also experience high anxiety, fail. Moreover, it would be worthwhile to explore whether, under the right conditions, the students who have weaker native language abilities, poor foreign language aptitude, and high levels of anxiety can become as proficient in foreign language as those with strong native language skills and foreign language aptitude. Likewise, examining learner characteristics which help to learn foreign language successfully could also be useful. All such studies may allow researchers to understand better the role of affective and cognitive factors and their interaction with each other in foreign language learning. The results will hopefully help to develop new methodologies to teach language.

Next, I discuss some of the findings which seem to suggest that anxiety could become part of a vicious cycle. In other words, anxiety could be a result, then a cause and then again a result of poor language performance. Following the findings of this study, if a student makes a mistake due to lack of foreign language proficiency or language difficulties during his/her oral presentation and the teacher corrects him/her harshly, or other students laugh at him/her, the student may experience anxiety. Until this point anxiety seems to be a result of poor performance because a mistake seems to arouse the student's feelings of anxiety. Onwards, anxiety may cause poor performance and then, it can play a cyclical role. For example, as the student is ridiculed once due to mistakes,

he/she may lose confidence due to the feelings that he/she is the focus of attention from others and his/her inadequacies are being exposed and in turn, he/she is being evaluated negatively. Such self-related thoughts and fears may waste students' cognitive energy and divert their attention from the actual task. Thus, they may get confused and flustered, and as a result, may make more mistakes. For instance, one student wrote in the open-ended question: *"My speech becomes disordered when I feel that they are judging me."* In fact, the data of this study suggested that in this situation the students may forget the material and may not recall it until they come out of the class. This retrieval of information may be affected by the 'freezing-up' moments due to anxiety. If students make more mistakes, they may experience more anxiety and in turn, worse performance. For example, one student, Kashif, reported, *"If I make a single mistake, I lose confidence. Then, I just slow down and can't get on track again"*. This poor performance may result in more anxiety. If this process continues, students may withdraw from the task. This may also affect their future participation. Thus, less participation may result in slower improvement which may result in more anxiety. It is possible that eventually students may abandon the language study.

The above example seems to highlight the social and evaluative nature of language learning and an important role of the context where the language is learned. Indeed, MacIntyre (1995) rejects Sparks et al's (1991) hypothesis on the basis of contextualisation and argues that their hypothesis places an undue emphasis on cognitive abilities and acquiring the sound system of the language. Thus, it isolates foreign language development from its social and cultural roots. MacIntyre (ibid.) further suggests that FLA is a part of social anxiety, which stems from the social and communicative aspects of language learning. It is an ego-involving process and it may affect students' self-esteem and self-confidence. It seems that affective or emotional factors (for example, anxiety) can play an important part in cognition. The Linguistic Coding Difference Hypothesis (LCDH) might not have considered the differences between native language acquisition and foreign language learning, particularly the characteristics that signify the uniqueness of foreign language learning context. MacIntyre (1995) argues that a significant correlation exists between anxiety and foreign language tasks, but not the same tasks are performed in the native

language. Horwitz (2000) argues that the LCDH considers only a simplified aspect of foreign language learning.

Recently, Sparks and Patton (2013) reported that although affective factors (e.g. anxiety) are important and they may obstruct learning, they are not more important than other academic tasks which develop language skills. Thus, they suggested that classroom teachers need to focus less on anxiety and motivation and more on the actual classroom activities and tasks which would develop students' language. On the other hand, various researchers argue that affect is at the heart of the foreign language learning process (e.g. Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). I suggest that although language teachers and researchers may take into account the possibility of language learning problems, language learning is a complex social and interpersonal endeavour, and to overlook the role of anxiety could be detrimental to educational outcomes.

The above discussion indicates that in fact, the advocates of both sides have not totally dismissed each other's views. Sparks et al., (2009) agree that anxiety may affect foreign language learning, while Horwitz (2000) acknowledges that cognitive or L1 issues may lead to anxiety and language learning difficulties. Following the findings of the present study discussed above, it appears that the answer to the question, whether poor learning ability causes anxiety or vice versa, may depend upon the situation. Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues could be right to hypothesise that anxiety can result from coding difficulties; but, as noted above, the fact is that even brilliant students may experience anxiety when learning a new language. Perhaps, Sparks, Ganschow and their colleagues may have ignored the complex effects of anxiety on foreign language learning. Horwitz (2000) points out that it is simple and easy to hypothesise anxiety as a consequence of poor language learning ability. For example, a student fails to do well and in turn, feels anxiety. She further states that "the challenge is to determine the extent to which anxiety is a cause rather than a result of poor language learning" (Horwitz, 2000:118).

In fact, the relationship between anxiety and achievement does not appear to have a one way relation but it seems a feedback loop. Onwuegbuzie et al.,

(2000) call this cycle of high anxiety, low self confidence and low achievement a “self-fulfilling prophecy of foreign language anxiety” (p. 12). Similarly, MacIntyre (1995) argues that the LCDH fails to thoroughly take into account the influence of anxiety in the recursive relationship that exists between anxiety, cognition, and behaviour. More recently, Gregersen & MacIntyre (2014) explain that individual differences such as anxiety and aptitude keep changing and interacting with each other. Put it differently, they will influence each other and will be influenced by each other. This phenomenon appears complex and dynamic. Thus, it seems difficult to establish unequivocally whether anxiety is a cause of poor language learning or is the consequence of it. I think factors such as cognition, perception, and emotion integrate with each other and develop inter-dependently. Thus, it could be argued that a complex cycle may develop that allows anxiety to be simultaneously a consequence and a cause. In this regard, however, an important question could be asked as to how anxiety disrupts learning.

The next section presents a discussion of factors which may affect anxiety directly or indirectly.

6.8 Discussion of Factors which may Influence Anxiety Directly or Indirectly

Keeping in view the data of the present study, it appears that most of the factors revealed in the data as sources of anxiety may exert a direct influence on students’ speaking anxiety (SA). For example, all individual learner-related sources of SA (e.g. motivation and lack of confidence), all classroom-related sources (such as fear of negative evaluation and of oral tests), all linguistic-related sources (for instance, lack of vocabulary and grasp of grammar), all factors related to teacher-student interaction (e.g. strict teacher and concern about mistakes), and some of the socio-cultural-related sources (e.g. competitiveness) seem to influence SA directly and immediately. Please see Chapter 5 (section, 5.3) and Chapter 6 (section, 6.3) for the detail about how the above mentioned factors may impact directly on anxiety.

On the other hand, as indicated by the data of this study, some of the factors may influence SA indirectly. For example, some of the socio-cultural-related

factors, such as students' geographic background, pre-university English education, parents' socio-economic status, and parents did not send their offspring to English-medium institutions previously. These socio-economic and cultural aspects appear to influence students' language ability and then anxiety indirectly. The data suggested (see section, 5.3.5) that due to the above mentioned factors, students did not have opportunities to seek better English training and speaking skills previously. Therefore, their foundation of English was weak and thus, they could not perform well in various oral activities in their university class and, in turn, experienced SA. The above mentioned factors seem to affect students' English language proficiency which, in turn, may cause their anxiety. Therefore, it could be suggested that these factors may exert an indirect influence on anxiety.

Similarly, the variable of cultural alienation seems to influence anxiety indirectly. The data of this study suggested (see section, 5.3.5.5) that some students may regard English as a language of usurpers and moreover, a threat to their self-identity, culture, and languages. Such perceptions may induce negative attitudes, hatred and even rage which, in turn, may affect students' motivation and interest for learning English. However, students reported in their interviews that they have to learn English due to its importance for their future, but do not have any emotional affinity with the language they are learning. Therefore, they may feel disturbed, worried, and uncomfortable in the class. It appears that cultural alienation may first affect motivation and then anxiety indirectly. It is noteworthy that this factor (cultural alienation) seems to be an issue of strong negative emotions and rage and it may not necessarily make all students anxious. However, the data of the current study seem to suggest that it may have an indirect influence on some students' anxiety. It could be worthwhile therefore to investigate further the association between anxiety and cultural alienation.

The above discussion seems to suggest that foreign language anxiety may exist within a complex dynamic network of variables. Moreover, the reasons and sources of anxiety may not always be apparent, immediate, and fixed but rather a number of variables might have an indirect association with anxiety. In other words, some direct and indirect factors may interact with each other to influence

students' anxiety which, in turn, may affect their language achievement. Gardner et al., (1997) recommended that by examining factors collectively rather than independently, the researcher might more clearly "determine the processes by which individual difference variables influence how well people acquire a L2" (p. 356). I suggest that anxiety studies could pay closer attention to certain indirect or remote reasons of anxiety (such as certain social and cultural factors), along with investigating some apparent and direct contributors of anxiety (such as fear of negative evaluation and of making mistakes) in order to understand better the origins of language anxiety. Findings of this kind of studies may help reduce students' anxiety more effectively. The interview technique proved useful in the present study to understand FLA more comprehensively. Therefore, one important method to understand better how anxiety functions in foreign language learning could be to interview students about their feelings, beliefs and perceptions about anxiety and language learning.

6.9 Discussion of Findings according to Three Perspectives of Anxiety: Trait, State, and Situation-Specific and of those which may also be Related to Classrooms of Other Subjects

Although many of the findings of the current study appear to be related more to the situation-specific type of anxiety, some of the findings may have a cross-over into state anxiety and trait anxiety. Similarly, some of the findings may not be specific to foreign language classrooms but may also be related to classrooms of other subjects. First, I discuss findings which seem to be related more to the situation-specific type of anxiety, then, those which may have a cross-over into trait anxiety, followed by those which could be related to state anxiety, and finally those findings which may also be related to classrooms of other subjects. Please see Chapter 5 (section, 5.3) and Chapter 6 (section, 6.3) for more detail about the following findings of the present study. Although I have already explained the concepts of trait, state and situation-specific anxiety in Chapter 3 (section, 3.4), I will explain each of these concepts below briefly so that the reader may understand better the discussion of the findings related to each of these types of anxiety.

6.9.1 Findings which Seem to be Related More to the Situation-Specific Type of Anxiety

Horwitz et al., (1986) posit that language learning contexts produce a unique type of anxiety which is classified as situation-specific anxiety. This perspective of anxiety examines a specific type of anxiety in a well defined situation and thus, it is tied to the situation (ibid.). This anxiety is provoked by a specific set of conditions, such as speaking in class or completing examinations (Horwitz, 2013). MacIntyre (2007:565) argues that “at the situation-specific level of conceptualisation, the concern is for concepts that are defined over time within a situation; at the situation-specific level, the concern is for establishing specific, typical patterns of behaviour.” Foreign language anxiety (FLA) may be defined as fears, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours specifically attached to the situation, i.e., language classroom.

In the present study, linguistic-related sources of speaking anxiety (SA), such as: vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation difficulties; teacher-student interaction, for example: strict teacher, formal classroom environment, fear of error-correction and lack of student voice; individual learner-related sources of SA, for example: students’ past negative and unpleasant language learning experiences, lack of confidence, and students’ beliefs about language learning; some classroom-related sources of SA, such as: oral tests, fear of negative evaluation, lack of preparation, and short time granted to formulate answers; and some socio-cultural-related sources of SA, for instance: competitiveness, cultural alienation, mixed-gender classrooms and other socio-cultural-related sources (e.g. students’ pre-university English education) which actually seem to represent lack of proficiency, appear to specifically induce situation-specific anxiety. In other words, feelings, perceptions, and behaviours produced by the above mentioned factors seem to be specifically associated with a context that is language classroom.

Students may experience anxiety due to these factors recurrently in the language classroom. In fact, there was evidence in the data of the present study that students may experience anxiety induced by the above mentioned factors whenever they go to language classroom. The following statement from a student’s (Imran) interview seems to indicate that oral activities may produce

recurrent anxiety for students whenever they go to the classroom (situation-specific anxiety) and they may become relaxed once they leave the class. Imran stated:

I am extremely afraid of speaking. I don't want to come to class when I know I have to make an oral presentation. I really feel stressful when other students are speaking and I feel the teacher may also ask me to speak. When the class is over I feel relaxed.

Likewise, the following statement from another student's (Kashif) interview appears to suggest that students may experience anxiety whenever they have language classes due to a strict teacher. He commented, "*The fact is that I am not relaxed in the class because I know that the teacher is in front of me who is very strict.*" Moreover, the data of the current study suggested that various factors such as oral tests, grammar, mistakes, and fear of negative evaluation may provoke recurrent anxiety for students whenever they have language classes.

Most of the above mentioned factors such as tests, linguistic-related issues, oral presentations, fear of negative evaluation, and of error correction seem to be common in language classrooms. Thus, students may experience anxiety due to these factors and they may associate this anxiety with language classroom since they experience these factors in this context. Interestingly, the literature suggests that such factors may induce anxiety for some students even in their 3rd or 4th language learning (e.g. Dewaele, 2013). Thus, it could be argued that these factors induce anxiety that could be specific to the language learning context. In order to explain how anxiety may get associated with the language learning context, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) state that, for example, a student faces problems in foreign language learning in the early stage and experiences anxiety about the feeling of negative evaluation, making errors and incompetence, which could lead to situation-specific anxiety.

6.9.2 Findings which may Have a Cross-Over into Trait Anxiety

Trait anxiety is defined as "a feature of an individual's personality and therefore is both stable over time and applicable to a wide range of situations" (MacIntyre, 1999:28). In the words of MacIntyre (2007:565), trait anxiety refers to "concepts that endure over long periods of time and across situations." It could be argued

that trait anxiety is a permanent characteristic of one's personality and people with trait anxiety may become anxious in any situation.

Some of the findings of my study, such as students' anxious personality, perfectionism, competitiveness, fear of correction, of speaking in front of the whole class, of negative evaluation, and lack of confidence cannot be solely related to the situation-specific type of anxiety, but they may have a cross-over into trait anxiety. In other words, due to these factors one may not necessarily experience anxiety in language classroom but rather in various situations. For example, students with anxious personality may have fear of speaking, of making mistakes, of negative evaluation, or they may experience losing confidence not only in language classroom, but in a variety of other situations, such as in social gatherings. Similarly, some students may have a perfectionist and overly competitive nature and therefore, they may experience anxiety due to these two factors in a variety of situations apart from language classroom.

However, it is important to note that students high in trait anxiety may experience more anxiety in language classrooms than those low in trait anxiety. One of the possible reasons could be that performance-oriented activities, such as oral tests and oral presentations, and fears, such as fear of mistakes and of negative evaluation, appear to be common in language classrooms. The data of this study suggested that students with anxious personality might be overly concerned about mistakes, evaluation, failure, and social image.

6.9.3 Findings which may Have a Cross-Over into State Anxiety

State anxiety is defined as a "moment-to-moment experience of anxiety; it is the transient emotional state of feeling nervous that can fluctuate over time and vary in intensity" (MacIntyre, 1999:28). In other words, state anxiety refers to a temporary condition which is experienced at a particular moment in time. It is experienced in reaction to a specific object or event such as an oral exam (Phillips, 1992). State anxiety fades when the event, object or situation that is perceived as threatening disappears (Spielberger, 1983).

Some of the anxiety provoking classroom activities, such as: discussions, oral tests, oral presentations, when asked to speak on the spot, and when asked a

question in the class, may not be specifically related to the situation-specific type of anxiety, but they may have a cross-over into state anxiety. Anxiety provoked by these factors may be experienced at a particular moment in time and it could be temporary. Moreover, students may no longer feel anxiety as these activities are over. For example, a student may experience anxiety as he/she is going to take a test; these anxious feelings may continue during the test but may reduce instantly after the test ends. Likewise, there was evidence in the data that students may experience anxiety when the teacher asks a question to the class but they may become relaxed and get back to normal once the question is answered. Moreover, some students reported in their interviews that they experience anxiety if they do not know the vocabulary word they need, or forget grammar rules during their oral presentation. This may also be more related to state anxiety because the anxiety induced by this situation seems to be temporary and occurring at a particular moment in time. Moreover, students may feel relaxed once they recall the vocabulary word, or grammar rules, or when the oral task is over.

The state type of anxiety has not been widely studied in SLA (MacIntyre, 2007), but the available literature appears to reveal that if anxiety is provoked, students' performance is affected (e.g. Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Gregersen, 2003).

6.9.4 Findings which may also be Related to Classrooms of Other Subjects

Some of the findings of the current study appear to have wider implications insofar as they are related not just to language classrooms, but may also be relevant to classrooms of other subjects. Various factors, such as: strict and biased teacher, inappropriate teaching methodology, overly formal classroom environment, fear of correction, forced participation, lack of confidence, of student voice, of preparation, fear of negative evaluation, tests, competitiveness, parental expectations, and mixed gender classrooms may make students stressed, worried and uncomfortable in the classrooms of other subjects, besides language classroom. In other words, these factors seem to be related to education in general and not just learning English. For example, students may be afraid of error correction, they may lose confidence, and may

have fear of negative evaluation in classrooms of other subjects, apart from a foreign language classroom. Likewise, if students' voice and opinions about exams, classroom, etc, are ignored in classes of other subjects, they may become tense, frustrated and worried. Moreover, students of other subjects may have a fear of failure and of obtaining poor grades and thus could experience anxiety about tests.

I think social and communicative demands of foreign language learning may distinguish FLA from other general performance and academic anxieties. Likewise, language learning is a personal and ego-involving endeavour. In this connection, Horwitz and Young (1991) argue that "probably no other field of study implicate self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does" (p. 31). Similarly, Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014:2) argue that "It is this very awareness of the inability to authentically communicate who we are in our first languages when using our second languages that is the impetus for foreign language anxiety". In other words, the realisation that one is a brilliant communicator in his/her own language but cannot communicate appropriately in a foreign language may lead to anxiety.

Anxiety is a complex and multidimensional variable (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Horwitz, 2013) and in the words of Scovel (1978:137), it is "not a simple, unitary construct". Dornyei (2009, cited in Dewaele, 2013:670) highlights the complex nature of anxiety stating that it is a "curious variable" because "although its conceptualization is straightforward, there is general uncertainty about the broader categorization of the concept: in some theories it refers to a motivational component (...), in some others to a personality trait (...) and it is also often mentioned as one of the basic emotions (...)". MacIntyre (2007) suggests that each of the three types of anxiety: trait, situation-specific, and state plays an important role in understanding the language learning process. He further argues that foreign language anxiety (FLA) should be viewed as state, situation-specific, and trait characteristics. Therefore, it could be argued that all these three concepts of anxiety may be interrelated. For example, Spielberger (1983) reported that there is a strong correlation between trait and state anxiety. In other words, higher levels of trait anxiety may be associated with higher levels of state anxiety. Likewise, frequent experience of state anxiety

may turn into trait anxiety (ibid.).

Similarly, state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety appear to be interrelated. For example, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) argued that if state anxiety occurs repeatedly and a link is developed between the anxiety arousal and foreign language learning, in turn, FLA emerges. Likewise, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) stated that state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety are interrelated. In a similar vein, Piniel, & Csizérc (2015:166) define foreign language anxiety as “repeated momentary experiences of anxiety (state anxiety) linked to the context of language learning in particular.”

Following the above discussion, some of the findings of the current study mentioned above, such as when asked a question in the class, oral presentations, oral tests, and vocabulary and grammar difficulties in the early stage of language learning, could be more related to state anxiety. However, these activities are frequent in language classrooms, thus, with the passage of time, students may be generally worried due to the perception that they will face problems whenever they are in the language class context. In turn, they may associate anxiety induced by these activities to language classroom, hence, eventually, state anxiety may turn into situation-specific anxiety. I think one of the differences between state and situation-specific anxiety could be that state anxiety refers to the experiences which happen in a particular moment in time and there may not be much concern whether they might happen again, while situation-specific anxiety may refer to the experiences which occur consistently within a specific situation.

Finally, situation-specific anxiety and trait anxiety may be interrelated. For instance, Al-Saraj (2014) and MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) argued that situation-specific anxiety could be regarded as a measurement of trait anxiety, which is restricted to a given context, such as stage fright and classrooms. It could be argued that situation-specific anxiety interacts with a particular situation, while trait anxiety does not interact with a particular situation.

It seems noteworthy that MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) concluded that trait anxiety and FLA are totally independent of each other and can hence “be

considered as two separate traits” (p. 268). However, some recent studies have contested this view and report significant correlations between FLA and trait anxiety (e.g. Dewaele, 2013; Dewaele & Tsui Shan, 2013). For example, Dewaele (2013:680) concludes that FLA “is more than just a situation-specific dimension. It is clearly linked to personality traits”. This finding is helpful as it seems to highlight the fact that FLA may be associated with personality traits. Likewise, it appears to suggest that students who are anxious by nature may experience more anxiety about speaking in the foreign language classroom. However, more research is needed to examine better this complex research topic. One question to consider could be to what extent language anxiety is linked with trait anxiety. Moreover, although Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale is a widely recognised instrument, anxiety researchers may develop better instruments to understand more deeply the possible association between trait, state, and situation-specific anxiety.

Recently, in the field of applied linguistics, “the description and investigation of various variables as interrelated and interconnected parts of complex dynamic systems (DSs) have gained ground” (Piniel, & Csizér, 2015:164). Van Geert (1994, cited in Piniel, & Csizér, 2015:164) defines dynamic systems as “a set of variables that mutually affect each other’s changes over time”. In this line, some writers (e.g. Dornyei, 2010; DeKeyser, 2012, cited in Piniel, & Csizér, 2015) have started to support the study of individual differences variables in language learning through dynamic systems perspective, “where the focus on change, interaction and variability rather than merely observing isolated relationships between variables in the hope of formulating generalisations.” (Piniel, & Csizér, 2015:165).

Anxiety is not a physical phenomenon but rather an abstract variable. Likewise, language learning is a dynamic process. I think it might be difficult to find an ultimate answer about the nature of FLA. I think all of the above mentioned findings of this study may interact constantly and thus, they may be highly correlated with each other. For example, if a student is anxious by nature, he/she may be afraid of speaking in front of the whole class, may have fear of correction and of negative evaluation in whatever context, including foreign language classes. Furthermore, the student may suffer from test anxiety, may

lack confidence, might be too perfectionist, could be more anxious about 'losing face' in public and might not be able to laugh it off. Therefore, it seems difficult to find neat little categories, or in other words, a pure example of a situation-specific factor. Dewaele (2007) states that FLA is “probably situated half-way between trait, situation-specific anxiety and state, more sensitive to environmental factors than personality traits and yet more stable than states since it remains relatively stable across languages” (pp. 405–406). Therefore, it could be argued that all three levels of conceptualisation: trait, situation-specific, and state may not be totally independent of each other, but rather may be interrelated.

6.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the findings of my study concerning speaking skills as being more anxiety-provoking than other skill areas, factors causing students' speaking anxiety (SA), teacher behaviour and classroom activities identified as helping to alleviate SA, and teachers' views of their students' SA and the teachers' approaches and strategies to manage and cope with their students' SA. Moreover, I discussed the findings from a theoretical viewpoint in terms of certain issues: facilitating and debilitating anxiety; anxiety causing or resulting from poor language performance; factors which may influence anxiety directly or indirectly; and discussion of findings in relation to three perspectives of anxiety: trait, state, and situation-specific, and to classrooms of other subjects. Based on the discussion of the main outcomes, the next chapter will present the implications of this study along with some suggestions for further research.

Chapter 7

Implications, Further Research and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

This chapter forms the conclusion of this research study into issues surrounding anxiety about speaking English in the classroom, as experienced by Pakistani English as a foreign language (EFL) university students. It starts by presenting the implications of the current study, then continues with suggestions for further research and finally concludes with a personal reflection on the researcher's PhD journey.

7.2 Implications of the Study

This section presents both the theoretical and the pedagogical implications of the current research. In addition, it offers some implications for educational/language policy-makers. First, the theoretical implications are laid out and then the pedagogical implications and those for educational/language policy-makers are explored.

7.2.1 Theoretical Implications

The present study makes the following theoretical contributions to the knowledge of anxiety from various perspectives. Firstly, as previously highlighted, studies carried out on general language anxiety in Pakistan are scarce and carried out on a small-scale. In addition, to the best of my knowledge, no study on speaking anxiety (SA) has been conducted about the Pakistani context. This current study aimed to fill this gap and build new knowledge. For example, it established that of all the four language skill areas, speaking may produce the most anxiety for Pakistani EFL students. Similarly, it revealed that there may be inconsistencies between both teachers' and students' perceptions of the role and understanding of SA. Moreover, besides identifying other sources of SA, the results of this study highlighted that two SA-inducing factors, namely teachers and socio-cultural, should be particularly taken into account when investigating anxiety in the Pakistani context.

With regard to the 'teachers' variable there is strong and widespread evidence in the data to show that teachers can significantly affect students' SA. Firstly, the data drew attention to a separate and main category, 'teacher-student

interaction' (see section, 5.3.4), with a number of further sub-themes as sources of SA which may directly be brought about by teachers. Secondly, the data suggested that teachers can directly or indirectly influence other sources of SA following the rest of the four main categories (see section 5.3). For example, with reference to the 'competitiveness' source (from socio-cultural-related sources) if the teacher does not provide students with a friendly and sociable classroom environment, the sense of competition may increase, which can invoke even higher levels of SA. Thirdly, the data indicated that various aspects of teacher behaviour and classroom activities (which also depend upon the teacher) can play a major role in reducing students' SA. Finally, the results revealed that teachers may be unaware of students' SA so they may not pay due attention to it.

Moreover, it also appears that no language anxiety study in Pakistan has as yet reported that socio-cultural factors can influence students' anxiety. However, the data from this study revealed the existence of a main, separate category, 'socio-cultural-related sources of SA' (see section 5.3.5), with seven sub-themes as possible sources of students' SA. As a result this study also identifies socio-cultural factors as a key potential area to investigate, in order to further the understanding of classroom speaking anxiety (SA).

In addition, with regards to the research methodology, this study adopted a mixed-methods research design, an approach which has been neglected in Pakistan. It therefore prepares the ground for further language anxiety research in Pakistan to use this type of insightful methodology to lead to further revelations about language anxiety. Similarly, classroom observation as a data collection tool has so far been ignored by language anxiety studies in Pakistan. However, it was used in the current study and it is evident that that it can result in a deeper and holistic understanding of anxiety.

Furthermore, this present research shows that the interpretive-constructivist framework can provide valuable and rich information about students' anxiety. This approach has so far been neglected in Pakistan; therefore, it is to be hoped that this study may motivate researchers in the Pakistani context to pursue the interpretive-constructivist form of enquiry in their studies.

Additionally, the researcher developed section 2 and section 4 (some items were adapted from Young (1990) for part 2 of section 4) of the questionnaire. Interview questions were also developed specifically for the study. Both of these instruments could be helpful for future SA studies in Pakistan.

Moreover, the data from this study showed that most of the teachers were unaware of SA. Additionally, there is a shortage of online resources and academic research into language anxiety and ELT in Pakistan; therefore, copies of this study are to be sent to the relevant authorities in various universities of Pakistan.

The current study also contributes to knowledge by proposing a model of identifying factors, initiatives and behaviours required to address the sources of Pakistani EFL learners' speaking anxiety (SA), which is based on the findings of this research. It highlights the factors that may contribute to students' SA and the teacher behaviour and classroom activities that may alleviate it. This reduction in SA may, eventually, lead students to higher achievement in spoken English. The following figure, 7.1, is the graphic display of the suggested model:

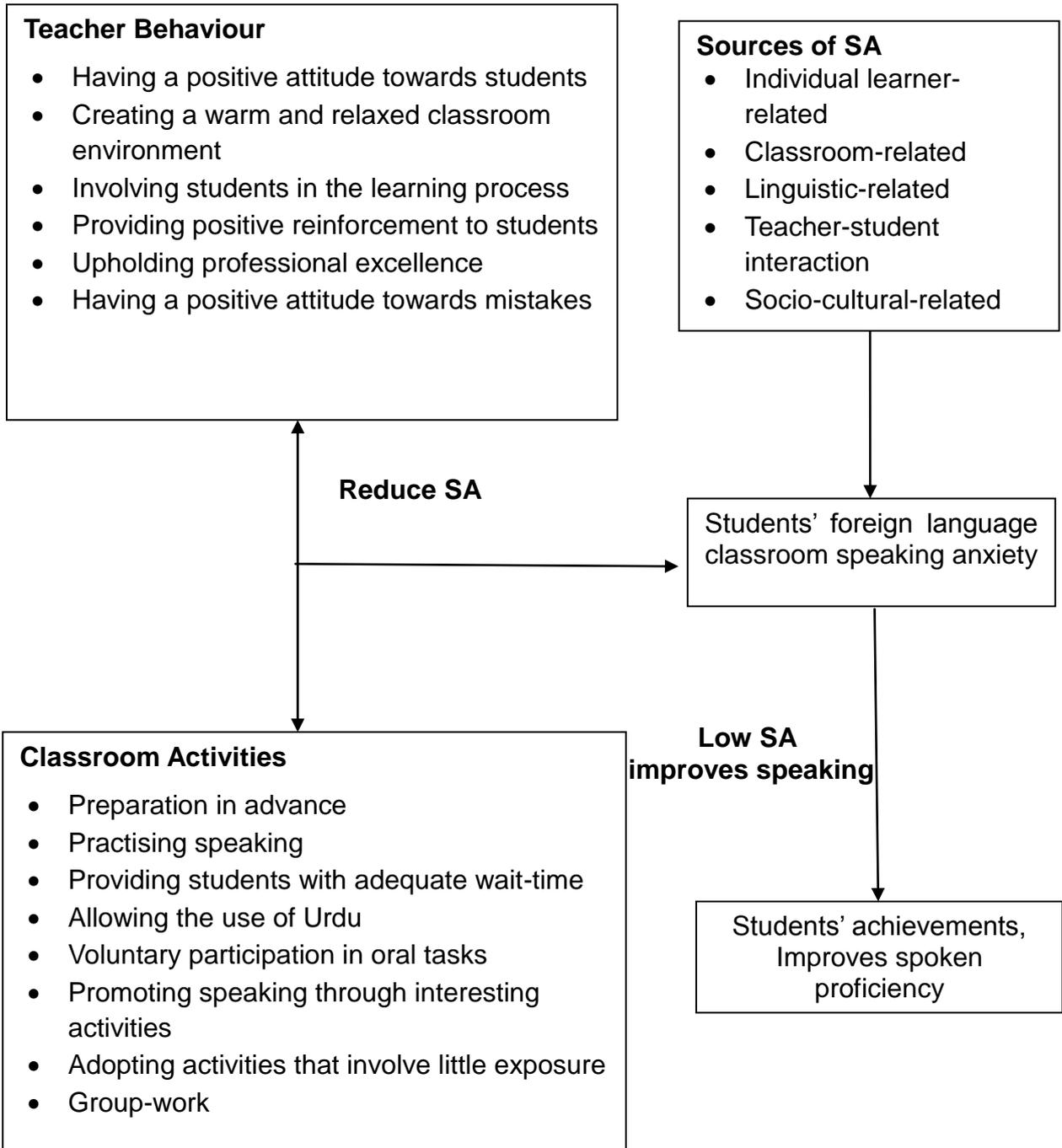


Figure 7.1 Model of Proposals to Address the Sources of Pakistani EFL Students' Speaking Anxiety

Since the lists of teacher behaviour and the classroom activities, in the model, seem to clearly explain their own meaning, the sources of SA that come under each main category will be summarised in the following section. Firstly, individual learner-related sources can be identified as including the student's: personality, students' pre-university learning experience, students' beliefs, motivation, and lack of confidence. Secondly, classroom-related sources include the fear of negative evaluation, lack of preparation, a short time granted to formulate answers, unfamiliar topics, and oral tests. Thirdly, linguistic-related sources include: lack of vocabulary, grammar, and incorrect pronunciation. Fourthly, teacher-student interaction includes: strict teachers, teaching methodology, a formal classroom environment, concern about mistakes, and lack of student voice. Finally socio-cultural-related sources include: students' geographic background, students' pre-university English education, the role of students' parents, social and cultural trends, cultural alienation, competitiveness, and mixed-gender classrooms. It should be noted that this model is proposed as a guideline and does not imply a fixed line of action.

This study makes some significant contributions to the knowledge of language anxiety beyond the Pakistani context. Firstly, classroom observation has been rarely used to date in the field of language anxiety (Cha, 2006; Tóth, 2011). However, the present study contributes to the literature by using this data collection method, effectively enabling researchers to observe SA in operational form in the classroom. Secondly, the researcher has found no scale in the literature to measure anxiety in all four skills. Following a review of the relevant literature, a 16-item scale was developed (see section 1 of the questionnaire) to examine which skill provokes the most anxiety in language learners. In this way, the study can make an important contribution by providing further methodological options. Thirdly, as outlined in chapter 1, there are very few studies available in the field of anxiety which have examined which of the four skills (speaking, writing, listening and reading) produces the most anxiety for foreign language learners (Ohata, 2005). Equally the same researcher notes that little attention has been paid to investigating teachers' awareness and understanding of their students' anxiety, and the strategies teachers currently use to reduce it. As such, the current study investigated precisely these questions with a view to contributing to existing knowledge.

Furthermore, this study has highlighted some possible sources of SA such as: lack of student voice, rote-learning, teacher bias, fear of saying anything socially unacceptable or against religion, cultural alienation, and mixed-gender classrooms and it has also identified some ways of reducing SA, such as, allowing them to resort to using their first language when speaking in the target foreign language. It appears that this way of reducing SA and these sources of SA have not been previously reported upon in the literature. Therefore, this study may serve as an index for future writers who are interested in examining anxiety from these previously-mentioned perspectives. Moreover, as noted in chapter 6 (sub-section 6.3.1.3), most studies to date have reported a negative relation between anxiety and motivation and very few studies indicate that motivation for learning a foreign language could in fact be a source of stress and frustration for some students. This study contributes to the knowledge and proposes a positive relation between these two variables.

Finally, there appears to be a shortage of studies examining anxiety in relation to students' immediate socio-cultural contexts. This study contributes to the existing knowledge by reinforcing the concept that socio-cultural factors associated with language learning may affect students' anxiety levels. Accordingly, it suggests that language anxiety can be investigated beyond the cognitive and psychological dimensions.

7.2.2 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The following implications and recommendations are drawn from the key findings of this study, with a view to enabling teachers to adopt and implement these recommendations appropriately in order to alleviate their students' SA and bolster students' speaking proficiency.

The principal message of this research for Pakistani EFL teachers is that speaking anxiety (SA) does indeed exist in classrooms and it can have a detrimental effect on students' speaking performance. Consequently, the first and most important step is that teachers should be aware of SA, acknowledge its presence in English classrooms and accept learners' anxious reactions as "legitimate" (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999:32). Teachers should not directly assume that poor performance by unresponsive and reluctant students is

entirely due to their lack of motivation, aptitude or ability; they should instead recognise the possibility that some students might be suffering from SA. Therefore, rather than ignoring students' SA or leaving them to cope with it on their own, they should address students' SA.

Given that students with self-confidence may be able to overcome SA, teachers are urged to focus on building and developing confidence in their students. This can be done by many ways. For example, teachers can give anxious students easy and simple oral tasks, with clear instructions. This will provide them with opportunities to experience success in using spoken English. This sense of achievement would enable them to have faith in themselves as proficient students which may foster self-confidence. Furthermore, giving positive feedback and particularly highlighting their good points will further help to build students' confidence. Finally, if some students fail to perform well, an empathetic approach on the part of the teacher may help students to feel that they are not alone in their endeavours and may also help to reassure them of their ability to learn.

In addition, teachers can also reduce their students' SA and save them from academic and emotional stress through effective communication. A discussion of SA can take place openly in class, so that anxious students may know that it is a common problem and that they are not alone in their concern. Alternatively, teachers can have one-on-one meetings with anxious students. Such a discussion may allow anxious students the opportunity to express their feelings and apprehension regarding speaking in a relaxed and confidential atmosphere, and it can also inform the teachers about students' academic problems. Kumaravadivelu (1991, cited in Wang, 2005) argues that the more teachers know about students' personal and academic concerns and worries, the better they will be able to address students' concerns.

While some teachers might not have sufficient time to attend to each anxious student, it is imperative to address students' SA. One way of handling this problem could be to provide students with useful strategies to help them cope with multiple SA-producing situations. In this regard, Foss & Reitzel (1991) suggest enabling students to consider their learning goals in a more realistic

way. Likewise, Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest relaxation exercises and giving students advice on effective language-learning helpful strategies to dispel anxiety. Additionally, reflective writing such as that in diaries and journals may also be recommended as useful resources to enhance students' awareness of both themselves as learners and of the phenomenon of SA. Finally, seminars and workshops can also be useful in informing students about the identification and nature of SA and how it can be effectively managed. However, the teachers must comprehend the complexity of anxiety and the language learning process, since one strategy may be suitable for some students but not for others.

It is recommended that teachers could confront students' erroneous beliefs about language learning and speaking by providing them with accurate information about the course goals and corresponding and, "reasonable commitments for successful language learning" (Horwitz, 1988:286). Likewise, students should be reassured that getting the message across is better and more important than doing so with absolute accuracy and perfection. At the same time, teachers should also reflect upon their own teaching practices because some learner beliefs, such as perfection in speaking, could be induced by teachers if they unduly highlight students' mistakes.

Moreover, this study indicates that a strict and inflexible classroom can be a source of speaking anxiety (SA). As such one of the implications for teachers may be that it can be beneficial to provide students with an easy-going, comfortable, supportive, and secure classroom atmosphere. Such an environment could discourage various SA-producing factors such as the fear of making mistakes (FMM) and the fear of negative evaluation (FNE) and give rise to other factors, which could cause students' spoken English to improve, such as, risk-taking, active participation, and self-confidence.

This sociable and nurturing environment in the classroom can be created in many ways. For example, teachers could discourage aggressive competition amongst the students and encourage a sense of community. Moreover, particular seating arrangements can also make some students feel secure. In most Pakistani classrooms students sit in rows, the traditional layout where the teacher is the fountain of knowledge and students only rarely interact with each

other and the teacher. Arranging the seats in semi-circle is one possible solution to break this habit, or perhaps the students could be asked about their own seating preferences. Finally, picnics and games are some other suggestions for teachers to create an open and sociable classroom climate.

However, in order to create a sociable classroom atmosphere, it seems particularly important that teachers should have a positive and friendly relationship with their students. For example, they then may present themselves as 'facilitators' rather than authority figures. Similarly, they should convince and assure students that they are genuinely concerned about them. Additionally, basic human characteristics such as patience, humour, eye contact and positive gestures are also both vital and helpful. When students perceive their teachers' concern, they may feel more inclined to participate, risk using English in class, and even acknowledge without fear that they do not know the answer.

Another recommendation is that teachers could play the role of researcher in their classrooms. For example, they could discover their students' learning styles. Moreover, they could explore factors that may underlie students' poor speaking and unwillingness to participate in oral activities. Teachers should also be aware of their students' educational and socio-cultural backgrounds. This would be helpful for teachers in allowing both the design and choice of: oral activities, assignments and tests, forming groups, and giving feedback. In addition, teachers have students from diverse educational backgrounds, and often with a wide range of oral competence in their classes. Hence, they may devise oral tasks in keeping with their students' ability levels. Furthermore, teachers could reflect upon their own teaching practices asking, for example, whether their teaching is addressing their students' learning needs, or whether they are indeed paying proper attention to unresponsive students. According to Norrish (1996), through reflection the teachers' initial understanding of things is modified or changed. In this way, teachers may develop professionally through this process. In this regard, Young (1991) suggests that videotaping classes to examine their own teaching practices may also be useful.

The finding that students may become self-conscious when singled out to speak in front of the class implies that teachers should design activities which involve little public exposure in the classroom and which encourage students to speak. For example, teachers could incorporate tasks involving work in pairs or in small groups. Such activities may lead to students feeling that they are not on their own, thereby boosting their confidence and encouraging them to speak more. Moreover, they would have less fear of being put into the spotlight and then, they may be less susceptible to fears such as FNE. Moreover, teachers could give students adequate opportunities to rehearse and prepare in advance what they have to present in group-activities, in order to enhance their comfort level. One caveat is that working in groups could be SA-inducing for some students; therefore, effective teachers should seek to know and recognise individual student traits to be able to respond accordingly.

It is recommended that teachers are careful and sensitive in the frequency and manner of their correction of students' spoken errors. With reference to the frequency of this: correcting every single mistake may distract students and cause them to lose where they are; inhibit their learning of this language skill, and demotivate them. Similarly, overcorrection may lead them to believe that accuracy is more valuable than conveying their message across. Teachers should correct those mistakes which occur frequently. One way to counter frequent mistakes might be to make a note of them and discuss these later on with the entire class.

However, perhaps, the most important point is that teachers' method of error correction should be gentle and encouraging, because "one crudely, insensitively corrected error" can irreparably harm anxious students' confidence and self-esteem (Gregersen, 2003:31). Moreover, Norrish (1983) suggests that language teachers should give encouragement to students in situations where they make mistakes and, "disapproval should on no account be shown" (p: 114). One method of correction could be modelling learners' responses; that is, repeating back the correct form of what they have just said (Young, 1991). In this way, students get linguistic input but their errors are not spotlighted in front of the class. However, modelling can be helpful if the target student listens carefully and follows the ensuing feedback. Similarly, self and peer correction

represent two further useful error correction techniques. It is always possible for teachers to intervene if confusion arises. Moreover, it seems important that teachers should assure students that fluency is as valuable as accuracy in leading to improved speaking proficiency. Above all, students should be explicitly taught that mistakes do not necessarily signify failure and incompetency, but instead represent a 'means to an end' and a useful resource in acquiring oral competence.

It was found that classes which did not engage or interest students may generate stress for some students. This implies that teachers need to teach speaking through interesting and enjoyable activities to stimulate students' interest and maintain their motivation in class. Moreover, teachers should avoid assigning more difficult topics for oral tasks, and try to choose topics which are more relevant to students' interests and lives.

The current study revealed that the 'student voice' is mostly ignored in Pakistani EFL classrooms. It is therefore recommended that teachers give students a chance to have their say about different aspects of the class, such as, teaching methodology and oral activities. Their involvement in the learning process could minimise their self-created fears about language-learning, particularly about speaking, and hence enhance their motivation.

There are also further implications for oral tests. For example, students who suffer from text anxiety could be offered several options to allow them to cope, e.g.: pre-test practice, conducting their tests in isolation or in groups, and giving them adequate time for tests. Similarly, students should not just be given points for accuracy but also for communicating meaning effectively too.

Other recommendations such as allowing students adequate wait-time and encouraging volunteer participation can help to reduce students' SA and increase their willingness to participate in speaking activities.

In summary, it appears that most of the implications of the current study are inter-related and following one can influence the others accordingly. For example, nurturing a friendly classroom climate can discourage competitiveness

which may alleviate FMM and this, in turn, can reduce FNE. However, as noted earlier, the role of the teacher is vital in reducing or evoking SA. As Young (1991) reported that the majority of anxiety sources are related to instructional and methodological practices, and it highlights that teachers are often doing, “something fundamentally unnatural” (p. 421). Creating an anxiety-free classroom for students, however, is often considerably harder in practice than in theory. It appears to be relatively difficult for successful language learning and teaching to be completely without any anxiety, as some anxiety could be inherent in the foreign language learning process. Nevertheless it is recommended that teachers should be as sensitive as possible to students’ SA. Equally students should be encouraged to learn more independently and consider ways and strategies in which to manage their own SA. It may be that they could benefit from acknowledging that learning and speaking a foreign language sometimes does involve some degree of anxiety. Similarly, they should not hide their SA but rather discuss it with their teachers or peers.

Finally, the above implications and recommendations are not exhaustive and language teachers can follow their plans according to their own understanding and teaching context.

7.2.3 Implications for Educational/Language Policy-Makers in Pakistan

This study has several significant implications for educational/language policy-makers in Pakistan.

It is recommended that a mechanism and systems for teacher-training be implemented to equip EFL teachers with the necessary skills to address affective factors, such as anxiety, that may influence foreign language learning and speaking. Similarly, workshops and language teaching conferences should be held to inform teachers about the phenomena of speaking and language anxiety, their ramifications and the effective means to reduce speaking and language anxiety. Moreover, the model of proposals to address the sources of Pakistani EFL students’ SA suggested by this study in section 7.2.1 could also be used to explain the phenomenon of SA to teachers. In addition, there is a need to give teachers training in English language teaching (ELT), particularly in how to develop students’ communicative competence in a non-threatening

classroom environment and to make them aware of the current research and teaching methodologies and trends in the field of language pedagogy.

Moreover, the suggestion made by Shamim & Tribble (2005) of establishing a National Centre of English Language Teaching and Research in Pakistan could also be helpful. They believe that such a centre could assist Pakistani universities in designing curricula, developing materials and training teachers.

In addition, new provisions such as English Language Support Units, online teacher consultation resources, Student Counselling Centre, and mentors could all be introduced in Pakistani universities. All of these steps may allow students to express their feelings and concerns about language learning and speaking and receive relevant support and advice.

Some teachers may generally lack motivation for their professional development, teaching and research. It is possible to build and strengthen their motivation in these areas. For example, teachers who develop themselves professionally and academically could be given more rewarding incentives. Similarly, teachers' promotion could be conditional upon their performance in research and/ or teaching. Likewise, an effective and transparent mechanism of teacher evaluation and accountability could be established to attempt to obtain better results. However, as teachers have limited salaries in Pakistan, it could just be productive to raise their salaries so that they were in turn more economically-satisfied and, as a result, they might be more able to dedicate more time to their teaching.

This study also highlighted the issue of 'teacher power' in the Pakistani EFL classroom. Although teachers have a higher degree of power and status in the classroom than their pupils, some teachers misuse their authority and control the classroom in an authoritarian manner. In this study, this behaviour was found to be one of the major sources of students' speaking anxiety (SA). Therefore, it is recommended that policy-makers address the issue of teacher power and authority in Pakistani EFL classrooms. Moreover, enhancing students' role and allowing their voice to be heard in the classroom may positively influence the process of learning and teaching spoken English.

The present study indicated further that, because of the diverse system of education in Pakistan, students may have unequal opportunities to seek not only English language education but also education in other fields of knowledge. On the one hand, this seems unfair to the students who could be deprived of a good education, and on the other hand, it may widen the divide between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' in this country. As such, it is recommended that the government works to replace the current system of education with one homogeneous system. Alternatively the government and educational policy-makers should attempt, at least, to reduce this educational divide, specifically in English language education, in the country as a whole. Students from both English and Urdu mediums of instruction, both rural and urban backgrounds, and belonging to various social classes should all be provided with equal classroom facilities and opportunities to learn English.

Another implication for the policy-makers and designers of ELT materials is to consider including the events and features of the local culture in ELT courses. This action may counter students' potential feelings of cultural alienation. McKay (2012) argues that ELT materials should not be against the target learners' cultural ethos. As such, she suggests the inclusion of local culture in ELT contents in post-colonial countries such as Pakistan. Moreover, due to the changing role of English as an international language, various countries are developing their own variety of English such as Singlish (Singaporean English). In Pakistan many Urdu words; for example, '*ustaad*' meaning teacher, '*melas*' meaning festival and '*roti*' meaning bread, are currently used when speaking English (Bilal et al., 2012). Therefore, introducing a local variety of English could be helpful in making the English learning more effective and enjoyable for Pakistani EFL learners (e.g. Bilal et al., 2011; Mahboob, 2009).

Finally, initiatives such as, emphasising the importance of English from the primary level upwards and suggesting to students' parents to support their children's English learning, all may represent helpful ways in which to promote better learning.

7.3 Suggestions for Further Research

In the first instance, given the shortage of research in the field of language anxiety in Pakistan, it could be productive to replicate this study with a larger number of participants in various universities in multiple regions of Pakistan. Next, as anxiety represents both a multidimensional and complex phenomenon; it would be worthwhile carrying out a longitudinal study to find a better and deeper understanding of this topic. In addition to other qualitative data collection methods, this eventual research project could incorporate the use of long-term classroom observation to record anxiety holistically and also collect useful data about how anxiety interferes with speaking.

Significantly the present study has identified five main areas representing various sources of speaking anxiety (SA) (see section 5.3). There is a rich mine of potential further studies which could follow each theme exclusively to explore it in-depth. The relationship between SA and socio-cultural issues seems particularly interesting. Therefore, further studies, both in Pakistan and in other contexts may be able to point to and highlight exactly how socio-cultural factors interact with language learning and SA in order to obtain a more detailed understanding.

Another opportunity for further research in Pakistan may be that, since this study has only considered the anxiety associated with speaking skills, it would be useful to examine the role of anxiety in relation to the other skill areas, i.e. reading, writing and listening, in order to broaden the understanding of this topic. Also, because this study investigated only non-major English students, further interesting research avenues could be provided by recruiting English major learners. It may be then fruitful to find out whether the latter group's frequent use of English is equally as or even more anxiety-provoking due to their having more linguistic demands made of them.

The findings of this study revealed too that mixed-gender classrooms can be SA-producing for some students. In this regard, it could be worthwhile in the Pakistani context (and also in other EFL contexts) to examine this factor in depth. Similarly, investigating the relationship between gender and SA could also give insights about how gender differences can affect SA.

Furthermore, the results of this study revealed that some students were unwilling to communicate. Since students' unwillingness to communicate and their SA may interact with each other (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), there is merit in investigating further Pakistani students' unwillingness to communicate in relation to SA. Similarly, this study explored the sources of student SA from students' perspectives. Further study is needed to explore this objective from language teachers' perspectives to deepen the understanding of SA.

Finally, besides the qualitative data collection tools used in this study, i.e. interviews and classroom observations, further studies could potentially use different qualitative methods such as student diaries, journal, and focus group interviews to explore more latent information about SA.

7.4 Personal Reflection on my PhD Research Journey

Embarking upon and undertaking my PhD has indeed constituted an inestimable journey, which has developed me as a teacher, researcher, and as a person. As a teacher, my study has provided me with insightful opportunities to both examine and expand my understanding of students' feelings and experiences, not only about speaking anxiety (SA) but also about other key factors associated with learning a new language. In addition, I have attended various educational seminars and a two-stage 'learning and teaching in higher education' programme organised by the University of Exeter in the UK, which have all illuminated and updated my teaching practices.

As a researcher, during this journey I have attained numerous skills. More specifically, I have learnt about: interpretive and scientific methodologies; discussing research with colleagues; communicating educational research; and plagiarism and ethical issues in research. Similarly, I have acquired many invaluable skills and ideas from the feedback from my supervisor. For example, I have learnt how to write critically, academically, clearly, and logically. In addition, the 'Effective Researcher Development Programme' at the University of Exeter has also provided me with useful practical skills such as: using SPSS, the PowerPoint Presentation Programme and how to communicate my research to a wider audience; the two latter have helped me with my own oral presentations.

With regard to my personal development, my PhD study has taught me patience and perseverance. I saw how unclear chapters can eventually get clearer. It was explained to me that being confused is not a weakness but rather not trying to overcome this confusion is a demerit. According to me one of the lessons I learnt has been, 'I will remain confused until I start writing anything, be it right or wrong'.

The most difficult and painful moment during my PhD was when I received a phone call from my home informing me that my mother had passed away. On that very day, I left for Pakistan but my mother had been buried before I got there. I came back to the UK but I could not study for a couple of months and I spent some extremely hard days and nights. However, gradually I composed myself with the help of my will and my friends.

As a final comment, I would like to state that I am eager to apply in my classrooms what I have learnt during this journey. Similarly, this study is a new beginning and it has augmented my passion to continue research in the field of education and ELT.

The overall purpose of this present study was to investigate the perceptions of Pakistani non-major EFL university students about SA. The study reveals that various factors may contribute to anxiety and that it is a pervasive phenomenon in language classroom. Several students in this study considered it a factor which may seriously influence their speaking performance in class. Therefore, it needs targeted attention and an active response from English teachers in order to address it. In this regard, however, the first step seems to be that teachers must be made fully aware of this factor and realise that oral work may generate anxiety for some students. Then as a result, teachers may be able to have friendly relationship with students, establish a supportive and non-threatening classroom climate, and use classroom activities which reduce SA and promote oral English in the classroom. This, in turn, would lead to better spoken competence and performance in English, as well as higher educational outcomes in students.

APPENDICES

Appendix (1)

Questionnaire

Dear student,

This questionnaire aims to identify the most anxiety-provoking English language skill; to explore factors that may contribute to your speaking anxiety; and to investigate the type of teacher behaviour and classroom activities that might reduce your anxiety about speaking English in class. All the information you give will be kept confidential and will be used only for research purposes. The questionnaire has been divided into four sections. I would be very grateful if you could please read each item carefully and be sure not to miss any items. There are no right or wrong answers and no answer is better than another. Please tick (✓) the option that best matches your feelings about each statement. I urge you to be as accurate as possible since the success of this investigation depends upon it.

I highly appreciate your cooperation.

The researcher

Abdus Samad

PhD Student,

School of Education

University of Exeter

E-mail: samadgmm@yahoo.com

Section One

Please provide the following details.

Gender:

Age:

Faculty:

Area of study:

Year of study:

Section Two

This section aims to explore how you feel about reading, writing, speaking and listening to English in the classroom. Please tick one of the options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Key:

1. Strongly Agree = SA

2. Agree = A

3. Neutral =N

4. Disagree = D

5. Strongly Disagree =SD

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to read a passage in English in class.					
2.	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to write English compositions in class.					
3.	I can feel my heart pounding when the teacher asks me to speak English in class.					
4.	I can feel my heart pounding when I have to listen to English in class.					
5.	I am usually at ease when reading English in class.					
6.	I am usually at ease when writing English compositions in class.					
7.	I am usually at ease when speaking English in class.					
8.	I am usually at ease when listening to English in class.					
9.	Reading English makes me nervous and confused.					
10.	Writing in English makes me nervous and confused.					
11.	Speaking English makes me nervous and confused.					
12.	Listening to English makes me nervous and confused.					
13.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I read in English in class.					
14.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I write in English in class.					
15.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I speak English in class.					

16.	I usually feel my whole body rigid and tense when I listen to English in class.					
	Please write down any other feelings or thoughts about your anxiety in reading, writing, speaking and listening. ----- ----- ----- -----					

Section Three

This section explores factors that may create anxiety for you when speaking English in the classroom. Please tick the response the same way as you did before.

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
17.	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.					
18.	I don't worry about making mistakes when I am speaking in my English class.					
19.	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on to speak in English class.					
20.	I think speaking English fluently requires a special ability.					
21.	I am afraid that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak English.					
22.	I feel overwhelmed by the number of grammar rules I have to learn to speak English.					
23.	I get nervous during oral tests in my English class.					
24.	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.					
25.	I get upset when I feel that my classmates speak English better than I do.					
26.	I start to panic when I don't have sufficient time to formulate my answer before speaking.					

27.	I feel confident when I speak in English class.					
28.	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.					
29.	I prefer to speak voluntarily instead of being called on to speak in my English class.					
30.	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of my classmates.					
31.	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting me on when I am speaking English.					
32.	I feel anxious about speaking English in a large class.					
33.	Even if I am well prepared for oral tasks, I feel anxious about them.					
34.	I am worried about my vocabulary.					
35.	I feel uncomfortable speaking in class if the attitude of my English language teacher is strict.					
36.	I feel that I should not speak English in class until I am sure that I can speak correctly.					
37.	I am afraid of not having a well-paid job if I can't speak English well.					
38.	I get upset if I pronounce words incorrectly when I am speaking in my English class.					
	Please write down any other sources of your speaking anxiety in your English class. ----- ----- ----- -----					

Section Four

Part 1

Below is a list of descriptions related to your English teacher's behaviours and characteristics. If the teacher behaviour below tends to decrease your speaking anxiety level and you feel comfortable when speaking in the classroom tick one of the options of strongly agree (SA) and agree (A). If the behaviour does not

tend to decrease your speaking anxiety level, tick one of the options of disagree (D) or strongly disagree (SD). Otherwise, tick neutral (N).

No	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
39.	The teacher explains material and oral tasks well.					
40.	The teacher is friendly.					
41.	The teacher encourages me to speak English.					
42.	The teacher has a good knowledge of the subject.					
43.	The teacher asks me about my learning preferences.					
44.	The teacher believes that everyone makes mistakes when speaking English.					
45.	The teacher makes me feel comfortable in class.					
46.	The teacher compliments me to make me feel valued.					
47.	The teacher corrects my mistakes in a gentle and supportive manner.					
48.	The teacher allows students to work in groups or pairs.					
49.	The teacher is relaxed and has a good sense of humour.					
50.	The teacher has good speaking skills.					
	Please write down any other teacher behaviour and characteristics that might be helpful in reducing your speaking anxiety. ----- ----- ----- -----					

Part2

This part explores various classroom activities which might be helpful in reducing your speaking anxiety. Please tick one of the options to indicate how you feel in the following classroom activities.

Key:

1. Very Relaxed = VR

2. Moderately Relaxed = MR

3. Neither Relaxed not Anxious =N

4. Moderately Anxious = MA

5. Very Anxious =VA

No	Statements	VR	MR	N	MA	VA
51.	Voluntary participation in discussions and debates in class.					
52.	Work in groups of 3 or 4 and prepare an oral presentation.					
53.	Repeat something as a class after the teacher.					
54.	Make an oral presentation with 2 or 3 other students in front of the class.					
55.	Participate in debates in my own seat.					
56.	Interview each other in pairs.					
57.	Learn speaking through interesting activities such as games.					
58.	Make your oral presentation to a group instead of the whole class.					
59.	Perform oral tasks in front of the class having prepared in advance.					
60.	Called upon to answer when given a sufficient time to formulate the answer.					
61.	Allowed to use some Urdu when I can't express myself in English.					
	Please write down any other classroom activities that might be helpful in reducing your speaking anxiety. ----- ----- ----- -----					

Dear student,

If you wish to participate in a second phase of this research involving an interview about this topic, please provide your contact details below.

Name

Phone/mobile number

Email address

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Appendix (2)

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986)

Please read the following statements and indicate with a tick (✓) how you feel about them in a foreign language class. Please use a five point Likert scale as follows:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I

make.

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.

21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.

22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.

23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.

24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.

25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

Appendix (3)

Section 2 (20 In-Class Activities) of the questionnaire developed by Dolly Jesusita Young (1990)

Please indicate with a tick (√) how you feel about the following activities in the classroom. Please use a five point Likert scale as follows:

Very Relaxed, Moderately Relaxed, Neither Relaxed Nor Anxious, Moderately Anxious, Very Anxious

1. Read silently in class.
2. Repeat as a class after the instructor.
3. Write a composition at home.
4. Do exercises in the book.
5. Work in groups of 3 or 4.
6. Work on projects (i.e., newspapers, filmstrips, photo albums).
7. Compete in class games by teams.
8. Repeat individually after the instructor.
9. Open discussion based on volunteer participation.
10. Interview each other in pairs.
11. Work in groups of two and prepare a skit.
12. Read orally in class.
13. Listen to questions and write answers to the questions.
14. Speak individually with the instructor in his/her office.
15. Write a composition in class.
16. Write your work on the board.
17. Present a prepared dialog in front of the class.
18. Make an oral presentation or skit in front of the class.
19. Speak in front of the class.
20. Role play a situation spontaneously in front of the class.

Appendix (4)

Students' Semi-Structured Interview

Introduction

Informing the interviewees about the purpose of the interview, estimated length of the interview, obtaining their permission for recording the interview, assuring them that the data will be kept confidential, and building rapport with them. The interviews are semi-structured and the researcher allows and encourages the interviewees to share their feelings and experiences freely without much interruption. The following possible questions will be asked.

1. Which English language skill (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) causes you most anxiety in the classroom? Please explain.
2. What about other skills? Explain.
3. Tell me about the factors that make you uncomfortable when speaking English in the classroom. Explain.

1. *What are the things that you dislike most about your English language class and speaking English? Explain.*

2. *What are the sources of your speaking anxiety? Explain. [E.g. various situations and classroom activities...speaking in front of the class, asking questions in class, oral presentation, oral tests, mistakes...other difficulties related to grammar, vocabulary...etc].*

3. *How can your teacher create the feeling of anxiety in the classroom? Explain. [E.g. teaching style, behaviour, managing the class...etc].*

4. *How are you affected by your classmates' and teachers' opinions of you?.....If you make a mistake when speaking, how would your peers and the teacher evaluate you?....How would they react?....Are you confident of your speaking ability?*

4. Some students believe that a special talent and certain practices are essential to learn and speak English well. Would you please comment on this belief?

1. *What do you believe speaking English fluently and effectively requires? Explain. [E.g. perfect grammar, native-like accent, intelligence].*

5. How do you view the usefulness of speaking English well in your life/in the Pakistani society? How does it influence you? Please give a brief explanation.

1. *If you feel that speaking proficiency is important to your future, how do you feel when you cannot speak English well?*
6. Please mention if there are any other reasons of your speaking anxiety.
7. What are the things that you like most about your English language class and speaking English? Explain.
8. What kinds of teacher behaviour might be helpful in reducing your speaking anxiety and motivating you to participate more in oral tasks in class? Explain. [E.g. friendly, caring, gentle manner of error correction, relaxed, supportive, maintaining a comfortable classroom environment...etc].
9. In which classroom activities and practices do you feel comfortable and confident when speaking English? Explain. [E.g. voluntary speaking, collaborative activities, advance preparation...etc].
10. Are there any other suggestions you would give to your teacher to make students feel comfortable when speaking English in class?
11. How do you feel now after discussing the issue of speaking anxiety?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix (5)
Teachers' Semi-Structured Interview

1. Would you please describe your feelings and experiences about your students' English learning?
2. Would you please describe your feelings and experiences about your students when they speak English in the classroom?
3. What is your view on foreign language speaking anxiety? ... About your students' anxiety about speaking English in class? ... What role does it play in affecting your students' speaking skills? Please explain.
4. Have you ever noticed that some of your students experience anxiety in various situations/ activities in the classroom that require them to speak English? ...What are your views about your anxious students? Explain.
5. What kind of strategies or measures do you use to reduce your students' anxiety about speaking in the classroom?
6. Have you attended any formal training on how to teach speaking effectively in a facilitating and comfortable classroom environment? [E.g. any professional development programmes, teacher training programmes, ELT workshops/courses to enable you to address students' English learning problems such as speaking anxiety].

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix (6)

A Student's Interview Transcript

Researcher: Which English language skill (speaking, reading, writing, and listening) causes you most anxiety in the classroom?

Tahir: Speaking produces more anxiety for me than reading, writing, and listening. Speaking English in class is very difficult and it makes me very upset.

Researcher: Right, so speaking causes you most anxiety. Can you explain it more?

Tahir: Oh yes, speaking is the most stressful. I really do not enjoy the class during oral activities. It is not just speaking; in fact, the students and teacher know all about me - my personality, abilities, way of thinking and memory. I can say that people can know everything about me but I don't want my classmates and the teacher to know about my academic or other weaknesses. No one wants to be called an incompetent student. I have this fear in my mind when speaking that everyone is judging me. Unfortunately, I can't speak correctly; therefore, I am afraid of speaking in the class.

Researcher: Ok, so speaking exposes your weaknesses. What do you mean by other weaknesses? Could you please give me an example?

Tahir: I mean if I can't speak well, the teacher and other students will know that I am not an intelligent, competent, and confident person. I don't want that I should appear less than others. But when I am speaking in front of the whole class in complete silence and everyone is looking at me, I really forget where I am and I don't know what happens to me. Sometimes, I tremble, stutter or sweat while speaking so they [the other students and the teacher] know about my personality and confidence. They laugh at me and some say I am a big loser. This is the fear and this is the problem. Does anybody want his teacher to call him a nobody or say, 'you know nothing'? Does anyone want his classmates to ignore him believing that he can't help them in any task? Some students decide how to behave with you. I mean they will totally ignore you and will not pay you any attention. This is very painful. That's why I say speaking creates most trouble.

Researcher: I understand what you mean. Right, so speaking is more stressful for you than reading, writing, and listening?

Tahir: Yes, of course.

Researcher: Right, so what about other skills? I mean how you feel when reading or writing something or listening to the teacher?

Tahir: I feel ok.

Researcher: Can you please explain it more?

Tahir: I mean everyone sits in the same level during listening. No one looks at me. Sometimes, I cannot follow my teacher but if I am not listening very well, I can pretend that I am doing very well and it is good. Or if I know I could not understand the teacher today the worry is limited to me but no one else knows about that.

Researcher: Ok, so what about reading and writing?

Tahir: I think reading is not a very difficult activity. Reading is good but sometimes, writing creates problems. I forget ideas when writing.

Researcher: You forget ideas when writing in English.

Tahir: Yes, sometimes it happens. After writing a few sentences, I feel my mind goes blank and I feel I have nothing in my mind. I try but I fail and then I feel anxious.

Researcher: Is writing more difficult than listening and reading?

Tahir: Yes, more than listening and reading but less than speaking.

Researcher: You have said that speaking creates embarrassment for many students, can you explain it more?

Tahir: I mean that I am sure it is a common problem. I know many students who don't like or enjoy speaking in the class. I can assure you that many students would say that speaking is more anxiety inducing than other skills. We are classmates so we know about each other.

Researcher: Do you mean that they also feel more anxiety in speaking as compared to other skills?

Tahir: Yes, of course.

Researcher: Thank you. Let us move on to the factors that may induce speaking anxiety. What are the sources of your speaking anxiety? For example, various classroom activities.

Tahir: There are many reasons for speaking anxiety. In fact, anxiety is my main problem in the English class; therefore, I am well aware of its sources. First, I think teachers are mainly responsible for our anxiety about speaking. Similarly, other students' behaviour and treatment of you also creates a lot of stress and problems. For example, if I make a mistake, they will laugh at me and make fun of me. If I ask a question or answer a question and if I am not right, they will mock me and they will say 'he knows nothing and he was trying to become very intelligent'.

Researcher: Right. Good. You have said that the teacher is the main source of your anxiety. Can you please explain how can your teacher create the feeling of anxiety in the classroom?

Tahir: Yes, of course, our teacher creates many troubles, problems, and issues for us. As you know the teacher has a lot of authority and power in our classroom culture. If he wants the classroom can become a paradise and if his attitude towards the class and students is negative then everything becomes negative. I say classroom is then like a prison. As you know how to conduct and manage the class totally depends on the teacher. I tell you one thing, I think the main thing that discourages and terrifies us is the teacher's unfriendly, strict, and insulting behaviour towards us. Some teachers are really very strict and serious. They will never laugh in the class and they will take an angry tone with you. I tell you a story that my friend abandoned the class due to the strict behaviour of the teacher. I think he got teacher phobia, kind of strong fear, the same I am feeling, the same feelings, sometimes, during my talk the teacher says to me, 'wrong wrong' very loudly. He seems all the time angry and serious. Now you decide please, can I try to speak English in the class of such a teacher when already I am confused and don't know whether I am right or wrong?

Researcher: Yes, I know what you mean.

Tahir: Trust me, he ignores us intentionally and does not pay us any attention. This is the reason that we don't feel encouraged and motivated to participate more in the class. This is the reason that speaking creates many problems. Ok, if I speak and make a mistake, he may insult me. We are university students but trust me our teacher insults us. Mistake is just a mistake but for him it is not just a mistake. He will say, 'you are stupid, you are incompetent, how did you secure a place on a Master's course and you should not make mistakes because you are not a school or college student'. As you know, we follow our teachers because our culture, our religion and our parents teach us to follow them. Therefore, many students also adopt the teacher's negative behaviour and temperament. Consequently, the atmosphere of the class becomes very formal and strict. If I make a mistake, other students will mock me, they will laugh at me, and they will make fun of me. Then, I get confused and I tremble. I know this fear of making mistakes and then being laughed at by the teacher and students stops me from trying to speak.

Researcher: Ok, so how does your teacher correct your mistakes?

Tahir: Yes, this is a very good question. Sometimes, he says, 'sit down' with an unhappy expression and sometimes, he corrects and makes a negative remark. Sometimes, if I make a mistake when speaking, I try to correct myself and the teacher knows that I will try to correct myself but he will correct me before I try to correct myself. For example, if I am answering comfortably and I make any mistakes, the teacher quickly corrects me. He does not wait so that I can think and repeat the correct version. At this point, my worry and anxiousness starts as I really think I have failed and my peers will also think the same. Next time whenever I make a mistake, I try to correct that as soon as possible but then I make more mistakes. I feel confused and the teacher's interruptions divert my attention. Moreover, the environment of the class is very strict; therefore, the fear of making mistakes increases.

Researcher: How your teacher manages the class?

Tahir: Like I said, everything depends on the teacher. If he/she is strict, the class will be strict and formal. Our class is very strict. Everyone sits silent during his lecture. This is not that everyone is paying attention to the teacher to

understand the lecture but this is due to the fear that he might get angry. Unfortunately, even at university level, everything is in the teachers' hands and we are not allowed to do things the way we want to. Our teacher gives us topics for our presentations. I tell you that this strict atmosphere does not let us become friends and we wait for each other's mistakes. This all affects our willingness to speak in the class. If the teacher is friendly, if the class is relaxed or in other words, the teacher and students are like a family or team, I am sure our speaking would improve because we would speak more and more. The more we speak without fear of making mistakes, the more we will improve.

Researcher: What about the teacher's teaching methodology?

Tahir: I would explain it in another way. The teacher's friendly and caring behaviour is like a soul and his teaching style is like a body. If the soul is good, body will be good. It is very important that the teacher's teaching methodology should be effective, encouraging, motivating and positive. I tell you if we ask a question, the teacher says, 'it was a stupid question'; 'it was a childish question', and 'shame on you'.

Researcher: Oh, really.

Tahir: Yes, then, you feel discouraged and you will never ask a question or try to volunteer. Then, I start feeling that I am stupid and I know nothing. I feel that I can't say a sentence correctly. I am sure teachers don't know that their teaching style affects their students. Because they never ask us what we like and what we don't like. I am sure I can learn speaking but how if my teacher puts me on the wrong path? For example, our teacher does not give us time for preparation. If I am not prepared, how I will speak? I mean when I am not prepared and the teacher forces me to speak, I know there is more possibility of being wrong. Because, I know my mind is empty as I did not have time to collect relevant ideas. The result is that other students laugh at me. Similarly, I don't know why the teacher gives difficult topics for oral tasks or tests. I can try to speak on the topics I know but I can't speak on difficult topics; therefore, I will feel anxiety and stress. I tell you the present teacher sets topics from out of the Ark. His topics are mostly complicated proverbs and things; I close my eyes and want to leave the class. If the teacher's teaching techniques are not good, the difficulty increases. Speaking English is very difficult as you have to consider many

things. For example, grammar and yes, another problem is pronunciation; it is humiliating that I pronounce many words incorrectly.

Researcher: Pronunciation

Tahir: Yes, I know I will make pronunciation mistakes when speaking. English pronunciation is very strange. For example, see the difference between 'put' and 'but' and why the letter K is silent in knife. Imagine you are alone in front of all the students and they are staring at you and you pronounce 'put' as you pronounce 'but', they will all laugh at you. This is the problem and it increases during oral tests. You know what happens to me, my mind goes blank during tests.

Researcher: Mind goes blank.

Tahir: In fact, I know why. On one hand, I am afraid of making mistakes and then getting a lower mark and on the other, that too many people are listening to me. I feel that I will be able to speak if there are not too many people in the class. I mean our class is big. I think I could speak in front of a small number of people but not before too many people. Too many people listen to me, it is hard, and I can't face them, I think that the teacher's aim is to assess my speaking ability, only he should listen to me. I am sure I can speak better.

Researcher: As you have already talked about mistakes, if you make a mistake when speaking, how would your teacher and peers evaluate you?

Tahir: They will believe that I am not competent and I think this is also a main factor which makes me afraid of speaking and I prefer to sit silent. You know that teachers like those students who are competent. It is frustrating when the teacher ignores you because he thinks that I am not a good student. Sometimes, I feel I can never be right. I feel I don't have the ability to speak well. I feel I am not a proficient student and other students think that I am unable to help them in any assignments. Intelligent students form their own group and if I go to them they really ignore me and some do not even want to talk to me.

Researcher: Some students believe that a special talent and certain practices are essential to learn and speak English well. Would you please comment on this belief?

Tahir: Can you please explain this question.

Researcher: I mean what do you believe speaking English fluently and effectively requires?

Tahir: Everything requires something particular. For example, vehicles need fuel and human body needs blood to function. Likewise, I think a good brain is a must to speak English fluently and correctly. Without a brain, it is like you go to market to buy something without having money. No problem, you may waste many hours but you will not be able to buy anything. If you don't have good brain, you will never speak fluently and it would be like hitting your head against a brick wall. Similarly, if I don't have knowledge that is needed to speak good English I will not be able to speak because I have not been taught well. I know why I can't speak, why I can't compete with other students, why the university class is a stressful place for me. I know the reason.

Researcher: Good. Right.

Tahir: I have thought it over. Because my previous English education was not good; therefore, speaking creates problems for me in my university class. I am from a small village and you know that our villages are deprived of good schools and colleges. Trust me, our teacher's English was very poor. He was not good and he taught us to pronounce 'niece' as 'nice' and just a few days ago in my class, I pronounced it as 'nice' and all other students laughed at me. I did not find good teachers, schools, environment, and English knowledge in my village. Tell me please, how I can feel comfortable when speaking in the class if I did not have opportunities to learn well. If I was not taught the grammar rules well, I do not know what is a pronoun, how to arrange words to make a sentence, I mean if I don't know the basics of English, how I can survive in the university class? On the very first day, I thought how I would speak. Oh, students from cities are lucky. They have studied at Beaconhouse and City Schools [English institutions of high repute]; therefore, their oral communication is strong. I wish I had studied at such institutions. Yes, they are good and I am really much upset. Now you know what happens next. We are in the same class. Students from

cities do not mix with us [village students]. We explain things according to our own culture and they laugh, make fun of us and they say we are Painsoo [meaning stupid villagers] and they make fun of our clothes, our speaking, and our accent, oh God, their presence in the class makes me depressed and tense. Yes, it is really disturbing and upsetting. Moreover, they [students from cities] are dominant in the class and we [students from villages] mostly sit silent in the class. I am clear that speaking for me is not easy. Please you tell me, how I can speak with my poor knowledge in a class where the standard is high and other students are much better? I think the best strategy is to sit silent but I am not happy because I am losing.

Researcher: Thanks. How do you view the usefulness of speaking English well in your life/in the Pakistani society?

Tahir: English has a lot of importance in Pakistan. As you know English is necessary for every job and interview. If your oral English is poor, your chances of getting a good job go down. It is fine if I don't know Japanese or any other language but I must know English. All books are in English. English is written on everything you buy and it shows the existence of English. Similarly, English is a mark of status in our society. Everyone wants to speak English because in this way, he/she will be regarded as an educated and intelligent person.

Researcher: If you feel that speaking proficiency is important to your future, how do you feel when you cannot speak English well?

Tahir: I will say that English is now a matter of life and death in Pakistan. Some people may think you are shodha [stupid] if you don't use English or switch from Urdu to English continually. If you use two, three sentences of English in your Urdu conversation then they regard you as an educated and a serious person. I have seen many TV shows where every participant tries to speak English. If you are good in English, you can start giving home tuition or open a tuition academy. I mean English helps you find food for your family. I am also a member of this society and my spoken English must be good, yes, it must be good, if it is not good then I must worry.

Researcher: Please mention if there are any other reasons of your speaking anxiety?

Tahir: Another thing that comes to my mind is that I feel shy and under pressure due to girls in our class. I mean I am not used to studying with girls. I feel tense and become very self-conscious due to their presence in the class. Yes, this is another reason that I can't speak confidently or ask a question.

Researcher: What kind of teacher behaviour might be helpful in reducing your speaking anxiety and motivating you to participate more in oral tasks in class? Explain. [E.g. friendly, gentle error correction, and supportive].

Tahir: I think the most important step is that the teacher should be friendly, relaxed and caring. He should not ignore us but rather compliment us. If the teacher is relaxed, entertaining and humorous, we feel relaxed. There would be no formalities between the teacher and students and we would be able to discuss or ask anything. Similarly, the teacher should not mock our questions but rather encourage us that we can ask any question. For example, if I ask a question and the teacher says, 'it is an interesting question' I feel good and all other students appreciate me. Moreover, he should explain questions in a friendly manner. Speaking English is difficult but the teacher can make it easy for us. He can teach us how to make a good presentation. He should acknowledge that we are just learners; therefore, he should explain the things in a very simple way. I would also say that the teacher should correct our mistakes in a gentle manner. If the teacher is friendly, we will not be much afraid of making mistakes and we will try to speak more and more. If I say that the teacher should respect us, I do not mean that he should salute us but I mean he should show his concern and sympathy. Their behaviour directly affects our participation in the class.

Researcher: I know what you mean.

Tahir: I know teachers have a high status but they should not dominate us. They really don't care about us and they ignore us. They should not consider us their subordinates or servants. I think the teachers should not impose their decisions on us. They should ask us how we want to be taught. I think it is very important otherwise, we lose our interest. If the teacher is relaxed, the class will be relaxed and if the class is relaxed, we will speak confidently. Because we know

we will not be ridiculed. The teacher should tell that no one will laugh at mistakes.

Researcher: Thanks. In which classroom activities and practices do you feel comfortable and confident when speaking English? Explain.

Tahir: There are many things teacher can do to make us feel comfortable in the class. All the things, eventually, boost our confidence and motivate us to study and participate more. I have not told you about one important thing, as I said, preparation is very important. This is very important for me because I have time to think over the topic and gather relevant ideas and materials. I speak in front of the mirror or with my brother and prepare myself and I can address my grammatical, pronunciation or vocabulary problems. Therefore, I feel confident that I will do well. The main problem is that I have to speak alone in front of too many people. I don't feel much nervousness when I speak individually with the teacher or with two, three students. And I feel I am not that person who is afraid of speaking in front of the class. Still I say the teacher's behaviour should be positive and encouraging.

Researcher: Are there any other suggestions you would give to your teacher to make students feel comfortable when speaking English in class?

Tahir: I think encouragement is very necessary. If a student can't speak well and makes mistakes and the teacher encourages him/her, he/she will not feel much anxiety. If I talk about myself, if I make a mistake when speaking in the class and the teacher says, 'good try, go ahead, it's a minor mistake' I would forget my mistake. You know it is very very important. I won't feel embarrassed and I would continue. I again say that teachers should not ignore students. They should ask us about our feelings. I mean if a student is not participating actively in the class, the teacher should ask him/her the reasons in order to solve his/her problems. If the teacher cares about us we would feel good, otherwise we feel stressed. Similarly, all the students should be like friends and not like enemies. We should not make fun of each others' mistakes and ridicule their speaking. If other students make fun of my English, next time I will not speak. Ok, some students are much better and I can learn from them but they should be willing to help me. We can prepare our presentations together. In this way, I will learn and

gain some confidence. I am already weak in English since my foundation in English is not strong, now the teacher should give me a comfortable and easy-going learning environment so that I may learn and speak English - that is very important to my future.

Researcher: Thanks, how do you feel now after discussing the issue of speaking anxiety?

Tahir: Thanks a lot. You are the first person who asked me about my anxiety. I feel very good because I have told you about a problem that was in my heart. In future, I will try to manage my anxiety. I am sorry but the teacher never asked me but teachers must know. I think your research on this topic would help teachers know about their students' anxiety and reduce it.

Researcher: Thank you very much.

Tahir: Thanks a lot and good luck.

Appendix (7)

Example of Field Notes

Teacher: *Habib*

University: *Al-Faisal*

Department: *Mathematics*

Observation No: *03*

Duration of the lecture: *1 Hour*

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes
<p>I enter and sit at the back. All the male students are sitting on the right-hand side while the female students are seated on the left. It is a cramped classroom, and the students are sitting in rows. Two students have no chairs; thus, they bring chairs from another classroom. The teacher's chair is near the board. There is a podium near the board. The classroom walls are not decorated with charts or posters about language learning. The classroom lacks appropriate ventilation, and the furniture is mostly old.</p>	<p>The layout of the classroom appears to be teacher centred. This layout may not facilitate group work and student-to-student interaction. The classroom does not appear psychologically secure.</p>
<p>The teacher enters and the students stand up. He sits in his chair and asks the students to sit down.</p>	<p>Teacher's high status.</p>
<p>The teacher looks at the students and asks them, 'Do you know how many articles there are in the English language.' Many students raise their hands. The teacher points to a student, who stands up and says, "A", "an", and "the". The teacher says,</p>	<p>The teacher directly involves the students by asking them a question. He praises the student for the correct answer, and this behaviour may encourage and motivate the student for future lessons.</p>

'Good'.

The teacher asks another student the same question, and she repeats the same answer.

Then, the teacher asks the students what these articles are called. Some students raise their hands confidently, some are hesitating, and some try to lower their heads to hide.

The teacher looks at all the students and says, 'I can't understand why you people can't raise your hands enthusiastically.' Then, he selects a student who does not have his hand raised. He stands up and says, 'Sorry, sir, I don't know'. The teacher reminds him in a serious tone that if he has come to the class, he is supposed to know, and then advises him, in an authoritative manner, to pay more attention to his studies.

One student enters the classroom late. The teacher looks at him and says, 'You will be considered absent.'

Then the teacher asks another student the same question. He says that 'a' and 'an' are called indefinite articles while 'the' is a definite article. But the student pronounces the word 'definite'

Students may hesitate due to a lack of confidence, and a fear of being wrong and of being laughed at. They may hide so that they will not be asked to answer.

The teacher pushes the student. Voluntary participation could be better. The teacher's attitude is negative and discouraging.

Advice could be more effective if encouraging and gentle words were used.

I can't understand why the teacher says this; it is authoritative, intimidating, and discouraging.

Pronunciation mistake.

incorrectly. In turn, some students laugh and then there is laughter by the whole class. The student seems embarrassed and worried.

Then, the teacher takes a book out of the bag and says, 'I will teach you articles today', and he writes the word 'Articles' on the board and beneath 'A', 'An', 'The.'

The teacher explains that in order to speak correct English, the proper use of indefinite and definite articles is essential. He writes various rules for the use of the article 'the' on the board, while students are busy in taking notes. There is a bit of chatting among students, and the teacher says, 'What is wrong with you?', and he asks them, in a strict tone, to be silent.

Then, the teacher turns towards the students and asks a student to get up and read aloud what is written on the board. The teacher wanders around the classroom. The student reads, and the teacher occasionally interrupts him to explain. The student makes a pronunciation mistake, and the teacher corrects him. He makes another pronunciation mistake, and the other students laugh; then, his voice shakes, he stammers, and his reading speed

The teacher could have appreciated the student's effort and encouraged him to give the correct answer. This would lead to more participation.

The teacher gives a serial number for each use, and he writes clearly. But his back is towards the students the whole time. He would have involved the students more perhaps by explaining a bit more verbally.

Pronunciation mistakes. The fear of making mistakes and subsequently, of being laughed at, can affect students' confidence, participation, and learning.

slows down.

Then the teacher states that the article 'the' is placed before the names of certain newspapers and asks a student to give him three examples following this rule. The student answers, "The News", "The Statesman" ', and she pauses, but the teacher totally ignores her, and he switches to another student and asks him to give him an example where the article 'the' is used before the names of rivers; the student says, 'The Indus river', and the teacher says, 'Very good.'

There is a knock at the door; a student enters and then goes out again.

The teacher asks another student to give him a sentence where 'the' is placed before the superlative degree of an adjective. The student produces a sentence, and the teacher says, 'Very good, excellent!' The student appears happy and proud.

Then the teacher points to another student and asks her to mention four rules for the use of article 'the' without looking at the board. The student can recall only three rules and gets stuck.

The teacher should have encouraged the student.

A student may experience frustration if he/she is not given sufficient time to complete the answer. Otherwise, they will not experience a sense of success.

The teacher praises the student and uses an encouraging comment.

Encouragement may promote students' participation and motivation.

It seems more like a memory test.

<p>The teacher says, 'Speak quickly! I want an answer.' Then he asks her to sit down and says in an angry tone, 'It is useless teaching you.'</p>	<p>The teacher's attitude is discouraging and negative.</p>
<p>Someone opens the door, and the teacher goes out with him.</p>	<p>Interruption.</p>
<p>Now, the students appear very relaxed, and I find a flow of energy in them which disappears when the teacher returns a minute later.</p>	<p>This reflects teacher dominance. If the teacher were friendly with the students, they would feel relaxed.</p>
<p>The teacher looks at the students and says, 'Now let us check your speaking proficiency.'</p>	<p>The teacher does not allow time for questions before moving on to the next activity. I am not sure he has done any lesson planning.</p>
<p>He gives students the topic 'clash of civilisations' to discuss.</p>	<p>The teacher, in a way, imposes the topic on the students. To achieve better results, the topic could be chosen in consultation with the students.</p>
<p>The students appear confused. Some students seem engaged as they are asking each other about the topic in Urdu, several seem uninterested as they are sitting very quietly, and I can see some students who are trying to hide. The students appear very nervous compared to the time when the teacher was explaining the use of the article 'the'.</p>	<p>The topic seems difficult for the students, and they appear unprepared. Also, speaking in front of other students and the fear of making mistakes and of negative evaluation could discourage students' participation. Simple topics for daily life communication needs could be more useful.</p>

The teacher asks the first student on his right to come to the podium and speak on the topic. The student seems reluctant when going to the podium. He appears unprepared and unconfident. It seems as if he doesn't know what to say. He utters a few sentences, but these are not really related to the topic. The whole class, including the teacher, is looking at him. Sometimes, he looks at other students and sometimes, looks down and adjusts his clothing and scratches his face. Now, he looks towards the teacher with an embarrassed expression and the teacher says, 'You even don't know the topic. I think you just want to waste time; go back as you have conquered the world' [sarcastically]. The student sits in his chair with his head down and he seems lost. Some students are still looking at him.

The teacher points to the next student, who says, 'Yes sir', and he goes to the podium. He starts speaking very confidently, and the teacher says, 'Very good ideas'. The student speaks very well in the beginning, but he pronounces the word 'Armageddon' in a funny way. A few students laugh, followed by laughter by all students

Speaking exposes the students.

The student is the other students' focus of attention.

I think the teacher should have explained the topic a little bit. He pushes the student and puts him on the spot; I wonder why. Voluntary speaking could be a better strategy. Likewise, rehearsal or group work could be helpful. The teacher's comments are discouraging and harsh. The student seems unprepared; thus, he may lack confidence.

Good encouragement.

Pronunciation mistake.

including the teacher. The teacher corrects him harshly, and he starts again and speaks really well. Now, he takes a pause, and his facial expressions show that as he is searching for the correct word or collecting his ideas. The teacher says, 'Speak! Speak quickly!' The student uses an Urdu word, unconsciously, I think, in an English sentence. All the students laugh. Then, the teacher's attitude towards the student changes as the teacher seems serious. Now, the student's speech becomes disordered. He starts stuttering, looks down and then at the door. He avoids looking at other students. He does not seem to be the same student who started the speech so confidently; now, he seems anxious and embarrassed, and he blinks his eyes repeatedly. Next, he goes back to his chair without the teacher's permission.

One student leaves the class.

The teacher points to another student, and she speaks really well. She speaks fluently, and her ideas are good. She makes an interesting

Harsh error correction. The teacher's correction manner should be gentle.

I wonder why the teacher is in a hurry. The student may get confused and flustered.

Students may lose confidence due to making mistakes and then being laughed at. The teacher should not ignore students' discomfort.

Avoidance behaviour. The students do not appear to enjoy the class, and several seem uncomfortable. An easy and interesting topic might have stimulated the students' interest.

It is positive and good to note the teacher's friendly and encouraging attitude, which could make the classroom friendly, reassure students

comment which the teacher and other students enjoy. She makes a minor grammatical mistake, but the teacher says, 'No problem; carry on'. He seems interested in her performance. She continues confidently and the teacher applauds her and says, 'Excellent'. She comes back to her chair, and she seems happy, satisfied, and confident. I can see her leaning forward towards the teacher, and she seems actively involved.

Another student is asked to speak. He simply repeats the topic and stands silently. The teacher says, 'I knew that', and asks him to go back.

Another student goes to the podium to speak. He confuses the past and present tenses and gives a fake smile. The teacher looks at him in a serious way and corrects him in an angry tone. Then, he reminds him that he is a university student, and he is not supposed to make such minor mistakes. Some students giggle. The student continues and then, he makes a mistake in the use of a preposition, but he carries on speaking. The teacher interrupts him and corrects him harshly. The student loses momentum. He stands silently and seems anxious. The teacher asks him

that mistakes are normal, and motivate them to participate more actively. Some teachers may believe that it is necessary to be a strict teacher to achieve effective learning. However, I think they might choose to become friendly if they are informed of the positive effects of being a friendly teacher.

Teacher-directed learning: I think pushing students to speak without them being willing to do so might provoke anxiety.

Grammatical mistakes and harsh error correction.

I think this over-correction may affect the student's communication and focus.

to continue, and he restarts reluctantly. But now he speaks very slowly, and there is no fluency. The teacher asks him to go back.

Another student comes to speak. He seems confident, and he speaks actively and confidently. His spoken proficiency is good. The teacher stops him and says, 'I know you are good.'

Another student starts well, and after a minute the teacher asks him to stop, and he further says, 'You are good.'

Then the teacher asks another student to speak. He gets up and says that he cannot speak as the topic is difficult for him, and he does not know what to say about it. The teacher tells him, in an angry tone, he cannot speak, even though the topic is easy.

The teacher uses his finger to beckon another student. She starts speaking and then, she gets stuck and produces sounds like 'ummm'. She utters the word and goes on. Then, she makes a mistake about the comparative degree of an adjective (uses 'more bigger').

It seems as if the student is now paying more attention to grammar and language instead of communication. Thus, his speaking may not improve.

The student is really good. The teacher praises him.

I cannot understand why the teacher focuses mostly on those students who do not seem willing to speak, (perhaps to involve them), as they cannot speak well, and they can get more afraid of speaking. It is discouraging to say that the student cannot speak. The topic could be difficult for him, which could restrict his communication. I think the student needs confidence and encouragement.

I think using the students' names might be better.

Vocabulary issues.

I think grammatical mistakes are

The teacher shakes his head showing disapproval, and he says that he has taught them 'adjectives' very well and he receives confirmation of this from all the students. Many students say, 'Yes, sir!' Then the teacher says loudly, 'But you will never learn.'

The teacher ignores the student who is still standing up and asks the class, 'Can anybody tell me, what an adjective is?' Many students raise their hands. The teacher uses his finger to point to a student, who gets up and says that adjectives describe a noun. The teacher says very loudly, 'Raise your voice - I can't hear you - and give me examples.' Then, the student says a bit more loudly, 'An old man, a black dog.'

Then the teacher asks students, 'What are comparative adjectives?' He wanders around the classroom. The students raise their hands. Some students raise their hands only half way. The teacher points to a student and says, 'Yes, you.' She says, 'These make comparisons...when we discuss two people or things'. The teacher says, 'Exactly, well done!'

Then the teacher asks another student to explain how to form comparative

frequent. Self-correction could be helpful as it may give the students a sense of achievement.

The teacher should have asked the student to sit down as he is the focus of others' attention.

The teacher switches from an oral task to grammar task.

The students' hesitation in raising their hand could be due to a lack of confidence, a fear of being wrong, and the effect of having a strict teacher.

Praise.

adjectives, where to add 'er' to the end of the adjective and where to use 'less or more' before it. The student says a few words and then he is silent. The teacher gives him a serious look then points to another student. She says that adjectives with one syllable take 'er' at the end.

Lesson time ends.

Overall, the teacher looks serious, strict, and unfriendly. He keeps control of the class and does not allow the students any freedom. There are no open and friendly relations between the teacher and the students. The teacher's attitude towards the students' mistakes is mostly harsh and negative. His tone, behaviour, and interaction with the students reflect authority and superiority. He mostly does not try to put the students at ease. He tries to make more and more students participate in a short time. The students seem passive and submissive.

Overall, I think there are no friendly and frank relations among the students as teasing each other and making fun of each other is observed. This behaviour may make them uncomfortable and may discourage

their participation.

Overall, except for a few instances, the classroom environment is stale, boring, uncomfortable, and formal. No activities, such as group work are incorporated that could make the classroom environment sociable and open and create a sense of community in the class.

I think the students may be afraid of speaking due to factors such as the fear of exposure, of making mistakes, of being laughed at, and of negative evaluation.

Appendix (8)

An Example of Coding of Filed Notes

Data	Codes
I enter and sit at the back. All the male students are sitting on the right-hand side while the female students are seated on the left. It is a cramped classroom and the students are sitting in rows. Two students have no chairs; thus, they bring chairs from another classroom. The teacher's chair is near the board. There is a podium near the board. The classroom walls are not decorated with charts or posters about language learning. The classroom lacks appropriate ventilation, and the furniture is mostly old.	Large classes Lack of facilities T (teacher) centred classroom Environment not psychologically secure
The teacher enters and the students stand up. He sits in his chair and asks the students to sit down.	T high status
The teacher looks at the students and asks them, 'Do you know how many articles there are in the English language.' Many students raise their hands. The teacher points to a student, who stands up and says, "A", "an", and "the". The teacher says, 'Good'.	Praise
The teacher asks another student the same question, and she repeats the same answer.	
Then, the teacher asks the students what these articles are called. Some students raise their hands confidently, some are hesitating and some try to lower their heads to hide.	Lack of confidence, fear of being wrong, avoidance
The teacher looks at all the students and says, 'I can't understand why you people can't raise your hands enthusiastically.' Then, he selects a student who does not have his hand raised. He stands up and says, 'Sorry, sir, I	T unaware of SA Forced speaking

don't know'. The teacher reminds him in a serious tone that if he has come to the class, he is supposed to know, and then advises him, in an authoritative manner, to pay more attention to his studies.

Strict T, T's negative attitude

One student enters the classroom late. The teacher looks at him and says, 'You will be considered absent.'

T's discouraging attitude

Then the teacher asks another student the same question. He says that 'a' and 'an' are called indefinite articles while 'the' is a definite article. But the student pronounces the word 'definite' incorrectly. In turn, some students laugh and then there is laughter by the whole class. The student seems embarrassed and worried.

Pronunciation mistake

Being laughed at due to mistakes
Anxiety

Then, the teacher takes a book out of the bag and says, 'I will teach you articles today', and he writes the word 'Articles' on the board and beneath 'A', 'An', 'The'.

The teacher explains that in order to speak correct English, the proper use of indefinite and definite articles is essential. He writes various rules for the use of the article 'the' on the board, while students are busy in taking notes. There is a bit of chatting among students, and the teacher says, 'What is wrong with you?', and he asks them, in a strict tone, to be silent.

T (teacher) writes on the board

Ss (students) passive learners

Formal classroom

Strict T

Then, the teacher turns towards the students and asks a student to get up and read aloud what is written on the board. The teacher wanders around the classroom. The student reads, and the teacher occasionally interrupts him to explain. The student makes a pronunciation mistake, and the teacher corrects him. He makes another pronunciation mistake, and the other students laugh; then, his voice shakes, he stammers, and his reading speed

Get up and read aloud

T interrupts the S (student)

Pronunciation mistake

Being laughed at due to mistakes
and then anxiety

slows down.

} Loses confidence

Then the teacher states that the article 'the' is placed before the names of certain newspapers and asks a student to give him three examples following this rule. The student answers, "The News", "The Statesman", and she pauses, but the teacher totally ignores her, and he switches to another student and asks him to give him an example where the article 'the' is used before the names of rivers; the student says, 'The Indus river', and the teacher says, 'Very good.'

} Give examples

} S takes a pause, T ignores the S, T switches to another S, limited time given to answer

} Praise and encouragement

There is a knock at the door; a student enters and then goes out again.

The teacher asks another student to give him a sentence where 'the' is placed before the superlative degree of an adjective. The student produces a sentence, and the teacher says, 'Very good, excellent!' The student appears happy and proud.

} Praise and encouragement
S seems happy

Then the teacher points to another student and asks her to mention four rules for the use of article 'the' without looking at the board. The student can recall only three rules and gets stuck. The teacher says, 'Speak quickly! I want an answer.' Then he asks her to sit down and says in an angry tone, 'It is useless teaching you.'

} Without looking at the board.

} Gets stuck, limited time given to answer

} T's authoritative and negative attitude

Someone opens the door, and the teacher goes out with him.

} Interruption

Now, the students appear very relaxed, and I find a flow of energy in them which disappears when the teacher returns a minute later.

} T's dominance
Ss' submissive role

The teacher looks at the students and says, 'Now let us check your speaking proficiency.'

He gives students the topic 'clash of civilisations' to discuss.

The students appear confused. Some students seem engaged as they are asking each other about the topic in Urdu, several seem uninterested as they are sitting very quietly, and I can see some students who are trying to hide. The students appear very nervous as compared to the time when the teacher was explaining the use of the article 'the'.

Ss confused, engaged, difficult topic

Ss unprepared for the topic

Some Ss are sitting silently, avoidance, lack of confidence
Ss are afraid of speaking activities

The teacher asks the first student on his right to come to the podium and speak on the topic. The student seems reluctant when going to the podium. He appears unprepared and unconfident. It seems as if he doesn't know what to say. He utters a few sentences, but these are not really related to the topic. The whole class, including the teacher, is looking at him. Sometimes, he looks at other students and sometimes, looks down and adjusts his clothing and scratches his face. Now, he looks towards the teacher with an embarrassed expression, and the teacher says, 'You even don't know the topic. I think you just want to waste time; go back as you have conquered the world' [sarcastically]. The student sits in his chair with his head down and he seems lost. Some students are still looking at him.

Speaking exposes and puts on the spot

S is unprepared and unconfident

Lack of knowledge for the topic

Speaking puts Ss at display

Lack of confidence
Feeling embarrassed and anxious

Ridiculed, T's negative and discouraging attitude

After-effect, speaking exposes Ss' deficiencies

The teacher points to the next student, who says, 'Yes sir', and he goes to the podium. He starts speaking very confidently, and the teacher says, 'Very good ideas'. The student speaks very well in the beginning, but he

Focus of others' attention

Encouragement

pronounces the word 'Armageddon' in a funny way. A few students laugh, followed by laughter by all students including the teacher. The teacher corrects him harshly, and he starts again and speaks really well. Now, he takes a pause, and his facial expressions show that as he is searching for the proper word or collecting his ideas. The teacher says, 'Speak! Speak quickly!' The student uses an Urdu word, unconsciously, I think, in an English sentence. All the students laugh. Then, the teacher's attitude towards the student changes as the teacher seems serious. Now, the student's speech becomes disordered. He starts stuttering, looks down and then at the door. He avoids looking at other students. He does not seem to be the same student who started the speech so confidently; now he seems anxious and embarrassed, and he blinks his eyes repeatedly. Next, he goes back to his chair without the teacher's permission.

- } Pronunciation mistake
- } Being laughed at due to mistakes
- } Harsh error correction
- } Takes a pause
- } Vocabulary issues
- } Time needed to collect ideas
- } T says speak quickly
- } Pressure to speak quickly may confuse Ss
- } Due to mistakes Ss are laughed at and ridiculed
- } Strict and formal T
- } Confused, loses confidence
- } Anxious and embarrassed
- } Withdrawal

One student leaves the class.

- } Avoidance

The teacher points to another student, and she speaks really well. She speaks fluently, and her ideas are good. She makes an interesting comment which the teacher and other students enjoy. She makes a minor grammatical mistake, but the teacher says, 'No problem; carry on'. He seems interested in her performance. She continues confidently and the teacher applauds her and says, 'Excellent'. She comes back to her chair, and she seems happy, satisfied, and confident. I can see her leaning forward towards the teacher, and she seems actively involved.

- } Speaks fluently, good ideas
- } Interesting comment and the classroom atmosphere becomes sociable
- } Mistake but no problem, carry on
- } T shows interest and she continues confidently
- } Praise, encouragement
- } Positive effects of encouragement and appreciation

Another student is asked to speak. He simply repeats the topic and stands silently. The teacher says, 'I knew that', and asks him to go back.

- } Forced speaking
- } lack of confidence and of knowledge
- } T's discouraging attitude

Another student goes to the podium to speak. He confuses the past and present tenses and gives a fake smile. The teacher looks at him in a serious way and corrects him in an angry tone. Then, he reminds him that he is a university student, and he is not supposed to make such minor mistakes. Some students giggle. The student continues and then, he makes a mistake in the use of a preposition, but he carries on speaking. The teacher interrupts him and corrects him harshly. The student loses momentum. He stands silently and seems anxious. The teacher asks him to continue, and he restarts reluctantly. But now he speaks very slowly, and there is no fluency. The teacher asks him to go back.

Grammatical mistake

Serious T

Harsh error correction

T's discouraging attitude

Ridiculed

Preposition mistake

Interruption, harsh error correction

Loses confidence

Anxious

Restarts reluctantly

Paying more attention to grammar than communication

Another student comes to speak. He seems confident, and he speaks actively and confidently. His spoken proficiency is good. The teacher stops him and says, 'I know you are good.'

Speaks actively and confidently

Praise

Another student starts well, and after a minute the teacher asks him to stop, and he further says, 'You are good.'

Praise

Then the teacher asks another student to speak. He gets up and says that he cannot speak as the topic is difficult for him, and he does not know what to say about it. The teacher tells him, in an angry tone, he cannot speak, even though the topic is easy.

Exposure

Difficult topic, lack of knowledge about the topic

Strict T, T's discouraging attitude

The teacher uses his finger to beckon another student. She starts speaking and then, she gets stuck and produces sounds like 'ummm'. She utters the word and goes on. Then, she makes a mistake about the comparative degree of an adjective (uses 'more bigger'). The teacher shakes his head showing disapproval, and he says that he has

Authoritative attitude

Gets stuck

Vocabulary issues

Grammatical mistake

An inappropriate teaching

taught them 'adjectives' very well and he receives practice confirmation of this from all the students. Many students say, 'Yes, sir!' Then the teacher says loudly, 'But you will never learn.'

Negative, unprofessional and discouraging attitude

The teacher ignores the student who is still standing up and asks the class, 'Can anybody tell me, what an adjective is?' Many students raise their hands. The teacher uses his finger to point to a student, who gets up and says that adjectives describe a noun. The teacher says very loudly, 'Raise your voice - I can't hear you - and give me examples.' Then, the student says a bit more loudly, 'An old man, a black dog.'

T ignores the student

Grammar is given much attention and importance

T (teacher) decides who will answer

T's strict and intimidating attitude

Then the teacher asks students, 'What are comparative adjectives?' He wanders around the classroom. The students raise their hands. Some students raise their hands only half way. The teacher points to a student and says, 'Yes, you'. She says, 'These make comparisons...when we discuss two people or things'. The teacher says, 'Exactly, well done.'

Lack of confidence, avoidance, fear of being wrong

T decides who will answer

Praise

Then the teacher asks another student to explain how to form comparative adjectives, where to add 'er' to the end of the adjective and where to use 'less or more' before it. The student says a few words, and then he is silent. The teacher gives him a serious look and then points to another student. She says that adjectives with one syllable take 'er' at the end.

T asks how to form adjectives

The S (student) says a few words and then he is silent.

Serious T

Another S answers correctly

Appendix (9)
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Consent Form

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

- there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation.
- I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me
- and any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications
- If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form
- All information I give will be treated as confidential
- the researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

.....
(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher. Contact phone number of researcher (s):

If you have any concerns about the research that you would like to discuss, please contact: Abdus Samad

Email: samadgmm@yahoo.com

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

Appendix (10)
Certificate of Ethical Research Approval

STUDENT HIGHER-LEVEL RESEARCH



Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level research
(e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guidelines/> and view the School's statement on the GSE student access on-line documents.

READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Abdus Samad

Your student no: 600036211

Degree/Programme of Study: PhD

Project Supervisor(s): Dr Salah Troudi & Dr Yongcan Liu

Your email address: sa373@ex.ac.uk

Tel: 07529370954

21 Magdalen RD, Ex2 4TA, Exeter, Devon

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my dissertation / thesis (delete whichever is inappropriate) **to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.**

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:.....

date:.....

06/04/2011

NB For Masters dissertations, which are marked blind, this first page must **not be included** in your work. It can be kept for your records.

Title of your project: A Study of Foreign Language Speaking-In-Classroom Anxiety among Pakistani EFL University Students.

Brief description of your research project:

The present study focuses on foreign language speaking anxiety. It aims to (1) explore whether or not speaking produces more anxiety than reading, writing, and listening for Pakistani EFL students, (2) identify the factors that may contribute to their anxiety about speaking in the classroom, (3) identify classroom activities and teacher behaviour that might help reduce students' speaking anxiety and improve their oral English, and (4) explore Pakistani EFL teachers perceptions of their students' speaking anxiety and strategies they currently use to reduce this anxiety.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The proposed participants of this study include Pakistani EFL university students and teachers.

Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:

- a) **informed consent:** Where children in schools are involved this includes both headteachers and parents). An example of the consent form(s) must accompany this document.

The researcher will explain the nature and objectives of the research to the participants. They will be given a consent form and it will be made clear to them that their participation is totally voluntary and there is no compulsion to participate in the research project. They will further be told that they have every right and freedom to withdraw at any stage of data collection process. Moreover, they will be assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of the data.

b) anonymity and confidentiality

The participants' anonymity will be thoroughly preserved. The researcher will use pseudonyms for the participants and research sites. With regard to confidentiality, the data will be kept completely confidential and will be used only for research purposes. No one will know about the participants' responses except the researcher.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

The research methods include a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview and a semi-structured classroom observation. The quantitative data will be analysed quantitatively using SPSS descriptive statistics and qualitative data will be analysed qualitatively.

The researcher will take every step to provide participants with a friendly and a comfortable environment and strive to avoid any stressful situation. The participants themselves will decide whether to participate or not. Moreover, the interviewees will be asked to select the time and place for interview keeping in view their own convenience.

Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project (e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires or special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.):

All data will be treated as extremely important and confidential and it will be saved securely.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

I do not anticipate any other issues.

This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.

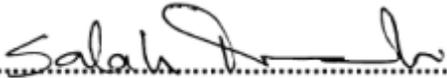
N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: April 2011 **until:**

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature):  **date:** 7/4/2011

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.

GSE unique approval reference: D/10/11/56

Signed:  **date:** 7/4/2011

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

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