

**Language Anxiety: A Case Study of the Perceptions and Experiences of Teachers and Students of English as a Foreign Language in a Higher Education Institution in the United Arab Emirates**

**Submitted by Rola Lababidi**

**To  
The University of Exeter  
For the degree of  
Doctor of Education in TESOL  
Submission date: 27/03/2015**

This thesis is available for Library use on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the thesis may be published without proper acknowledgement.

I certify that all material in this thesis, which is not, my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

## **ABSTRACT**

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) is considered a situation-specific anxiety experienced in the context of the foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994). Despite the growing interest in investigating and exploring the potential causes and manifestations of language anxiety in many Western and Far Eastern countries, the potential sources of this complicated phenomenon have not been widely researched and identified in Arab EFL contexts. The importance of this research rests on a paradigm, which attests the existence of substantial variation through which FLA is experienced not only across cultural groups Horwitz (2001) but also across regions within a specific country (Yan and Horwitz 2008). In order to fill the gap in literature, this mixed method research design study explored and investigated possible factors associated with language anxieties and the coping strategies used by students to alleviate its existence in the hope that the findings contribute to current related literature. Therefore, the current case study comprised two phases. The first phase explored the scope and severity of language anxiety among all Foundation level male students at a Federal college in the UAE. In the second phase of the study, quantitative data were collected using two inventories and one scale with the purpose of investigating the anxiety levels, effects, sources, and beliefs of language learners. In addition, interviews were undertaken with a sample of teachers and students. Focus group (FG) interviews with students were conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the possible sources of anxiety about language learning and its manifestations, as well as consideration of the strategies that may be used to alleviate its negative effects. The purpose of the 1:1 interviews with the teachers was to explore their views and experiences of the phenomenon of language anxiety. Observations of language sessions were also conducted to triangulate the data gathered from the inventories and the teacher and student interviews. The findings show that some of the student participants in this case study experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety in the second language classrooms. Feelings of anxiety could be attributed to a number of interrelated personal and situational related variables. The findings paved the way for a number of implications and recommendations for future research.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would never have been able to finish my thesis without the guidance of my supervisors, and support from my family.

First, and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Gillian Haynes, for her aspiring guidance and patience during my journey. Without her help and encouragement, this thesis would not have been completed. I would also like to thank Dr. Susan Jones for her support and invaluable assistance. My acknowledgment and sincere appreciation also extends to Dr. Tony Wright and Dr. Salah Troudi.

My very special thanks go to the one person whom I owe everything I am today, my father. His faith and confidence in my abilities is what has pushed me to be the person I am today. Thank you for everything. My thanks also go out to my mother who taught me how to cultivate the true essence of persistence and resiliency in the face of all odds.

Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to my husband and my children. I could never have accomplished this thesis without their love, support, and understanding.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| ABSTRACT   | - 2 -  |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS   | - 3 -  |
| LIST OF ACRONYMS OR ABBREVIATIONS                                      | - 9 -  |
| CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION   | - 10 - |
| 1.0. WHY RESEARCH LANGUAGE ANXIETY? NATURE OF THE PROBLEM              | - 10 - |
| 1.1. WHY RESEARCH LANGUAGE ANXIETY? THE RATIONALE OF THE CASE STUDY    | - 11 - |
| 1.2. WHY RESEARCH LANGUAGE ANXIETY FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES?        | - 13 - |
| 1.3. RESEARCHING LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN THE ARAB CONTEXT                  | - 14 - |
| 1.4. WHY IS THIS CASE STUDY SIGNIFICANT?                               | - 14 - |
| 1.5. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS  | - 16 - |
| CHAPTER 2 CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY                                    | - 17 - |
| 2.0. INTRODUCTION  | - 17 - |
| 2.1. THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES  | - 17 - |
| 2.2. THE USE OF ENGLISH IN THE UAE                                     | - 18 - |
| 2.3. THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE UAE                                   | - 18 - |
| 2.4. EDUCATIONAL TRANSITIONS IN THE UAE                                | - 19 - |
| 2.5. HIGHER EDUCATION  | - 20 - |
| 2.6. ENGLISH IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION                               | - 21 - |
| 2.7. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH SETTING                                   | - 22 - |
| 2.8. DESCRIPTION OF LEARNERS   | - 23 - |
| 2.9. FOUNDATION LEVEL PROGRAM DETAILS                                  | - 24 - |
| 2.10. CONCLUSION   | - 24 - |
| CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK                  | - 26 - |
| 3.0. INTRODUCTION  | - 26 - |
| 3.1. THEORIES OF ANXIETY   | - 26 - |
| 3.2. ANXIETY AND SECOND LANGUAGE                                       | - 29 - |
| 3.3. THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF ANXIETY IN SECOND LANGUAGE | - 29 - |
| 3.4. DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY                                   | - 31 - |
| 3.5. FACTORS RELATED TO LANGUAGE ANXIETY                               | - 32 - |
| 3.5.1. LEARNER VARIABLES: PERSONALITY TRAITS                           | - 33 - |
| 3.5.1.1 SELF-ESTEEM  | - 33 - |
| 3.5.1.2. PERFECTIONISM AND RISK TAKING                                 | - 34 - |
| 3.5.1.3 COMPETITIVENESS  | - 34 - |
| 3.5.1.4. STUDENTS' BELIEFS AND LANGUAGE ANXIETY                        | - 35 - |
| 3.5.1.5. SOCIAL ANXIETY  | - 36 - |
| 3.5.2. SITUATION-SPECIFIC ANXIETY                                      | - 36 - |
| 3.5.2.1. TEACHERS'-RELATED FACTORS                                     | - 37 - |
| 3.5.2.2. CLASSROOM-RELATED FACTORS                                     | - 39 - |
| 3.5.2.2.1. PHYSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CLASSROOM                         | - 39 - |
| 3.5.2.2.2. PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES                                      | - 40 - |
| 3.6 SOCIAL IMAGINARIES AND THE EMERGENCE OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY           | - 42 - |
| 3.7. EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY                                       | - 44 - |

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 3.7.1. LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC EFFECT   | - 47 -        |
| 3.7.2. LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND LANGUAGE SKILLS   | - 48 -        |
| 3.8. MANIFESTATIONS OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY   | - 50 -        |
| 3.9. STRATEGIES TO ALLEVIATE LANGUAGE ANXIETY   | - 51 -        |
| 3.10. CONCLUSION  | - 53 -        |
| <b>CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b>   | <b>- 55 -</b> |
| 4.0. INTRODUCTION TO METHODOLOGY  | - 55 -        |
| 4.1. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK: RESEARCH PARADIGMS   | - 55 -        |
| 4.2. RESEARCH DESIGN-MIXED METHOD: SEQUENTIAL TWO PHASES DESIGN                           | - 56 -        |
| 4.3. CASE STUDY APPROACH  | - 59 -        |
| 4.4. RESEARCH METHODS AND PLAN  | - 60 -        |
| 4.5. PILOT STUDY  | - 60 -        |
| 4.6. PHASE 1  | - 62 -        |
| 4.6.1. PHASE 1-SAMPLING PROCEDURES  | - 62 -        |
| 4.6.2. PHASE 1 - DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND ANALYSIS                                     | - 63 -        |
| 4.7. PHASE 2  | - 67 -        |
| 4.7.1. PHASE 2-STUDENTS SAMPLING  | - 67 -        |
| 4.7.2. PHASE 2- FACULTY SAMPLING  | - 68 -        |
| 4.7.3. PHASE 2 –DATA COLLECTION   | - 68 -        |
| 4.7.3.1 FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE  | - 68 -        |
| 4.7.3.2. COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY (CUCEI)                   | - 69 -        |
| 4.7.3.3. BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING INVENTORY (BALLI)                                | - 70 -        |
| 4.7.3.4. OBSERVATIONS   | - 72 -        |
| 4.7.3.5. INTERVIEWS: TEACHERS’ ONE-ON ONE INTERVIEWS AND STUDENTS’ FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS | - 72 -        |
| 4.8. PHASE TWO-DATA ANALYSIS  | - 75 -        |
| 4.8.1. QUANTITATIVE DATA/ DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS  | - 76 -        |
| 4.8.2. QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS  | - 77 -        |
| 4.9. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF QUALITATIVE DATA  | - 78 -        |
| 4.10. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS  | - 79 -        |
| 4.11. ACCESS AND ACCEPTANCE   | - 79 -        |
| 4.11.1. INFORMED CONSENT  | - 80 -        |
| 4.11.2. PRIVACY ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY   | - 81 -        |
| 4.11.3. DATA COLLECTION AND STORAGE   | - 81 -        |
| 4.12. CHALLENGES  | - 81 -        |
| 4.12.1. DEVELOPING THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS   | - 81 -        |
| 4.12.2. RESEARCHER’S IDENTITY   | - 81 -        |
| <b>CHAPTER 5 STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY</b>                                 | <b>- 83 -</b> |
| 5.0. INTRODUCTION   | - 83 -        |
| <b>PART 1- STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS</b>             | <b>- 83 -</b> |
| 5.1. STUDENTS BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEMANDS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING                              | - 83 -        |
| 5.1.1. STUDENTS’ FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE  | - 83 -        |
| 5.1.2. STUDENTS’ BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY  | - 84 -        |
| 5.1.3. STUDENTS’ BELIEFS ABOUT THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING                            | - 87 -        |
| 5.1.4. STUDENTS’ LEARNING AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES                                    | - 88 -        |
| 5.1.5. STUDENTS’ MOTIVATIONS TO LEARN   | - 89 -        |
| 5.1.6. SUMMARY OF STUDENTS’ BELIEFS ABOUT THE DEMANDS OF LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE       | - 89 -        |
| 5.2. STUDENT’S PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCES OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY                             | - 90 -        |
| 5.2.1. LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND THE DEMANDS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING                              | - 91 -        |
| 5.2.2. CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND LANGUAGE ANXIETY   | - 93 -        |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 5.2.5. SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY          | - 96 -         |
| 5.3. STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM                 | - 99 -         |
| 5.3.1. STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTION   | - 99 -         |
| 5.3.2. TEACHING APPROACHES AND PRACTICES: TEACHERS TEACHING STYLE                    | - 100 -        |
| 5.3.3. STUDENT -STUDENT INTERACTION  | - 101 -        |
| 5.3.4. STUDENTS' SENSE OF AUTONOMY IN THE CLASSROOM                                  | - 103 -        |
| 5.3.5. CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES  | - 103 -        |
| 5.5. SUMMARY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM        | - 104 -        |
| PART 2- STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY QUALITATIVE FINDINGS                | - 106 -        |
| 5.6 SOURCES OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY  | - 106 -        |
| 5.6.1 TEACHER-RELATED FACTORS  | - 106 -        |
| 5.6.2 PEDAGOGICAL AND INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES  | - 109 -        |
| 5.6.3 PACE AND SPEED   | - 109 -        |
| 5.6.4 LISTENING ACTIVITIES   | - 110 -        |
| 5.6.5 SPEAKING IN TARGET LANGUAGE  | - 111 -        |
| 5.6.6 FEAR OF MAKING ERRORS  | - 113 -        |
| 5.6.7 TEST- TAKING   | - 115 -        |
| 5.6.8 PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE OF LEARNING AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE                         | - 116 -        |
| 5.7 EFFECTS OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE                             | - 116 -        |
| 5.8 MANIFESTATION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY  | - 117 -        |
| 5.9. STUDENTS' RECOMMENDATIONS ON HAVING A LESS STRESSFUL ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASS     | - 119 -        |
| 5.10 REFLECTION  | - 122 -        |
| <b>CHAPTER 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS</b> | <b>- 123 -</b> |
| 6.0. INTRODUCTION  | - 123 -        |
| PART1- TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY                                      | - 123 -        |
| 6.1. THE CAUSES OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY AMONG L2 STUDENTS                                | - 123 -        |
| 6.1.1. FACTORS RELATED TO LEARNERS   | - 124 -        |
| 6.1.1.1. SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE  | - 124 -        |
| 6.1.1.2. STUDENTS' BELIEFS   | - 125 -        |
| 6.1.1.3. STUDY SKILLS  | - 127 -        |
| 6.1.2. TEACHER- RELATED FACTORS  | - 128 -        |
| 6.1.2.1. TEACHERS' CHARACTERISTICS   | - 128 -        |
| 6.1.2.2. TEACHING APPROACHES AND PRACTICES   | - 129 -        |
| 6.1.2.2.1. CLASSROOM ORGANISATION – GROUPING PROCEDURES AND GROUP WORK               | - 131 -        |
| 6.1.2.3. COURSE STRUCTURE AND DEMANDS OF THE CURRICULUM                              | - 132 -        |
| 6.1.4. PEER RELATIONSHIPS  | - 132 -        |
| 6.2. MANIFESTATIONS OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY  | - 134 -        |
| 6.3. STRATEGIES BELIEVED TO REDUCE ANXIETY AMONG STUDENTS                            | - 136 -        |
| PART 2- CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS   | - 140 -        |
| 6.5. SUMMARY   | - 142 -        |
| 6.5. REFLECTION  | - 143 -        |
| <b>CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION</b>  | <b>- 145 -</b> |
| 7.0. INTRODUCTION  | - 145 -        |
| 7.1. THE ORIGINS OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY – TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS           | - 148 -        |
| 7.1.1. LEARNER-RELATED FACTORS   | - 150 -        |
| 7.1.1.1. STUDENTS' SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SELF-ESTEEM                                   | - 150 -        |
| 7.1.1.2. BELIEFS ABOUT SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING                                      | - 151 -        |
| 7.1.2. CLASSROOM-RELATED FACTORS: TEACHERS AND PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES                 | - 152 -        |
| 7.1.2.1. TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS AND RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDENTS                      | - 153 -        |
| 7.1.2.2. THE DEMANDS OF SPEAKING IN THE L2 CLASSROOM                                 | - 154 -        |

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 7.1.2.3. CLARITY OF DELIVERY _____   | - 155 -        |
| 7.1.2.4. TESTING AND ASSESSMENT _____  | - 156 -        |
| 7.1.2.5 ONE SIZE FITS ALL – A LACK OF DIFFERENTIATION _____  | - 156 -        |
| 7.1.3 THE SHAPING OF STUDENTS’ AND TEACHERS’ BELIEFS AND IDENTITIES _____                                  | - 158 -        |
| 7.2. ALLEVIATING LANGUAGE ANXIETY – TEACHERS’ AND STUDENTS’ VOICES _____                                   | - 160 -        |
| 7.3. REFLECTION _____  | - 164 -        |
| <b>CHAPTER 8 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE _____</b>  | <b>- 166 -</b> |
| 8.1. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF FINDINGS _____   | - 166 -        |
| 8.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE _____  | - 166 -        |
| 8.2.1. IMPLICATION FOR TEACHERS _____  | - 166 -        |
| 8.2.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPERS _____  | - 169 -        |
| 8.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY _____  | - 169 -        |
| 8.4. CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE _____   | - 170 -        |
| 8.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH _____   | - 171 -        |
| 8.6. FINAL REFLECTION _____  | - 172 -        |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY _____</b>  | <b>- 173 -</b> |
| <b>LIST OF APPENDICES _____</b>  | <b>- 190 -</b> |
| APPENDIX A MANIFESTATION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY CHECKLIST _____   | - 190 -        |
| APPENDIX B SUMMARY OF STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH<br>_____              | - 191 -        |
| APPENDIX C ADAPTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS) _____                                  | - 192 -        |
| APPENDIX D TEACHERS’ PROFILE _____   | - 195 -        |
| APPENDIX E ADAPTED COLLEGE AND CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT INVENTORY (CUCEI) _____                               | - 196 -        |
| APPENDIX F SCALE NAME AND DESCRIPTION _____  | - 199 -        |
| APPENDIX G ITEM DISTRIBUTION OF CUCEI _____  | - 200 -        |
| APPENDIX H ADAPTED BALLI SCALE -BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE LEARNING INVENTORY _____                            | - 201 -        |
| APPENDIX I INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (FACULTY MEMBERS) _____  | - 204 -        |
| APPENDIX J INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (STUDENTS) _____  | - 205 -        |
| APPENDIX K1 EXAMPLE OF CODED TRANSCRIPT (TRANSCRIPT 3: FG INTERVIEWS/ NUMBER OF<br>PARTICIPANTS: 13) _____ | - 206 -        |
| APPENDIX K2 SAMPLE OF QUALITATIVE WORK _____   | - 207 -        |
| APPENDIX L UNIVERSITY OF EXETER CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL RESEARCH APPROVAL FORM _____                        | - 208 -        |
| APPENDIX M STUDENTS CONSENT FORM _____   | - 211 -        |
| APPENDIX N STUDENTS CONSENT FORM (INTERVIEWS) _____  | - 212 -        |
| APPENDIX O BALLI RESULTS _____   | - 213 -        |
| APPENDIX P FLCAS FINDINGS _____  | - 215 -        |
| APPENDIX Q CUCEI FINDINGS _____  | - 217 -        |
| APPENDIX R1-OBSERVATION CHECKLIST _____  | - 220 -        |
| APPENDIX R2 OBSERVATIONS CODES AND CATEGORIES OF ONE OF THE OBSERVED CLASSES (C1) _____                    | - 221 -        |
| APPENDIX S OBSERVABLE AND NON-OBSERVABLE MANIFESTATIONS _____  | - 222 -        |

## LIST OF TABLES

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| TABLE 1: PHASE 1-NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LEVEL ONE AND LEVEL TWO _____                               | - 63 - |
| TABLE 2 SUMMARY AND COMPARISON OF RESULTS IN PREVIOUS AND CURRENT STUDIES _____                    | - 65 - |
| TABLE 3 PHASE 1 STUDENTS’ INTERVIEW FINDING-CATEGORIES EMERGING FROM STUDENTS’ RESPONSES -<br>66 - |        |
| TABLE 4 PHASE 2-NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN LEVEL ONE AND LEVEL TWO _____                                | - 67 - |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>TABLE 5 DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS ACROSS (FOUR CLASSES) BASED ON ITEM RATING AND LA TOTAL SCORE</b>                       | <b>- 68 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 6 CRONBACH ALPHA OF CUCEI RELIABILITY STATISTICS</b>   | <b>- 70 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 7 CRONBACH ALPHA OF CUCEI SUB- SCALES</b>  | <b>- 70 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 8 FOCUS GROUP, PARTICIPANTS AND CODES</b>  | <b>- 74 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 9 RELATION OF DATA SOURCES AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS</b>  | <b>- 76 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 10 STAGES OF THEMATIC ANALYSIS BASED ON BRAUN AND CLARKE (2006) SIX STAGES</b>   | <b>- 78 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 11 STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE APTITUDE</b>   | <b>- 84 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 12 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ABOUT FOREIGN LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY</b>  | <b>- 85 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 13 STUDENTS' BELIEFS ABOUT THE LEVEL OF LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY</b>  | <b>- 86 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 14 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON TIME NEEDED TO GAIN FLUENCY IN L2</b>   | <b>- 86 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 15 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING</b>   | <b>- 87 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 16 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATION AND LANGUAGE STRATEGIES</b>   | <b>- 88 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 17 STUDENTS' MOTIVATION TO LEARN A SECOND LANGUAGE</b>   | <b>- 89 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 18 STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARD THE ENGLISH CLASS</b>   | <b>- 92 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 19 STUDENTS' COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION</b>  | <b>- 93 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 20 STUDENTS' ANXIETY OF TESTS</b>  | <b>- 94 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 21 STUDENTS' FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION</b>   | <b>- 95 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 22 VARIABLES THAT ARE INDICATIVE OF RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY AMONG FOUNDATION LEVEL MALE STUDENTS</b> | <b>- 97 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 23 SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' APPREHENSION AND CONCERNS</b>  | <b>- 98 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 24 STUDENT-TEACHER INTERACTION</b>   | <b>- 99 -</b>  |
| <b>TABLE 25 STUDENTS PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS' TREATMENT</b>  | <b>- 100 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 26 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS' TEACHING STYLE</b>  | <b>- 101 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 27 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF STUDENT-STUDENT INTERACTION</b>   | <b>- 101 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 28 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF COOPERATION</b>   | <b>- 102 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 29 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF AUTONOMY</b>  | <b>- 103 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 30 PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITIES</b>  | <b>- 104 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 31 SUMMARY OF CUCEI SUB SCALES MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS</b>   | <b>- 105 -</b> |
| <b>TABLE 32 STUDENTS RECOMMENDATIONS ON HAVING A LESS STRESSFUL CLASSROOM</b>   | <b>- 120 -</b> |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>FIGURE 1. THE NUMBER OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION AND STUDENTS POPULATION IN THE UAE</b>                      | <b>- 21 -</b>  |
| <b>FIGURE 2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ANXIETY</b>  | <b>- 28 -</b>  |
| <b>FIGURE 3 THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNER, TEACHER AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES THAT MAY LEAD TO ANXIETY</b> | <b>- 42 -</b>  |
| <b>FIGURE 4 THE EFFECT OF ANXIETY ON COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE</b>  | <b>- 45 -</b>  |
| <b>FIGURE 1: THE CASE STUDY TIME- LINE OF THE TWO PHASES</b>  | <b>- 60 -</b>  |
| <b>FIGURE 6 THE COMPLEX NATURE OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY</b>  | <b>- 158 -</b> |



## **List of Acronyms or Abbreviations**

For clarity of meaning throughout the thesis, the following abbreviations are applicable.

BALLI Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory

CEPA Common Educational Proficiency Assessment

CUCEI College and University Classroom Environment Scale

EFL English as a Foreign Language

FLA Foreign Language Anxiety

FLCAS Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

HEI Higher Education Institution

L1 First or Native Language

L2 Second Language

TA Thematic analysis

LA Language Anxiety

FG Focus group

In this thesis, FLA and LA are used interchangeably

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.0. Why Research Language Anxiety? Nature of the Problem

The extensive use of English language globally has placed second language learners (L2) on a challenging tract of acquiring effective communicational skills. Surmounting this challenge is depicted as a guaranteed 'rite of passage' within higher education and subsequent success in the job market. However, Horwitz and Young (1991: xiv) state, "we have been truly surprised at the number of students who experience anxiety and distress in their language classes".

Anxiety that is associated with learning a second language is referred to as language anxiety (LA). LA is a psychological construct particular to language learning and can be characterized as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986:128). For educators, the challenges are manifested in the ability of educators to promote a stress-free learning environment that engenders in learners an interest in learning a second language. From a theoretical point of view, this is not a simple task to embrace. Educators and students step into classrooms with a loaded baggage of expectations, beliefs, and prospects about a particular teaching and learning environment. The interplay of these expectations may foster a unique learning context that shapes the nature of the classroom environment. In instances, whereby, the climate in the classroom is rigid and judgmental in outlook, this presents a context that shakes and sometimes shatters the learner's self-concept. As Horwitz et al. (1986) clearly note, "Any performance in the L2 is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic"(p. 128).

Learning English as a second language incorporates many challenges to both educators and learners alike. For learners, these challenges are inherent in many a priori factors that are embedded in the learner's unique psychosocial and educational framework. This framework takes into account the learner's affective

and cognitive predisposition in learning a second language. Feelings of anxiety, nervousness, and apprehension are usually manifested by L2 learners in learning to speak a second language. These feelings are considered to connote a negative and detrimental consequence on communication in the target language. Foreign language anxiety or more precisely, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) is considered a situation-specific anxiety experienced in the context of the foreign language classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b, 1994). The nature of the classroom environment may trigger the emergence of language anxiety among L2 students. For the purpose of clarity, the term 'classroom environment' is used here to include a wide range of educational dimensions that takes into account the physical setting, the socio-psychological environment, and a variety of instructional routines related to teachers' characteristics and behaviours. Some classroom environments create a feeling of insecurity among students. Often, classroom related scenarios such as teacher factors and the behaviours of peers are deemed to be at the root of such feelings of anxiety.

### **1.1. Why Research Language Anxiety? The Rationale of the Case Study**

Education as a field has always elicited my interest and has driven my professional journey to experience the richness of this field in various educational milieus. My interest in studying foreign LA grew out of my personal and professional experience in the classroom. On a personal level, I can recount many instances whereby I felt apprehensive and anxious in L2 classrooms while I was a student. From a professional perspective, I have also witnessed the occurrence of this phenomenon among L2 learners and non- native speakers of the English language.

I started my career as a special educator whereby I had the opportunity to teach special need students of different age groups, across subject areas and grade levels. I also taught in regular schools and colleges. As a college instructor of English and Work skills, I became increasingly aware that some of the students were reluctant to participate in classroom discussion and of them coming up with ill-founded excuses to skip classes. I began to consider the possibility, that some of the students might be experiencing anxiety in their English language classes. This triggered my interest in conducting a small –scale case study in 2010. The

participants were Arab ESL college students; 108 participated in the pilot study; 48 students completed the adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and 12 participated in focus interviews. The findings suggest that some students in relation to at least some aspects of English language learning experience significant English language anxiety. It was inferred from this study that some levels of foreign FLA are experienced by Semester 1 Work skills students in response to specific aspects of foreign language learning. This study laid the infrastructure for this thesis; it has affirmed my assumption about the existence of FLA among Emirati college students and has triggered my interest to study this affective domain further taking the many facets of the classroom environment into consideration.

The major aim of this case study is to investigate the complex phenomenon of LA among L2 learners. This research aims to investigate both learners and teachers' perceptions of the causes and manifestations of LA among learners and how this might be addressed/reduced. The importance of this study emerges from the fact that foreign LA has a profound impact on students' success in learning a second language. The basic assumption underpinning this case study, which is based on my past research into LA and other studies in this field (discussed in Chapter 3), include the following:

- It is assumed that the emergence of LA among L2 learner has its roots in the interplay of self-originating factors and context related elements that the learner belongs to. Self-related factors may include disposition, beliefs, and embedded previous experiences that have shaped the learner's tendency to experience LA. On the other hand, certain classroom circumstances may trigger in students a sense that they are being judged, isolated, and stripped of emotional control. This phenomenon may become a frame of reference, which dictates present and futuristic anxiety reactions among some L2 learners.

The scarcity of research studies investigating such an essential construct in the Gulf region, particularly in the UAE, set the ground for its investigation via the following main research question:

What are teachers and learners' perceptions of the causes, manifestations, and ways of alleviating language anxiety (LA) among L2 learners in one institution in the United Arab Emirates?

## **1.2. Why Research Language Anxiety from Different Perspectives?**

Psychological constructs are not easily observable; this makes the investigation a rather challenging task to undertake. Hence, investigating LA is not an easy task to tackle. It requires an in-depth investigation that takes into account the complexity of this phenomenon. In order to achieve my aim, I decided to use a pragmatic approach to study the phenomenon. "Pragmatists use whatever philosophical or methodological approach works best for a particular research problem at issue" (Robson, 2003:43). Pragmatism can serve as the philosophical underpinning for conducting mixed methods research where both quantitative and qualitative methods are used in a single research study (Creswell, 2003). Based on this rationale, I decided to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to: (a) build on the findings, (b) corroborate the data and, (c) to enhance the integrity of the findings.

My theoretical position is based on the following assumption: it assumes that the beliefs, the classroom environment, and perceptions of students and teachers engulfs an implicit effect on learning a second language and that many factors may be attributed to the development of anxiety among L2 learners. L2 learners may have acquired 'erroneous' beliefs about language learning, these beliefs and perceptions compounded with certain socio-cultural element evident in the classroom environment could have contributed to the development of LA among L2 students. Many factors have been assumed to affect language learning, and in turn have an impact on students' beliefs and anxiety level in the classroom. Therefore, in my study, classroom related factors such as the classroom dynamic compounded with the teacher's pedagogical approach and personal factors of the learner form a complex interplay through which the anxiety state of the learner is investigated. Based on this understanding, the findings from this study can provide a valuable insight into a psychological construct that has been scarcely investigated in the Arab world. The results may be of benefit to teachers and students alike.

A thorough analysis of the research context will be addressed in chapter two of this thesis. However, for setting the ground of its significance, a brief statement of the setting is acknowledged next.

### **1.3. Researching Language Anxiety in the Arab Context**

The case study presented in this thesis was the General Education Department of a governmental all male college in the Emirates, where English is a key element of higher education.

The research design involved the use of both quantitative and qualitative tools to investigate the level and severity of LA among L2 Emirati students. Even though this study tried to tackle a specific issue –LA as it related to male Emirati students in a specific educational context; its scope was constrained by practical factors. The participants in Phase 1 of the study were drawn from a pool that included all level one and two students (N=278) registered for Foundation English in the fall and spring term of 2011-2012; Phase 2 of the study included 56 student participants. All these students completed the surveys, while 50 out of the 56 students participated in the focus interviews. In addition, four experienced Language teachers participated in semi-structured interviews.

### **1.4. Why is this Case Study Significant?**

Investigating the concept of LA is of profound significance due to the adverse negative effects it can have on second language students learning experience and outcome. LA can have a detrimental effect on learners' achievement (e.g., Horwitz et al, 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994). It also has an adverse outcome on social interactions (MacIntyre, 1995). From a cognitive perspective, it interferes in the three stages of learning; input, process and output (Tobias, 1986). Due to its deliberating consequences, Krashen (1982) emphasizes the importance of creating a low stress-learning situation in improving learner's language competence. Consequently, investigating the roots of LA will help in gaining a deeper understanding of this complex phenomenon and will in turn assist second language teachers in creating a stress- free classroom environment.

Most of the studies on FLA emerges from Western countries (e.g., Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner 1991) and from a number of other countries in the world. Very few studies have been undertaken in the Arab world,

notable exception include for example Al-Saraj 2011[KSA]; Alrabai, 2014, 2015[KSA]; Rassaei, 2015 [Iran].

Horwitz (2001) review of research studies asserts that there are cultural variations through which FLA is experienced among learners and as such, generalizations from other studies should be carefully considered. Therefore, in order to fill this gap, this study aimed to explore foreign language anxiety as experienced by Emirati male Foundation level students.

In addition, the findings and recommendations from this mixed method study might add a significant contribution to the literature. Compared to studies conducted in other L2 contexts in the Arab world (for e.g. Alrabai, 2014, 2015; Rassaei, 2015) which were for the most part quantitative in nature, this study is unique in using a multi-method approach in investigating LA in the UAE. It explored the perspectives of different educational stakeholders specifically the similarities and dissonance between students and teachers' perceptions of the complex nature of language anxiety using a combination of surveys, interviews, and observations. The methods used in this study are original in terms of the logistics of the research design –tools, participants and context. This is the first study of its kind that has employed a number of surveys, interviews and observation to investigate language anxiety as perceived by both students and teachers. The context of the study also adds significance to the research. With the advent of globalization, UAE is taking giant steps towards becoming a knowledge society – a mission that entails greater emphasis on the role that English language plays in Emirati schools and beyond. English language is increasingly becoming an essential communication tool amid the Emirati culture and has become a 'gate keeper' for both professional and educational advancement. In this regard, the findings and conclusion of this study will identify implications for the pedagogy of teachers of college students in the UAE EFL context, which are based on the stakeholders' recommendations, and experiences in EFL contexts. These could form part of professional development or training courses for English language teachers who teach in higher education institutions targeting Foundation level students, in particular.

## **1.5. Organization of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of eight chapters including this introductory chapter.

Chapter 1 has explained the focus of this case study, the rationale for undertaking this research, the research design, and the contribution this study will make to the field. Chapter 2 describes the context in which this study took place. Chapter 3 presents an overview of major learning theories as they relate to foreign LA. In Chapter 4, the methodology is described in detail with an explanation of the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research design. In chapter 5, the student data are presented and discussed; in this chapter, the aim was to focus on the students' voices. In chapter 6, the teacher data are presented and discussed, in relation to the students' data. Chapter 7 provides a discussion and summary of the findings. Chapter 8 offers a set of implications related to practice- practical recommendations for both teachers and students, which set the ground for further research in the field of language anxiety



## **CHAPTER 2 CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY**

### **2.0. Introduction**

This study focuses on investigating students and teachers' perceptions of anxiety within the context of Emirati EFL classrooms in one UAE higher education institution. This chapter will describe the educational context in which the study occurs. It will look at the education system in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the transitional landmarks that affected the pedagogical policies in education and the evolution of the English language in relation to the socio-cultural, economic, and political issues, which impinges on them. It will examine the general use of English in the UAE, and its usage within the country's tertiary educational system, along with discussing the context in which this study evolves.

### **2.1. The United Arab Emirates**

The United Arab Emirates commonly known as the Emirates or the UAE is an Islamic country situated in the southeast of the Arabian Peninsula on the Persian Gulf. The total area of the UAE is 83,600 square kilometres, and the capital city is Abu Dhabi with an area of 67,340 square kilometres. The country was established in 1971 as a federal government and consists of seven Emirates. The Emirates are Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Ajman, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah, and Umm al-Quwain. The capital city of the UAE is Abu Dhabi, which is the hub for many commercial activities. The Emirates was formally governed by the Portuguese for 150 years and then by the British until its independence in 1971.

The discovery of oil in the 1960s established UAE as one of the most-developed economical countries in Western Asia with the world's seventh-highest GDP per capita. UAE has the second largest economy in the Arab world (after Saudi Arabia) with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$377 billion (AED 1.38 trillion) in 2012. A third of the GDP is from oil revenues (Khaleej Times, 2013). The United Arab Emirates' National Bureau of Statistics estimated the country's total population to have been 8,264,070 in 2010, based on census data; immigrants make up more than 80% of the total population, according to UN data (2013). The UAE's

population is comprised of the following ethnic groups: Emirati 19%, other Arab and Iranian 23%, South Asian 50%, other expatriates (includes Westerners and East Asians) 8% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014). The official spoken language is Arabic whilst Persian, Urdu, and English is widely spoken by many expats. Based on the Ministry of Economy census in 2005, 76% of the total population was Muslim, 9% Christian, and 15% other (mainly Hindu). The literacy rate is now at 90% and life expectancy as of 2012 was 77.0 years (World Bank Development Indicators, 2014). Approximately 9% of the workforce is Emirati.

## **2.2. The Use of English in the UAE**

The use of English language in the UAE and its status in the nation's educational system and within UAE society serves as an essential bridge for connecting the UAE with the many facets of the advancement that is currently taking place in UAE. A new form of English, a 'lingua franca' with an English base, is emerging in the UAE and other Gulf countries. In the UAE, many expatriates are fluent in English but other residents in the UAE lack English fluency. Nevertheless, it is evident that in the current cultural and linguistic context of UAE society, use of English language is increasing rapidly. This increase in English language is attributed to many factors. From a political perspective, the influence of the colonial presence in the early 19th and 20th century helped to embed the importance of English language in the region which was embraced positively and was regarded as vital for the nation's development. Another factor influencing the presence of English language in the UAE is the multinational demographic makeup of its population. With such diversity, English language gained impetus as a common language of communication.

## **2.3. The Education System in the UAE**

The Ministry of Education controls the educational system at primary and secondary level in all the Emirates except for Abu Dhabi, where it is under the dictates of Abu Dhabi Educational Council. UAE government allocates about one third of its federal budget to education and emphasizes that "educational development is vital to economic success, in the long term in a post-oil future" (Abu Dhabi Week, 2011: 5). Today, the UAE provides a comprehensive free education to all male and female citizens from kindergarten to university. The majority of the

1,190 schools in the UAE are public (61%) /723 schools. The UAE public education systems consist of kindergarten (two years), primary school (six years), intermediate (three years), and secondary education (three years). During the final term of Grade 12, students must take the examination for the General Secondary Certificate (GSC). There are also many privately owned schools that are accredited by many international organizations and offer various tracks that include International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced Placement (AP), and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) programs among others. Admission to a higher education institution is greatly governed by the results attained from GSC along with a national placement exam called CEPA (Common Educational Proficiency Assessment).

#### **2.4. Educational Transitions in the UAE**

The educational system in the UAE passed through many transitional stages, which laid down the foundations for the current structure. During the early 1900s, merchants established a small number of schools. These schools were known as Khatatib<sup>1</sup> and they remained the sole provider of education to Emiratis until 1950s. The establishment of the British schools during the 1950s introduced formal education to a meagre 450 males out of the national population of 80,000-95,000 (US Library of Congress, 2006).

During the 1960s, the government of Abu Dhabi (Yamani, 2004) established a free formal educational system that included compulsory schooling for primary aged children. Because of the oil boom and the priority given to education, the Federal government established many schools in the UAE. This led to an increase in the nation's literacy rate by 26 percent and from 53 percent in 1989 to 79 percent in 2000 (UNESCO, 2004).

In late 2005, the country of the United Arab Emirates set out to reform education nationally. A case study carried out by Macpherson, Kachelhoffer, and El Nemr (2007) gives a critical evaluation of UAE national system of schooling. The case also described the educational system as out-dated and in need of reconstruction for many reasons. These included low budget, and poorly paid, unqualified

---

<sup>1</sup> These educational organizations offered classes in reading, writing and Islamic studies.

teachers who lacked a sense professionalism and loyalty to their schools and students. The curricula were reported as being poorly designed, with emphasis on repetitions, fragmented and with a redundant content. The school culture was found to be ineffective with lack of emphasis on discipline coupled with high absence rates, especially among male students. The teaching methods were described as ineffective with great emphasis placed on rote learning. Inappropriate assessment methods were used whereby memory is being assessed rather than skills and comprehension.

Despite these shortcomings, the UAE has made significant giant leaps in the last six decades to eradicate illiteracy and to improve its educational system. According to Findlow (2006), it has underwent a transformation from colligate of poor rural tribes with modest organization in their educational systems to a more economically and technologically sophisticated country. However, regardless of the educational evolution that schools underwent, they are all unified under “2020 Vision for Education” strategic plan. The strategic plan set the ground for an educational reform that is supported by all schools in the UAE. The main goal of this plan focuses on the abolishing of traditional education. The underlying assumptions of Education Vision 2020 echoes the mission statements of many universities in the UAE which support liberalism, competition, open and free markets, and pragmatism (Kawach, 2004).

## **2.5. Higher Education**

The UAE attains high rates of enrolment in higher education. Approximately 95 per cent of all females and 80 per cent of all males who complete the final year of secondary school apply for admission to higher education (National Media Council, 2009).

A major landmark in the educational history of the UAE was the establishment of higher education institutions in the country. There are currently three main federal universities in the UAE: UAE University, Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) and Zayed University (ZU). The first university (UAE University) was established in 1977. Then, in 1988, the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) were set up to provide chiefly vocational and technical programs. The HCT currently has a network of 17 campuses across the country, with separate colleges for males and

females. The third and final institution established by the Federal government is Zayed University\_ established in 1998. There are also many privately owned universities in the UAE. Examples of private locally owned universities include the University of Dubai, the American University of Sharjah, Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi. Many others have since opened, including Middlesex University and Heriot-Watt University, and Exeter University from the UK.

A study undertaken by the British Council in 2009 revealed the number of higher education institutions in the UAE (Fig 1).

| Types of HEIs          | Number of HEIs | Number of Students | % Total Students |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Federal                | 3              | 36,672             | 40%              |
| Private- International | 49             | 28,717             | 32%              |
| Private-Local          | 44             | 25,765             | 28%              |
| Total-All HEIs         | 96             | 91,154             | 100%             |

**FIGURE 1. THE NUMBER OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION AND STUDENTS POPULATION IN THE UAE (SOURCE: BRITISH COUNCIL)**

In 2008-9, the UAE University admitted 3355 new students; the Higher Colleges of Technology, 7902 students; and Zayed University 1558 students (National Media Council, 2009). Of the national students who graduated in 2006, 66.8 per cent were female (Hijazi et al., 2008). Many males prefer to join the armed forces or to take up employment in family businesses or relatively well-paid administrative positions in the public sector.

The main aim of UAE's Higher Education " is a world class higher education system that will prepare [the] citizens for social and economic leadership and for informed and intelligent personal lives" this is established with the intent of quipping Emiratis for a productive participation in the workforce (MOHESR, 2007).

## **2.6. English in the Context of Education**

Governmental schools introduce the basics of English language in the first primary grade. All of the subjects are taught in Arabic, while English language is predominantly taught and used in English language classes. Normally, children of the UAE are not exposed to the English language before schooling. Students who graduated from public schools at the age of 18 may not be ready to use English for

academic purposes. In 2010, Gulf News had reported that around 90 percent of public and private secondary school graduates in the UAE who apply to federal universities are not qualified to immediately engage in undergraduate level studies due to the following reason: lack of proficiency in English language because the medium of instruction in higher Education is in English (Moussly, 2012). The transition from high school to college requires students to take the Common Educational Proficiency Assessment (CEPA) exams. In 2007, the Ministry of Education and Scientific research introduced CEPA. This exam is used to identify students who require placement in Foundations programs, to improve their English and prepare them to pursue academic studies in the Bachelor Programs (CEPA, 2011). However, publication of the CEPA scores revealed low levels of students' readiness for university demands. MOHESR (2007) reported, "It is clear a large number of new students are not ready for work at the university level. MOHESR further stated that the scores on the CEPA test show that far too many students do not have the necessary competencies in English to do college-level work" (p. 26). The UAE government believes that a poor grasp of English is one of the chief employment barriers for UAE nationals.

## **2.7. Description of Research Setting**

The educational setting where this study took place and where I used to teach is a government funded higher education institution. O'Brien and Martin (2010:109) assert that the vision for these colleges emerged from the need to get rid of "inappropriate methods of teaching and learning" and to move the focus from "teaching to learning, from the teacher to the learner, from memorization to creativity, reflection, imagination, and innovation." The colleges employ primarily non-Arab expatriate teachers and teach almost exclusively in English, with Arabic being used only for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Findlow, 2006). During the 2012–2013 academic year, there were 11,232 female and 6,855 male students enrolled at 17 campuses throughout the country. More than 55,000 UAE nationals are graduates of the institution (HCT Fact book 2012-2013).

Only Emirati nationals are eligible to apply to these colleges. The students are enrolled on various programs. These programs include Master level, Bachelor Programs, Foundation Programs, and Work Readiness. The students who

participated in this case study were Foundation level students. The Foundation Studies Program assists students in meeting Bachelor degree admission. This Program consists of four levels of English preparation and two levels of mathematics. It is geared toward providing new students with the English and mathematical skills that they need to succeed in a college setting and eventually in the work market. The entry requirement is a minimum 150 on CEPA (HCT). Depending on their entry level, students may need one, two, three, or four English courses in Foundations. Each course is one semester (16 weeks). The Foundations English program has four levels and students are placed at the appropriate level according to their CEPA English score:

- Level 1 – 150 to 156
- Level 2 – 157 to 163
- Level 3 – 164 to 169
- Level 4 – 170 to 179

Depending on a student's entrance CEPA scores, he may spend between one semester to four semesters undertaking these programs. In meeting the program completion requirement, the students must earn an average score of 5.0 on IELTS Academic or an acknowledged equivalence. Upon achieving the desired IELTS results, the student will then be eligible to join the major of his choice (HCT).

## **2.8. Description of Learners**

Students of the present study are male Emirati students who have previously attended governmental institutions, where for the most part traditional methods of instruction were strongly reinforced. These students were taught in an educational system that emphasized rote learning, an instructional approach based on a behaviourist model of learning, which emphasizes memorizations, reinforcement, and habit formation (Macpherson, Kachelhoffer & Nemr, 2007). This system fails to address the educational and professional needs of students in this era of modern globalization. This status quo is further confirmed by the most recent results of the Program for International Assessment (PISA), which was released on (01/04/14) \_\_\_based on a study carried out in 2012. The analysis compares 85,000 students in 44 countries. The results revealed that out of the 65 participating countries, the UAE ranked 48 (434 points) in math, 44 (442 points) in reading and 46 (448 points)

in science. In fact, the UAE lies in 39th place, 5th from bottom, with an average score of 411, which is quite below the global average score of 500 ( Dahl, 2014). These results reveal that despite the many reforms and money invested in the educational sector, UAE students lag critically behind in Reading, science and Math. According to Swan (2011) college students in the UAE, where “[A]bout 80 percent of students accepted to federal universities do not have the required math, English or IT skills, and have to take remedial classes before starting their degree”.

### **2.9. Foundation Level Program Details**

The students in the present case study took English classes twenty hours per week for eighteen weeks per semester. The classroom is adequately designed and equipped for teaching and learning to take place. The curriculum is taught to second language learners within a student-centred learning environment that encourages respect for students, their culture, and traditions. The teacher utilizes various educational technological driven resources to ensure that effective and innovative instruction methodologies are employed. Students taught in these classrooms are also provided with individual pedagogical assistance whenever it is needed. Assistance, in this regard, may take on many forms depending on the students’ needs. Examples of student support include attending remedial classes at a specialized centre at the library run by highly qualified teachers or one-on-one help by the course teacher and/or joining study groups that may help the student surmount any difficulties that he is experiencing in learning a second language. The institution also utilizes the expertise of a highly qualified Western counsellor that caters to the students’ psychological needs. However, students sometimes find it difficult to discuss their problems with the counsellor due to their limited lexical proficiency.

### **2.10. Conclusion**

The current research is launched within a unique educational context that is the product of many educational transitions and milestones in the UAE recent history. Being able to communicate effectively in English has emerged as a de facto measure for achieving success in the world of global economy. The students are a homogenous blend of participants who share a similar background in terms of



culture, traditions, and language. Most of these students face a tremendous amount of linguistic difficulties upon entry to HEIs. They are usually not quite equipped to meet with the challenges and demands of the under graduate studies due to their poor language skills and the fact that all Undergraduate subjects are taught in English. The disjunction between pedagogies in secondary schools and HEI set the ground for a number of challenges that students must overcome in order to secure entry into the major of their choice. Based on this realization, I set out to investigate Emirati students' experience of learning English and to examine the phenomenon of language anxiety severity and scope from different angles taking into account the students' belief system, the current classroom environment and the role that teachers play in EFL classrooms. In the next chapter, I will look at some of the theoretical constructs and research studies pertinent to the current study.

## **CHAPTER 3 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide a comprehensive account of relevant literature that explore the sources and effects of LA and the coping strategies that learners use to alleviate their apprehensiveness in EFL classrooms. As will be revealed, much of the previous research has not examined LA in Arab EFL contexts.

### **3.1. Theories of Anxiety**

Anxiety is described as a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of autonomic nervous system (Spielberger 1983:1). Anxiety embodies three fundamental interconnected features: physiological (e.g., blood pressure, muscle tension, sweaty palms, blushing, forgetfulness), behavioural (frequent absence, avoidance behaviour, leaving a situation) and cognitive (subjective appraisal process, self-doubt, negative expectations). From a cognitive perspective, high or low levels of anxiety depends on the individual's appraisal of his/her capacity in dealing with threatening environments (Pappamihiel, 2002). Lazarus (1966) describes anxiety as a fear of a threatening situation. Whilst the physiological aspects of anxiety are depicted as, a cognitive affective reaction associated with physiological arousal and perceptual and anticipated fear of what might happen in certain situations (Leary, 1982), there are individual differences in how people perceive a situation as threatening. This varied response has been a key focus of research for those investigating the roots of this phenomenon. Experiencing past negative experiences is a contributing aspect to individual's levels of anxiety. Pekrun (1992) asserts that an individual who experiences threatening situations is likely to be highly anxious in similar situations in the future. In an attempt to understand these individual differences with respect to anxiety, three conceptual explanations of this construct are provided. First, anxiety is considered as a transient psychological state, an immediate response to a specific anxiety-provoking stimulus. Secondly, anxiety is conceptualized as a feature of an individual disposition. Thirdly, anxiety arousal

that is associated with a specific situation. These three interpretations are referred to as 'trait' anxiety, 'state' anxiety, and 'situation-specific' anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999).

In an attempt to gain a deeper understanding of what might be informing language anxiety, it is useful to consider how these three interpretations of anxiety might be operating in the context of language learning.

Trait anxiety refers to a stable predisposition to become nervous in a wide range of situations (Spielberger, 1983). According to Dornyei (2005), a general predisposition to experience anxiety in a wide range of situations is seen as a personal characteristic of an individual and is considered one of the primary traits of human personality. People with a high level of trait anxiety are generally nervous people; they lack emotional stability (Goldberg, 1992). These individuals are more likely to experience state anxiety elevation in a large number of situations than low-trait anxiety individuals. Therefore, not all individuals who have high state anxiety have high trait anxiety, but those who have high trait anxiety are more likely to experience state anxiety (Spielberger, 1983).

State anxiety refers to "the moment to moment" experiences of anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999:28). It is the apprehension that is experienced at a particular moment in time (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991:91). This typology includes transitional emotional state, which according to (Spielberger, 1983) is characterized by subjective feelings of tensions, nervousness, and worry, and by activation and arousal of the autonomic nervous system". State anxiety has an effect on emotion, cognition, and behaviour. Its effect on emotion results in increased level of arousal. Cognitively, when people experience state anxiety they are more susceptible to what people are thinking of them. As to behaviour, people with state anxiety ruminate over real and imagined failures and often plan ways to escape from the anxiety provoking situations. Behavioural effects include physical manifestations of anxiety for example, fast heart beats, sweaty palms, dizziness and attempts to physically flee from the anxiety provoking situation. Based on this interpretation, anxiety is seen as a multifaceted construct that is not easily defined from a one-dimensional perspective. In order to get a better understanding of the anxiety construct, a distinction is made between two main anxiety components: worry and emotionality. The former refers to the cognitive and the latter to the effective side of anxiety.

Sarason (1986) defines worry as distressing preoccupation about an anticipated event, while emotionality refers to the anxious individual's awareness of bodily arousal or tension (Sarason, 1986).

A third conceptualization of anxiety is situation-specific anxiety. This refers to anxiety related to a specific context or situations only. Thus, it is stable overtime, but not consistent over time. It is based on the assumption that certain types of situations are more likely to produce anxiety than others, however, there are individual differences among people as to what situations are perceived as anxiety provoking. Embracing Spielberger's (1983) conceptualization, situation specific anxiety could be defined as a personal disposition or tendency to become anxious in one type of a situation (MacIntyre, 1999). Examples of situation specific anxieties are test anxiety, stage fright, and language anxiety, because each of these refers to a specific context: taking a test, giving a speech, or using a second language. Figure 2 gives an overview of the different conceptualizations of anxiety. Applied to language learning, one can infer that a person with a high level of LA will experience state anxiety frequently and a person with a low level of LA will not experience state anxiety very often in the second language context (MacIntyre in Young 1999).

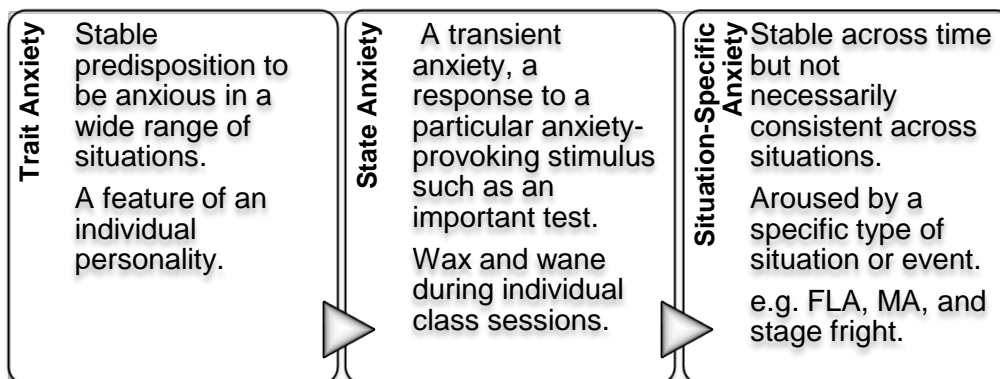


FIGURE 2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ANXIETY

In this section, I have presented a brief overview of three interrelated, but distinctively different conceptualization of LA as a psychological construct which are presented as a preliminary discussion of various approaches to the study of anxiety in second language learning and which sets the ground for explaining a specific kind of anxiety: language anxiety.

### **3.2. Anxiety and Second Language**

Several researchers have presented different definitions of foreign language anxiety (FLA). Clément (1980) defined foreign language anxiety as a complex construct that deals with learners' psychology in terms of their feelings, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Highlighting the unique feature of FLA, Young (1992) defined it as a complicated psychological phenomenon peculiar to language learning. More precisely, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) defined FLA as the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second or foreign language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning, or the worry and negative emotional reaction arousal when learning or using a second or foreign language (MacIntyre, 1999). Similarly, Zhang (2001) defined anxiety as the psychological tension that the learner goes through in performing a learning task. These definitions emerge from the assertion made by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) that FLA is "a phenomenon related to but distinguishable from other specific anxieties" (p. 129). Horwitz et al. (1986) were the first to conceptualise FLA as a distinctive type of anxiety particular to foreign language learning. Their theoretical model of FLA plays a significant role in language anxiety research.

### **3.3. Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Anxiety in Second Language**

There are two different theories relating to the study of anxiety in language learning. These are: (1) the anxiety transfer and (2) the unique anxiety approach (Horwitz and Young, 1991; MacIntyre, 1999). The assumption underlying the first approach is that anxiety experienced in L2 context is result of a transfer of other forms of anxiety into the L2 classroom. Anxieties in the L2 context are considered as either as the manifestation of a general trait of anxiety, or as the transfer of some situation specific anxiety (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991; McIntyre 1999). In contrast, the assumption behind the second theory is that language learning produces a unique type of anxiety. This is based on Gardner's hypothesis that a construct of anxiety, which is not general but instead, is specific to language learning (1985:34). Studies investigating the anxiety transfer theory have yielded inconsistent and contradictory results (MacIntyre, 1999). Based on the review of the literature, some investigations found a negative relationship (Bartz, 1974 in Young, 1994) while others found a positive relationship between anxiety and L2

performance (Klienmann, 1977), and still others found no significant relationship (e.g. Westcott, 1977 in Young 1994). According to Young (1994), the discrepancies in the results are due to the measures adopted in measuring anxiety. The problem is that these measures were not specific to the anxiety experienced in L2 contexts (MacIntyre, 1999; Young, 1994). On the other hand, studies adopting the unique approach, which employed measure specific to L2, yielded consistent results (Gardner, Clément, and Smythe 1977, 1980: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al, 1999). While neither trait anxiety nor situation-specific, anxiety was confirmed by empirical research, the notion that a unique type of anxiety might be at work proved a more plausible hypothesis (Tóth, 2010). The development of a theoretical model of FLA by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) is considered as a landmark in the study of anxiety in language learning. This model bridges the two approaches (i.e. the anxiety transfer, unique anxiety) discussed above (MacIntyre, 1999). Horwitz et al. (1986) conceptualizes L2- related anxiety as a distinct type of anxiety expressed in response to the unique experience of learning and using a language other than one's mother tongue (L1).

From a psycholinguistic perspective, the process involved in the production of speech - such as lexicogrammatical, morphological, phonetic encoding and articulation- and understanding speech- such as acoustic-phonetic analysis, phonological and grammatical decoding- are automatic in L1 but not readily so in L2; they demand conscious attention on the part of the speaker or listener (Kormos, 2006; Levelt, 1995, Tóth, 2010 ). Further to this understanding, it is argued that language anxiety has to do with performance evaluation in academic and social contexts. Thus, from a theoretical perspective, LA is a specific form of situation-specific anxiety that does not appear to have a strong relation to other forms of anxieties (Horwitz et al., 1986).

A breakthrough in the study of LA was the introduction of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) as a measure to identify LA. This scale has been adopted in many LA studies and is considered as the most widely used instrument in investigating LA. Foreign LA has been conceptualized through three related performance anxieties: (1) communication apprehension; (2) test anxiety and (3) fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is a type of fear

or shyness when communicating with others. Learners with high levels of communication apprehension usually avoid communication. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), fear of communication in FLA contexts originates from the typical concern of oral communication and immature FL vocabulary and structures. Test anxiety is defined as “the tendency to view with alarm the consequences of inadequate performance in an evaluative situation” (Sarason, 1978:214). In the same way, Horowitz et al. (1986) defines test anxiety as “a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure.” They also assert that “test-anxious students often put unrealistic demands on themselves and feel that anything less than a perfect test performance is a failure”(p.128). The third aspect of FLA is fear of negative evaluation. This component is related to fear of being negatively evaluated by others. Tóth (2010) emphasizes that this fear may refer to academic evaluation, as well as to personal evaluation of the learners based on their performance and competence in L2 setting. These three components are regarded as the building block of FLA. Consequently, FLA is defined as 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).

The theoretical framework proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986) has received empirical support from many studies examining the relationship between specific second language learning and more general anxiety construct (see for e.g. Toth, 2009; Aida, 1994; Bailey et al., 1998). This support has led to it being viewed as a reliable theoretical framework for the investigation designed to explore language anxiety among Foundation level students. Moreover, the Foreign language anxiety scale(FLCAS) which is based on this conceptualization is a widely used and validated instrument of FLA (Horwitz, 1986), thus the use of this scale in the present study had an added advantage of facilitating the comparison of the results of the present Emirati context with those of previous studies using the same instrument. The four factor FCLAS scale was used for the present study (Zhao, 2007), originally developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), to measure the English learning anxiety of the respondents.

#### **3.4. Development of Language Anxiety**

The development of language anxiety as conceptualized by Horwitz et al. (1986) and others (e.g., Young, 1992; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989) is consistent with psychological theories of anxiety development, such as communication apprehension. Teachers need to identify individuals who experience high communication apprehension levels, as they will be the most likely candidates for language anxiety. In this framework, language anxiety occurs when students associate anxiety with the second language. In the initial phases of language learning, a student will most likely encounter many difficulties and challenges in learning, comprehension, grammar and other second language skills. If the student becomes anxious about these experiences, if he/she feels uncomfortable making mistakes, then a state anxiety occurs. With recurrent occurrences of state anxiety, the student tends to link anxiety arousal with the second language (MacIntyre in Young 1999:30) and, therefore, the student will expect to experience a feeling of anxiety in the context of second language. This becomes a self-fulfilling emotional prophecy in the students' second language learning.

In the next section, factors related to the complex nature of anxiety as it relates to second language learning are discussed.

### **3.5. Factors Related to Language Anxiety**

Research has examined many personal and or situational variables that are related to second language anxiety. Students with high level of anxiety share a number of characteristics. A study, conducted by Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley (1999) with university language students, revealed that they share at least one of these characteristics: they are usually older, high achievers, had never visited a foreign country, had not taken high school language courses, had low expectations of their overall average for their current language course, had a negative perception of their scholastic competence, or had a negative perception of their self-worth. Dewaele, Petrides and Furnham (2008) found that, in addition to personal characteristics; social circumstances also play a role in generating language anxiety. They conducted a large-scale study of multilingual adults from different countries and established that individuals who were younger when they started learning a second or third language had lower levels of FLA. Social circumstances include the availability of supportive conversational partners and L2 role models



may play a role in helping language learners avoid or overcome FLA. Al-Saraj (2013) conducted case study research in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) to examine female students' perception of FLA. She concluded that there a number of teacher-related variables that may be responsible for the emergence of anxiety among EFL students.

Evidence from a number of research studies indicated that variables associated with FLA may fall into two main categories: micro-level (learner's variables/ trait-specific anxieties) and macro-level (situational variables/ situation specific anxieties). Along this continuum exists elements of state anxieties.

Learner's variables include ability, age, attitude, beliefs, culture, gender, learning styles and personality variables among others (Campbell, 1999; Ehrman and Oxford, 1995; Gardner, Day & MacIntyre, 1992; Gregersen & Horwitz 2002; Oxford, 1999). Situational variables incorporate for instance; course activities, course level, course organization, instructor's attitude, behaviour, and social interaction among learners (Jackson, 2002; Oxford 1999; Spielman & Radonfsky 2001; Young, 1991).

### **3.5.1. Learner Variables: Personality Traits**

Personal factors provide a fertile crescent for FLA for example self-esteem, competitiveness, social anxiety, risk taking and 'erroneous' beliefs.

#### **3.5.1.1 Self-Esteem**

Self-confidence or self-esteem is one of the affective variables that have shown a strong relationship with language anxiety. Self-confidence involves judgments and evaluations about one's worth, based on feelings of efficacy, a sense of interacting effectively in one's environment. Self-confidence can be negatively skewed when the language learner thinks of one -self as deficient in the target language. Horwitz et al. (1986) state that language learning threatens self-esteem because it demands a new mode of communication that individuals are unaccustomed to use. Learners who have high levels of self-esteem are less likely to be anxious than are those with low self-esteem (Horwitz et al., 1986: 129).

In general, unsuccessful language learners often have lower self-esteem than successful language learners (Price, 1991). Like anxiety, self-esteem can be a trait (an inherent personality characteristics) or a situation-specific (related to a particular situation) anxiety.

### **3.5.1.2. Perfectionism and Risk Taking**

Gregersen & Horwitz (2002) found that perfectionism might play a key role in the emergence of anxiety. In their study, they concluded that there is a difference between anxious and non-anxious perception with respect to the goal of the oral task. The anxious learners tried to avoid mistakes and the non-anxious continued to talk even if they made mistakes. Here, it can be argued that the anxiety that emerges because of perfectionism is an example of trait anxiety. Students who are usually highly anxious about language learning often are hesitant to take risks. According to Oxford (1990), the language learner can benefit greatly by taking moderate but intelligent risks, rather than taking no risks or taking uninformed risks. Language students who fear ambiguity or whose self-esteem is low frequently freeze up, allowing their inhibition to take over completely (Beebe, 1983 in Arnold, 2005). A perfectionist might be inhibited to use the language because of the awareness that his or her speech is far from perfect (Thompson, 2000). Horwitz (2002) examined the relationship between language anxiety and perfectionism. Anxious and non-anxious students (n=78) from the University of Chile were interviewed. The results indicated that anxious students demonstrated high level of procrastinations and high personal standard performance. This study revealed that perfectionism plays a greater role in anxiety among L2 students (Gregersen and Horwitz, 2002).

### **3.5.1.3 Competitiveness**

Language anxiety may also originate from the personality trait of competitiveness. Bailey (1983:96) defines competitiveness as a 'learner's desire to excel in comparison to others'. Competitive learners are preoccupied with comparing themselves to other classmates, with an intense desire to surpass them in academic performance and are overly worried about tests and grades. According to Bailey's hypothesis, learners develop anxiety because they perceive themselves as less competent than others. In the same way, Scarcella and Oxford (1992) assert that competitiveness can relate to language anxiety but this is dependent on the nature of the learners' culture as whether it thrives on competition or not. Therefore, the link between competitiveness and LA depends on the learning style

of the student, the nature of the competition, and the demands and rewards of the environment (Arnold, 2005:63).

#### **3.5.1.4. Students' Beliefs and Language Anxiety**

Many researchers have found that learners' own beliefs about language learning may trigger language anxiety (Truitt, 1995; Kuntz 1997; Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope 1986; Young 1991). Examples of such beliefs include: the language is difficult to learn; I am not clever enough to learn it; it is important to be accurate all the time when speaking and writing. Students, who believe that language learning is difficult, tend to exhibit higher anxiety than students who believe that the target language that they are studying is not difficult (Horwitz, 1989; Kuntz, 1997). An additional belief that was found to relate with anxiety is a belief about self-efficacy. Truitt (1995), Kuntz (1997) and Horwitz et al. (1986) found that students who displayed confidence in their English ability were more likely to have lower LA compared to those who were not confident in their language ability. Beliefs relating to accuracy and error correction were found to relate to high anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) found that anxious students report being afraid of making mistakes and being corrected in language classes.

Horwitz (1988) identified the most commonly held beliefs about language learning. These beliefs include: (1) a belief that accuracy must be achieved before communicating in the foreign language; (2) the importance of speaking with excellent native - like accent; (3) a belief that it is not acceptable to guess an unfamiliar second/foreign language word; (4) or hold that language learning is basically an act of translation; (5) while others believe that a couple of years are sufficient in order to achieve fluency in the target language. Moreover, others believe that language learning is an innate gift not possessed by all. Young (1991:128) stated that these 'erroneous' beliefs about language learning can contribute to the manifestation of LA among students. In the same line of thought, Ohata (2005:138) indicated that unrealistic beliefs could lead to greater anxiety among learners, in particular, when beliefs and reality clash. He argues that if the learners start learning a second language with the belief that pronunciation is the most essential element of language learning then after many years of learning, many L2 learners are disappointed with the output that they have realized, having

pronunciation that is still hemmed with many flaws. These beliefs are apt to emerge from learners' perfectionist nature. These elevated or perfectionist standards create an ideal situation for the development of language anxiety (Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990: cited in Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002: 564).

### **3.5.1.5. Social Anxiety**

Social anxiety is a broad concept that can include speech anxiety, shyness, and fear of public speaking, social evaluative anxiety and communication apprehension (Leary, 1982). Individuals who are highly concerned about people's evaluation of them tend to behave in a way that minimizes the likelihood of negative appraisal (Arnold, 2005). Language anxiety is correlated to this sort of anxiety because language learning is greatly affected by social and communication aspects (MacIntyre, 1995). To illustrate this point, Aida (1994) describes the communicational pattern of people who suffer from this condition as limited and often fail to take initiatives in conversations. According to Leary (1982), four theoretical positions are used to explain social anxiety. From a behaviourist perspective, learners may feel anxious in language classrooms because they had previous negative experiences in similar contexts. The skill deficit hypothesis attributes social anxiety to lack of interpersonal skills and competences necessary for social and communicative interaction. According to the cognitive self-evaluation theory, people are anxious in social situations not only because they lack the necessary skills, but rather because they believe them and consider themselves inadequate (Leary, 1982). The fourth theory argues that each of the aforementioned models is inadequate to account for social anxiety by itself. Self-presentation theory integrates all of the previous models. Applying this model to the language-learning context –all factors such as learners' beliefs; dispositional variables as well as situational factors have to be considered when examining the causes of anxiety in L2 contexts.

### **3.5.2. Situation-specific Anxiety**

Interpersonal dynamics between teachers and students affect anxiety and motivation in the acquisition of the second language. The classroom realities are usually perceived differently by students and teachers (Horwitz, 1989). There is a conflict between teachers' expectations, pedagogical demands, and individual

students' differences. Teachers are at times bound by their beliefs, expectations and the demands of the curriculum and as such, this interplay leads to an increased level of anxiety among students. The situation-specific variables discussed in this section encompass teacher-related factors and classroom-related factors.

### **3.5.2.1. Teachers'-related Factors**

Similar to students' beliefs about language learning, language teachers' beliefs about teaching and language learning have also been attributed as a cause students' language anxiety. In the context of FLA, Oxford (1999) asserts, "behaviours vary across cultures and what might seem like anxious behaviour in one culture might be normal behaviour in another culture" (p. 64). Horwitz (2001) contends, in considering the issue of language anxiety and classroom practice, it is important to keep cultural differences in mind. Some practices perceived by one group of learners as comfortable may prove stressful for learners from a different cultural group, who are used to different types of classroom organization. Examples of social behaviours that might contribute to language anxiety among Emirati students include the manner through which errors are corrected in the classroom and greater emphasis placed on oral participation in the classroom. This kind of anxious feeling might be unknown to some second language teachers, unless they share the same social/cultural norms with their students.

Tenents Brandl (1987: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999: 220) asserts that some teachers' think that their role should be authoritarian, directive, and intimidating and that they are on a mission to correct every error that students make rather than to facilitate the leaning process. A number of studies indicate that students realize that some error corrections are crucial but they report anxiety over responding incorrectly and looking or sounding 'dumb' or 'inept' (Koch and Terrell in Young 1991: 429).

According to Skinner (1957/1992), operant conditioning or habit formation occurs only when a particular stimulus is reinforced, positively with a reward or negatively with punishment. Unlike classical conditioning, reinforcement always follows the observation of the desired behaviour. This form of operant conditioning is used

extensively in classrooms, particularly for shaping the behaviour of a learner in developing language fluency. For example, if a teacher provides positive verbal reinforcement in response to a student's communicative attempt in the classroom, the learner will associate his attempts as eliciting praise and will continue practicing this behaviour. However, if the student's attempts received harsh error correction then this may create interruption in the learning process characterized by severe emotional reactions such as anxiety to any future attempts of verbal communication in the classroom.

Young (1991: 429) states that the underlying problem for the students is "not necessarily error correction but the manner of error correction – when, how often, and most importantly, how errors are corrected". Some behaviour that teachers embrace lead to language anxiety among students (Young, 1991). In addition to error correction, (Young, 1991) points out that some teachers think that they should be doing all of the talking in the classroom due to the belief that group work may contribute to the class getting out of control. They take on the role of a drill sergeant rather than a facilitator in the teaching learning process (p. 428). This approach can cause anxiety among L2 learners (Young, 1991:248).

Samimy (1994) notes that a judgmental teaching attitude and a harsh manner of teaching (Aida, 1994) are linked to student apprehension in the classroom.

Palacios (1998) compiled a list of teacher's characteristics that are associated with students' anxiety. These include; the absence of teacher's support, indifferent personalities, lack of time for personal attention, preferential treatment, a sense that the class lack the necessary tools to match up with the teacher's expectations, and a sense of being judged by the teacher or to impress the teacher. Students may also feel isolated and unworthy if, the teacher makes them feel anonymous. Shevson and Stern quoted in Nunan (1989: 21) observed that teacher favouritism is manifested in classrooms by inconsistent error correction. In circumstances where the students are being judged, not listened to, or are unable to fully comprehend what the teacher is explaining, they might feel frustrated and ultimately a feeling of loss of control over the learning process occurs (Turulla, 2002).

The frequency and quality of contacts with native speakers may also affect the anxiety level of students (Clément, 1980). Lack of confidence in one's linguistic

abilities makes one feel inferior and apprehensive to communicate with someone who has full command on English language for example, native speakers (Pierce, 1995: 21). Davis and Rinvoluceri's (1990) investigation of language anxiety and classroom environment indicated that some classroom situations make students feel isolated, judged, and lacking control of the learning process. Often, teachers' routines lie at the root of these feelings; they may be judgmental toward their students both verbally and non-verbally. In this regard, error correction whether it is done explicitly by giving the correct answers or implicitly- by pointing out the errors make a difference. The later method gives the student an opportunity for self-correction and hence, a sense of empowerment that they are capable students. Moreover, peers in the classroom may also be judgmental when they exhibit a lack of patience, express disapproval, and mock each other in the classroom. These behaviours are not beyond the teachers' scope of control and are directly related to effective classroom management techniques. Teachers who encourage competition in the classroom may be setting the ground for judgmental behaviours by the students.

### **3.5.2.2. Classroom-related Factors**

In this section, the term 'classroom' is used to refer to the space where students and teachers interact with each other and use a variety of tools and information resources in their quest for students' learning (Wilson, 1996). Classrooms represent complex contexts for the learning process (Wright, 2005). The ethos of the classroom environment and the interactions in the classroom can affect the manner through which students learn (McRobbie, Roth and Lucas, 1997).

#### **3.5.2.2.1. Physical Structure of the Classroom**

The physical structure of the classroom includes the vast array of classroom arrangements, such as distribution of space, light and seating arrangements.

Research into the classroom-learning environment has shown that the physical arrangement of a classroom can influence the behaviour of both students and teachers (Savage, 1999) and that a well-organised classroom tends to enhance students' academic and behavioural outcomes (Walker, 1991). If a classroom-learning environment is not appropriately organized to support class activities then the teaching plan that the teacher has planned can ultimately hamper and limit the

manner through which students' learn. Conversely, a well-organised classroom environment facilitates instruction that is more effective and creates a climate for learning to take place. (Savage, 1999; Weinstein, 1992). Classroom seating arrangements may have an effect on students learning and sense of belonging to the learning context. Research has indicated that cluster seating encourages on task behaviour and social facilitative learning. In this regard, students like each other and are able to build a positive rapport with each other when seated facing each other. In contrast, in situations where the students are not facing each other or are sitting in a place that does not allow eye contact with the teacher or classmates, a feeling of not belonging will develop inevitably.

#### **3.5.2.2.2. Pedagogical Activities**

The L2 classroom entails many activities that may provoke anxiety reactions in students. Kosh and Terrell cited in Horwitz (2001: 118) suggest that students find the most anxiety provoking activities are giving a presentation, oral skits, and speaking in large groups. They also indicate that students feel highly anxious when called upon to answer a question, rather than given the chance to respond on a voluntary base.

The organisation of learning can be important. Students reported feeling more at ease if they are paired with a classmate or are placed in a small group rather than a larger group. In the same way, Palacios (1998) argues that there are certain classroom characteristics that are anxiety producing such as oral participation, feelings of being put on the spot, the pace of the class, and fear of negative evaluation. Young (1990) outlines a list of classroom activities that are perceived by students as provoking anxiety: (1) unplanned role-play (2) speaking; (3) oral presentations or skits (4) exchange of ideas; (5) writing work on the board, (6) putting a considerable emphasis on grammar or avoiding grammar Young (1999). Error correction also plays an important role; being negatively evaluated by either the teacher or peers is often associated with anxiety. Daly and Buss (in Horwitz and Young 1991:9) identified five characteristics of anxiety-provoking situations, which can lead to increased communication apprehension levels. All of these characteristics occur naturally in a language classroom, which will have a negative effect on the behaviour and performance of individuals who already experience



high communication apprehension. The five characteristics are: (1) Evaluation – the greater the degree of evaluation in a particular setting, the higher the level of situational apprehension. (2) Novelty – the less familiar the situation and the people involved, the higher the level of situational apprehension. (3) Ambiguity – the more ambiguous the situation, the higher the level of situational apprehension. (4) Conspicuousness – the more conspicuous a person feels, the more apprehension he/she will feel especially when making errors. (5) Prior history – the greater the extent to which a situation created anxiety for the individual in the past, the higher the situational apprehension. People who have previously had negative experiences in a language classroom will probably enter a new language class with high anxiety levels and preconceived notions of what to expect.

An additional factor that contributes to language anxiety is test anxiety. Test anxiety is defined as the 'tendency to become alarmed about the consequences of inadequate performances on a test or other evaluations' (Sarason 1986). During test taking, state anxiety may occur, because a particular student may also have predispositions toward trait anxiety. Consequently, if a student displays high state anxiety, he or she may have high trait anxiety. There are a number of conditions that might increase students' test anxiety. These conditions include the following: (1) testing students on novice concepts, (2) using a testing format that students are not familiar with, (3) a highly evaluative testing conditions and (4) placing great emphasis on tests (Young 1991). In cases of severe anxiety, referral to an educational psychologist for more extensive evaluation is recommended

Figure 3 depicts the interplay between personal, teacher and classroom related factors that leads to language anxiety among L2 learners (my emphasis).

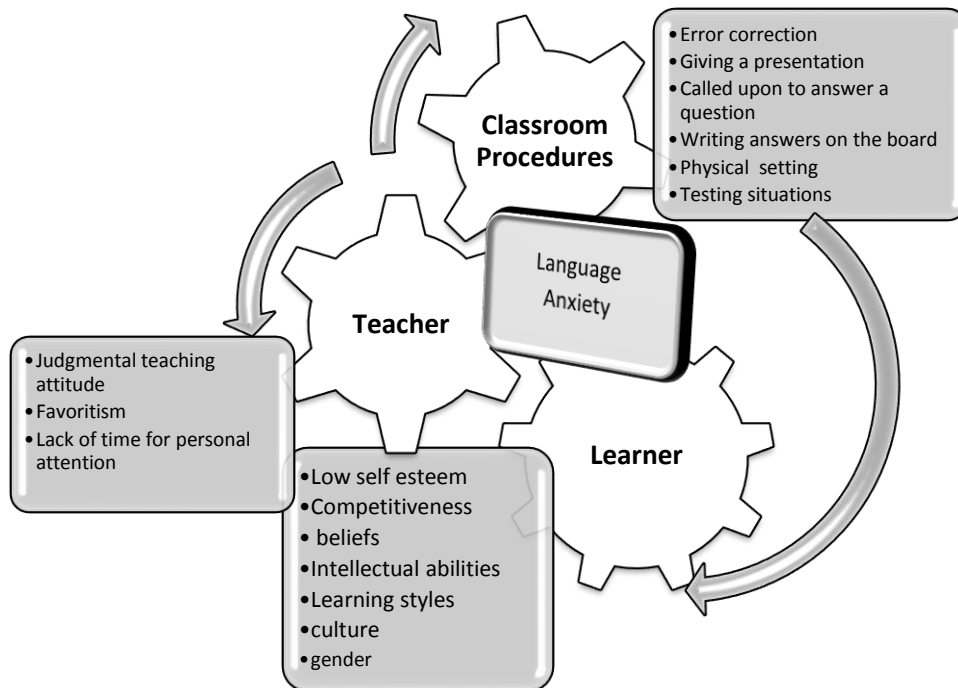


FIGURE 3 THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNER, TEACHER AND CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES THAT MAY LEAD TO ANXIETY (MY EMPHASIS)

These interrelated factors are considered potential sources of language anxiety among learners. Additional factors may also take into account the socio-cultural milieu of learning that are deeply embedded in the social imaginaries of a particular society.

### 3.6 Social Imaginaries and the Emergence of Language Anxiety

In discussing, the factors associated with language anxiety it is essential to consider the influence of the socio-cultural elements of a given society in shaping anxiety related behaviours among learners. Horwitz (2001) review of research studies asserts that there are cultural variations through which FLA is experienced among learners. This conception is essential for our understanding of FLA because learners from different parts of the world do not share identical learning experiences. These experiences are governed by educational systems that are greatly shaped by forces that sovereigns the uniqueness of the collective social imaginaries shared by members in any given society. In the field of LA, Da Costa (2015) was the first to coin this notion; he asserts that in investigating this

phenomenon, the impact of globalization and the wider social context of learners should be addressed by positioning these learners within a particular social imaginary (p.506). Taylor (2007) defines social imaginaries as (a) a way ordinary people imagine their social surrounding; it is carried in images stories and legends. At any point in time, a social imaginary is (b) complex involving both how things are and how things ought to be. It is shared by a large group of people, if not the whole society. A social imaginary refers to (c) a culture's wide angle and deep background of understanding that makes possible common practices, unarticulated and relevant sense giving features (2004:23-29. 2007 :171-2). Based on this conception, people in a given society learn conventions about when to speak and to whom they associate and all manners of customs and conventions. These conventions are usually passed down from parents to their off-springs based on their religion and socio-cultural upbringing. To illustrate the manner through which examples of this reality is materialized among the Arabs; Naffsinger (1995) describes the Arab in society as being expected to show personal integrity to be socially acceptable. He states, that for Arabs, dignity and stature are granted only to those who show themselves as flawless. He further states:

"The society of the Arab world has no place or respect for those whose errors or faults come to public knowledge. Blame, fault, or error accruing to an Arab personally brings his immediate fall from social grace and a loss of dignity or face." (Naffsinger, 1995; Dignity vs. objectivity section, para. 3). From a socio-cultural perspective, the stigma of failure or making mistakes leads to the fear of '*losing face*'. Jones (2004: 34) emphasizes that language anxiety is a concern of face in different cultures. A concept of face is present, almost certainly, in every society and plays a part in inhibiting interaction for many people whose grasp of a foreign language is deficient. Fear of '*losing face*' is a deeply embedded value in Arab culture. This value becomes especially pronounced when '*losing face*' occurs in the presence of a superior who is in this case the teacher and or the classmates. The antecedent of this feeling is evident when the students consider the teachers of a higher social status. In this regard, students sense a feeling of an inferiority complex; feeling of lesser or lower status than others, Pica (1987) indicates unequal status between students and teachers can be a cause of anxiety for students.

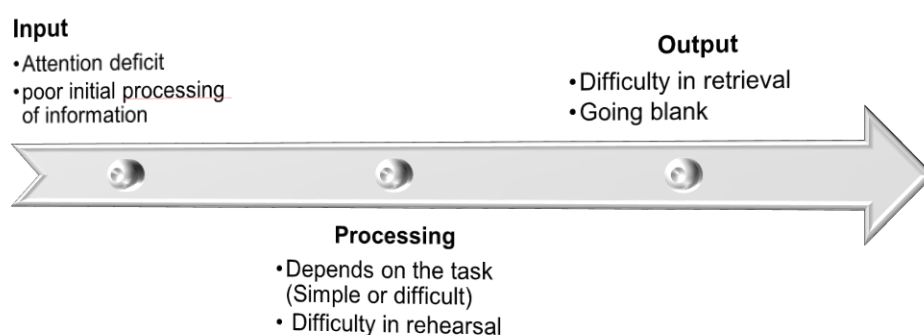
An additional example to this imaginary is the emphasis placed on learning a second language. When learning, English is perceived as an obligation and English competence accreditation is seen as critical in order to matriculate or get a good job, this creates pressure on learners and hence leads to apprehensiveness in the EFL classroom. In the UAE, the basic rationale for studying English has underlying economic and educational implications. Emirati students of the present study are implicitly obliged to learn English for the purpose of securing entry into the Bachelor programme and to subsequently gain a better stance in the global economy, where English is the 'lingua franca,' or a legitimate international language that must be mastered in order to gain easier access to this global world. Failure to succeed in this status quo may have many adverse effects on the learner. This failure will lead to a shattered image of adequacy and result in the fear of *'losing face'* while interacting with others.

In sum, Arab L2 learners' social imaginary is based on a deeply embedded cultural notion of perfectionist anticipation to succeed and to gain entry in the global world through the mastery of the second language. Failure to achieve this aim is usually hemmed with anxiety and fear of *'losing face'* in a society that places great emphasis on dignity and stature. The effects of language anxiety is discussed next.

### **3.7. Effects of Language Anxiety**

Many studies on anxiety in educational contexts have focused on the effect of anxiety on learner's academic achievement (Tobia, 1979; Horwitz, 2001). Anxiety has been considered as a variable related to students' underachievement, high dropout rates, and low GPA at all academic levels and with respect to various learning task and academic subjects. The learner's attitudes, motivation, and anxiety have been frequently shown to be important elements for successful learning in the context of second language learning. Many educators and linguists have blamed anxiety for its debilitating effect on second language acquisition (Krashen, 1982; Saimmy, 1989; MacIntyre, 1995; Young, 1991). The negative association between anxiety and achievement in evaluative contexts has been generally attributed to the worry or cognitive component of anxiety, which is theorized to interfere with attention and cognitive processes involved in the

learning and performance process (Sarason, 1986). From a cognitive perspective, Tobia (1986) has proposed a model of the effect of anxiety on learning. She notes that anxious learners tend to engage in self-directed, deprecating cognition rather than focusing on the task itself. Non-anxious learners tend to engage more on relevant task rather than on self-defeating thoughts. This theory helps to explain the interaction between anxiety, task difficulty, and ability. According to Tobia (1986), interference to learning may occur at three levels: input, processing, and output (refer to Figure 4).



**FIGURE 4 THE EFFECT OF ANXIETY ON COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE**

During input, anxiety may cause attention deficits and poor initial processing of the given information. Anxiety acts like a filter preventing information from getting into the cognitive processing system. This is similar to Krashen's theoretical construct of "affective filter hypothesis". Krashen defines the 'affective filter' as an imaginary wall controlled by the learner's motives, attitudes, or levels of anxiety that allows or inhibits language input. For instance, second language learning is hampered when low motivation, low self-confidence, and high debilitating anxiety unite together and increase the affective filter, which prevents comprehensible input. People with higher anxiety face difficulty in staying on task, because time is divided between processing their emotional state and the task. Relaxed students would be better able to gather information because they do not experience this type of interference. Obviously, if words or phrases do not enter the system, they cannot be processed or retrieved later. At the processing stage, if the task is relatively simple, anxiety may have little effect. Conversely, if the task is difficult, relative to ability, anxiety shows greater impact on learning. Anxiety can influence both the speed and

accuracy of learning. In this sense, anxiety acts as a distraction, learners may not be able to learn new words, phrases, grammar, when they are anxious. MacIntyre in Young (1999) indicated that this worrying may take the form of a preoccupation with future communication or the fear of misunderstanding a particular concept. Students, who are unable to process information, integrate it with existing knowledge, and who are unable to understand what they hear are more prone to set the ground for impairment and interference of the language and its use. Difficulty in rehearsal of information would be an example of this type of effect. At the Output stage, anxiety may interfere with the retrieval of previously acquired information. The experience of going completely blank or “freezing” on tests can be due to the effect of anxiety at the time of retrieval (MacIntyre and Gardner in Young 1991). McIntyre and Gardner (1999: 301) argue, “The potential effects of LA on cognitive processing in the second language appear pervasive and may be quite subtle.” In their study, McIntyre and Gardner reported that performance at all three stages; input, processing, and output may be hindered by language anxiety and the strongest correlation was observed for the processing and output stages. Strong correlations were reported for the time required to recognize words, ability to hold words in the short term memory, memory for grammar rules, ability to translate a paragraph, memory of new vocabulary words, time required to complete a vocabulary test, ability to retrieve vocabulary items from long term memory, ability to repeat items in native language, ability to speak with an accent, complexity and fluency of spoken language. The results indicated students might require more time to take in information, if they have the time to do so; performance at later stages is not affected by anxiety. On the other hand, time limits aggravate LA and performance during the processing and output stages is hindered. The Krashen hypothesis and Tobia’s theoretical assumptions on the relation between anxiety, cognition and its effect on language acquisition and learning, has increased language teachers’ awareness about the importance of creating stress free classrooms. In this regard, Krashen (1982) calls on language teachers to adopt motivating teaching strategies such as tolerating students’ mistakes, building up risk free language classes and making the class a primary source for ‘comprehensible input’. In the next section, approaches to the study of

anxiety in second language learning are reviewed focusing particularly on its academic effects.

### **3.7.1. Language Anxiety and Academic Effect**

Language anxiety may affect students' academic performance in the second language classroom. Research has persistently shown that language anxiety is a universal problem experienced by many students in the language classroom in different parts of the world. However, research on the relationship between language anxiety and academic achievement has provided contradictory results. Some researchers reported a negative relationship between LA and achievement, for example, the higher the anxiety state, the lower the performance, (Horwitz, 2001; Gardner, Clément & Smythe, 1977, 1980: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999: 218). Conversely, others reported no relationship, or a positive relationship (Scovel, 1978). Horwitz (2001: 121) has emphasized that the issue of understanding the relationship between anxiety and achievement is unresolved. These contradictory results illustrate that anxiety is a complex, multi-faceted construct. The effects of anxiety on language learning and performance could be conceptualized as facilitative or debilitating in form. Anxiety that impedes learning is referred to as 'debilitating anxiety', because of its harmful consequences on the learner's performance. This harmful anxiety engulfs excessive feeling of doubt and worrying which alternately leads to avoidance of the language. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) assert that the strongest negative correlation of language achievement is anxiety. Examples of research studies that illustrate the negative correlation of anxiety with achievement include grades in language courses (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner 1994; Young 1986); performance in speaking and writing tasks (Young 1986); self-confidence in language learning (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991; MacIntyre and Gardner 1992); over studying (Horwitz et al. 1986; Price, 1991). Empirical research has also indicated anxious L2 learners are less likely to volunteer answers or to participate in oral classroom activities (Ely, 1986; Horwitz et al., 1986; Koch and Terrel in Young 1991; Price, 1991). Moreover, learners with high levels of anxiety communicate less and provide limited information than their counterparts (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991a; b; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Philips, 1992). The negative effect of anxiety on learner's

oral participation in second language has been offered as another explanation for the underachievement of learners in L2 contexts. Second language learning relies heavily on learning through participation, language learners who do not participate in classroom discussions are at a disadvantage compared to a relaxed learner Dornyei (2005). Their lack of participation or withdrawal from communicative situation has an adverse effect on their performance in L2 contexts (Horwitz, 1995; MacIntyre, 2002).

On the other hand, anxiety may be helpful or 'facilitating' in that it may contribute to learners' alertness (Scovel, 1978). Studies that show a positive relationship between anxiety and achievement include oral production of difficult English structures among native Arab speakers and Spanish speakers (Klienmann 1977), high language proficiency and self-confidence among a handpicked group of excellent language learners (Eherman and Oxford 1995).

Anxiety, in its debilitating and facilitating forms, serves simultaneously to motivate and to warn the learner to either fight or flee from the learning task. Scovel (1991) asserts that facilitating anxiety "motivates the learner to "fight" the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behaviour" while, debilitating anxiety, in contrast, "motivates the learner to "flee" the new learning task; it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behaviour" (p: 22).

Conversely, a contradictory point of view asserts that language anxiety is not a cause behind students' underachievement, but rather a consequence of differences in language learning (Ganschow and Sparks 1996). In this framework, Sparks and Ganschow (1991) propose the linguistic coding difference hypothesis, which assumes that success or failure in second language is dependent on the learner's aptitude. In this regard, a learner's apprehensiveness about FL learning is a sign of poor language aptitude and resulting language learning difficulties (Ganschow and Spark, 1996; Ganschow, Sparks, Anderson, Javorsky, Skinner and Patton, 1994 in Arnold 2005).

The relationship between language anxiety and language skills is discussed next.

### **3.7.2. Language Anxiety and Language Skills**

The relationship between language anxiety and different learning skills in English language was investigated by many researchers.(Young, 1992; Tanveer, 2007;



Kim, 2002; Kuru-Gonen, 2005 Cheng et al, 1999; Leki, 1999). Young (1992) asserts that language learners might have anxiety around one or more skills. However, the most anxiety-inducing scenario among students is concerned with speaking and oral performance in L2 contexts. In such situations the learners' anxiety stem from being negatively evaluated by teachers and peers, perfectionism, fear of making mistakes, low self-esteem, and some linguistic difficulties related to pronunciation and grammar ( Tanveer, 2007). Listening comprehension is often cited as a source of anxiety and apprehensiveness among L2 learners. Huang (2009) indicated that there are five potential sources of listening comprehension anxiety. These sources are: (1) the characteristics of the listening comprehension task, (2) the logistics of the listening task such as speed, pronunciation, length and level of vocabulary used, (3) teacher's classroom routine such as error correction, (4) learners' self-esteem, and (5) listening to unknown texts or sitting for a dictation.

Reading is considered by many educational practitioners as the least anxiety provoking skill, however many studies have affirmed its existence. Kim (2002) points out the existence of literacy anxiety whereby reading anxiety is caused by reading abstract texts with unfamiliar content. (Kuru-Gonen, 2005) emphasizes that reading anxiety originates from lack of motivation, negative past experience, difficult linguistic structures, boring topics, fear of negative evaluation. As for writing, a significant number of researchers (e.g., Cheng et al., 1999; Leki, 1999; Hussien, 2013) find writing a potential source of anxiety.

Aida (1994) argues that one of the linguistic factors that shapes student second language learning is the language distance between L1 and L2. Aida asserted that the difficulty in learning a language depends on how different L2 is from the learners' native language. Thompson (2000) stated that the more similar L1 is to L2 the easier for the learner to translate between them.

Woodrow (2006) studied 275 advanced learners from Europe, South America and Far Eastern countries. The results indicated that those students demonstrated lower level of anxiety as compared to Far Eastern students. The findings supports Aida's assertion that the difficulty of a second language is related to how similar it is to L1. It also supports Thompson theory that western countries share similar culture and similar Latin root words and as such , it is assumed that European tend to experience less anxiety as compared to Far Eastern countries in speaking

activities for instance. Therefore, it is speculated that Arab students may experience high level of anxiety when learning a second language because of the great distance between L1 and L2.

Thus based on the findings of the previous studies on the link between specific language skills and the emergence of specific anxieties among learners this affirms the notion that FLA might be the outcome of the difficulties learners face when learning certain language skills in L2 contexts. The causes of these specific types of anxieties are attributable to both learner and situational factors embedded in the context of L2 classroom. In the next section, a review of the manifestations of language anxiety is discussed.

### **3.8. Manifestations of Language Anxiety**

Language learning must be a rewarding experience not hemmed with nerve-racking experiences for the learner. Some learners experience significant levels of anxiety in their language classes that is manifested cognitively, physiologically, and behaviourally. Shwarzer (1986) reported that individuals engage in self-defeating cognition, and this applies to language learners as well (Young, 1991). Examples of self-defeating thoughts include students thinking of others opinion about their proficiency level. Examples of physiological anxiety responses include headaches; sweaty hands, cold extremities; shaking, sweating and pounding heart (Wörde, 2003). Behavioural manifestations include; avoidance behaviour, nervous laughter, joking, giving short answers, foot tapping, desk drumming, and avoiding eye contacts (Horwitz et al., 1986). Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that students are anxious when they refrain from conveying difficult messages, freeze up in role-play activities, claim that they forget the answer to a question although they know the answer, write down the wrong answer on a test due to nervousness, and over-study without any progress in results (p.126-127). Teachers who believe that a certain level of anxiety is an essential motivator to learn are literally setting the ground for severe anxiety reactions in some students.

Students' various responses to anxiety may impel teachers to assume that the students lack motivation, or lack the mental ability to acquire the simplest skills in second language. It is however vital to keep in mind that behaviours vary across cultures, and what might seem like anxious behaviour in one culture might be

considered quite normal and acceptable in another. Therefore, teachers must be aware of what constitute as acceptable behaviour in cultures that are different from the one they come from. Some of the manifestations of language anxiety are often readily observable that any receptive teacher can identify even without the use of FLCAS. Based on a synthesis of the literature review, I have summarized the manifestations of FLA in a checklist format (**Appendix A**). This list is compiled and adapted from Oxford cited in Arnold (2005) Young (1991), Wörde (2003), and Horwitz (1986). All of these signs- may infer the existence of language anxiety among L2 students.

### **3.9. Strategies to Alleviate Language Anxiety**

Ehrman and Dornyei (1998) argue that an unconscious learning alliance between teachers and students permits them to take risks and suspend ordinary power relationship. Promoting a sense of safety, interpersonal boundaries, and student-centred approaches are crucial for the alleviation of anxiety among students in different contexts. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1991) state, educators should help anxious students cope with anxiety-provoking situations and attempt to make the learning environment less stressful. Creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere appears to be a prerequisite for success in language learning.

A broad range of research has been done on how to help students cope with language anxiety in academic settings. The focus was primarily on cognitive, affective, and behavioural approaches (Hembree, 1988:67). Cognitive approach focuses on the thinking disturbances that occur in the classroom, and intervention in this regard centres on cognitive restructuring and rational emotive therapy. The affective approach attempts to alter the negative association between the classroom and anxiety. Interventions in this regard include systematic desensitization<sup>2</sup>. Whilst the behavioural approach postulates that anxiety occurs because of poor academic skills. Accordingly, training students in acquiring

---

<sup>2</sup> Systematic desensitization is a type of behavioural therapy that is basically based on the concept of classical conditioning, this type of therapy is used to overcome phobias and anxiety disorders. It generally assumes three essential therapeutic steps: (1) identification of an anxiety inducing stimulus hierarchy, (2) learning relaxation and coping techniques and (3) the use of these skills in overcoming certain fears. (See Wenrich, Dawley& General (1976). Self-directed systematic desensitization: A guide for the student, client and therapist).

effective study skills is assumed to alleviate anxiety (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004:259).

Young (1990: 1) also provides suggestions that may help anxious learners such as; (1) using an anxiety graph; (2) asking for remedial instruction or joining a support group; (3) using more pair and group work; (4) playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving; and (5) role-playing with preparatory activities to instil class rapport. Furthermore, Young indicates that students feel more at ease when the teachers' manner of error correction is not callous and when they are friendly, patient, adopt a good sense of humour, and are not rigid in their approach. The second language teacher plays a fundamental role in fostering a non-threatening environment for students. This can be achieved by boosting the self-esteem of students through giving them many opportunities for success, reducing competition, catering for variant learning styles, encouraging students to recognize symptoms of language anxiety, identifying anxiety-maintaining beliefs, and help student practice positive self-talk.

Many factors have been assumed to affect language learning, and in turn have an impact on students' beliefs and anxiety level in the classroom. Social, psychological, and cultural factors have increasingly been regarded as affecting anxiety level among L2 learners in EFL contexts. Cultural factors such as embedded Arabian values and cultural differences between L2 learners and expatriate teachers have sometimes caused conflicts in the classroom (Hudson, 2013). Conflict may stem from lack of intercultural awareness on the part of students and teachers alike. In this respect, possible differences between the social norms and values of *Emirati* students and those of the L2 expatriate teachers with regard to issues such as religion, politics, perceptions, beliefs and learning styles shapes the Emirati teaching and learning ethos in HEI. The totality of these elements gives rise to a unique culture of learning in L2 HEI. Hence, if expatriate teachers are not receptive to the culture of learning that shapes the Emirati students' perception of learning, then this might give rise to problematic pedagogical approaches whereby learners are to blame, and vice versa. This conflict might lead to a mismatch between teacher and learner perspectives and has been empirically found to have a negative impact on students' learning and teaching context (e.g. Nunan, 1995; Entwistle, 2003).

Therefore, classroom related factors compounded with the teacher's pedagogical approach and personal factors of the learner form a complex interplay through which the anxiety state of the second language learner is investigated in this study. Thus, it may be appropriate to investigate LA from a variety of perspectives (Young 1992).

### **3.10. Conclusion**

The above discussion has evidently outlined the complexity of language and has certainly affirmed my conviction that language anxiety is a multi-dimensional phenomenon that should be investigated from different approaches and perspectives; hence, the justification of using a multi-method approach to investigate the phenomenon was set forth. As stated earlier, the significance of this research rests on a paradigm, which attests the existence of substantial variation through which FLA is experienced not only across cultural groups Horwitz (2001) but also across regions within a specific country (Yan and Horwitz 2008). The scarcity of research on FLA in the UAE and the existence of cultural variations among learners from different cultures adds to the unique originality of this study and warns that generalizations from various studies on LA to the UAE context should be considered with absolute cautiousness. In addition to the aforementioned factors, the importance placed on learning English compounded with the transformational forms of the educational system adds a distinctive dimension to the study of LA in the UAE.

Therefore, in order to fill the gap in the literature, and to expand the field current understanding of LA in the Arab world, this mixed method research design study is set forth. It also affirms the importance of Alrabia (2014) and (Hussien, 2013) call for using multi-methods for the purpose of exploring and investigating possible factors associated with language anxieties and the coping strategies used by students to alleviate its existence. It is also worth mentioning that the original research question was slightly reworded (see ethics form) due to the difficulty of collecting data from the wider socio-cultural environment for example parents and key education policy makers. Consequently, this case study with its core intent to investigate language anxiety among Emirati learners; assumes that attitudes, beliefs and perception of students and teachers, embrace an implicit aspect of

learning a language and that there are many factors that influence these perceptions and ultimately the anxiety level of L2 learners. It is also assumed that language anxiety that many students experience in L2 classrooms cannot be defined in a linear manner (Skehan, 1989), but rather it may be viewed as a complex psychological construct, influenced by many interrelated factors. Thus, in keeping with the main topic of the thesis “Language Anxiety: A case study of the perceptions and experiences of teachers’ and students’ of English as a Foreign Language in one higher education institution in the United Arab Emirates.” The data is expected to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are L2 teachers and students’ perceptions of the extent to which L2 students’ attitudes and beliefs about learning English contribute to L2 students’ feelings of anxiety?

RQ2: What are L2 teachers and students’ perceptions of the extent to which the L2 classroom environment contributes to L2 students’ feelings of anxiety?

RQ3: How is this anxiety manifested amongst L2 learners?

RQ4: What strategies do L2 teachers and students believe would be effective in reducing levels of anxiety in the L2 classroom?

## **CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **4.0. Introduction to Methodology**

In this chapter, I discuss the philosophical assumptions underpinning the design of this study. Consideration of the research questions is followed by a discussion of the research tools and methods used. The sample and sample characteristics are explained; the benefits of using a mixed method approach are discussed and details are given of the research instruments employed. The procedures used to analyse the different data sets are reported. An explanation of how ethical issues were considered and addressed is provided. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and the reasons for these.

As identified in chapter 3, language anxiety is a complex psychological phenomenon that is better understood with the use of a broad lens that takes into account the students, teachers, and the classroom environment, in general. In order to achieve this purpose, this case study was guided by four overarching goals; I aimed to investigate the pervasiveness of language anxiety among Foundation level Emirati students and the degree of this anxiety. I sought to identify students' attitudes and beliefs toward learning English. I also sought to explore the students' perceptions of the EFL classroom environment. The fourth goal aimed at exploring teachers' perception on the causes, manifestation, and alleviation of language anxiety.

### **4.1. Research Framework: Research Paradigms**

One of the fundamental influences on the selection of a research design is the researcher's own worldview (paradigm). Ernest (1994) points out that "there are multiple research paradigms, each with their own assumption about knowledge, about the world, about how knowledge is obtained, about education" (p. 19). In educational research, the most common paradigms are scientific, interpretive, and critical. The researcher's ontological and epistemological positions shape their aims and rationale for conducting a particular study and the nature of the knowledge to be achieved from it. Positivist researchers aim to search for objective knowledge or truth in the form of laws leading to prediction and control (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Interpretivist researchers, on the other hand, aim to understand the world by interpreting subjectively constructed meanings (Pring,

2005). Those working within the critical paradigm seek change and intervention for social reform, thus focusing on social justice issues (Cohen et al., 2007).

The methods and techniques used by positivists are quantitative in nature. The interpretive paradigm approaches rely on naturalistic methods such as observation and interviewing, document reviews, and visual data analysis. For my study, I decided to adopt a mixed methods approach, sometimes described as a 'pragmatic' approach, in order to address my research questions.

The significance of 'pragmatism' as a philosophical paradigm underpinning mixed methods studies arises from its focusing attention on the use of multi-method for understanding a research problem without committing to only one system of philosophy or reality (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Therefore, as a pragmatist, my philosophical underpinning of this research rests on a continuum between the positivistic and interpretivistic traditions. It is greatly shaped by the ontological and epistemological assumptions from positivistic and interpretivistic approaches. According to this principle, researchers should collect multiple data using different strategies, approaches, and methods in such a way that the resulting mixture or combination is likely to result in complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. The aim here is not solely based on corroborating the data but to increase understanding on a particular phenomenon. Consequently, the pragmatic rationale for combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods is based on my philosophical and practical assumptions that neither quantitative nor qualitative research methods alone can provide a holistic and transparent picture of the complexity of the psychological phenomenon under study if each is used in a state of secluded absolutism. Hence, combining both methods provides a deeper insight and understanding of language anxiety because each of these methods can counteract the weaknesses of the other while building on the strength of each (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998) see **Appendix B**.

#### **4.2. Research Design-Mixed Method: Sequential Two Phases Design**

Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, and Hanson state that a mixed methods study: "involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and/or qualitative data in a



single study in which the data are collected concurrently or sequentially, are given a priority, and involve the integration of the data at one or more stages in the process of research” (2003:212). The present study used a mixed method approach in a sequential multi-phase explanatory design. By adopting a mixed method research approach, the study implicitly assumed a pragmatic stance towards knowledge, in this case understanding the research problem and finding answers to the research questions was felt to be more crucial than dwarfing the problem to be studied based on an inclination for a particular methodology (i.e. qualitatively or quantitatively). The focus is on the “what” and “how” of the research problem (Creswell, 2009). Therefore, the use of a mixed methods study allows me to mix “multiple methods, different world views, and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis” (Creswell, 2009:11). Mixed-method research embodies a number of benefits. Chiefly, the combination of both approaches can offset the weaknesses of either approach used in isolation. Using a multi-method approach enables triangulation and support for the accuracy of the data, which can in turn enhance its validity and reliability. Triangulation emerges from an ethical need to authenticate the validity of the processes and, in case studies; it can be achieved by using multiple sources of data comparing them to decide if it corroborates (Yin, 2003; Creswell, 2003). In studying a complex phenomenon, Yan and Horwitz (2008) emphasize that valuable information can be gained by listening to the participants’ experiences and voices. Patton (1990) notes the value of using variant data collection methods when investigating human behaviours and attitudes. Therefore, using mixed method allows for a better understanding of the participants perspectives on FLA.

The principle research problem was to gain an in-depth understanding of language anxiety as experienced by Arab male college level students. The use of Foreign Language Classroom Scale (FLCAS) gave a pre-existing research based theoretical framework on the extent and severity of this problem among the students. This was a necessary starting point for the current study since it established the existence of this phenomenon among the students. My aim was to draw from both quantitative and qualitative in order to describe the existence of LA from a holistic and eclectic perspective, and to augment the description with an

understanding of how the classroom environment impinges in any way on its proliferation. From a pragmatic standpoint, understanding the phenomenon of LA is a pivotal point to this thesis. The employment of a multi-method approach is one strategy that researchers can use to inductively and deductively gain the knowledge needed to understand a particular problem such as this. Therefore, in phase 1 of the study, the quantitative data had more weight than the qualitative data. While in phase 2 of the current study, both the quantitative and qualitative components of the scale were emphasized equally. The justification behind this approach originates from the rationale that integrating the questionnaires and the interviews findings (students' focus interviews and teachers' one-on-one interviews) can be employed to triangulate the findings, which leads to a more holistic and eclectic understanding of the phenomenon under study.

This case study comprised two phases. Phase 1 of the study FLCAS was administered to all students in Foundation English with the intention to flag up classes that showed highest scores on anxiety. This resulted in the collection of quantitative data on the anxiety state of students across classes. A subset of these L2 learners was informally interviewed to get a preliminary understanding of the context. In Phase 2 of the study FLCAS, CUCEI, and BALLI were used with the classes that exhibited the highest levels of anxiety in Phase 1. In the Phase 2 of the study, FG interviews were undertaken with students and one-on-one interviews with four teachers. In addition, observations were carried out of some L2 classes.

I was keen to find in-depth answers to my questions and this approach provided a strong means for my inquiry and have added a methodological contribution to knowledge. Therefore, the use of mixed methods allowed the use of scales, inventories, observations and interviews to complement each other, as well as to unify both the participating teachers and students perceptions along with me, the researcher, to make a more comprehensive and transparent evaluation of the derived data. Consequently, this approach paved the way for triangulating the findings and to investigate the phenomenon from variant angles through the use of both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions.

### **4.3. Case Study Approach**

As signalled earlier, I chose to undertake case study research. Yin defines 'case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (Yin, 2003: 13). Robson (2002) adds to this, stressing that looking at a case or phenomenon in its real life context usually involves employing many types of data collection (p.178). Stake (2005) distinguishes three types of case studies in terms of their purpose: (a) the intrinsic case study is used to understand the unique nature of a particular case (for example, the person or an organization); (b) the instrumental case study is intended to give insight into a wider issue and to draw possible generalizations; and (c) the multiple or collective case study is undertaken to study a number of cases jointly. In this case study, I am interested in learning about language anxiety within one higher education institution. The research design was geared towards gaining an in-depth understanding. In this sense, my case can be described as 'intrinsic', but while my key focus was to understand language anxiety in the context of one higher education institution in the UAE, I was hopeful that my findings might also flag up issues, which might be of interest to the wider L2 community. Therefore, there could also be the possibility of this case being instrumental in generating wider understandings of this phenomenon. The process employed in this case study describes the mechanism through which the data was gathered and analysed and which in turn leads to answer the research questions. This process could be viewed as helpful in understanding the possible existence of this complex phenomenon within similar context in the Gulf region. My sole interest is to learn how language anxiety can be prevented or reduced by identifying the variables that leads to its occurrence. This may consequently lead to improved practices in similar institutions.

#### 4.4. Research Methods and Plan

As stated earlier, I adopted a case study approach, which involved multiple methods of data collection, over two phases: it included the use of scales, inventories, observations and interviews. Figure 5 shows the plan I followed in collecting the data of this research.

| Time frame                   | Tool   | Participants                                      |        |
|------------------------------|--|---|--------|
| September/October 2011       | FLCAS, BALLI, CUCEI and Interview questions  | Foundation level students                         | Pilot  |
| November/ December 2011/2012 | Foreign language Classroom Anxiety Scale(FLCAS)  | Foundation level students                         |        |
| January 2012                 | Informal interview   | 10 students                                       | Phase1 |
| March/ April 2012            | FICAS<br>College and University Classroom Environment Scale (CUCEI)<br>CUCEI<br>Belief about Language learning Inventory (BALLI) | 56 participants                                   |        |
| May                          | observations   | 3 observations                                    | Phase2 |
| May                          | Students interview<br>Teachers Interview   | Students 50/4 FG<br>Teachers x 4 - 1:1 interviews |        |

Figure 5: The case study time- line of the Two Phases

#### 4.5. Pilot Study

To provide a firm foundation for the case study and to establish its feasibility, a pilot study was conducted during the months of September and October (2011). The reasons for carrying out a pilot study included the following: (1) testing the reliability and validity of the proposed tools for data collection; (2) identifying the strengths and limitations of the research methods; and (3) determining the time needed for collecting and analysing the data. Considering the fact that the participating

students are Foundation level students, I assumed that they might be equipped with the necessary linguistic skills to understand the content of the given scales (FLCAS, BALLI, and CUCEI) but, as will be seen, this was not the case. The preliminary phase of the pilot study was conducted in English. However, undertaking this step revealed the need to translate the instruments and the interviews into Arabic. The three questionnaires were therefore translated, piloted and revised before distribution. In order to ensure the content validity of the scales, a professional translator and I translated the scales, a method that is referred to as multiple translators. The aim of this method is to make certain that the translated scales serve its purpose and are effectively suitable in terms of language and content. The translated scales were tested for response validity by using thinking aloud protocol with a professional translator, and two students who have an excellent command of the English language. The students were asked to read out each item, highlight any questions they found confusing, and to make general comments on the scales. The pilot phase of the study, which took place in 2011 helped to refine the data collection plans with respect to both content and procedures to be followed. It also provided a trial run for the scales, which involved testing the wording of the questions, identifying ambiguous questions and testing the technique that was used to collect the data. The three translated questionnaires along with consent forms were given to 22 students<sup>3</sup> registered in levels one and two of the foundation program. Upon completion, I asked the participants whether they came across any difficulties in answering the translated items. In this respect, the participants claimed that the items on all three questionnaires are comprehensible and easy to complete. Typo errors were pointed out and later corrected. In this study, factor analysis of the translated scales were not attempted because of the small number of participants who participated in the pilot phase. According to MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang & Hong (1999) sample size should not be less than 100. Moreover, Comrey and Lee (1992) thought that 100 is poor, 200 is fair, 300 is good, 500 is very good, and 1,000 or more is believed to be excellent. They urged researchers to obtain

---

<sup>3</sup> These students were exempted from participating in the actual formal study (phase one and two).

samples of 500 or more observations whenever possible (in MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang & Hong, 1999, p.84). As indicated earlier, one of the main aims of piloting the questionnaires was to test these instruments validity and reliability. The reliability of the questionnaires was also tested during each phase of the study. In the piloting phase, internal consistency was measured using Cronbach alpha coefficient. The internal consistency for FLCAS, BALLI and CUCEI in the piloting phase of the 22 students who participated in the piloting phase yielded 0.87, 0.68 and 0.82 respectively. As discussed later in the chapter, reliability procedures for each of the questionnaires were provided in an effort to emphasize the robustness and soundness of the research findings of the study.

The focus group interviews questions were also piloted and scrutinized by a colleague who holds a Doctorate degree in Education. The questions were tested with five students in the Foundation Program. By piloting the interview questions, I was following Wragg's (1984:189) recommendation of the importance of piloting the interview question with a group of respondents that are similar in make up to the group that would be interviewed, and that a qualified person should scrutinize these questions. Results from the pilot study provided useful feedback for designing the case study. The changes included rephrasing some of the translated questions. These items were highlighted, altered and double-checked for any connotative meanings. Consequently, the piloting stage set the ground for conducting both phases of the current study in Arabic.

#### **4.6. Phase 1**

This section describes sampling, data collection and analysis procedures for Phase 1 of the case study.

##### **4.6.1. Phase 1-Sampling Procedures**

In this study, I decided to use purposive sampling. Patton defined purposeful sampling as selecting a specific sample "to learn something and come to understand something about certain select cases without needing to generalize to all such cases (1990: 100). Kumar (1996) asserts it is useful in describing a phenomenon, or in developing, something about which only little is known. Therefore, I intentionally selected participants who might be experiencing language anxiety in L2 contexts. The main purpose of choosing this sampling method was to

identify the classes, which exhibited the highest level of anxiety. These classes, which displayed the highest level of anxiety, then participated in Phase 2 of the case study. Therefore, sample of 278 students in 18 classes representing the total number of classes of both level one and two in the Foundation program completed the 33-items FLCAS questionnaire during November and December 2011. Of the participants, 119 (43%) were level One students, and 159 (57%) were level Two students.

Hence, the main aim of Phase 1 was to highlight the classes that displayed the highest level of anxiety as shown by the use of FLCAS. In order to achieve this purpose, the FLCAS was given to all Foundation level male students. Table 1 presents the number of students attending each level.

**Table 1: Phase 1-Number of Students in Level One and Level Two**

|       |         | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|-------|---------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Valid | Level 1 | 119       | 43      | 43            | 43                 |
|       | Level 2 | 159       | 57      | 57            | 57                 |
|       | Total   | 278       | 100.0   | 100.0         |                    |

I think it is vital to mention the reasons behind my decision, as a female, to recruit male participants for this study. My choice was pragmatic. I was a full time faculty member at an all Emirati male students' college during the period that this study was undertaken. Therefore, trying to choose a different setting was almost impossible to even consider due to time constraints and the distance I need to travel while keeping in line with my teaching load.

#### **4.6.2. Phase 1 - Data Collection methods and Analysis**

FLCAS was administered to Foundation students' levels one and two; the total number of students was 278 during week 8 of term 1.

The Foreign Language Classroom Environment Scale (FLCAS) was used in this study in order assess the scope and severity of participants' FLA. The rationale for using this instrument in Phase 1 was twofold: (1) to assess the students FLA level and (2) to identify the classes that scored the highest scores. The instrument was

also given to classes that scored the highest scores in term two with the intent of reaffirming the existence and severity of this phenomenon among the selected participants. The major aim of the scale is to assess the extent and nature of FLA (see **Appendix C**). Horwitz and associates developed FLACS in 1986. FLACS is a self-report measure, which determines “the degree of anxiety, as evidenced by negative performance expectancies and social comparisons, psycho-physiological symptoms, and avoidance behaviours” (Horwitz et al. 1986:559). The scale has demonstrated internal reliability, achieving an alpha coefficient of .93 with all items producing significant corrected item-total scale corrections. Test reliability over eight weeks yielded an  $r = .83$  ( $p < .001$ ) (Horwitz et al., 1986). FLCAS is based on an investigation of possible causes of LA in a classroom, integrating the three related performance anxieties posited by Horwitz et al. (1986): communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Horwitz (1986:560) stated that possible scores on the FLCAS ranged from 33 to 165; the theoretical mean of the scale was 99. This study showed that the mean of anxiety scores measured by the FLCAS for the entire group of 278 subjects in phase one was 86.4958 and the range was 62-139, indicating moderate levels of anxiety among the surveyed students. The reliability analysis of the adapted scale in phase one was conducted by Cronbach’s alpha using the statistical package for the social science version (21). It is generally agreed that a Cronbach Coefficient of 0.70 or above is considered acceptable. The adapted scale achieved a Cronbach value of 0.895, which demonstrates good reliability level.

Table 2 provides a brief overview of findings from the use of FLCAS across a number of research studies. These studies used the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to measure the anxiety of students at different educational levels. As shown in the table, the mean of FLCAS across studies is adequately consistent. The result of this current study is similar to what has been reported in the literature of anxiety research.



**Table 2 Summary and Comparison of Results in Previous and Current Studies**

| Researcher               | Sample size | Students ' Academic Status    | L2       | Cronbach alpha( $\alpha$ ) | Range  | Mean    | Standard Deviation |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|--------|---------|--------------------|
| Horwitz (1986)           | 108         | Freshman                      | Spanish  | 0.93                       | 45-147 | 94.5    | 21.4               |
| Aida (1994)              | 96          | Freshman                      | Japanese | 0.94                       | 47-146 | 96.7    | 22.1               |
| Elkhafaiifi (2005)       | 233         | Graduate and undergraduate    | Arabic   | 0.94                       | 44-146 | 90.06   | 23.81              |
| Mastuda and Gobel (2004) | 252         | Freshman Sophomore and junior | English  |                            | 72-133 | 100.77  | 11.428             |
| The current study (2012) | Phase 1     | Foundation level students     | English  | 0.895                      | 62-139 | 86.4958 | 17.44807           |
|                          | Phase 2     |                               |          | 56                         | 0.901  | 63-136  | 92.1786            |

To assess the scope and severity of foreign language anxiety experienced by Foundation level students, descriptive statistics were used. As stated earlier, the main aim of Phase 1 was to highlight the classes that exhibited highest levels of anxiety. All eighteen classes were ranked ordered based on the results derived from FLCAS and classes who scored relatively high in Phase 1 of the study were selected to participate in the second phase.

Students' interviews were conducted in both phases of this case study. The rational for conducting interviews in Phase 1 of the studies was to capture a preliminary picture of language anxiety prior to commencing with Phase 2 of the data collection. In Phase 1 of the study, exploratory interviews with 10 randomly chosen students were conducted. I personally approached the students to participate in the informal interviews. These students were randomly chosen based on their scores on FLCAS. The anxiety level of these students as revealed by the FLCAS included five non- anxious and five anxious students. The interviews lasted

around 15 minutes each. The two basic questions that guided these interviews were: (1) what aspects of the English language class do you like best? (2) What aspect of the English language class do you like least? The rationale for using informal exploratory interviews at this stage of the research is summarized below:

- To gain an understanding of the setting and its members' ways of perceiving the context.
- To identify key issues for developing the semi-structured FG interview schedule, for Phase 2 of the study.

The data corpus of the students interviews were read many time to ensure familiarity with its content. The data set was divided into two sub-data set representing the responses of non-anxious and anxious students. Each subset was read many times and coded. Two main themes emerged during data analysis and they were classroom activities and teachers' personality. Table 3 shows a summary of the interview finding in phase one.

**Table 3 Phase 1 students' Interview Finding-Categories emerging from students' responses**

| Theme                | Sub-themes                                  | Frequency of students' Responses |                                 | Liked/least liked |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
|                      |   | Anxious students (A) (n=5)       | Non-anxious students (NA) (n=5) |                   |
| Classroom activities | group work/Projects                         | 5                                | 4                               | Like              |
|                      | interactive activities on Black board vista | 1                                | 4                               |                   |
|                      | Tests and Homework                          | 5                                | 4                               |                   |
|                      | presentations                               | 5                                | 3                               |                   |
|                      | writing                                     | 3                                | 3                               |                   |
|                      | unfair marking                              | 4                                | 4                               |                   |
|                      | Teachers characteristic                     | friendly                         | 5                               | 4                 |
| helpful              |   | 3                                | 2                               |                   |
| serious              |   | 2                                | 1                               | Least Liked       |

The interview findings revealed that both anxious and non-anxious students share similar views on what features they like or least liked in L2 classrooms. It has provided a useful yet limited starting point and insight into the students' perception of the L2 classroom. The findings of phase one acted as a springboard for phase two of the study. As stated earlier, this phase played a significant role in this study because it has highlighted the classes with the highest level of anxiety as measured by FLCAS. Thus, this phase set the ground for answering the research questions of phase 2 of this study.

#### **4.7. PHASE 2**

The main aim of phase 2 was to investigate students and teachers' perceptions of language anxiety and to find answers to the research questions that guided the current study. As stated earlier, the aim of phase one was to highlight the classes that scored the highest on FLCAS, once this was achieved, the participants of these classes completed surveys, were observed and interviewed. In addition, four EFL teachers were interviewed.

##### **4.7.1. Phase 2-Students Sampling**

Classes that exhibited the highest level of anxiety as measured by the FLCAS in phase one were purposely chosen to participate in the second phase of the study. The rationale was to investigate the complexity of this phenomenon through the voices of students who scored considerably high on the FLCAS. Table 4 presents the academic levels of the participants that participated in Phase 2 of the case study.

**Table 4 Phase 2-Number of students in Level One and Level Two**

|       |         | Frequency | %     | Valid % | Cumulative % |
|-------|---------|-----------|-------|---------|--------------|
| Valid | Level 1 | 25        | 44.6  | 44.6    | 44.6         |
|       | Level 2 | 31        | 55.4  | 55.4    | 100.0        |
|       | Total   | 56        | 100.0 | 100.0   |              |

The distribution of participants based on item rating is displayed in Table 5.

**Table 5 Distribution of Participants across (four classes) based on Item Rating and LA Total Score**

| Item Rating               | LA Total Scores | N (Percentage) |
|---------------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1-2(non-anxious)          | 33-66           | 11 (19.6%)     |
| 2-3(slightly anxious)     | 67-99           | 18 (32%)       |
| 3-4 ( moderately anxious) | 100-132         | 23(41%)        |
| 4-5 (very anxious)        | 133-165         | 4 (7.4%)       |

The data shows, 32% of the students fell into the slightly anxious group and 48% of them are moderately anxious or very anxious.

#### **4.7.2. Phase 2- Faculty Sampling**

In the academic year of 2012-2013, there were 237 employees and 146 faculty members at the institution where this study was carried out representing 67 different nationalities. The teachers taught on full-time regular contracts (teachers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors). In the Foundation program there were 18 English language teachers teaching level one and level two. The majority of the teachers (90 %) were non-Arab. Each of the participants has a different and rich educational and professional background, in terms of the qualifications they hold, the contexts they taught and the level of students they have taught. Four teachers volunteered to participate in the interviews. I rationalized that the four teachers are representative of the teachers' population who teach both levels one and two (see **Appendix D** for an overview of teachers' participants' profile).

#### **4.7.3. Phase 2 –Data Collection**

FLCAS, CUCEI and BALLI were administered to 56 students in phase 2 of the current study. In addition to these measures:

- 3 observations were conducted
- 50 students who completed FLCAS, BALLI, and CUCEI participated in the FG interviews.
- 4 teachers were interviewed.

##### **4.7.3.1 Foreign Language classroom Anxiety Scale**

In phase 2 of the study, the reliability analysis of the adapted FLCAS scale was also conducted by Cronbach's alpha using the statistical package for the social

science version (21). The adapted scale achieved a Cronbach value of 0.901, which demonstrates good reliability level. In

The scales descriptive statistics in Phase 2 yielded the following: the mean of anxiety scores measured by the FLCAS was 92.1786, and the range was 63-136, indicating moderately high levels of anxiety among the surveyed students.

#### **4.7.3.2. College and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI)**

The College and University Classroom Environment Inventory, (CUCEI), was developed by Fraser, Treagust, Williamson & Tobin, (1987) to investigate L2 students' perceptions of the psychosocial environment in university and college classrooms. CUCEI includes seven scales: Personalization, Involvement, Student Cohesiveness, Satisfaction, Task Orientation, Innovation, and Individualization. Each scale consists of seven items, making 49 items in all. There are four responses provided for each item, namely, Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The validation of the CUCEI, carried out by Fraser and Treagust (1986), yielded scale alpha reliabilities ranging from 0.70 to 0.90. The descriptions for each scale and sample items in the CUCEI are shown in Appendix E and F. Moreover, the scales are developed based on Moos's (1986) three categories of dimension conceptualizing human environments; in this case Relationship Dimension (the nature and intensity of personal relationship), Personal Development Dimension (an area whereby personal growth and self-awareness tend to occur), and the System Maintenance and System Change Dimension (the degree to which the environment is systematic, clear in expectations and receptive to change). The distribution of CUCEI items according to its seven subscales is shown in **Appendix G**. The rationale for using CUCEI is to assess the students' perception of the classroom environment.

The present case study employed various attempts to ensure the reliability of the adapted CUCEI instrument. Cronbach alpha coefficient values were used as a measure of the internal consistency of each of the different scales of the CUCEI. For the present study, the CUCEI alpha values in phase two range from 0.80 to 0.83 for the different scales. These figures exceed the threshold of 0.60 usually regarded as being acceptable for research purposes. The overall Cronbach's Alpha of the scale showed an excellent reliability coefficient of 0.955. Therefore,

alpha reliability figures were calculated for the adapted CUCEI scale using both the totality of all components of the scales and that of the subscales as the basic unit of analysis. The results are summarized in table 6 and table 7 respectively.

**Table 6 Cronbach Alpha of CUCEI Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's ( $\alpha$ ) Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|---|------------|
| .955             | .955  | 49         |

**Table 7 Cronbach Alpha of CUCEI Sub- Scales**

| Scales            | Number of Items | Cronbach Alpha |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Personalization   | 7               | 0.81           |
| Innovation        | 7               | 0.83           |
| student cohesion  | 7               | 0.81           |
| task orientation  | 7               | 0.81           |
| Cooperation       | 7               | 0.81           |
| Individualization | 7               | 0.80           |
| Equity            | 7               | 0.79           |

Overall, these scores suggest that all scales of the CUCEI are reliable.

#### **4.7.3.3. Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)**

The main purpose of BALLI is to elicit students' beliefs about foreign language learning. The inventory consists of 34 items assessing student beliefs in five major areas, each of which embodies a distinctive subscale. The five subscales are: (1) Foreign Language Aptitude; (2) the Difficulty of Language Learning; (3) the Nature of Language Learning; (4) Learning and communication strategies; and (5) Motivations.

The utilisation of BALLI in this case study was considered important because literature on L2 anxiety had identified the role of 'erroneous' beliefs in generating/exacerbating students' anxiety. The present case study has employed various attempts to ensure the reliability of the BALLI. Some studies indicated that BALLI gives a rather low reliability coefficient, but according to other studies, BALLI remains a good instrument to use in assessing students' beliefs about language learning.

The original BALLI Horwitz (1988) themes were not statistically generated, and the items within one theme may refer to a wide range of language learning aspects, a reliability test of the BALLI results was performed to determine the overall reliability of the instrument. The individual themes showed low reliability with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.437 to 0.687. The low reliability of BALLI themes is attributed to its being designed by Horwitz (1987) without the use of statistically generated themes (Kuntz, 1996) in addition to the broad range of topics covered by items within each theme. However, many researchers, such as Nikitina and Furuoka (2006), have attempted to verify the reliability of this instrument and have concluded that despite certain weaknesses, the BALLI stays a reliable tool for measuring learner beliefs. In the present study, a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.705 was recorded for the BALLI, which is above 0.60, the acceptable Alpha level, according to Landau & Everitt (2004).

While other statisticians advocate an Alpha level of 0.80 to be considered statistically significant (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The very nature of the BALLI suggests that a lower Alpha would still indicate reliability because the instrument encompasses a wide range of beliefs about language learning, even within a single theme. The Cronbach's Alpha for the BALLI questionnaire in this study parallel those found by other researchers including Yang (1999), Park (1995), Truitt (1995) and Kuntz (1996), who all found values of between 0.60 and 0.70. An opposing finding was Hong (2006) research study on Korean EFL learners. She found slightly higher Cronbach's Alpha levels of 0.74 and 0.77 for the BALLI results of her study. As stated earlier, in an effort to ensure the reliability of the adapted (translated version of BALLI) I employed two basic methods commonly used to ensure the reliability of instruments. These methods are backward translation and think aloud methods. These methods were conducted into two separate sessions with the help of a bilingual colleague and two senior level students. Their input resulted in rewording some of the items in an attempt to ensure that the items are free from ambiguity and are meaningful to the target population under study. Based on their feedback, some items were reworded to ensure that items were free from any ambiguous or confusing words (please refer to **Appendix H**).

#### **4.7.3.4. Observations**

Observations of L2 lessons were conducted in order to broaden my understanding of language anxiety in the classroom setting. I observed the classes of the students who had completed FLCAS, BALLI and CUCEI. The teachers are highly qualified and hold MA and EDD qualifications from well-reputed universities. They also have vast experience in teaching L2 learners in the Gulf region. The observations took place during speaking/listening classes and one observation was conducted during test taking activity.

The rationale for including classroom observations in this study was that it enabled me, the researcher, to collect first hand evidence of the L2 classroom. To facilitate this data collection, I designed a checklist divided into three main categories: (1) the physical setting, (2) teacher-student interactions; and (3) curriculum content. Each category was further subdivided to take into account relevant items appearing in the scales and inventories refer to **Appendix R1**.

All along, I was thinking of what effect my presence would have on the students in the classroom and I have decided to take on the role of a non-participant observer in the classroom, and seated myself at the back of each classroom. I considered the possibility of using a video recorder, but in light of the findings by MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) which indicate that the use of video recording in the classroom may increase anxiety and in turn affect academic performance, I opted not to record the sessions. The observations allowed me the freedom to scrutinize the classroom as the students worked on a given task. Even though I was following an observation checklist, I came upon instances where I had to jot down notes on the nature of interaction between students and students as well as students and teachers. In addition, reflection observational notes were written immediately the class had ended. The observations gave me the opportunity to gain insights into the general ethos of each classroom.

#### **4.7.3.5. Interviews: Teachers' one-on one Interviews and Students' Focus Group Interviews**

One-to-one teachers' interviews and students' FG were used in phase two of this study. Patton (1990) describes interviewing as a data gathering technique that allows the researcher to gather information that takes into account the inner reality



of the interviewee (p.278). Interviews give participants the opportunity to “discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view” (Cohen et al., 2007:347). Given that the main objective of the study was to investigate and understand language anxiety, interviews were deemed an appropriate tool to generate rich understandings of students and teachers perceptions of the phenomenon. Two types of interviews were undertaken in this study: one-on one semi-structured teachers’ interviews and students’ FG. One-on-one interviews were used with the teachers in order to elicit adequate information about each of the teacher’s perceptions and personal experience on language anxiety among L2 learners. The choice of using FG with students in phase 2 of the study is based on the following assumptions. First, it is assumed that being part of a group inhibits anxiety and provide a more relaxed context for discussion to take place ((Greenbaum, 1988). Second, FG allow the researcher to observe the nature of interaction among the different groups in trying to understand the phenomenon (Morgan, 1988:12).

In this case study, semi-structured interview schedules were used, with open-ended questions, which were aimed at informing and illuminating the responses given by students to the FLCAS, CUCEI and BALLI scales and inventories.

I interviewed four English language teachers. The interviews were semi-structured in nature and were organised in order to elicit teachers’ perceptions and experiences of language anxiety in relation to my research sub-questions: (please refer to **Appendix I**):

I tried to generate rich and in-depth data by taking on the role of a facilitator during the interview sessions. The teachers preferred to participate in the interview during their break time. The interviews took place in a classroom that was available for our use. At the beginning of each interview, I presented a copy of the consent form to be signed, and explained the research and terms of consent before beginning the interview process. The teachers’ interviews lasted for approximately 20- 25 minutes each.

As stated earlier, focus group interviews were conducted with students who had participated in the quantitative aspect of Phase 2 of the research design. Four FG were conducted; each group comprised 13 /12 /14/ 11 participants respectively.

The table below indicates the number and code of participants in each class who participated in the focus interviews.

**Table 8 Focus Group, Participants and Codes**

| Classes          | Participants' Codes  |
|------------------|--|
| Class1(Level 1)  | S1A, S1B,S1C, S1D, S1E, S1F, S1G, S1H, S1J, S1K, S1L, S1M, SIN         |
| Class 2(Level 1) | S2A, S2B,S2C, S2D, S2E, S2F, S2G, S2H, S2J, S2K, S2L, S2M              |
| Class 3(Level 2) | S3A, S3B,S3C, S3D, S3E, S3F, S3G, S3H, S3J, S3K, S3L, S3M,<br>S3N, S3O |
| Class 4(Level 2) | S4A, S4B,S4C, S4D, S4E, S4F, S4G, S4H, S4J, S4K, S4L                   |

Because the students' lacked adequate English language skills, the FG interviews were conducted in Arabic. In designing the interview schedule for the students, I decided to follow Radnor's Method (Radnor, 1994) which consisted of a numbers of open-ended questions related to the issue under investigation. A number of supplementary questions (see **Appendix J**) which are referred to as "Pick Ups" followed each question (Radnor, 1994). The main advantage in using this interview design is the possibility of keeping the interview free flowing. The interview schedule was piloted with five students in the Foundation program. I also asked a colleague for her comments on the draft schedule. The final schedule included the background data relating to the selected classes, time and location of the interviews. The timing and the place of the interviews were negotiated with the students. The participants opted for the interviews to take place in the classroom after the last period or at noon during their lunch break.

When conducting the interviews, I was faced with a dilemma that I was not prepared for. The majority of the participants objected to the use of an audio-recorder stating that they did not feel comfortable having their voice recorded. This, I thought, was a clear setback for my research study. However, I had to abide by their wishes and to concur that the use of an audiotape in exploring a psychological construct such as anxiety may prove to be an obtrusive method. I was reassured to some extent by Weiss's (1994) assertion. He states that many researchers believe

that recording interviews is not advisable because note-taking forces the researcher to concentrate more closely and that the presence of an audiotape may lead to students' withdrawal or limited input during the interview. Furthermore, audio recording is can be problematic in FG because it is not always possible to discern the identity of the participating interviewee. From my experience, even though note taking has some potential advantages over audio recording, merits, it surely is a very tedious task to undertake. The benefits were: (1) it kept me more alert and focused and (2) it gave the respondents a brief time out to reflect on their responses and to gather their thoughts.

It is worth mentioning that a very small number of the participants (5 participants) who took part in the FG interviews gave very limited input. This could be due to a number of reasons. First, the phenomenon under study centres on an emotion – anxiety - which some might consider as a weakness and therefore the participants could have been reluctant to admit to it and discuss it openly with others. Second, being an Arab female might have also acted as a barrier to openness on the part of the participants who were all male. Under the circumstances, it is a matter of saving face or saving one's image and shirking away from being looked upon as a person with a psychological problem. Third, there is an issue related to power and the fact that I am a teacher hence an authority figure. Nevertheless, the participants who diligently and actively participated during the interviews gave a rich perspective on the phenomenon under study. In general, the students were relaxed during the interview sessions and were keen to respond to my interview questions.

#### **4.8. Phase Two-Data Analysis**

The data analysis software package SPSS 21 was used to process quantitative data and derive the statistical analysis for each of the scales and inventories used in this case study. Qualitative data was then used to reinforce results found from the quantitative data through the use of quotes from participants to support or explain the findings. Table 9 shows the relationship of data sources and methods of analysis to the primary and secondary research questions.

**Table 9 Relation of Data Sources and Method of Analysis to the Research Questions**

| Research Questions   | Instruments                         | Method of Analysis                          |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| RQ1: What are L2 teachers and students' perceptions of the extent to which L2 students' attitudes and beliefs about learning English contribute to L2 students' feelings of anxiety? | FLCAS<br>BALLI                      | Descriptive statistics                      |
| RQ2: What are L2 teachers and students' perceptions of the extent to which the L2 classroom environment contributes to L2 students' feelings of anxiety?                             | CUCEI<br>Observations<br>Interviews | Descriptive statistics<br>Thematic analysis |
| RQ3: How is this anxiety manifested amongst L2 learners?   | FLCAS Interviews                    | Descriptive statistics<br>Thematic Analysis |
| RQ4: What strategies do L2 teachers and students believe would be effective in reducing levels of anxiety in the L2 classroom?   | Interviews                          | Thematic Analysis                           |

#### 4.8.1. Quantitative Data/ Descriptive Analysis

BALLI was used to assess students' beliefs and attitudes toward their English classroom. This tool identified the students underlying attitudes towards the following broad categories: (1) foreign language aptitude, (2) the difficulty of language learning; (3) the nature of language learning; (4) Learning and communication strategies, and (5) Motivation.

The use of FLCAS with Foundation level students succeeded in identifying the anxiety level of the students. The responses were quantified as follows: 5- Strongly disagree (SD); 4- disagree (D); 3- neither agree nor disagree; 2-agree (A); and 1- Strongly agree (SA). In an effort to display the results clearly, percentages have been rounded up; and thus may not add up to 100%. The mean and standard deviation of each item were calculated in an effort to determine the most anxiety provoking aspect of the English language classroom. The data was analysed using Zhoa Na four-factor model. Although Cao's (2011) study revealed the three-factor scale to be a better fit for investigating anxiety of second language learning, I felt that the four-factor model was more appropriate to use in the Emirati context. Having 'anxiety of English classes' as the fourth factor, it would afford a more holistic understanding of the situation as learners of English in the Emirates who are the products of a rigid and for the most part traditional system of education. The scale is composed of four subscales. The FLCAS Items 3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, and 33 measure fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986); items, 9,

14, 18, 24, 27, 29, and 32-measure communication apprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986). Whilst items 2, 8, 10, 19, and 21 measure fear of tests (Horwitz et al., 1986), items 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 28, 30 measured anxiety of English classes (Zhao Na, 2007). Lower scores on FLCAS items indicated lower anxiety and higher scores showed higher anxiety. When statements in the FLCAS were negatively worded (items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, 32) responses were reverse-coded.

The CUCEI was used to identify Foundations level students' perceptions of the psychosocial environment of the classroom. The responses were quantified as follow: 1- Strongly Agree (SA); 2- Agree (A); 3- Disagree (D); and 4-Strongly Disagree. Participants' responses to the items on CUCEI subscales were determined by examining the item means, standard deviations, and percentages.

#### **4.8.2. Qualitative Data Analysis**

As stated earlier, the data from the exploratory interviews in Phase 1 of the study were analysed with the aim of gaining a 'snapshot' of favourable and non-favourable aspects of the L2 classrooms, to inform Phase 2 data collection. The process of analysing the FG data commenced during the data collection stage. In an effort to gain a comprehensive picture of the collected data, the data from both the one-on one teachers' interviews and students' FG were analysed using the thematic analysis (TA) approach. TA is defined as 'the method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns within data.' (Braun & Clarke, 2006:79). Thematic analysis was chosen in this study because of its flexibility and pragmatic approach. In addition, TA makes provision for summarising large data sets and helps in identifying similarities and differences between data. These characteristics are of outmost importance for this particular study as will be revealed later. Six clear and comprehensive key stages of Braun and Clarke's (2006) structured methodology was followed within the current study, as summarized in Table 10.

**Table 10 Stages of Thematic Analysis Based on Braun and Clarke (2006) six stages**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Stages of Qualitative Data Analysis  | An overview of the process followed in this study  |
| <b>1. Data Familiarization</b>   | Reading and re-reading the data  |
| Initially the data corpus was read many times and then was divided into the following data set: possible causes of language anxiety, manifestations of LA and ways to alleviate its existence.   |  |
| <b>2. Generating codes</b>   | Coding of the data in a systematic manner across the entire data set, collating data pertinent to each code.   |
| Each data set was read and re-read many times in an effort to gain familiarity and to assign possible initial codes.   |  |
| <b>3. Searching for potential themes</b>   | Collating codes into relevant themes   |
| Initial Codes were grouped into clusters of different themes relevant to the research questions  |  |
| <b>4. Reviewing themes</b>   | Checking whether the themes work in relation to the coded extracts.  |
| During this stage, themes were refined. Each theme was reviewed in order to ensure that it mirrors the content of the extracted data. Themes that were too general or t did not have adequate data to support them were deleted.       |  |
| <b>5. Renaming/defining themes</b>   | Generating clear definitions for each theme  |
| During this stage, each derived themes was clearly defined and renamed.  |  |
| <b>6. Writing the report</b>   | Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature. |
| In the final stage of the analysis, a written report included examples of relevant participants' quotes were chosen to reflect each theme. This also included relevant literature and potential recommendations based on the findings. |  |

**Appendix K 1 and K2** provide examples of the qualitative data analysis process.

#### **4.9. Trustworthiness of Qualitative Data**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that “the trustworthiness of qualitative research can be established by using four strategies: credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. To address the credibility of my findings prolonged engagement, triangulation procedures and observations were undertaken. In this case study, I did spend sufficient time in the site, which enabled me to become oriented to the situation. My presence at the context of the study allowed me to observe the occurrence of the phenomenon and the interaction of the students and teachers, which in turn illuminated the data I had collected from the scales, inventories, and interviews. Furthermore, triangulation was achieved with the use of these different data collection methods. In order to ensure the dependability and conformability of my findings, an external auditor, my supervisors, was responsible for examining the process of the research, findings, interpretations, and recommendations to attest that it is supported by data. Transferability refers to the

degree in which the research can be transferred to other contexts. In this thesis, I give a detailed description of data collection procedures and analysis, which can assist other researchers interested in considering whether my findings are transferable to other contexts or in carrying out a similar study in their own context.

#### **4.10. Ethical Considerations**

Cohen et al. (2007) assert that ethical considerations are more than just technical procedures since they engulf the entire research process and are an imperative consideration in structuring the research design because “one has to consider how the research purposes, contents, methods, reporting and outcomes abide by ethical principles and practices” (p. 51). In the process of thinking about the research mechanisms of this study, I had to also think about the cost/ benefit aspect of this study. I considered the cost in terms of the time the participants would have to give to my study against the expected benefits of the research in terms of the knowledge gained about the nature of language anxiety among Emirati students. It was important therefore that my participants felt fully informed of the research aims, and believed that the study would be of significance to many stakeholders (myself personally, students and teachers alike). I was determined to ensure that I had addressed the ethical procedures relating to informed consent, anonymity, privacy, confidentiality, and diminishing the risks to participants.

#### **4.11. Access and Acceptance**

Access to the research site, advises Bell, (1991:37 in Cohen et al., 2007) focuses initially on gaining permission attaining and indicating the possible benefits of the research. Therefore, it was imperative that I cleared official channels by formally requesting permission to carry out my investigation as soon as I reached upon an agreed project outline. As per the requirement of the University of Exeter, I handed in a “Certificate of ethical research approval” to my research supervisor and to the Graduate School of Education including a description of the research project, information about the participants, procedures for gaining informed consent and anonymity and confidentiality of subjects, along with information concerning data collection, analysis, and storage. The University of Exeter, Graduate School of Education granted approval in 2011 (see **Appendix L** for ethical clearance approvals). Then, in order to ensure a legitimate access to the participants in the

study, several consent forms were sent to key supervisory personnel at the college. The Dean of the Education program agreed to my research study objectives. Following this approval, a letter was sent to the head of the Foundation Program, which was also approved. Consent forms were signed by students who agreed to participate in the study (refer to appendices M and N).

Dealing with a psychological phenomenon requires sensitivity and receptiveness towards the participants' feelings and reactions. In order to ensure that students did not suffer from any psychological harm, I strived to build rapport with the students, answer all their questions concerning the research and emphasized that information provided by them would be considered confidential and the participants would remain anonymous.

#### **4.11.1. Informed Consent**

Informed consent defined by (Diener & Crandall, 1978, as cited in Cohen et al., 2007) "as the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed about the facts that would be likely to influence their decisions." This definition involves four elements: competence, voluntarism, full information, and comprehension. With respect to competence, all participants in this research are mature individuals - age range from 18-25 - who are capable of making informed decisions by themselves. Individual participation was based on voluntary choices and they were informed of the nature and purpose of the research at each phase of the data collection process. They were also informed that they could withdraw at any time during the research process. Finally, the participants fully understood the nature of the research project. They were provided with the name and contact information of the researcher at each stage of the research.

For each of the scales and inventories used in this research, a summary of the research project and my contact number and email were included. As for the FG, each of the interviewed students received an informed consent form. In addition, in relation to informed consent, the required guidelines for the institution Research Ethics Committee were adhered to at all times. Furthermore, I clearly explained to the participants that participating in this research would have no adverse effect on their academic progress or grades in the course.



#### **4.11.2. Privacy Anonymity and Confidentiality**

I made sure to take the necessary precautions to ensure that the students and teachers who participated in this case study remain anonymous.

I was diligent in emphasizing that their identity would be protected. The participants in each classroom was given a section/ letter code to facilitate the tabulation and analysis of the derived data in a way that would ensure their anonymity.

#### **4.11.3. Data Collection and Storage**

In order to ensure that my participants remained anonymous and that their confidentiality was protected, I personally distributed the surveys and collected them upon completion. These surveys were securely placed in a locked box at my home. The data from both the quantitative and qualitative data were entered into my personal laptop and backed up on an external hard drive. Accesses to these files were protected by a password known only by me.

#### **4.12. Challenges**

I was faced with two main challenges in conducting this research study: mainly developing the research instruments and identity issues.

##### **4.12.1. Developing the Research Instruments**

The most challenging aspect of this study had to do with the selection and design of the research instruments and the formulation of the interview questions. It was difficult to construct a valid instrument with items that serve the purpose of extracting the needed information for the purpose of this research. Based on this challenge, FLCAS, BALLI, and CCUEI were administered because these instruments are well established and serve the intent of this research. However, the pilot study indicated that the instruments would need to be translated from English to Arabic and validated. This was a challenging and time-consuming task.

##### **4.12.2. Researcher's Identity**

Female researchers in the Arab world face many challenges and obstacles originating from the socio-cultural and religious blend of the Arab countries. The Arab world implicitly regards women as a subordinate and of a lesser status. In spite of many reforms that affected the educational, political, and professional

status quo of Arab women, they are still intellectually marginalized by some Arab males.

Consequently, based on this subjective reality, a female researcher may find it difficult to conduct research and to collect data from male participants. This is especially true when the research focuses on a psychological construct such as anxiety. Arab males in general - and this is based on my observations and experience within this realm - may find it difficult to discuss their feeling, anxieties, and insecurities with an Arab woman. Arab men depict anxiety and its manifestation as signs of weakness; expressing this shortcoming to an Arab woman shakes the image of strength and vitality that Arab men have tried to maintain throughout the history of time. Therefore, Arab men may have had the tendency to 'fake good' while responding to the scale/inventory and interview questions. In order to surmount this issue, I placed a great emphasis on building rapport with the students through the projection of a professional image.

The next two chapters will present the findings of my research. Chapter 5 will discuss the students' data, while Chapter 6 will examine the data from the teachers' interviews. The rationale for displaying the findings in such a manner is to highlight the importance of both the students and teachers' voices in understanding the complexity of this phenomenon.

## **CHAPTER 5 STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY**

### **5.0. Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two main parts, which map directly onto the research questions. The first part displays the quantitative data derived from the use of BALLI, FLCAS and CUCEI. This part includes section 5.1 which presents L2 students' beliefs about the demands of learning a second language, drawing on the data collected using the BALLI instrument. Section 5.2 explores students' perceptions and experiences of language anxiety, whilst the third section presents students' perceptions and experiences of the L2 classroom. The second part of this chapter presents the findings derived from the students' focus group interviews.

### **Part 1- STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY Quantitative Findings**

#### **5.1. Students Beliefs about the Demands of Language Learning**

This section discusses the responses of the Phase 2 sample of 56 students to the key topics addressed by BALLI. The BALLI was used to explore the students' beliefs and attitudes towards second language learning. Many research studies indicated that the source of language anxiety among many learners is the results of 'erroneous' beliefs held by the language learner (Ohata, 2005; Young, 1991; Horwitz, 1988). The data findings from the use of BALLI is displayed in **Appendix O**.

##### **5.1.1. Students' Foreign Language Aptitude**

The students generally endorsed the notion of special characteristics being required for effective language learning. Results in Table 11 show that the vast majority of students 82% either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement 'It is easier for children than adults to Learn English.

**Table 11 Students' Foreign Language Aptitude**

| <b>Students' Foreign Language Aptitude Items</b>                                     | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1-It is easier for children than adults to learn English                             | 41              | 41             | 14             | 4               |
| 2-Some people are born with special ability which help them learn English            | 20              | 46             | 23             | 11              |
| 3-I have a foreign language aptitude   | 14              | 34             | 36             | 16              |
| 7-People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages | 16              | 21             | 50             | 13              |
| 8-Emiratis are good at learning a foreign language                                   | 21              | 34             | 38             | 7               |

Two thirds of the participants believed that some people have an innate ability to learn a foreign language. However, a much smaller percentage of participants (48 %) felt that they personally had this particular ability. Thus, even though most participants believed that, some people have an innate gift for learning languages; most of them did not regard themselves as having this talent. Fifty-five percent of the participants believed that Emiratis are not good at learning a foreign language. These responses indicate that these students had a particular negative perception of their own language abilities. These results reaffirm a commonly held belief in both Western and Arab world about the people who generally do well at language learning tend not to do well in scientific subjects. Students are usually directed towards either a literary or a scientific track in high school, and each track has its impact on the majors chosen in universities. In this regard, and even prior to the emergence of Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, psychologists in general viewed intelligence as comprising two forms, linguistic and logical-mathematical (Brown, 2000). It can be inferred that these students did not base their judgments on accurate facts, but on the contrary, they based their abilities on subjects and age as a reference point. They are in this process formulating an image of an ideal learner about language learning based on faulty assumptions and beliefs. These students echo common misconceptions about language learning; and these misconceptions are likely to impact on language anxiety.

### **5.1.2. Students' Beliefs about Language Difficulty**

The students' beliefs about the difficulty of learning an additional language are displayed in Table 12 along with an assessment of students' expectations in term of general success in learning a language.

**Table 12 Students 'Perception about Foreign Language Difficulty**

| <b>Language Difficulty items</b>   | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 15-It is easier to read and write English language than to speak or understand it. | 18              | 52             | 25             | 5               |
| 16-It is easier to speak English than to understand it.                            | 30              | 52             | 16             | 2               |
| 17-I believe that someday I will speak English very well                           | 25              | 50             | 16             | 9               |

More than half of the students (70%) indicated that they perceive reading and writing English as easier than speaking and understanding while 82% indicated that speaking a language is much easier than understanding it. However, when it comes to language skills, figures in Table 12 show that the majority of them (70%) trusted in their abilities to speak the language well eventually. One possible explanation is that students feel more at ease engaging in reading and writing than speaking and comprehension possibly because of the anxiety level that these students experience in their attempts to speak or comprehend what their teachers say in the classroom. A further explanation might be related to the difference between the productive medium- writing and speaking and the receiving medium – reading and listening, as the former requires the generation of content and the latter demands the interpretation of existing content. Therefore, it may be that language anxiety might be constructed around the performance of language rather than the response to language whether it is oral or written.

Responses to the level of difficulty of English language are displayed in Table 13. The results indicate that 20% of the students consider the English language as a very difficult language to learn, 34% consider it of medium difficulty, and 47 % think it is difficult. Interestingly, none of the respondents deems the English language as a very easy or an easy language to learn.

**Table 13 Students 'Beliefs about the Level of Language Difficulty**

| <b>19-Levels of Difficulty</b> |                   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent %</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Valid                          | Very Difficult    | 11               | 20               |
|                                | Medium Difficulty | 19               | 34               |
|                                | Difficult         | 26               | 47               |

The responses to the question, 'If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long it would take him to become fluent?' are set out in Table 14. Sixty-four percent indicated that they believed that one to two years is sufficient to gain proficiency in a second language. These results contradict their responses with respect to the difficulty of English language and reveal the students' unrealistic expectations and anticipated time frame in gaining proficiency in the English language. Research has, in fact, revealed that students are required to spend 3 to 5 years to gain oral proficiency in English and 4 to 7 years to gain academic proficiency ( Hakuta and Witt, 2000; Cummins, 2000).

**Table 14 students' Perception on Time Needed to Gain Fluency in L2**

| <b>20- If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long it would take him to become fluent?</b> | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent %</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| less than a year  | 12               | 21               |
| 1-2 years   | 36               | 64               |
| 3-5 years   | 6                | 11               |
| 5-10 years  | 2                | 4                |

Students' views about the difficulty of language learning are crucial to their development since their judgment affects their expectations and commitment towards language learning. In retrospect, if they overestimate the difficulty level of the task this acts as a cognitive and a psychological barrier, which creates frustration and hinders their progress (Maslamani, 2007). On the other hand, a belief that it will take two years or less to learn a language can be very frustrating and an anxiety embedded experience for students. In this situation, students' beliefs might clash with reality .i.e. when fluency is not attained within the two years perceived period. Conversely, a belief that it will take ten years to learn a language could be discouraging and cause them to place minimal input because the desired

outcomes requires a prolonged time to attain. This finding gives further evidence about the influence of misconceptions on learning. Ohata (2005:138) elaborated that unrealistic beliefs can lead to greater anxiety among learners especially when these belief clash with reality.

### 5.1.3. Students' Beliefs about the Nature of Language Learning

Many students believe that learning another language is a matter of translation from English or learning grammar rule (Horwitz. 1987). This belief might be related to the teaching- learning experience they were exposed to while learning a second language. Respondents in this study shared some of these beliefs about language learning (Table 15).

**Table 15 Students' Perception of the Nature of Language Learning**

| <b>Nature of Language Learning Items</b>  | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> |
|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 9-Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.                  | 23              | 43             | 27             | 7               |
| 10-Learning English is different from learning other subjects                     | 23              | 39             | 27             | 11              |
| 11-Learning English is a matter of translation to Arabic.                         | 23              | 43             | 27             | 7               |
| 13- The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning new words. | 45              | 33             | 12             | 10              |

While 62% agreed or strongly agreed that a learning a language differs from learning other school subjects, many students gave a rather constricted view of language learning. For example, 67% and 78% respectively believed that learning grammar and new words was the most crucial aspect of learning a foreign language, while 66% agreed or strongly agreed that learning a language is a matter of translation. The students' responses in this category and the emphasis they placed on grammar, vocabulary, and translation may reflect their own previous experience in learning a second language. This is also an indicative reflection of the manner through which language learning has strived in many schools in the Gulf area, whereby greater emphasis was placed on grammar rules, vocabulary acquisition, and translation.

L2 students in this study who hold this belief are more likely to spend the majority of their study time on memorizing grammar rules, vocabulary words and translated

words and phrases at the expense of learning effective analytical skills that may enhance and solidify the mastery of basic linguistic skills.

In the following section, participants' beliefs related to language learning and communication strategies will be discussed.

#### 5.1.4. Students' Learning and Communication Strategies

The previous three sections presented students' beliefs about certain features of language and language learning. This next category of the BALLI items is concerned with the process of learning a language and the practice of spontaneous communication in the classroom (Table 16).

**Table 16 Students' Perception of Communication and Language Strategies**

| <b>Students' Communication and Language Strategies Items</b>   | <b>SA %</b> | <b>A %</b> | <b>D %</b> | <b>SD %</b> |
|--|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>21-</b> It is important to speak a language with an excellent accent.   | 27          | 63         | 7          | 4           |
| <b>23-</b> If I heard someone speak the language that I am trying to learn I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language. | 16          | 61         | 16         | 7           |
| <b>25-</b> In learning English, it is important to repeat and practice a lot.  | 30          | 55         | 11         | 4           |
| <b>27-</b> If you are allowed to make mistakes in English, it will be hard to get rid of them later.   | 5           | 54         | 27         | 14          |
| <b>28-</b> I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.   | 25          | 43         | 21         | 11          |
| <b>29-</b> If my teacher is a native speaker; she/he should be able to speak Arabic When necessary.  | 25          | 48         | 23         | 4           |

One of the items in Table 16 suggests the students' previous experience in learning a second language and highlights the traditional learning strategies that they resort to in learning. Eighty-five percent of the students strongly advocate the role of repetition and practice in learning. This finding shows that although students are influenced by the traditional methods of learning, they are also embracing the communicative approach to language learning that is strongly reinforced in many English classes at the college as indicated by 77% of the students. Accent emerged as an important dimension by 90 % of the students. In this regard, many of the students may perceive accent as an essential element in the process of gaining proficiency in a second language. Therefore, practicing with native speakers is deemed as a 'gate-pass' for gaining mastery in L2. Furthermore, 73% of the students think that native speaking teachers should be able to speak Arabic when necessary.



With respect to errors, many students believe that making errors and error correction is part of the learning process; 52% of the students thought that if they were allowed to make errors in English, it would be difficult for them to correct them later on. However, 32% students do not want their teachers to correct their mistakes. Therefore, some of the anxious students of the present case study are reluctant to make mistakes and consider speaking with an excellent accent as important. These concerns would most likely deter their attempts to communicate in the L2 classroom. These findings provide a possible explanation as to some of the potential causes behind some of the students' inhibitions and lack of participation.

Participants' motivation for learning a second language is presented next.

### 5.1.5. Students' Motivations to Learn

In second language research, "motivation provides the primary impetus to initiate learning in the L2 and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process" (Dörnyei, 2005:65). This section explores learners' motivations and expectations as factors shaping their attitude towards language learning (Table 17).

**Table 17 Students' Motivation to Learn a Second Language**

| <b>Motivation Items</b>   | <b>SA</b><br><b>%</b> | <b>A</b><br><b>%</b> | <b>D</b><br><b>%</b> | <b>SD</b><br><b>%</b> |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 30- If I learn English very well; I will have many opportunities to use it with English speaking people | 36                    | 50                   | 9                    | 6                     |
| 33-If I learn English very well; it will help me get a better job.                                      | 54                    | 29                   | 14                   | 3                     |
| 34- I want to learn to speak English very well.   | 25                    | 44                   | 20                   | 11                    |

Sixty-nine percent of the students are motivated to learn to speak English very well. The vast majority of students 83% associated their desire to learn English with a wish to get better job opportunities. Thus, it seems that three quarter of the students are highly motivated to learn a second language.

### 5.1.6. Summary of Students' Beliefs about the Demands of Learning a Second Language

The data gathered through the BALLI inventory provided insights into students' beliefs about English language learning. Some of the language anxiety driven students of the present case study displayed a number of misconceptions about language learning that may hinder their progress and development of proficiency in a second language. Prominent among these misconceptions are perceptions relating to the difficulty of language learning: the majority of the students consider learning English as a very difficult endeavour. At the same time, however, they were confident of their ability to learn the target language.

With respect to learning and communication strategies, many students endorsed the fact that native teachers must be capable of speaking Arabic. This is most probably related to the problem of lack of understanding of what the teacher is saying in the classroom. Another important result that is related to understanding is indicated by the high percentage of students who supported the fact that it is easier to speak than understand English. This highlights the problem of comprehension faced by many students. The majority of the students were concerned about mistakes and accents, which seemed likely to inhibit their attempts to communicate in the target language. This preoccupation with errors and accent may underlie the students' preoccupation of what their teachers' response to their mistakes and poor accent could curtail. In line with Howirtz, (1988), Cenoz & Lecumberri (1999) findings, students who believe that they must acquire a perfect accent and pronunciation, similar to native speakers, start worrying when they realize that it is almost impossible to acquire a native-like accent in a short time. A further interesting finding from BALLI indicated that the vast majority of the students still hold on to the traditional practices of learning as evident by the great emphasis placed on the importance of practice and on learning grammar rules.

The next section will aim at trying to find out the pervasiveness and perception of anxiety among language learners.

## **5.2. Student's Perception and Experiences of Language Anxiety**

This section explores Emirati students' explanations of the causes, effects, and manifestations of language anxiety with a particular focus on what happens in the classroom environment. The complexity of the classroom environment embodies the interplay of two complex systems: the students, on one hand and the

classroom, on the other. It is within the complexity of this system, learners develop a number of expectations, beliefs, and feelings that include the learners' perception of the unique and ideal yet subjective norm for learning a second language. The significance of this complexity operates within the loci of the current and past classroom experiences; this refers to the totality of the educational experiences in which students develop. This understanding engulfs the nature of interaction of individual factors of the learner's identity \_ such as attitudes, motivation, early learning experience in which the learner operates. Each of these factors is intrinsically intertwined making the task of extracting each factor alone to determine the causes and manifestation of language anxiety an impossible endeavour to measure. Hence, relying on statistics alone to understand language anxiety gives a rather narrow understanding of the phenomenon under study. Therefore, based on this understanding, the use of both quantitative and qualitative means\_FLCAS and students' focus interviews<sup>4</sup> were employed for understanding the complex nature of anxiety as it relates to learning a second language.

The findings from FLCAS set the ground for a preliminary attempt to investigate the pervasiveness of language anxiety among Foundation level students. (See **Appendix P** for a summary of the FLCAS findings).

Two main categories emerged from the use of FLCAS. These categories included the following: (1) language anxiety and the demands of language learning and (2) classroom practices and language anxiety.

### **5.2.1. Language Anxiety and the Demands of Language Learning**

Students' attitudes towards the demands of language learning unveiled the following: (1) an affirmation that LA is a situation specific anxiety, (2) the effect of LA on cognitive process and (3) behavioural manifestations of LA. Plausible evidence that feeling of anxiety that some of the students are experiencing is situation specific and is related to English classes is revealed by their responses in Table 18. Thirty-eight percent of the students feel more anxious in their language

---

<sup>4</sup> See part two of this chapter for FG findings.

classes than in any other class and 50% feel overwhelmed by the number of rules that they have to learn to speak a foreign language.

Table 18 Students' Attitude toward the English Class

| Anxiety of English Class Items  | SA % | A % | NA/D % | D % | SD % | Mean    | Standard Deviation |
|---|------|-----|--------|-----|------|---------|--------------------|
| 5-It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.                                | 41   | 38  | 7      | 9   | 5    | 2.000   | 1.15994            |
| 6-During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course. | 21   | 23  | 23     | 20  | 13   | 2.7857  | 1.33095            |
| 12-In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.                                    | 25   | 23  | 14     | 20  | 18   | 2.8214  | 1.46607            |
| 16-Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.                            | 20   | 40  | 7      | 20  | 14   | 2.6964  | 1.888              |
| 17-I often feel like not going to my language class.  | 16   | 23  | 7      | 16  | 38   | 3.3571  | 1.56587            |
| 26-I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes                        | 19   | 16  | 13     | 24  | 29   | 3.3036  | 1.48837            |
| 28-When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed                                 | 20   | 18  | 14     | 32  | 16   | 3.0714  | 1.39944            |
| 30-I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language.             | 21   | 29  | 21     | 18  | 11   | 2.67866 | 1.29484            |

These findings provide further support to the view that language anxiety is a distinctive set of beliefs, perceptions, and feelings in response to foreign language learning and not merely a composite of other anxieties (Horwitz et al. 1986: 130).

From a cognitive perspective, 48% claims that anxiety affects their ability to recall information. These results support Tobias' (1986) suggestions that interference to learning may occur at three levels: input, processing, and output. During input, anxiety may cause attention deficit and poor initial processing of the given information. The ability to process or rehearse the information is also greatly compromised. At the Output stage, anxiety may interfere with the retrieval of previously learned information. The experience of going completely blank or "freezing" on tests can be attributed to the influence of anxiety at the time of retrieval (MacIntyre & Gardner in Young 1991). Sixty percent of the students indicate that preparing for their classes does not diminish the feeling of anxiety they experience in their language classes. These findings might suggest that the students lack affective study skills strategies. The absence of these strategies might hamper the efforts that the students place in beneficial preparation for the English classes.

Evidence of behavioural manifestations of language anxiety as perceived by the participants is provided by the tendency to skip classes - reported by 39% of the students. This finding suggests that these students might feel nervous and apprehensive of the English language classes. Despite the feeling of anxiety, more than two third of them would not mind taking additional L2 classes. A possible explanation for this contradiction and their evident motivation to learn a second language is the importance that students' allocate to language classes. Students are quite aware that they need a specific score on IELTS exams to guarantee entrance into the major of choice. Therefore, it seems that anxious students have no choice but to succumb to their feelings of nervousness and apprehension in order to guarantee their entry into the Bachelors program.

Elements that might lead to students' anxiety in the classroom will be discussed next.

### 5.2.2. Classroom Practices and Language Anxiety

The students reported a number of causes of language anxiety that are attributed to certain classroom related practices.

Students develop anxiety because they can neither express themselves freely nor adequately to comprehend what others are saying. As a result, these students may exhibit feelings of nervousness and even panic which results in meagre attempts to participate in the target language (see Table 19).

**Table 19 Students' Communication Apprehension**

| <b>Communication Apprehension Items</b>  | <b>SA %</b> | <b>A %</b> | <b>NA/D %</b> | <b>D %</b> | <b>SD %</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> |
|--|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1-I do not feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class         | 16          | 25         | 20            | 20         | 20          | 3.0179      | 1.38158                   |
| 4-it frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language | 34          | 25         | 12            | 23         | 5           | 2.4107      | 1.31808                   |
| 9-I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class                | 27          | 27         | 19            | 13         | 14          | 2.6071      | 1.38405                   |
| 14-I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.                | 20          | 20         | 14            | 23         | 23          | 3.1071      | 1.47314                   |
| 27-I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.                       | 38          | 29         | 6             | 25         | 2           | 2.7679      | 1.30720                   |
| 29-I get nervous when I do not understand every word the language teacher says.              | 27          | 38         | 13            | 9          | 13          | 2.4285      | 1.31919                   |

The data in Table 19 shows that 54% of the students completing the FLCAS indicated they panic if they are asked to speak, without preparation, in the class. Similarly, 67% of the students report that they become nervous and confused when they are required to speak in the language class. These findings may indicate that their feeling of apprehension is related to the classroom context or to lowered self-confidence as indicated by 41% of the students who do not feel confident in speaking a second language.

Students' low self-confidence may be attributed to many factors that could be related to certain variables that this component of the scale was unable to identify. These factors may be attributed to learners' self-concept, beliefs, and past learning experiences or to teachers' characteristics such as teaching style or whether the teacher is native or non-native. Furthermore, I could not help but question whether the student- student relationship in the classroom played any role in these results.

Students' responses to situations such as teachers' error correction, test taking, preparations, and failing indicate a number of numbers of concerns that may trigger anxiety in some learners (see Table 20).

**Table 20 Students' Anxiety of Tests**

| <b>Test Anxiety Items</b>  | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>NA/D<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 2-I don't worry about making mistakes in language class                        | 20              | 34             | 7                 | 25             | 14              | 2.8036      | 1.39375                       |
| 8-I am usually at ease during tests in my language class                       | 20              | 18             | 11                | 27             | 24              | 3.1964      | 1.9447                        |
| 10-I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class         | 27              | 27             | 18                | 14             | 14              | 2.6250      | 1.39561                       |
| 19-I am afraid that language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make. | 20              | 32             | 11                | 10             | 27              | 2.9286      | 1.52384                       |
| 21-The more I study for a test the more confused I become.                     | 27              | 28             | 15                | 11             | 19              | 2.6964      | 1.47611                       |

These results indicate that over a third of the participants experience anxiety in relation to test taking situations. Under the circumstance, the results also indicated that advance preparation for the test does not in any way alleviate the problem. On the contrary, 55% of the students reported that the more they study for the test the more confused they become. The results show that 54% of the students do not worry about the consequences of making mistakes. Error correction by the teachers is a source of anxiety for 52% of the students. These figures are higher

than the results revealed by other researchers for example, 15% by Horwitz et al. (1986). In this regard, anxious students tend to report being afraid of making mistakes and being corrected in language classes (Horwitz et al., 1986).

The results also indicate that 54% of the students worry about the consequences of failing. These results are relatively similar to the findings obtained by other researchers, for example, 42 % Horwitz et al. (2009) and 57% Aida (1994). Moreover, 52% do not feel at ease during test taking situations.

In addition to test anxiety, anxious students may fear being less competent than other students or being negatively evaluated by their peers (Horwitz, 2009). The data in Table 21 indicates a number of fears related to negative evaluation.

**Table 21 Students' Fear of Negative Evaluation**

| <b>Fear of negative Evaluation Items</b>  | <b>SA %</b> | <b>A %</b> | <b>NA/D %</b> | <b>D %</b> | <b>SD %</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> |
|---|-------------|------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 3-I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class                        | 27          | 25         | 13            | 14         | 21          | 2.7857      | 1.52213                   |
| 7-I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.                    | 21          | 21         | 23            | 21         | 14          | 2.8671      | 1.36753                   |
| 13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.                                | 30          | 25         | 7             | 13         | 25          | 2.7679      | 1.60670                   |
| 15-I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.                         | 30          | 21         | 25            | 14         | 9           | 2.5000      | 1.30732                   |
| 20-I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class                | 11          | 30         | 12            | 11         | 37          | 3.3036      | 1.48837                   |
| 23-I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do            | 38          | 27         | 6             | 11         | 18          | 2.4464      | 1.52458                   |
| 25-Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind                            | 16          | 30         | 20            | 18         | 16          | 2.8750      | 1.33570                   |
| 31-I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language       | 18          | 16         | 12            | 25         | 29          | 3.3036      | 1.48837                   |
| 33-I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I have not prepared in advance. | 27          | 38         | 14            | 9          | 13          | 2.6964      | 1.38721                   |

As indicated by item 3, an alarming 52% of the students, worry about being called on to participate in classroom discussions. This item, as well as items 20 and 33 refers to situations where teachers call on students to answer questions in the classroom. Moreover, 55% of the students feel embarrassed to volunteer answers in the class. Similarly, 65% also indicate that they get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which they have not prepared in advance. A plausible

explanation to these findings suggests three possible causes for these high scores. First, it is possible the students anticipate being called on, due to their past experiences of being placed on the spot, or because the teachers use this method in the classroom. Second, it can also be inferred from these results that the students are highly concerned with the possibility of looking foolish and 'losing face' in front of their teacher and peers - if they were unable to give the correct responses. Third, it can be related to their self-perception in relation to others.

A further significant finding from the use of the FLCAS shows how the students' perceive their abilities in relation to others; 41% of the students think that others are better in learning a language and 65% think that the other students' are better in their speaking skills (item 23). These results give further support to the BALLI results whereby 52% of the students believe that they do not have a foreign language aptitude.

Forty-six percent of the students worry about being left behind because of the accelerated pace of the language class. These results are relatively similar to (59%) in Horwitz's (2009) study and with 58% in Aida's (1994) study. The results from this component tapped on students' perception of their ability and social image in comparison to their peers in the classroom. Because of their nervousness, these students may not attend class, over-study, or hide in the last row in an effort to avoid the humiliation or embarrassment of being called on to speak; a finding that was certainly verified by the qualitative data as will be revealed later.

The FLCAS failed to measure the impact of past learning experiences on the development of language anxiety among students; in this respect, students were treated as a static group.

#### **5.2.5. Summary of Students' Perceptions and Experiences of Language Anxiety**

The derived results from the FLCAS succeeded in giving a preliminary understanding of the nature of students' language anxiety. The finding from the FLCAS showed some of the variables that are indicative of relatively high level of



language anxiety among Foundation level male Emirati students. These variables are highlighted in Table 22.

**Table 22 Variables that are Indicative of Relatively High Level of Language Anxiety among Foundation Level Male Emirati Students**

| Items indicative of anxiety   | %  | Mean   |
|---|----|--------|
| 16-Anxiety about the language class even if I am well prepared for them.    | 60 | 2.6964 |
| 21- The more I study for a test the more confused I become.                 | 55 | 2.6964 |
| 10- worrying about the consequences of failing foreign language class       | 54 | 2.6250 |
| 8-Lack of ease during tests in language classes.                            | 52 | 3.1964 |
| 20- Feel the pounding of the heart when being called on in language class   | 41 | 3.3036 |
| 18- Lack of confidence when speaking English in class.                      | 40 | 2.6786 |
| 17- Feel like not going to language class.                                  | 39 | 3.3571 |
| 26- Feel more tense and nervous in language class than in any other classes | 35 | 3.3036 |

Five key findings merged from the FLCAS. The first of these findings is related to the students' general attitude and feelings towards the language class. Despite their considerable anxiety and feeling of apprehension, a moderately high percentage of the students would not mind at all taking additional L2 classes. This may indicate that students are motivated to learn a language. In line with BALLI results, the vast majority of students 83% associated their desire to learn English with better employment opportunities.

A second finding has to do with the students' academic performance in the classroom. A considerable percentage of the students are excessively worried about their performance and the consequences of failing their L2 classes.

The third finding that emerged from the data defines language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety experienced in the second language classroom and which is associated with uneasiness and physiological symptoms.

An additional finding emerged after further scrutiny of the students' responses on the FLCAS highlighted a number of fears and worries related to language anxiety. The greatest fears as indicated by the majority of the students and which may be considered as potential sources of language anxiety are outlined in Table 23

**Table 23 Summary of Students' Apprehension and Concerns**

| <b>Apprehensions and Concerns</b>   | <b>%</b> |
|---|----------|
| 27- I get anxious and confused when I am speaking in my language class. ( <b>speaking</b> )                                       | 67       |
| 4- It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language. ( <b>comprehension problems</b> ) | 59       |
| 10- I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class. ( <b>consequences of failing</b> )                       | 54       |
| 19- I worry the language teacher will correct every mistake I make. ( <b>error correction</b> )                                   | 52       |
| 30- I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language. ( <b>rules to be learnt</b> )          | 50       |
| 31- I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language. ( <b>peers' scorns</b> )              | 34       |

These findings echo' students' responses to the BALLI; whereby a very high percent (82%) believe that it is easier to speak than to understand the language. I find this as a very interesting finding. Many of these students, despite their apprehension, find speaking easier than understanding which reinforces the debilitating negative effect that anxiety have on cognitive ability (refer to chapter three on a discussion on the cognitive interference model).The third fear is related to the consequences of failing the course followed by the fear of teachers correcting their mistakes.

Additional key findings from FLCAS are associated with the effects of language anxiety on second language learners. These effects take into account the following: (1) self-confidence, (2) academic and cognitive effects and (3) behavioural and psychological effects. Almost 65% of the students feel that the other students are better than them in L2. The hampering effect of language anxiety on students' cognitive ability emerged through the students' responses: 44 % think about other things in the class. Forty-eight percent claim that they tend to forget things they know, while 55% of the students indicated that the more they study the more confused they become. The third and essential effect of language anxiety is related to the physiological and behavioural reactions of the students. Physical reactions are evident: almost 50% experience heart pounding and trembling. Behavioural effects are displayed by more than half of the students who claim that preparation is not enough while 39% feel like not going to class.

The next section of this chapter aims to further explore students' perceptions and experiences of the second language classroom. It draws on the CUCEI instrument (explained in Chapter 4) in an attempt to investigate students' perceptions of the EFL classroom environment.

### 5.3. Students' Perceptions and Experiences of the Language Classroom

While the BALLI questionnaire provided data about the participants' language learning beliefs, the CUCEI explored the learners' perceptions of the second language classroom environment (see **Appendix Q**).

The next sections will display the findings from each component of the CUCEI. Student – Teacher interaction component is discussed next.

#### 5.3.1. Student-Teacher Interaction

Effective student-teacher interaction in the classroom plays a prominent role in paving the way for a productive learning outcome. Therefore, in order to understand the nature of the students and teachers' interactions in the classroom including fairness of treatment, the students were requested to give their response on the 'Personalization' and 'Equity' components of CUCEI. Table 24 and Table 25 displays some of the students' perception of student- teacher interaction.

**Table 24 Student-Teacher Interaction**

| <b>Personalization Items</b>                                 | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 2.- The teacher is friendly and talks to me                  | 27%             | 32%            | 21%            | 20%             | 2.3393      | 1.08337                       |
| 4-The teacher helps me when I am having trouble with my work | 25%             | 32%            | 23%            | 20%             | 2.375       | 1.0713                        |
| 7-The teacher is unfriendly and inconsiderate towards me     | 16%             | 25%            | 30%            | 29%             | 2.3571      | 1.08592                       |

The findings from the data reveal that around half of the students reported that their teachers are friendly and are willing to provide help when needed, whilst 41% think their teacher is unfriendly and 43% claim that they do not provide help when they are facing problems with their work. Scrutiny of the data reveals a number of possible explanations for these findings. Teacher-related variables may indicate an element of favouritism. In addition, their attitude in the classroom may be depicted by some of the students as unfriendly if they (teachers) project a stern and rigid approach. A further explanation could be related to the students' perception and

expectations of what constitutes an ideal teacher. This could be related to the teachers' teaching style and the manner through which they expect teachers to interact with them

In order to assess students' perception of teachers' fair treatment in the classroom; the students were requested to complete the 'Equity' scale of CUCEI (Table 25).

**Table 25 Students Perception of Teachers' Treatment**

| <b>Equity Items</b>  | <b>SA %</b> | <b>D %</b> | <b>A %</b> | <b>SD %</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> |
|--|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 37-I get the same amount of help from the teacher as do other students | 20%         | 32%        | 25%        | 23%         | 2.5179      | 1.06158                   |
| 38-I am treated as other students in the classroom                     | 23%         | 29%        | 21%        | 27%         | 2.5179      | 1.12801                   |
| 40-I get the same opportunity to answer questions as other students    | 23%         | 27%        | 25%        | 25%         | 2.5179      | 1.11177                   |

Almost half the students (48%) claimed that they receive bias treatment in the classroom. Forty-eight percent claimed that the teacher does not provide help when they are facing problems with their work, whilst 50% claim that they get the same opportunity as other students in answering questions in the classroom.

Research has indicated teachers' support is important in helping students to achieve better engagement in their academic work (Wentzel, 1994). A number of research studies give evidence that a supportive and friendly teacher can help diminish language anxiety among L2 learners (Price (1991; Young; 1990; Wörde 2003; Horwitz, 2008).

Students 'perception of their teachers teaching style is displayed next.

### **5.3.2. Teaching Approaches and Practices: Teachers Teaching Style**

In an effort to gain an understanding of the students' perception of the teachers' teaching style, the students were requested to complete the 'Innovation' subscale of CUCEI (Table 26).

**Table 26 Students' Perception of Teachers' Teaching Style**

| <b>Innovation Items</b>                                     | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|---|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 43. implementation of new ideas in the classroom            | 25%             | 30%            | 23%            | 22%             | 2.4107      | 1.09173                       |
| 45. The teacher think up innovative activities for me to do | 30%             | 30%            | 16%            | 24%             | 2.3214      | 1.09722                       |
| 49. I seem to do the same type of activities in every class | 30%             | 32%            | 25%            | 13%             | 2.2679      | 1.05298                       |

Almost half of the students thought that the teachers use new ideas and about 60% of the students claim that their teachers implement innovative activities in the classroom.

Research has demonstrated that the use of innovative teaching methods such as computer-mediated instruction in EFL contexts has many benefits to L2 learners. These benefits include the following: the anxiety level of language learners is reduced (Beauvois, 1992; Kelm, 1992), students participation increases (Kelm, 1992; Sullivan & Pratt, 1996) and there is more student-to-student interaction (Kern, 1995).

However, 62% of the students claim that they seem to do the same type of activities in every class. It can be inferred that although the teachers are using new innovative ideas, there is still a sense of predictability and routine as to the kind of activities that are carried out in the classroom.

Students' perception of student-student interaction is displayed next.

### **5.3.3. Student -Student Interaction**

Some of the students' perceptions with respect to 'Cohesiveness' and 'Cooperation' scales of the CUCEI are displayed in tables 27 and 28 respectively.

**Table 27 Students' Perception of Student-student Interaction**

| <b>Cohesiveness Items</b>  | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 10. Students make friends easily in the classroom                      | 25%             | 38%            | 21%            | 16%             | 2.2857      | 1.02184                       |
| 13. Students in my class have the chance to know their classmates well | 30%             | 32%            | 20%            | 18%             | 2.25        | 1.08293                       |

More than half of the students report that they have the chance to know their classmates well and are capable of making friends in their classroom. Research indicates that an environment of communality and friendship among the students appears to alleviate student's anxiety (Wörde 2003; Samimy and Rardin 1994).

Table 28 presents some of the students' responses to the scale 'Cooperation', referring to students' cooperation rather than competition with one another on learning tasks.

**Table 28 Students' Perception of Cooperation**

| <b>Cooperation Items</b>                            | <b>SA %</b> | <b>A %</b> | <b>D %</b> | <b>SD %</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> |
|---|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| 24. students' work with each other on the projects  | 26%         | 32%        | 21%        | 21%         | 2.3929      | 1.0901                    |
| 25. students' learn from each other                 | 16%         | 34%        | 21%        | 29%         | 2.625       | 1.07132                   |
| 26. students' work with each other in the classroom | 23%         | 32%        | 23%        | 22%         | 2.4286      | 1.07631                   |

The data indicated that the 55% of the students have the opportunity to cooperate with each other in the classroom and this figure rises to 58 percent when asked if they work on projects together. However, while there is clearly some element of cooperation present in L2 classrooms, it is perhaps surprising that the percentage of students reporting working with their peers is not higher. Many research studies give evidence that student support should be considered essential to language learners because students spend substantial time together and they share the same status as learners in a specific context. Learners may obtain support from their peers not only in the form of friendship but also in ways that facilitate learning (Hartup, 1989; Wentzel, 1994). This support or sense of connectedness claims Wörde (2003) helps students to feel less self-conscious, less isolated and less anxious in the classroom. Research on small group dynamics indicates that increased feeling of connectedness among learners may lead to increased productivity. Group cohesion is positively correlated with group productivity and academic performance (Prisbell, Dwyer, Carlson, Bingham, & Cruz, 2009), based

on this understanding It is safe to assume that a cohesive classroom climate should have a notably positive impact on second language learning.

#### 5.3.4. Students' Sense of Autonomy in the Classroom

Students' Autonomy/Individualization refers to students making decisions and being treated differently according to ability, interests, and rate of working. Table 29 displays the students' responses on the scale 'Individualization'.

Table 29 displays a number of interesting findings related to the students' freedom to make decisions and to be treated differently based on abilities. Sixty-one percent of the students think that they are expected to do the same amount of work as other students.

**Table 29 Students' Perception of Autonomy**

| Individualization Items   | SA % | A % | D % | SD % | Mean   | Standard Deviation |
|---|------|-----|-----|------|--------|--------------------|
| 29. I am expected to do the same as all students                            | 29%  | 32% | 23% | 16%  | 2.2679 | 1.05298            |
| 33. Teaching approaches in the classroom allow me to proceed at my own pace | 23%  | 32% | 23% | 22%  | 2.4286 | 1.07631            |
| 35. The teacher decides what I will do in the classroom                     | 13%  | 40% | 25% | 23%  | 2.5893 | 0.98676            |

In contrast, 45% of the students think that the teaching approaches do not allow them to work at their own pace. Furthermore, 53% think that teacher decides what they do in the classroom. From the students' responses, it appears that some teachers are still holding fast to traditional methods of instruction and are treating the students as a homogenous static group with limited or scarce consideration of the need for differentiation.

The next section describes students' perception of activities in their L2 classrooms.

#### 5.3.5. Classroom Activities

The students in this study gave a glimpse of how they perceive pedagogical activities in the L2 classroom (Table 30).

**Table 30 Pedagogical Activities**

| <b>Task Orientation Items</b>                    | <b>SA<br/>%</b> | <b>A<br/>%</b> | <b>D<br/>%</b> | <b>SD<br/>%</b> | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard<br/>Deviation</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 15. Know what needs to be done in class          | 32%             | 41%            | 14%            | 13%             | 2.0714      | 0.98824                       |
| 17. Get side-tracked in class                    | 32%             | 32%            | 18%            | 18%             | 2.2143      | 1.9069                        |
| 19. The class assignments are clear              | 30%             | 32%            | 27%            | 11%             | 2.1786      | 0.99283                       |
| 21. Activities are clearly and carefully planned | 29%             | 38%            | 20%            | 13%             | 2.1954      | 1.01658                       |

Seventy-three percent of the participants claim that they are aware of the work needed to be completed in the classroom, which means that over a quarter are unclear of the teacher's expectations of them. Further evidence of this is reflected in the finding that 62% of the students claim that class assignments are clear and they do know what to do, 38% of them do not share this view. It is not possible to judge from the quantitative data above the reason why 64 % of the students' report they are often side-tracked in the classroom, but it may be that a lack of understanding of what is required/expected of them may be one explanation.

### **5.5. Summary of Student Perceptions and Experiences of the Language Classroom**

The results depicted from the use of the CUCEI instrument gave some insights into the students' perceptions of their L2 classroom environment. In general, the students' ratings of their learning environments were good. In the present case study, the participants in the study rated all four of the relationship dimensions (personalization, corporation, cohesiveness, and equity variables) as moderately high. Table 31 provides a summary of the subscale means and standard deviations.



**Table 31 Summary of CUCEI Sub scales Means and Standard Deviations**

| <b>Subscale</b>          | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Personalization</b>   | 16.2857     | 7.58704                   |
| <b>Cohesiveness</b>      | 16.6072     | 7.53451                   |
| <b>Task orientation</b>  | 15.6419     | 8.19935                   |
| <b>Corporation</b>       | 17.3393     | 7.65515                   |
| <b>Individualization</b> | 16.7143     | 7.26926                   |
| <b>Equity</b>            | 17.3751     | 7.79                      |
| <b>Innovation</b>        | 16.8571     | 7.66351                   |

The Equity scale achieved the highest mean score of 17.38 (SD= 7.8). In this dimension, most of the students rated their teachers as treating students equally. As for the personal development dimension, which takes into account the ‘Task orientation’ subscale of the CUCEI, the students gave the lowest rating for this subscale with a mean score of 15.60 (SD=8.20). The responses showed that some of the students are aware of the works needed to be completed in the classroom. With regard to system maintenance and system change dimension of the CUCEI scale, innovation but not Individualization’ ‘received the highest scores. ‘Individualization’ referring to students making decisions and being treated differently according to ability, interests and rate of working was rated slightly lower than innovation. ‘Innovations’ which refers to teacher’s preparation of new, innovative activities, and the utilization of variant teaching techniques and assignments. The students broadly think that the teachers employ some innovative strategies in the classroom. This finding suggests that the teachers are striving to implement a student centred approach in their classroom. Moreover, the findings might also suggest that some of the students think that they are not treated as a homogenous static group without any consideration to their abilities and their socio-psychological background. The findings also showed that students have autonomy and a sense of empowerment and say over the learning process. The next part of this chapter will outline the qualitative data of the students’ focus interviews (FG).

## **Part 2- STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY**

### **Qualitative Findings**

This part represents a continuation of data analysis conducted in the previous section. Part one introduced statistical findings in relation to students' perceptions, beliefs and attitudes about language anxiety in the context of the classroom environment. The purpose of the present section is to provide an in depth analysis of language anxiety through the use of a more focused lens that takes into account the students accounts of language anxiety under the spectrum of the classroom environment. Thematic analysis of the FG interviews succeeded in extracting a number of categories and subcategories that shed a light on the students' perception of the phenomenon under study. These categories include the following: (1) causes of language anxiety, takes into account the nature of language learning; (2) effect; relates to the impact of language anxiety on the students' academic, social and cognitive abilities; (3) manifestations of language anxiety and (4) the coping strategies that some of the students resort to in anxiety ridden situations in the classroom and the strategies that are deemed as helpful in alleviating this anxiety.

#### **5.6 Sources of Language Anxiety**

The roots of language anxiety as extracted from the FG findings are grouped under the following main themes: (1) teacher characteristics; (2) pedagogical practices; (3) fear of making errors; (4) test taking and (5) previous experience of learning an additional Language. These themes emerged from the analysis process.

##### **5.6.1 Teacher-related Factors**

The findings from the students' FG indicated that certain teacher- related factors might play a role in the emergence of feeling and uneasiness towards the English Language class. These factors include teachers' attitude, fast speech rate and accent, native versus non-native teachers and attention bias.

About two –third of the participants indicated that if the teacher is very serious or is in a bad mood this may have a negative toll on their psychological well-being and which ultimately leads to feelings of discomfort and agitation on their part. One of the participants indicated that if the teacher is very authoritarian in the classroom

*“this will generally increase my apprehension level and would bring back not-so-happy memories of my previous bad experience at school.”*

Further examples of the students' comments:

*“When my teacher is wearing a serious mask on his face or is angry this makes me very nervous.”*

The fast speech rate of some of the teachers was attributed as a hurdle in understanding what is discussed in the classroom. Participant S1K indicated that lack of comprehension might be attributed to the fast speech rate that some teachers use in the classroom. He emphasized:

*“When teachers speak in a very fast manner, I find it very difficult to comprehend what she is saying, but with a slower pace I can get a general idea of what she is trying to tell us.”*

I asked whether the teacher's accent is also related to this issue. Most of participants indicated that the teachers' accent and speed of their talk has an effect on their comprehension level. In this regard, M3S recalls:

*“I had once a college teacher who spoke in a thick incomprehensible accent ... I was not able to comprehend a word she was saying, attending class was a waste of time.... I eventually changed classes because of this teacher's accent”.*

The preference/ non-preference for native vs. non-native English language speakers were brought up by about one-third of the participants. In this regard, the participants provided various explanations for their preferred choice of a particular teacher. Examples of their comments are cited below:

*“ I strongly prefer native English language teachers because they have more experience teaching students... my teacher taught in many countries and he is very knowledgeable....in addition his accent is amazing, I want to be able to speak like him one day” ( S2B non- anxious student).*

*“I feel more at ease with a non-native teacher ...simply because he/she can clarify any ambiguities through translating or re-explaining in Arabic... This is especially helpful for vocabulary and grammar concepts.” (S1A anxious student)*

I find the discrepancy between anxious and non-anxious students' preference of a particular teacher an interesting finding in this study. Non-anxious students might feel that a non-native speaker of the English language is better at clarifying any concept that they are finding a difficulty in understanding.

Some of the participants' comments on the issue of knowing how to speak Arabic by native speakers of English are also exemplified in the 'Students' Learning and Communication Strategies' component of the BALLI, whereby 73% of the students endorsed the fact that native speakers of the English language must be capable of speaking Arabic.

### **5.6.2 Attention Bias**

Attention bias also emerged as a potential source of anxiety among the students indicated by eight of the interviewed students. One of the students emphasized the issue of teachers' divided attention, which could be related to their feeling of nervousness. Teacher must show equal attention to all students and favouritism in the classroom must be strongly avoided. This finding is in line with the Equity component of the CUCEI whereby 48% of the students claimed that the teacher does not provide help when they are facing problems with their work, whilst 50% claimed that they do not get the same opportunity as other students in answering questions in the classroom.

Participant S3D (an anxious student) indicated that teachers' attention which is usually directed towards the bright students in the classroom, increases anxiety among some students. This divided attention, he further emphasized makes some of the students feel apprehensive and affirms their somehow predisposed belief that they are unworthy of the teachers' attention because they are not bright enough. I asked him to reveal more about this concern. Participant S3D responded:

*“Lack of attention from the teacher can lead to lack of attention in the language class from my part. Teachers seem to be more interested in students who stand out than they are in others who do not... you know those who always give the correct answers to the teacher's questions. S3D further emphasizes: I do not like it when the teacher has a favourite student*

*in the classroom... he is usually the person who always gets the highest marks and is always ready to answer the teacher's questions... this makes feels worthless because I am a student with lesser ability...".*

Pedagogical and instructional practices as a possible source of anxiety among the students are discussed next.

### **5.6.2 Pedagogical and Instructional Practices**

Around forty percent of the interviewed students described the teaching style of their present teachers as innovative in nature. In this sense, teachers use various innovative strategies and interesting activities in the classroom, which are in most cases technologically focused. A finding that was certainly verified by 60% of the students' response of the 'Innovation' component of CUCEI. Examples of students' comments from the FG include the following:

*"We study through the use of many interactive activities from different sites... We also use Smart Boards to do these activities... English class is fun at times."*

*"... Teacher uses various activities on Black Board Vista that makes the lesson very interesting ... and it helps me to stay focused in the classroom."*

Despite the use of innovative teaching strategies in the L2 classrooms, a number of pedagogical practices were identified by the students as anxiety provoking at the college. These practices seems to effect the students understanding and participation in L2 context. These include the following; (1) pace and speed; (2) listening comprehension activities and (3) speaking the target language.

### **5.6.3 Pace and Speed**

The students' 'inability to understand and follow teachers' instructions in the classroom were depicted as prominent features of many L2 learners' experiences. The students' FG provided insights into students' concerns about understanding the target language. The interviewed students both anxious and non-anxious indicated that intensive or fast-paced lessons could increase their anxiety. Students are worried about being left behind because they are not able to catch up with the pace of the lesson, which ultimately leads to frustration due to their inability to fully comprehend the given lesson. These findings parallel that of item 25 on FLCAS in this respect, 46% of the students think that the class moves

quickly and worry about being left behind. The majority of the participants\_ who were interviewed indicated that they face a tremendous amount of difficulties in understanding what is being said in the classroom, and many of these students indicated that this difficulty contribute to anxiety as indicated by 65 % of the students who completed the FLCAS.

Participant S4B (anxious student) described his problem as an extremely frustrating experience:

*“I cannot understand what is going in the classroom; I have to ask my classmates about what is being explained during class, or whether there is a project or test ...this can very frustrating because I do not trust my listening abilities.”*

These findings complement the findings derived from the FLCAS whereby 59% of the students feel that they do not understand what the teacher is saying in FLA classrooms.

#### **5.6.4 Listening Activities**

Almost all of the interviewed students stated that listening to a text is a major source of anxiety. They have attributed this anxiety to lack of listening and comprehension strategies. In the words of one of the participants:

*“Listening to a text terrifies me. I keep on hearing the sound of drumming in my ears, lose track, panic and in many cases give a wrong response to the questions... I do not know how to get the main idea...”*

The students' performance in listening comprehension exams was cited as problematic and they always live in the fear of failing their exams. Participant S30 (non-anxious student) shared his experience during a listening comprehension test. He blamed his difficulties on the fast pace of the scripted audios and because of this he ended up submitting a blank sheet of paper.

Another student reported a further example of students' difficulty in this area:

*“Listening to an audio text during a listening exam is of great concern to me, even though the text is repeated twice, I end up leaving many of the questions unanswered...”*

In general, the majority of the students indicated that their listening skills improved over time, but the feeling of anxiety generated by listening tasks has not been resolved. The listening, and related comprehension difficulties, which these students face may be attributed to a number of possible causes. Chiefly teachers' accent, the speed at which they speak and students having limited vocabulary in relation to the content of the spoken language. The findings from my study are similar to those of Aida (1994) and McIntyre & Gardner (1999) who found that an inability to comprehend the teacher in the classroom poses a serious problem for many learners.

### **5.6.5 Speaking in Target Language**

All of the students indicated that speaking in class the least likable activity but while they said, it is the most frightening experience at the beginning of the term this feeling diminishes to a certain extent over time. However, none of the students stated that they have yet overcome this problem. The students' FG also highlighted evidence of students' communication apprehension. The findings from the FG echoes the findings derived from FLCAS, which highlighted evidence of students' communication apprehension (see section 5.2.2).

The majority of the students indicated that speaking in class is the activity they like least. Classroom discussion was also indicated as an activity that many students dread in the English language classroom. Participant S2A explained the problem for him:

*"In most cases I feel as though I am lagging behind and unable to keep up with the discussion."*

This may indicate that that the students' apprehension is subject to both the act of speaking and that of sustaining the flow of the conversation with others.

Fear of making presentations was also cited as a major concern for many participants. Participant S1D (anxious student) brought up this concern and the rest readily agreed that it is their worst fear. Participant S3O indicated giving presentations is very frightening. He stated:

*“I feel very worried if I have to prepare for a presentation... even though I usually read out the presentation from my papers ... my hearts beats very fast, my hands tremble and I seem to lose my hearing and attention abilities.”*

Thus, it seems that the fear of presentations is a common feeling among both anxious and non- anxious students.

Additional sources of anxiety cited by the majority of the participants were the fear of being called on and waiting for their turn in answering the teachers’ questions. Many of the participants claimed that this feeling has not diminished with time and have described it as very ‘*dreadful*’. Their response indicated general discomfort with this classroom related procedure. Participant S2M indicated that he always keeps quiet in the classroom and feels very nervous when the teacher asks students to participate or when he calls on students to answer questions.

Examples of students’ responses:

S3M (an anxious student) points out:

*“I am always quite in the classroom and feel at ease when the teacher is lecturing. However, I become very anxious when the teacher asks questions or call on me to answer the question, my mind goes completely blank and I only hear incomprehensible voices in my ears. I stutter, give any answer to save face, and feel ill at ease afterwards.”*

S2A stated:

*“I feel very anxious when I have to speak in the class simply because I am not used to doing so and second, I always fear that the teacher will yell at me and this is very embarrassing...even though I know that my teacher will never do so”.*

Consequently, the students only speak or volunteer answers when they are sure that whatever they have to say is correct. The comments from participants S1B below further support the students ‘uneasiness with respect to speaking:

*“I hardly ever speak in the classroom, I do not even like to volunteer answers.”*

Student S1D said:



*“I do not speak in the classroom, I am so worried that I will give a wrong answer and be considered as not as smart as the rest in the class.”*

SM1 revealed:

*“I am inclined to stay silent even though I know the answer to the teacher’s question”.*

These results complement the findings derived from the BALLI component – ‘Beliefs about the Nature of Language Learning’, whereby speaking was cited as one of the most anxiety provoking activity by 67% of the students. The findings are also consistent with many studies of language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; Koch and Terrell, 1991; Price, 1988, 1991; Young 1990, 1991, 1992). These findings will be discussed at length in Chapter 7 in relation to the wider literature. Furthermore, the findings from the FG could also be mapped to the importance placed by the students in speaking with an excellent accent as indicated by 90% of the students’ response on the Students’ Learning and Communication Strategies’ component of the BALLI.

#### **5.6.6 Fear of Making Errors**

Fear of making errors was profound for 10 students who reported that they refrain from any proactive participation in lessons.

Even asking the teacher for clarification is avoided during class time as participant SG2 explained:

*“I want to ask my teacher the question... I rehearse the question many times in my mind but was never able to gather my courage to do so...thinking that the question is unimportant or that I might sound not so bright if I ask a question that sounds silly or obvious to many and as a result I do not ask questions.”*

SM4 said that he feels very embarrassed and humiliated if the teacher corrects his mistakes in front of his peers in the classroom.

In the same line, student S1D said:

*“I do not speak in the classroom, I am so worried that I will give a wrong answer and be considered as not as smart as the rest in the class.”*

Participant S2L also indicated:

*"I stay quite because I think I am the weakest in the classroom and all the other students are better than me... my classmates laugh at everything I try to say...it is so embarrassing... I know I must participate because it helps in practicing my speaking skills ...I do not unless I am called upon by my teacher, in this case I only say a word or two... and feel angry and embarrassed when the others laugh at my attempts, but I do not show my anger... I join my classmates in laughter..."*

The majority of the students (anxious and non-anxious) also indicated that their peers usually try to correct them by whispering out the right answer or writing down the correct answer on a piece of paper for the student to read.

Fear of negative evaluation seemed to be a major concern to many students. The data from the interviews emphasises the students' fear of making errors. As stated earlier, this fear was also picked up by items in FLCAS and BALLI. Based on FLCAS results, 52% of the students fear that the teacher will correct each mistake and 34% fear that their classmates will make fun of them. However, the BALLI data revealed that many of the students think that making errors and error correction is part of the learning process; 52% of the students believe that if they were allowed to make errors in English, it would be difficult for them to correct them later on. Simultaneously, 68% students also want their teachers to correct their mistakes. It is assumed that some of the anxious students of the present case study are hesitant to make mistakes and consider speaking with an excellent accent- as indicated by both the BALLI and FLCAS-as important. These concerns would most likely inhibit their enthusiasm to communicate in the L2 classroom. These results may provide an explanation as to some of the potential causes behind the students' inhibition and lack of participation as evident by the results from FLCAS, whereby 67% of the students express a fear of speaking and 39% of the students worry about making mistakes.

These findings may also indicate that the students may suffer from a low confidence level and it may also highlight the nature of students-students relationship in the second language classroom. Based on the results derived from FLCAS, 41% of the students do not feel confident in speaking a second/ foreign

language. Previous studies have found that low self-concept leads to lowered self-confidence and which in turns can be a strong predictor of language anxiety among language learners (Horwitz, 1990; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). These findings may also be related to a cultural issue. As mentioned in the literature review the fear of ‘*losing face*’ is a pronounced cultural issue in Arabian societies, thus making errors may result in the fear of being looked upon as less capable than others.

### **5.6.7 Test- Taking**

Almost half of the interviewees indicated that tests cause anxiety and yet testing is a regular occurrence in their L2 class. Nearly all of the participants indicated that test taking is very stressful. Participant S3M indicated that speaking tests are stressful. He stated:

*“Waiting for my turn can make me feel sometimes like running away from the class... thinking that I might not be able to utter a word when my turn eventually comes”.*

Participant S1B stated:

*“I feel very nervous when I have a speaking test; I feel overwhelmed and attempt to memorize the given dialogues, and sentences word by word... but during the test I find myself stuck because I cannot remember some of the words and phrases hence my sentence sound gibberish and make no sense”.*

The students’ comments reveal that both speaking and taking oral tests are a source of apprehension in EFL classrooms. These findings echo the findings derived from FLCAS whereby 54% of the students worry about the consequences of failing.

Participant S4D echoes his peers’ concerns. He explained why:

*“I study hard for the test...but during the test I forget the sentences and I even try to translate some of the words but the results were never good... I end up failing most of my speaking exams.”*

These findings are in line with the result of the FLCAS component of test anxiety, whereby 52% of the students exhibit a considerable amount of fear in

test taking situations. Similarly, 55% of the students report that advance preparations for tests does not in any way alleviate this problem but on the contrary increases their confusion as measured by the FLCAS.

### **5.6.8 Previous Experience of Learning an Additional Language**

The majority of the students stated that the present classroom environment in general is very welcoming and relaxing and that the teachers try their best to make the students feel at ease. Their current teachers are described as very friendly and helpful (n=34). In contrast, previous school experiences have been, for some, less positive. Many of the students attributed their anxiety to two main causes related to their previous schooling experiences in which traditional practices were upheld: (1) an educational system that does not put great emphasis on student participation (n=16) and (2) the harsh manner of error corrections (n=19). Their earlier experiences were portrayed with a rather negative tone. They believe that their rather dreadful previous experience at school might have played a role in their current feeling of uneasiness in the English language classroom. In this respect, none of the quantitative tools used in this study was able to measure the impact of past learning experiences on the development of language anxiety among students. Conversely, the FG data provided strong evidence that prior learning experiences can shape students' attitudes towards learning an additional language. Furthermore, many of these beliefs were highlighted through the use of the BALLI. Based on these findings, it can be inferred that students' 'anxiety and 'erroneous' beliefs might be a remnant of their past experience in traditional schools.

In the next section, the effects of language anxiety on the students are analysed.

### **5.7 Effects of Language Anxiety on Students' Performance**

The students reported a number of perceived effects of language anxiety on their academic performance. All of the anxious students in the study believed that anxiety affected their academic achievement in English. One of the anxious participants said:

*“Anxiety leads to feeling of uneasiness and frustration in the classroom. This feeling acts as a wall which blocks comprehension.”*

This finding corroborates with the item analysis of students' attitude component of the FLCAS whereby, 48% claims that anxiety effect their ability to recall information.

To give a further emphasis on the role of language anxiety on students' academic performance in the classroom; the finding from the FG showed that students are very apprehensive with respect to classroom participation. In this regard, students with high level of anxiety are more inclined to refrain from engaging in communicational activities in the classroom. Lack of participation by anxious students could be attributed to the fear of speaking as indicated by 67% of the students as revealed by the FLCAS.

An anxious participant stated:

*“Participation is greatly diminished when one is feeling anxious.”*

This idle status in the classroom may also have a negative effect on the students' academic progress in the program.

One of the anxious students' said that he dropped the course twice because of his unexplained fear of the language classroom. In this sense, anxiety can lead to attaining lower grades due to lack of participation, dropping the course and, in worst-case scenarios, failing the course altogether.

The finding supports Clément, Gardner, & Smythe's report (1977, 1980: cited in Onwuegbuzie et al, 1999) that there is a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement e.g. the higher the anxiety, the lower the performance.

The next section will discuss the students' accounts on the manifestations of language anxiety.

### **5.8 Manifestation of Language Anxiety**

Students were asked to describe how their language anxiety was manifested. The explanations that the students provided could be organized under two main categories: psycho-physiological and behavioural indicators.

Feelings of anxiety were described as being manifested in physical symptoms such as tremors, rapid heart palpitations, sweating and blushing. Many students worry

that their teacher and peers would notice these physical symptoms, which served to increase their anxiety level further.

Examples of students' responses include:

S3M indicated:

*"My hands tremble; my knees become weak and even my voice shakes."*

S1M (an anxious student) reported:

*"I can feel the beating of my hearts and buzzing sounds in my ears".*

The reports on physical manifestations of anxiety amongst the interview participants corroborate the FLCAS data: 53% of the students said they tremble when they know that they are going to be called on to speak in their language class and 41% of the students feel their heart pounding.

Behavioural manifestations of language anxiety cited by the students include skipping classes, coming late to class, hiding behind classmates, avoiding eye contact, making jokes, laughing or displaying a 'not so serious' attitude in the classroom or engaging in off task activities in the classroom.

S4K (an anxious student) indicated:

*"I play on my laptop instead of completing an on-line listening task or I give the impression of completing an activity while my mind wanders to things unrelated to what is going on in class".*

This finding echoes the CUCEI component of task orientation whereby 64 % of the students' report they are often side-tracked in the classroom

Besides engaging in off-task activities, many students reported that an additional manifestation of language anxiety is not participating or reluctance to participate in classroom discussions.

As stated earlier, manifestations of language anxiety can lead to the use of avoidance behaviour or a detached state from the learning process to cope with their fears.

Examples of students' responses are cited below:

Participant S4D (an anxious student) indicated:

*“I do not come to class when I have a presentation.”*

The FLCAS also provided evidence of behavioural manifestations of language anxiety by the tendency to skip classes - reported by 39% of the students.

Participant S3G (an anxious student) indicated:

*“I sit in the back row; hiding behind my classmate’s back praying that my teacher will not notice me.”*

Incidentally, many students resort to the following behaviours: skipping classes, not studying or preparing for the class or succumbing to their anxious feelings, which are usually manifested in different ways.

### **5.9. Students’ Recommendations on having a less stressful English language class**

Most of the participants suggested a number of activities and strategies to make the English language classroom less stressful. There was a focus on the teacher-student relationship. The students interviewed felt that a teacher could reduce learners’ anxiety by (a) being friendly (b) being supportive and tolerant (c) having a sense of humour and (d) speaking slowly. Pedagogical practices that would help to reduce levels of anxiety were cited as group work, and clear instructions about tasks. Table 32 provides a summary of students’ recommendations on having a less stressful classroom.

Table 32 Students Recommendations on having a less Stressful Classroom

| Categories                              | Sub-categories   |
|---|--|
| Teacher                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being friendly</li> <li>■ Being supportive and tolerant</li> <li>■ Having a sense of humour</li> <li>■ Speaking slowly</li> </ul>   |
| Pedagogical and Instructional Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encouraging group work</li> <li>■ Giving clear instructions</li> <li>■ Being informed of lesson's objectives</li> <li>■ Less test or quizzes</li> <li>■ Using on-line interactive activities</li> </ul> |
| Students                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Coming prepared to class</li> <li>■ Using positive thinking</li> <li>■ Seeking the help of their peers and teachers</li> </ul>  |

Most of the participants (n=34) indicated that being informed beforehand about the lesson objectives would help to reduce their fear of the English language classroom. There were also calls for less use of tests and/or quizzes, and more use of on-line interactive activities.

However, Participant S1C indicated that none of these situation-specific ideas would help him overcome his nervousness in the classroom, because his fear is deeply embedded. Based on the student's account, it is evident that his apprehensions could be categorized as a trait anxiety in its outlook.

He further elaborates:

*“My teachers are patient and supportive; my friends are helpful, yet the fear is there ... I do not think I am smart enough to learn this language. Many students learn it faster than I.... I have been studying English for the past three years ... I am still confused when to use the verb ‘to be’ or verb ‘to have’... You see, I am helpless.”*



The respondents indicated a number of strategies that they sometimes use to avoid and/or cope with feelings of anxiety. These included being well prepared (n=11), positive thinking (n=1), avoidance behaviour (n=9), and seeking the help of their peers and teachers (n=16). Some of the participants indicated that coming prepared to class may help in reducing their apprehension, but preparation does not make the associated symptoms of anxiety disappear completely. Participant S3L indicated:

*“...When I come prepared for class I feel more confident motivated and more at ease in the classroom ... when my teacher asks me a question... I do get the jitters but they are usually less than when I come unprepared to class.”*

The FLCAS also revealed that 60% of the students still feel anxious in spite preparing for the class. Sixty-five percent also indicate that they get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which they have not prepared in advance. Thus, it seems that preparation might slightly help in alleviating the feeling of apprehension but does not in any way eradicate its presence.

Participant S3E (anxious student) indicated that at times, he does not know what to prepare for class and he ends up studying hard for a lesson that the teacher does not teach the next day.

He further stated:

*“Why bother studying when we always have surprises in the class?”*

S3M disagreed with S3E, indicated that they always know what they are going to study, and blamed participant S3E for not paying sufficient attention in the classroom. Participant S3E was quick in defending himself and he stated:

*“I sometimes do not understand what the teacher is saying ....”*

In addition, the students indicated a number of coping strategies for dealing with problems related to understanding what is happening in the classroom. If they missed an important piece of information, they check with one of their classmates or ask their teachers after class in order to make sure that they have not missed anything important that might be included on the test or for an upcoming project or task.

Only one participant indicated that he adopts positive thinking and self-encouraging statements as a strategy to cope with his apprehension. Self-encouraging statements included “I can do it”; “I must pass my English class”.

Many of the students across the classes also emphasized the significant role of their teachers and peers in reducing their anxious feelings in the classroom. Some of the students also reported sharing their feelings with their classmates, but rarely with their teachers.

### **5.10 Reflection**

Using qualitative data alongside the quantitative data from FLCAS, BALLI, and CUCI enabled a deeper and more nuanced understanding of language anxiety from the perspective of the English language learner. According to Ghaith, Shaaban, & Harkous (2007: 230) research into the effectiveness of teaching and learning has highlighted the importance of classroom climate as a key determinant of learners’ achievement and psychosocial adjustment. The participants’ responses in this study are consistent with such finding. Most of the interviewed (anxious) students claimed that a stressful classroom atmosphere made them highly anxious. At the same time, there was some evidence that current apprehension may be partly a result of previous learning experiences and accumulated beliefs and attitudes about English language learning, in general. The findings from the students’ data identified a number of elements that are associated with the causes and manifestation of language anxiety among Emirati male Foundation level students. These elements include (1) learners’ variables and (2) pedagogical practices.

The next chapter will explore of the teachers’ interview data in the light of the issues emerging from this chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6 TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS**

### **6.0. Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to provide a deeper insight of language anxiety by examining the phenomenon from two further, yet related, angles: the perceptions and experiences of teachers and observed practice in the L2 classroom which will be discussed in part one and two respectively. The observations-although limited in number- did succeed in providing a glimpse of L2 classrooms' dynamics.

Reference to the observational data is used to support or question the findings from the teachers' interviews with respect to the nature of interaction in the classroom. In this chapter, L2 teachers' perceptions of the extent to which L2 students' attitudes and beliefs about learning English contribute to L2 students' feelings of anxiety is investigated; along with their perceptions of the extent to which the L2 classroom environment contributes to L2 students' feelings of anxiety.

### **Part1- Teachers' Perception of Language Anxiety**

The interviewed teachers gave a vivid description of their beliefs and practices in their L2 classrooms. All the interviewed teachers reported that they are aware that language anxiety exists among L2 learners. They also believed that the students experience language anxiety differently and that its occurrence can have negative consequences on the students' performance in the classroom. The teachers indicated that there are a number of indicators of anxiety among L2 learners that teachers must be aware of. Furthermore, they also believed that there are a number of strategies that could help in reducing language anxiety among L2 learners.

### **6.1. The Causes of Language Anxiety among L2 Students**

Teachers' accounts of the causes of language anxiety in their classrooms suggest that they believe that some of these causes are intrinsically bound up with the learners' identities: their beliefs about L2 learning; their prior experiences of L2 learning; their learning style; and their levels of self-esteem and confidence. The teachers in this case study also indicated that they believed that students' current L2 classroom environment could also contribute to a sense of anxiety. In particular,

teachers referred to the teacher/student relationship, student/student relationships and pedagogical approaches.

Almost all of the teachers agreed that high levels of anxiety in the language classroom would have a negative impact on students' learning and acquisition level. Anxiety, they stated, if left untreated or unnoticed will lead to avoidance behaviours and ultimate failure in the language classroom.

PM stated:

*"...a high level of anxiety can impede learning in the classroom and that anxiety may contribute to students' diminished motivation to learn."*

PN, too, emphasized the negative consequences of anxiety on learning and he argued that anxiety could have a negative effect on the student's ability to process and retrieve information. He elaborated that, in an anxious state the student's attention and ability to understand and remember the information is distorted, because in such situations the student's attention is turned inward towards feelings, thoughts and their accompanying physical manifestations rather than on the task. Participant PJ had a slightly different view on language anxiety. He stated that anxiety in itself can act as a motivational catalyst for learning and, as such, it is a facilitative element in the learning process, but he also acknowledged that, for some students, a heightened level of anxiety might impede the learning process. Hence, based on this understanding, it becomes extremely difficult to draw a line as to when anxiety is a motivator or impeder to the learning process.

In the two sub-sections below, I discuss what the teachers perceived as learner-related causes of language anxiety and those perceived as triggered by the classroom-environment.

### **6.1.1. Factors Related to Learners**

All the teacher participants believed that language anxiety is usually triggered by many factors that are interconnected with the personality of the learner's learning style, past experience, and proficiency level.

#### **6.1.1.1. Self-esteem and Confidence**

The students' levels of self-esteem and confidence were considered influential factors. PM believed that students with a high level of self-esteem are less likely to feel anxious in the classroom. She also emphasized the important role that self-confidence plays in students' success and emotional wellbeing in the classroom.

“If the student feels confident in his ability to learn and excel in English language then this will definitely have a positive impact on his performance and will subsequently reduce any level of anxiety that the student might be feeling in the classroom.”

This evidence echoes the findings derived from the FLCAS instrument used in this study. Given the importance attached to self-esteem and confidence, it is worrying that over half 41% of the students taking the FLCAS questionnaire indicated that they did not feel confident in speaking a second/foreign language. A further evidence of lack of confidence was that 65% of the students felt that the other students were more proficient than them in L2.

#### **6.1.1.2. Students' Beliefs**

The teachers also believed that unrealistic beliefs about language learning contribute to the development and manifestations of language anxiety among learners. Set out below is a list of the beliefs which teachers in this study believed that students hold about L2 learning:

- A belief that language learning is an innate gift not possessed by all.
- The importance of speaking in perfect native like accent.
- a non-western teacher or a western teacher is a better teacher
- Past experience in learning a language becomes a marker for present and future success in language learning.
- A belief that one year is enough to gain fluency and accuracy in language.

It is crucial to mention that teachers' were basing their accounts of learners' experience of language anxiety on what they perceived to be their students' concerns. PJ explained:

*“... Efforts to negate some of these beliefs... I have students in the class who think that they are not born with the ability to learn a language.”*

PM states that this view was frequently mentioned in her classroom, too. This point parallels the findings derived from BALLI Foreign Language Aptitude subscale, in which 58% of the students believed that some people have an innate gift for learning languages.

Another point that was mentioned by two of the teachers was the importance of speaking in a perfect native like accent. PS highlights this matter based on some of her students' comments:

*"I want to speak like you, teacher, but I don't think I will ever be able to do so".*

The quotation above raises the issue of native speaker vs. non-native speaker. Native speakers said that they face a problem with some of their students because they (students) believe that a non-native speaker is better at teaching them a language than a native speaker because of the teacher's ability to translate some of the confusing words or to clarify tasks-related instructions. On the other hand, non-native teachers mentioned that they frequently hear remarks from their students focusing on the importance of having a native speaker. These students, they said, believe that a Western teacher is better at teaching them English with a perfect native accent. Amid the complexity of the situation, the teachers (native/non-native) mentioned that students would resort to changing classes just because of these reasons and beliefs. The issue of native vs. non-native teachers emerged from both the students' focus group interviews and the findings from the BALLI communication and language strategies items, in which 73% students indicated that native teachers must be capable of speaking Arabic. In this respect, students who believed that accent is an essential element in being proficient in a second language preferred a native speaker. Students who placed greater emphasis on understanding basic vocabulary concepts and grammatical rules opted for a non-native speaker.

In discussing the causes of learners' language anxiety, the teachers in my study also pointed to the role that students' previous experiences play. This belief echoed those of the students. There was evidence in the student data that many believed that previous experiences in learning a language predicted how they would perform in their current language class. Students who had had a negative

experience previously believed that they would struggle again in their current context. The difficulties that these students faced evolved around the teachers' rigid and non-supportive teaching approach during their previous school years.

The teachers evidently do not share their students' expectations with respect to language acquisition. They are aware of their students' expectations with respect to language acquisition, which centres on the learners' inflated ability and self-confidence in gaining language proficiency. Many of their students believe that a year is more than suffice to gain sufficient proficiency in a second language. In the same token, the data derived from the BALLI also echoes the students' unrealistic views of the period needed to learn a language. In the next section, the teachers highlight ineffective or a lack of study skills as a contributing factor to the emergence of language anxiety among L2 students.

#### **6.1.1.3. Study Skills**

The teachers in this case study reported that many students were lacking functional study skills techniques. This perceived deficiency becomes especially pronounced when the students set very high expectations and goals for their own progress, yet at the same time lack the motivation to achieve these goals. PS gave a vivid example of this issue:

*“I once asked one of my students whether he is studying for his exams, and he said that he can study all of the required units in two days... This attitude creates a problem for many students especially if they lack the necessary study skills techniques....Under the circumstance, the student might fail the test and this will definitely have an adverse consequence on his self-concept and will ultimately increase his fear of the English language.”*

In the words of one of the teachers:

*“... students have not been taught effective study skills or time management skills.... the majority of the students have been conditioned to rely more on rote learning and memorization rather than on the use of effective learning strategies that focus more on the use of note taking, analytical thinking and time management skills.”*

The emphasis placed by the teachers on the absence of effective study skills among students was mirrored by evidence from the FLCAS. Sixty percent of the students felt that preparation for L2 classes does not diminish the feeling of anxiety they experience in their language classes. These findings might also suggest that the students lack efficient study skills strategies. The absence of these strategies might hamper the efforts that the students place in beneficial preparation for the English class. Paradoxically, I could not help but question some of the teachers' perceptions specifically blaming the students for their lack of efficient study skills. Arguably as it might sound; it is part of our job as teachers to teach our students effective study skills.

In the next section, teacher-related factors will be discussed, as possible causes of language anxiety among L2 learners.

### **6.1.2. Teacher- Related Factors**

Many elements that are independent of the learners' scope seem to nurture the development of language anxiety among L2 learners. These elements, as depicted from the findings of the teachers' interviews, revolve around the following major themes: (1) teachers' characteristics; (2) teaching approaches and practices (3) course structure and the demands of the course and (4) peer relationships.

#### **6.1.2.1. Teachers' Characteristics**

A number of teachers' characteristics are accentuated as an important determinant in the development of language anxiety among L2 students. These characteristics as highlighted by the interviewed teachers focused mainly on the teacher's disposition. For instance, PM emphasized that a friendly and a caring teacher can help reduce any anxiousness that students might be experiencing with respect to language learning. Further characteristics impinge on the helpful and fair nature of the teachers.

PS notes:

*"Teachers must provide undivided attentions to all students, ... willing to answer all their questions and give support and assistance whenever it is needed... must always reinforce students' achievements- even if these achievements are incrementally meagre in nature".*



Therefore, teachers' dispositions compounded with certain pedagogical practices and instructional activities were considered as a pivotal contributor towards the development of language anxiety among students.

#### **6.1.2.2. Teaching Approaches and Practices**

The interviewed teachers placed great emphasis on matters within teachers' control as factors influencing the level of language anxiety among L2 learners in their classes. The teachers emphasised the importance of a stress-free classroom environment. In this regard, they mentioned that teachers play a central role in the creation of a supportive and encouraging environment. Teachers believed that particular pedagogical practices and activities could lead to language anxiety among L2 students, as the quotations below illustrate PJ emphasizes:

*“Language anxiety becomes more pronounced during speaking classes when the student is asked to practice a dialogue in the presence of other classmates”.*

PN stated:

*“Regardless of the skill taught in the classroom, language anxiety might be triggered when a certain degree of evaluation and or judgment is involved by the teacher or the students for that matter.”*

PS argues:

*“The student's personality is related to the student learning style. In this sense if the student has an introvert personality characteristics then independent work is a highly desirable activity for this learner, however if asked to speak or interact in the classroom then the resulting outcome is a heightened level of anxiety which might be visible if it is physically manifested by the learner”.*

All the teachers emphasized that test taking and speaking activities appear to trigger heightened levels of anxiety among learners. PM also noted that verbal and written judgmental evaluations by the teacher place pressure on the learners. A judgmental attitude or harsh manner of error correction can unsettle learners. In this regard, PJ asserts:

*“The teachers must keep reminding students that making errors is a normal aspect of the learning process. In correcting students' mistakes, the teacher*

*must at first highlight the students' efforts by providing positive reinforcement or encouraging phrases...Examples of these phrases, good try, but this might sound clearer if..., it would be more correct to say or to write....".*

All of the teachers affirmed that they try their best to create a learner –centred classroom by fostering an environment that caters for the humanistic aspect of the learner- an environment that is best described as low anxiety in nature.

Nevertheless and as PS notes:

*"Language anxiety is a complex psychological phenomenon that may not be always manifested physically and as such some learners bear the frustration and at times the negative consequences of language anxiety alone, undetected and unreached out by most teachers".*

Teachers identified speaking in class as the most common cause of anxiety amongst L2 learners. Their view is supported by the findings derived from FLCAS: 67% of students reported that speaking is of a great concern to them in L2 classes. Thus, both students and teachers believe that anxiety seems to originate from performance in front of their peers and the teacher, rather than the task itself. Samimy (1994) notes that a judgmental teaching attitude and a harsh manner of teaching (Aida, 1994) are linked to student apprehension in the classroom. Young (1999), states that using speaking activities that put the learner "on the spot" in front of peers without allowing prior preparation are also sources of anxiety for many students. The findings from the teachers' interviews indicated that the teachers' believe that their own error correction procedures are not harsh; on the contrary, the teachers believe they are tolerant and very receptive to students' mistakes in the classrooms. However, there were contradictions between the teacher data and the student data. Some of the students interviewed expressed their concerns over their teacher's approach in correcting students' errors. Moreover, 62% of the students claimed that they worry about error correction as indicated in their response to a FLCAS item on this topic. The picture is further complicated by the observation data. In the lessons I observed, the teachers did appear to be careful and tactful in handling student mistakes. Under the circumstances, however, I could not rule out Hawthorne effect in shaping the outcome of the findings. Nevertheless, the students' fear of negative evaluation

may not be attributable to the current L2 context, but rather a residue of their previous schooling experience.

The next section will discuss the grouping procedures that the teachers employ in L2 classrooms.

#### **6.1.2.2.1. Classroom organisation – grouping procedures and group work**

Some of the basic elements for an effective classroom climate are grouping procedures and seating arrangements. The observations did not give a clear-cut settlement of whether grouping procedures used took into account students' abilities and or particular affiliations with group members. The teachers, however, indicated that grouping procedures are carefully planned in their classrooms. One of interviewed teachers described her classroom as welcoming to students. She said she was very diligent in following a certain protocol in grouping students. She further emphasized that seating arrangements and grouping rules are changed on a regular basis.

In her words:

*“Grouping rules are based on maintaining a certain balance among group members. In order to keep this balance grouping is usually done based on comparable abilities among students. ... The seats are usually arranged in a semi-circle manner by which all students can see each other. This obviously gives the students an increased opportunity to get to know each and to interact with one another during the second language classroom.”*

PM also pointed to the need for careful selection of group members:

*“A profound discrepancy among group members might contribute to unhealthy competition and leads to the development of anxiety among some members of the group.”*

PM was indicating that the less able student might feel that he is not as smart as the rest and will eventually shun away from providing input, from the fear that he might look foolish in front of others. Hence, in this situation, the student(s) with higher abilities might end up doing all the work which in turn creates friction among members and disposes other members to feel less competent and doubtful of their

abilities. On the other hand, if group work is geared towards competitive activities, then the emergence of anxiety is inevitable. This scenario, which is frequently seen in many classrooms, generates a fertile ground for the development of language anxiety among some students or helps in intensifying an already pre-existing language anxiety feeling in their repertoires.

The next section explores the possibility of course structure and the demands of the curriculum as sources of language anxiety among L2 learners.

#### **6.1.2.3. Course Structure and Demands of the Curriculum**

An accelerated course structure was identified by some teachers in this case study as a possible source of anxiety among learners. A non-flexible teacher who adheres religiously to the lesson plan at the expense of taking into account their students' needs contributes greatly to the development of anxiety among their students. As PS indicated:

*“Teachers are still expected to follow their prescribed lesson plans ... this, of course, causes problems to many students and increases their apprehension towards English language, especially if this done at an accelerated pace.”*

In this regard, students might not be able to follow the pace of the classroom. This can lead to comprehension problems or inability of the students' to follow the teachers' directions.

The observation did provide evidence that the teachers are teaching according to a preconceived plan and that there are a number of concepts that need to be tackled prior to an upcoming assessment.

The next section gives the teachers' account on the nature of student- student relationship in the L2 classroom.

#### **6.1.4. Peer Relationships**

Teachers believed that the nature of the students' relationship in the classroom could be a source of anxiety. In this regard, PS stresses the importance of clearing out the air of any unseen undercurrents in the classroom. These under-the-surface elements take into account competitiveness, status and peer relationship among members. According to Schmuck and Schmuck (2001), “the students of a class are

more than a collection of individuals, they form a social system”, in addition, informal relationships among and between students “the individual’s definition and evaluation of the self becomes more and more vulnerable to peer group influence” (pp.). The intricacies of the social system created by students may not be observable to the teacher because this structuring of a group takes place “underneath the surface” (Dornyei & Murphy, 2003:15). Within this absolute woven cluster, students create a social structure that defines status hierarchy, peer relationships and the system’s role and norm (Dornyei & Murphy, 2003). This social structure operates under the umbrella of the culture through which the learner is a member and which in turns shapes their identity as learners. Teachers in the present study argued that it is important to create a healthy group dynamic in the classroom- one that is based on connectedness and collaborations. PS outlined a number of solutions for creating a healthy group dynamics in the classroom. These elements included the following: (1) competitiveness is acceptable as long as it is being done in a collaborative nature; (2) cooperation among peers is an integral component that must be reinforced and; (3) the seating arrangements must be arranged in a way that foster collaboration and connectedness and a sense of belonging among group members in the classroom.

PJ, on the other hand, stated:

*“While every teacher knows that class dynamics is an important factor in the success of lessons, many are still oblivious that these elements play a crucial catalyst in improving the social and emotional climate in L2 classrooms.”*

Thus, there is a dichotomy between what they believe and what they actually practice or do to foster an effective classroom climate. For some teachers, putting it into practice plays a marginal role in their classrooms and as such, many teachers may face a number of problems in handling various issues among students in the class, subsequently; this can have a negative toll on the teaching and learning process.

The classroom observations and findings from the quantitative data provided further insights into the nature of the dynamics in L2 classrooms. In one of the

observed classrooms, the seating arrangement reflected the teacher's awareness of the importance of the physical environment in the teaching-learning purpose. At the beginning of the lesson, the students were seated in a semi-circle. This arrangement gave the students a clear view of the smart board and the bulletin boards and facilitated group discussion. For paired work, students also changed their seating arrangements and were asked to sit in pairs facing each other. The paired students were also seated in a circular manner; this arrangement gave the teacher freedom of mobility around the classroom.

Based on the observations in one of the classrooms( C1) (please refer to Appendix R2), student-student interaction in the classroom was deemed to be highly co-operative, yet complex in nature (these findings will be discussed at length in Chapter 7 in light of the findings from the students' focus interviews and the quantitative data). During paired work, the students were grouped in pairs of five/seven groups. In general, the interaction can be described on a continuum of helpful -caring attitude to frustration-impatient behaviours. An example of a helpful-caring attitude was evident when students were trying to give helpful prompts and cue words to help each other in answering the questions. Whilst, at the other end of the continuum were students who were impatient with their partners who were struggling to find the correct vocabulary word to express their ideas about the topic.

The findings from the observations indicate that the interactions in the classrooms are the outcomes of a complex relationship between the students on one hand and the teachers on the other. In this respect, student-student relationship in the classroom is envisioned as an outcome of teachers' efforts and expertise in fostering and encouraging a harmonious climate in the classrooms.

In the next section, I discuss what teachers identify as the outward manifestations of this anxiety.

## **6.2. Manifestations of Language Anxiety**

The interviewed teachers indicated that language anxiety is covertly and or overtly manifested among learners. All of the participants indicated that non-observable manifestations of anxiety among students are sometimes very difficult to detect. Observable manifestations include psychological symptoms for example, fear,

nervousness, forgetfulness and lowered self-confidence. They pointed out that there are tell-tale signs that might be noticed by teachers such as blushing, quivering voice, trembling hands, shortness of breath, avoiding eye contact, and sweaty hands. They emphasized that they personally try their best to create an anxiety free atmosphere in the classroom by avoiding certain practices in the L2 classroom. Despite all their efforts, they believe that there are students who escape their sensitive radar and experience anxiety, which exists unnoticed in the classroom.

PM pointed that it is difficult to judge whether a withdrawn student who avoids classroom participation or gives short answers to the teacher's questions in the classroom is suffering from language anxiety or perhaps instead lack of motivation, boredom, or learning difficulties that require intervention.

PM further elaborates:

*“An anxious student may also display certain body movements indicative of generalized discomfort in a particular situation...scratching the face area or rubbing the hands together. Other signs may include preoccupations with items found on the desk; books, stationary items or technological devices.*

However, PN points out that:

*“A quite student in the classroom does not always mean that the student suffers from language anxiety ... this student might be an internal learner...it is quite difficult to tell whether the student suffers from anxiety or not”.*

PS noted that there are other signs to look out for, such as recurrent absence, tardiness, and sitting at the back of the classroom. Individuals tend to display their emotion in many different ways, which in turn makes it even more difficult to detect language anxiety. Nevertheless, all the teachers interviewed noted that many cases of language anxiety in the classroom are difficult to detect based solely on overt behavioural manifestations, but with a receptive and a caring teacher, some of the tell-tale signs can be identified.

In summary, the teachers' responses are grouped under the following main categories: (1) overt and (2) covert manifestations. Examples of these manifestations are displayed in **Appendix S**.

Hence, briefly stated, students who experience language anxiety may have considerable difficulty concentrating, become forgetful, sweat, have tremors and experience palpitations, skip class and refrain from studying, doing homework and projects (Wörde, 2003). Students' different reactions to anxiety may impel teachers to assume that a student lacks motivation, or lacks the ability to acquire the simplest skills in second language.

The findings from both the students' FG interviews and the quantitative data shed further light on the teachers' accounts of some of the indicators of language anxiety among L2 students. These manifestations are also echoed in some of the responses on FLCAS. For example, 53% of the students said they tremble when they know that they are going to be called on to speak in their language class and 41% of the students feel their heart pounding.

As the above discussion has shown, teachers and students agree that students may experience unpleasant psychological and physical responses to anxiety in the L2 classroom. Some learners adopt behavioural avoidance tactics to minimise stress, but students that are more conscientious will be more likely to persist with trying to understand and engage with the lesson.

In the next section, I discuss what teachers in my study identified as strategies for reducing anxiety in the L2 classroom.

### **6.3. Strategies Believed to Reduce Anxiety among Students**

As already mentioned above, teachers may play a pivotal role in increasing or alleviating the anxiety level among L2 learners. The role that teachers adopt is greatly influenced by the teaching philosophy and the manner through which they manoeuvre the teaching learning process in their classrooms. The interviewed teachers said they teach with the intent of fostering a student-centred classroom, as mandated by the managerial and pedagogical mission of the college. However, these mandates do not usually guarantee the implementation of particular practices. Incidentally, teachers' beliefs, expectations, and managerial pressure may shape the manner in which classes are conducted. With respect to this argument, the interviewed teachers cited many examples that attest their intent to create student-centred classrooms. All the teachers highlighted the importance of



student- centred learning environment in the classroom. This environment, they emphasize, helps to diminish if not negate the level of anxiety among L2 students. Based on the principles of the learner-centred philosophy in the classroom, all participants believe that working collaboratively plays a central role in creating a low anxiety classroom. The observation data gathered in this case study provided evidence of the push toward a learner-centred environment with many activities that encourage students to take responsibility over the learning process. Furthermore, the observed classrooms projected an environment that is friendly. The students were also given many opportunities and prompt to participate in classroom discussions.

PM states that teachers must design learning experiences that link fundamental concepts and skills to students' current understanding about the topic in order to scaffold further or deeper understandings. Students in this sense are involved in the decision making process. PM further states that this usually gives the student a sense of empowerment and increases their academic self-efficacy. PM concludes that with an increased level of self-efficacy, students' anxiety level will decrease and their confidence in completing a given task increases. PS also stresses the importance of fostering a positive classroom climate in the classroom. He states that the majority of the students come from schools that adopt traditional methods which clash with the current student- centred approached adopted in L2 classrooms. Most students were exposed to rigid teaching styles that focused mainly on rote learning and memorizations. In the same token, the students' voice as decision makers in the teaching- learning process were barely heard, as indicated by all of the teachers. Addressing these factors may play a role in reducing the anxiety level among L2 students. All the participants provided examples of practices that they apply in their classroom to promote a favourable classroom climate that is conducive for learning. These practices are grouped under two major themes: (1) effective and supportive teacher-student relationship ;( 2) classroom and instructional activities.

*Characteristics of effective teacher-student relationships included:*

- A friendly laissez faire attitude i.e. Teacher-student relationship
- A non-rigid approach to teaching – Pedagogy - flexibility

- Providing equal attention to all students especially those who are suspected of having language anxiety. – Teacher-student relationship
- Supportive and empathetic attitude – Teacher – student relations

The teacher participants in this current study appeared to adopt a positive non-rigid teaching approach in the classroom. Participants PM, PN, PJ stated that they often use humour in the form of jokes with their students. Moreover, they also try to build a friendly relationship with their students. Examples of this approach include social conversations that tap into many different topics related to the students' life experiences. All of this is done to make the L2 classroom as less stressful as possible. Participant PJ said he always spends the first few lessons to get to know his students by asking them to draw illustrations portraying major life events, interests, and concerns and to write brief captions under each illustration. These pictures are usually stapled together and circulated in the classroom. This activity, stated PJ, helps students and teachers get to know each other better.

Two of the teachers indicated that they alert their students' attention to essential study skill techniques to help them improve their language skills. These study skills techniques draw on effective time management and the importance of preparation before coming to class.

PS notes:

*“The most important advice I give my students is for them to study on daily basis and to highlight any concepts that are confusing to them”.*

In the same line, PN states:

*“I always place great emphasis on study groups ...students are advised to study together for a test...”*

As for additional help or assistance, all of the participants indicated that they are always available to provide support whenever it is needed. The student may seek their teacher's help through many means such as emails, Blackboard Vista, mobile phones, or in person during office hours. They also indicated that they sometimes refer weak students to an on-campus learning centre, equipped with variant assistive technology devices, for additional help and support on a one on one basis. A qualified English language teacher who has ample qualifications and

expertise in dealing with L2 struggling students usually provides this sort of assistance.

A summary of teachers' cited instructional activities helpful in reducing anxiety among students is listed below.

- Place greater emphasis on group or paired work
- Use of music, games and humour
- Direct error correction is minimized
- Use authentic project based assessments based on the student's proficiency level
- Choose interesting and relevant topics
- Use of technologically driven activities

Examples of some of the teachers' activities include the use of group works for projects and presentations. A procedure that one of the teachers believes reduces competition among group members and increase group cohesiveness and collaboration. These activities focus on cooperative and collaborative behaviours among all members in the classroom. All of the teachers also indicated that they inform students that making errors is a normal and acceptable episode in the learning process. Moreover, authentic and technologically driven activities are also used via Blackboard vista and Smart boards. The use of these activities in EFL classrooms provides a meaningful and engaging process for language learning, and students are more motivated to learn. It also helps in creating a non-threatening learning environment and tends to help reduce learners' language anxiety (Huang and Hwang 2013).

In addition, they emphasize the importance of proper time management and keeping an electronic portfolio as functional learning strategies, which may help students, increase their English language proficiency. The teachers' also claimed in the interview that their classrooms project an aura of emotional comfort, which help in reducing the anxiety level among students. PN, PJ, and PS reported that their classrooms enclose a stress free atmosphere whereby students are motivated to learn. PJ indicated that she uses music, games, and humour a great deal in the classroom. PN stated that the seating arrangement in the classroom is very important and as such, she always makes sure that the students' seats face each

other in the classroom. PJ further elaborates the importance of motivating students to develop a positive attitude toward the English language. She emphasized the use of interesting and familiar topics, which she believes helps in reducing the students' anxiety level. Examples of which include the importance of watching movies, reading Graded readers and teaching them brief survival sentences that might help in diminishing their fear of the English language.

All the teachers emphasized the importance of providing practical pedagogical practices in the classroom with the ultimate purpose of enhancing students' motivation and understanding of the subject matter. Moreover, they all believe that teaching the subject matter represents a fraction of what the teacher undertakes in the classroom.

PM stated:

*“The teacher plays many interrelated roles in the classroom which include teaching, mentoring, and counselling.”*

The teachers' interview provided a rich understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon under study. This understanding is greatly based on their teaching experience, beliefs and teaching philosophy. Nevertheless, regardless as to what they believe are the causes, manifestations, and strategies to deal with language anxiety among students; they all stressed the important role of the teacher in fostering a stress free environment for learning.

The observations gave further support to the teachers' use of some of the aforementioned pedagogical activities in the classroom, which will be discussed next.

## **Part 2- Classroom Observations**

### **6.4 Classroom Observation- A Glimpse**

Classroom observations- although limited in number gave a glimpse on the nature of interaction in L2 classrooms.

The observed classrooms appeared to be supportive and student-centred; teacher and students worked together in a collaborative environment. Many opportunities were provided for student interaction, with instructions that focused on functional and meaningful task-based activities. In one of the observed classrooms, the students were requested to engage in a speaking activity. The activity required students to choose their favourite city from photos and magazine extracts that were displayed on the bulletin boards of the classroom. Students appeared very interested in the activity and were asked for their own opinions and thus felt involved and motivated to complete the activity in the classroom.

The main objectives of this speaking/listening activity were to introduce new vocabulary words, and provide students with a relaxed environment to learn new information about countries. The theme of the lesson was likes vs. dislikes. This activity highlights the significance of verbal interaction and tasks, which encourage students to speak, listen, and develop their vocabulary in a co-operative, stress free environment. The teacher's role was more of a facilitator or mentor in the learning process. In the opening phase of the lesson, she clearly stated the objectives of the lesson, set up the materials in an unobtrusive manner, and gave a brief direct instruction on what to expect during the activity. This lesson highlighted the teachers' ability in taking on different roles to facilitate the learning process. In this regard, the instructor prompts and questionings aimed to involve all students in the activity, for instance, she inquired about their opinions on the given topic.

Examples of teacher's questioning and prompts are:

*"Khalid, why is New York your favourite city?"*

*"Another word for modern is cosmopolitan."*

*"Do you like modern Arts, is that why you like to visit the museum of modern Arts in New York?"*

The role of the teacher here highlights her ability to guide and facilitate the learning process. The teacher displayed a very subtle and non-rigid approach in correcting students' errors, suggesting her sensitivity towards her students' feelings.

Examples of the phrases she used to correct students' errors included: "Good try, but do not you think it is more correct to say..." In certain situations, she asked the

students to give alternative answers to the answers they had provided earlier. However, her attention in most situations was directed toward the more active learners in the classroom. In this regard, quiet students were overlooked even though I could sense at times their confusion clearly outlined through their facial expressions.

The observation data illustrate that the teachers were using a variety of resources in their classrooms. Examples of these resources included textbooks, handouts, photos, flashcards, and question strips for paired/ group activities. The visual aids (photos, flashcards) were engagingly displayed on the smart board by the use of the Black Board Vista software. The manner through which the materials were used appeared to address a variety of different learning styles and students' interests.

Many of the strategies used by the teachers in helping their students cope with anxiety are similar to Young (1990: 1) suggestions of ways to help anxious learners. These include (1) for anxieties stemming from learner's personality- giving remedial instruction or joining a support group; (2) for anxieties stemming from classroom procedures- using more pair and group work; playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving; and role-playing with preparatory activities to encourage collaboration and class rapport.

## **6.5. Summary**

The teachers' interviews and the limited observation data gathered provided complementary perspectives to the students' account on language anxiety. The main findings from the teachers' interviews reveal a number of beliefs that the teachers embrace with respect to language anxiety. These beliefs are grouped under the following broad categories: (1) origin of language anxiety (2) manifestation of language anxiety; and (3) strategies to alleviate students' apprehension.

The findings from the teachers' interviews and the observations were analysed in order to find commonalities or discrepancies between the findings. The teachers' interviews gave an insight into some of the teachers' beliefs and expectations of the teaching learning process with an emphasis on language anxiety. The major

findings from the interviews indicated that the teachers are aware of the occurrence of language anxiety among L2 learners. They further indicated a number of tell-tale signs that teachers must be attentive to in L2 classrooms. Examples of these indicators revolve around covert and overt signs of language anxiety. They also emphasized that some of these signs may pass unnoticed due to the complexity of the issue at hand.

The teachers also indicated a number of possible causes for the development of language anxiety among L2 learners. These include teacher- related variables and students – related variables. Learner- related variables include beliefs, self-esteem and learner' past experience in learning a second language. Conversely, teacher- related variables encompass teachers' characteristics, teaching approach, course structure or the demand of the curriculum and peer relationship.

In addition, the teachers also provided a number of strategies that may help in reducing the students' nervousness in the classroom. The results from the observations gave a snap shot of the nature of classroom dynamics in each of the observed classes. However, the observation failed to give a definite and concise evidence of the causes and manifestations of language anxiety among the students. This could possibly be due to the complex nature of this psychological issue that cannot be easily scrutinized with a complete detachment from the agents involved- the students and teachers.

## **6.5. Reflection**

The opportunity to interview the teachers and to observe L2 classes has given me a deeper and an eclectic perspective on language anxiety among L2 Foundation level students. Relying solely on students' FG interviews and their responses to the quantitative tools may not have yielded a comprehensive picture of language anxiety. Obviously, teachers' beliefs and expectations act as important facilitators in the teaching- learning process, hence, excluding them will give a rather partial understanding of language anxiety among L2 learners. Therefore, listening to the teachers' voice and observing the manner through which they conduct their classes gives a more coherent grasp of the phenomenon from a different perspective.

In the next chapter, I will attempt to answer the primary research question of this case study: What are the similarities and dissonance between teachers and learners' perceptions of the causes, manifestations, and ways of alleviating LA among L2 learners in one institution in the United Arab Emirates? I will discuss the findings presented in this chapter and those relating to the students in Chapter 5. In the process of trying to understand the complexity of language anxiety, two broad questions are used as basic prism in the discussion chapter: (1) where does language anxiety stem from. In addition (2) who holds the key for addressing language anxiety in the EFL context?



## CHAPTER 7 DISCUSSION

### 7.0. Introduction

In this chapter, I will look at themes/issues that emerged from the analysis of my data. I address two key questions: (1) where does language anxiety stem from? Moreover (2) who holds the key for addressing language anxiety in the EFL context? In so doing, I will be addressing my key research question:

What are teachers and learners' perceptions of the causes, manifestations, and ways of alleviating LA among L2 learners in one institution in the United Arab Emirates?

In Chapter 3, I discussed three different types of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety (Spielberger, 1983). While there is evidence that some individuals have an innate disposition to be anxious in a wide range of situations, many individuals may only experience anxiety in relation to a particular one-off stimulus; others may find that they are anxious only in certain situations – i.e. their anxiety is aroused by a specific type of setting/context. I was not able in my study to determine which individual students in my sample experienced 'trait' or 'state' or 'situation-specific' anxiety – and that was not my aim. What I wanted to understand was whether the L2 classroom is a setting for 'situation-specific' anxiety and, if so, what it is about the L2 classroom that engenders this negative emotion in students. As has been discussed in Chapter 5, many of the students in my study in the higher education institution in the UAE reported feeling anxious in their current L2 classroom. This anxiety manifested itself both in physical and behavioural ways. However, it could be argued that such feelings of apprehension and anxiety might surface in any learning context. To what extent, therefore, was their anxiety specifically 'language anxiety', rather than an innate individual trait or disposition to being anxious? It is important to address this question because, if language anxiety is a situation-specific anxiety, then strategies for alleviating it are likely to lie within the L2 classroom, rather than with the individual student.

It was clear from the literature reviewed in Chapter 3 that there is a strong body of opinion, which believes that the anxiety experienced by learners in the L2 classroom is strongly related to the characteristics and processes of second

language learning. Horwitz et al. (1986) argue that L2-related anxiety is a distinct type of anxiety expressed in response to the unique experience of learning and using a language other than one's L1. Some explain this distinctive anxiety by focusing on the psycholinguistic dimension of learning: automatic in L1 but conscious-controlled in L2, causing some students difficulties in their oral performance and/or information processing. According to these theories, the processes involved in the production of speech- such as lexicogrammatical, morphological, phonetic encoding and articulation- and understanding speech- such as acoustic-phonetic analysis, phonological and grammatical decoding- are automatic in L1 but not readily so in L2, they demand conscious attention on the part of the speaker or listener (Kormos, 2006; Levelt, 1995, Tóth, 2010 ). For the student, added to the complexities of getting to grips with the linguistic demands of L2 learning is the emphasis in the L2 classroom on tests of oral and written performance – these have been strongly identified in my study as associated with 'state anxiety' and may feed into the overall situation-specific anxiety that some students have reported to experience.

Others explain language anxiety focus on second language learning's potentially transformatory effect on the learner's identity. This conceptualisation of FLA is consistent with theories emphasising the essential difference between learning a second language and learning other skills on the principle that "language and self/identity are so closely bound, if indeed they are not one and the same thing, that a perceived attack on one is an attack on the other" (Cohen & Norst, 1989, p.76). Due to the strong link between self-expression through language and one's self-image, Guiora and Acton (1979) argue for the existence of a different self in the foreign language, named "language ego", which is based on the psychological experience shared by many language learners that "one feels like a different person when speaking a second language and often indeed acts very differently as well, to have permeable ego boundaries entails having a well-defined, secured, integrated ego or sense of self in the first place" (Guiora & Acton, 1979:199). Guiora (1972) states that acquiring a second language "demands that the individual, to a certain extent, incorporate a new identity" (p.145). This mechanism is certainly not stress free for many learners. In this sense, the language ego

attempts to guard the ego of the learner by holding on to the safe shield of the native language. Consequently, making mistakes can be perceived as a threat to one's ego. With the fear of making mistakes, the language learner may resist to speak in the classroom. Related to this is an idea expressed by Rardin (in Young, 1992), who suggests that language learning may produce existential anxiety in students, in that they may believe "If I learn another language, I will somehow lose myself; I, as I know myself to be, will cease to exist". That is, learning a foreign language "touches the core of one's self-identity, one's self-image" (Young, 1992, p.168).

The nature and extent of language anxiety has been explored in many studies, using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The three model component of Horwitz (1986), Aida (1994 ) or Zhao Na's (2007) four component model (my emphasis), to identify anxious students and to pinpoint certain classroom- bound factors that are responsible for its emergence. These studies along with the present study provided strong evidence that language anxiety is a distinct phenomenon and that language anxiety is 'a unique combination of different performance anxieties arising in the process of L2 learning and communication' (Tóth, 2008:70). The FLCAS asserts that if the learner engages in a language-learning task, he will naturally generate self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours that may influence anxiety specific to the second language-learning context. However, not every learner experiences anxiety in the same manner as the FLCAS conception of anxiety. Whilst one learner may perceive certain pedagogical activities in the classroom as anxiety inducing, others might find these tasks or activities as motivators to study harder, to improve their performance in the classroom. This would suggest that while language anxiety indeed is justified as being identified as a situation-specific anxiety, the individual 'traits' of students may also be influential in determining whether and to what level students experience it. This has implications for teachers and their pedagogical practices, as discussed in later sections of this chapter. First, however, I reflect on what the teachers and students' in my own study believed to be the causes of these students' language anxiety. In the next section, I address the following research questions:

What are L2 teachers and students' perceptions of the extent to which students' attitudes and beliefs about learning English contribute to L2 students' feelings of anxiety?

What are L2 teachers and students' perceptions of the extent to which the L2 classroom environment contributes to L2 students' feelings of anxiety?

### **7.1. The Origins of Language Anxiety – teachers' and students' perceptions**

In Chapters 5 and 6, the discussion of the analysis of the student and teacher data sets provided strong evidence that the causes of language anxiety are multiple and complex and that language anxiety is a product of the interplay between learner-related and situation-specific factors. What has been particularly interesting in my own study is the way that there is not always consensus amongst teachers and students as to the causes of language anxiety.

The findings from both the qualitative and the quantitative data of the students' participants revealed that there are a number of learner-related potential causes of language anxiety, which seems to have a negative effect on the students' performance in the classroom. Chief among these sources include the following; (a) low self-confidence (trait anxiety); (b) previous experience in learning a language (situation specific/state anxiety); and (b) faulty beliefs and expectations (situation specific/state anxiety). Ohata (2005:138) stated that unrealistic beliefs could lead to greater anxiety among learners especially when these beliefs clash with reality. Moreover, the students responses give further support to Palacios (1998) investigation which suggests that there are a number of activities that increases students' apprehension such as speaking, feelings of being put on the spot, the pace of the class, and the element of being evaluated (i.e., fear of negative evaluation). Young (1999) suggests that anxiety arousal may be associated with self-related thoughts of failure and negative self-perception. Therefore, it is not surprising that learners consider speaking in front of other people one of the most common sources of anxiety, especially if proficiency in the second language is perceived as limited (Young, 1999). Research into 'language anxiety' indicates that particular beliefs about language learning contribute to the student's tension and frustration in the class (Horwitz et al., 1986: 127). The results

from the present case study parallel Horwitz (1988: cited in Ohata, 2005: 138) findings on students' erroneous' and unrealistic conception about language learning.

Students' beliefs and perception of the English language process may trigger frustration or anger towards students' own poor performance in a second/foreign language. Young (1991: 428) suggests that these 'erroneous' beliefs about language learning can lead to language anxiety in students. In his review of literature on language anxiety, Ohata (2005: 138) noted that unrealistic beliefs could contribute to anxiety and frustration, particularly when the beliefs and reality clash. He explains that if the learners start learning a second language with the belief that pronunciation is the most important aspect of language learning, they will obviously feel frustrated to find that their pronunciation is still very weak even after learning and practicing for a long time. The origin of these beliefs can be attributed to many interrelated factors such as learners' and or situational variables. Here, the role of the teacher cannot be overlooked. Teachers' (both past and present) attitude, teaching style, and the approaches they use to orchestrate the manner through which the class is conducted may have a great influence on how students perceive the learning process and in turn shape the beliefs that they hold with respect to learning a second language. Therefore, trying to pinpoint a single variable is naturally impossible to isolate because of the complexity of the phenomenon under study.

My interviews with the teachers indicated that they believe that the problem of language anxiety is partly located within the learner. In this sense, they highlighted factors that are related to learners' variables such as ability, age, attitude, beliefs, culture, gender, learning styles, self-concept, motivation level, and their prior learning experience (Campbell, 1999; Ehrman and Oxford, 1995; Gardner, Day & McIntyre, 1992; Gregersen & Horwitz 2002; Oxford, 1999). On the other hand, the students perceived the problem as predominately located within the practices of the L2 classrooms. In this respect, the teachers teaching style and certain pedagogical practices past and present were identified as contributing to their anxiety.

The students' interview data provided strong evidence that prior learning experiences can shape students' attitudes towards learning an additional language. The majority of the students interviewed stated that, in general, their current language classroom environment is very welcoming and relaxing and that the teachers try their best to make the students feel at ease. Previous school experiences had, for some, have been less positive. Two key issues were identified. First, the education system in the Emirates does not place great emphasis on student participation and therefore being required to interact with the teacher and with peers was an unfamiliar experience. Second, their teachers in the past might have responded in a harsh manner to their errors. This might have led to some students' reluctant participation in their current L2 classroom.

Using the teachers' lens to discuss the roots of anxiety among language learner revealed that the teachers are aware that language anxiety hampers students' performance in the L2 classroom but they tend to place the blame in this respect on the student-related factors as well as on factors related to the L2 classroom. Teachers in this study included in 'student-related factors' the following: (1) students self-confidence and self-esteem; (2) lack of effective study skills; and (3) beliefs, while classroom related factors encompassed teachers' personal characteristics, their pedagogical practices and curriculum content and demands. These are discussed in more detail below.

### **7.1.1. Learner-related factors**

#### **7.1.1.1. Students' Self-confidence and self-esteem**

Self-confidence involves judgments and evaluations about one's worth, based on feelings of efficacy, a sense of interacting effectively in one's environment. Self-confidence can be negatively skewed when the language learner thinks of one-self as deficient in the target language. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that language learning might influence an individual's level of self-esteem because it demands a new mode of communication that individuals are unaccustomed to. However, learners who have high levels of self-esteem are less likely to be anxious than are those with low self-esteem (Horwitz et al., 1986: 129). Applied to language learners, it follows that students who have low self-esteem are more likely to become more anxious in the classroom. These students may spend many hours

preparing for their classes, yet the outcome may not meet the teacher's and student's own expectations.

#### **7.1.1.2. Beliefs about Second Language learning**

One of the influences shaping a student's self-confidence and self-esteem is the set of beliefs that the student holds with respect to learning a second language. Horwitz et al. (1986) argue that certain beliefs about the function of language may contribute to feelings of anxiety in the classroom (p.127). The evidence from the BALLI inventory in this study indicates that the students who participated place great importance on accuracy; the value to speak with excellent native like accent; hold the view that two years are adequate in order to gain fluency in the target language; and believe that second language learning is a special gift not possessed by all. The teachers in this study were aware their students held these beliefs and believed that these beliefs potentially hampered the students' performance in the classroom and limited their willingness to participate in lessons. The teachers perceived these beliefs to be a by-product of both present and past learning experiences, i.e. their origin is not confined to the context of the current L2 classroom. It is important to note that teachers in this study tended to talk about students as an homogenous group who share a number of beliefs and other personal characteristics that were perceived as hindering the learning process. While it is true that some learners may become apprehensive in situations that focus on performance such as speaking; others may become motivated to excel in their language classes thus paving the way for facilitating anxiety. Facilitating anxiety is said to "motivate the learner to 'fight' the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behaviour" (Scovel, 1978: 139). Therefore, L2 learning, understood in this context, need not essentially hinder language learning; on the contrary, it can encourage the learner to perform even more effectively.

The discussion so far has centred on student-related variables as the locus of language anxiety in L2 classrooms, the next section will discuss situational related factors, and will discuss teachers' and students' views on pedagogical practices, curriculum content and demands. It will address the following research sub-question:

What are L2 teachers and students' perceptions of the extent to which the L2 classroom environment contributes to L2 students' feelings of anxiety?

### **7.1.2. Classroom-related Factors: teachers and pedagogical practices**

As my data has shown, students come to class with a baggage of acquired expectations and beliefs about the learning process that are usually a by-product of past learning experiences. The findings from the interviews indicate that these learners felt anxious and apprehensive in L2 classes during their earlier school years and suggests the possibility that they had essentially established a preconceived notion of the anxiety they would experience in their current L2 classroom. This reflects the findings of other studies, which have found strong links between past negative or unpleasant experiences of language acquisition to current English language-related anxiety (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989, 1991). This appears to be highly probable because the language learning histories of these students – who for the most part attended governmental traditionally oriented schools, did reveal that they had encountered many difficulties and negative past experiences with learning a second language. In the students' opinion, the core of these difficulties rested on the teachers' rigid and unsupportive approach in the classroom and the recurrent lack of success in learning the second language that they had continuously faced throughout their school years. The students also reported that particular teaching practices are associated with generating anxiety. Palacios (1998) compiled a list of practices that are associated with students' anxiety. These include; the absence of teacher's support, indifferent personalities, lack of time for personal attention, preferential treatment, a sense that the class lack the necessary tools to match up with the teacher's expectations, and a sense of being judged by the teacher or acting to impress the teacher. Others have also identified the teachers' beliefs and behaviour as important, but have identified other factors, too such as course level, course organization, pedagogical activities, and social interaction among learners (Jackson, 2002; Oxford 1999; Saminy 1989; Spielman and Radonfsky 2001; Young, 1991). Each of these elements may pose a number of challenges for the language learner. Drawing on the data from my own study, I discuss below the particular factors, which seemed pertinent in the context of the institution where I undertook my study: teacher characteristics and



relationship with students, the demands of speaking in the L2 classroom; the clarity of the teachers' delivery; testing, and the apparent lack of differentiation by task.

#### **7.1.2.1. Teacher Characteristics and Relationship with Students**

Teachers come to class armed with both theoretical and pedagogical knowledge necessary for conducting their classes in an effective manner. However, this endeavour is not an easy venture to accomplish especially when their beliefs and teaching philosophies are constrained by the reality and expectations of the organization they are working for. The beliefs that teachers hold are intimately tied to the teachers' sense of self-both their personal identities and teaching identities and as such are at times difficult to change. In the face of a reality that challenges their beliefs, such as policy enticement to implement a certain teaching approach, to modify/include new populations of students, or to innovate with new technologies, teachers tend to feel threatened (Fecho, 2001; Gregoire, 2003). This challenge incorporates a fundamental challenge to teachers, thus the paradox becomes evident in the manner through which they conduct their classes and the mechanism through which they seem to accept or refute certain approaches in the teaching and learning process.

Favouritism emerged as an undesirable practice in the classrooms described by some of the students in my study. The findings revealed that teachers interact more with some students than others do, and this was also evident from the observations (please refer to section 5.3.7). This inclination by some of the teachers might indicate that they are at times prone to select high achievers as a safety measure over not choosing students with limited linguistic resources. Finding a justification for teachers' behaviours might indicate that they are overly sensitive to students' feelings and as such, they resort to this mechanism in an effort to diminish the feeling of embarrassments that might arise if the students fail to provide the correct answer. However, this behaviour may have a negative effect on some students' self-esteem and may reaffirm preconceived beliefs of self-worthlessness and inadequacy in language proficiency, especially, when this biased attention is directed towards "bright" outspoken students in the classroom.

### 7.1.2.2. The Demands of Speaking in the L2 Classroom

The students in the present study cited many examples of how being asked to speak in class induces panic or how they refrain from participating in the classroom. Certainly, this form of performance is highly necessary for L2 learning.

- Fifty-four percent of the students completing the FLCAS indicated they panic if they are asked to speak, without preparation, in the class.
- Sixty-seven percent of the students report that they become nervous and confused when they are required to speak in the language class.

Students' responses to this component parallel their comments in the interviews. Many of the students indicated that they hardly speak in class, do not like to like to participate in classroom discussion and feel very worried if they have to prepare for a presentation.

Related to communication apprehension is the students' fear of being negatively evaluated in the classroom. Here again the role of the learner's ego and the value placed on performance in L2 is used to explain their fears. In this respect, anxious students may fear being less competent than other students or being negatively evaluated by their peers (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2009). As such, the students may limit their participation in the classroom like volunteering answers or expressing their opinions (Ely, 1986). The results from the FLCAS showed that 41% students perceive their abilities as less competent than others. Further to these findings, 52% of the students worry about being called on to answer questions in the classrooms. However, these results also indicated that more than half of the students' samples do not perceive themselves as less competent than others. Further to these findings, around half of the students do not worry about being called on to answer questions in the classrooms. For the anxious students, a plausible explanation to these findings (see 5.2.2) suggest the students are highly concerned with the possibility of looking foolish and '*losing face*' in front of their teacher and peers- if they were unable to give the correct responses, thus presenting a threat to the learners' ego. This preoccupation can be related to their cultural upbringing as well as to their self-perception in relation to others. Findings from the focus interviews highlight the possibility of student's fear of '*losing face*' when one of the students mentioned that he becomes angry when other students

make fun of him. These findings were further conferred with students' comments from the interviews. The example cited below gives a clear indication of the interplay between the learner's ego, the social construct of the classroom and the demands of the task itself.

#### **7.1.2.3. Clarity of Delivery**

The findings revealed that the students attribute another cause of apprehension in L2 classrooms to the fast speech rate and/or English accent of some of the teachers. Therefore, the students feel that at certain times they cannot clearly comprehend a given lesson especially when teachers speak in a fast rate and a thick accent that makes them unable to understand what is being taught in the classroom. The findings from my study are similar to those of Aida (1994) and McIntyre & Gardner (1999) who found that an inability to comprehend the teacher in the classroom poses a serious problem for many learners.

Further to this finding is the preference placed by some of the students on the issue of native vs. non-native speakers because the latter are easier to understand.

A related concern relates to listening comprehension exercises in L2 classrooms. This listening comprehension is also highly anxiety provoking "if the discourse is incomprehensible" Krashen (in Young 1992: 168). According to Scarcella and Oxford (1992), listening anxiety arises when the learners feel the lesson is unfamiliar or too difficult to grasp. Joiner (1986) asserts the anxiety arising during the listening process emerges from low self-esteem in the area of listening. Vogely (1998) has identified additional sources of anxiety related to listening and comprehension, which are (1) the nature of the speaker's voice (clarity, enunciation, speed and pronunciation, (2) inappropriate strategy use, (3) level of difficulty of listening comprehension passage, and (4) fear of failure. Although these difficulties can surface in any subject area, not just the L2 class, yet the students' concern with accent and fast speech rate of the teachers give a clear indication that the anxiety that some of the anxious students experience is related to the specific context of L2. Specifically a lack of clarity of delivery, which can lead to apprehension among some of the students. My findings in this respect are

similar to Wörde (1998) who stated that students develop anxiety when they could not understand native teachers because they tend to speak in a fast speech rate.

#### **7.1.2.4. Testing and Assessment**

MacIntyre & Gardner (1989, p. 268) argue, “Test anxiety is a general problem and not one that is specific to the language classroom”. Researchers describe test anxiety as “stemming from a fear of failure” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127), and argue that perfection is rigorously aimed for in the classroom, however when unsuccessful, learners experience failure then this triggers the emergence of anxiety. As is quite acknowledged, many L2 classrooms usually utilize frequent tests; the learner, under these circumstances, must demonstrate his knowledge, and be evaluated accordingly. Making mistakes is a natural occurrence for learners in any context yet anxiety among L2 learners may increase due to the frequency of testing. In such situations, the student’s attention is directed inward in an attempt to curb their fears while at the same times trying to remain attuned to the demands of the task (Tobia, 1986; Aida, 1994; Krashen, 1986). Fifty-four percent of the students in my study said they worry about the consequences of failing. These results are relatively similar to the findings obtained by other researchers, for example 42 % Horwitz et al. (2009) and 57% Aida (1994). Moreover, 52% do not feel at ease during test taking situations. One student summed up what others had said:

Participant S1B stated:

*“I feel very nervous when I have a speaking test; I feel overwhelmed and attempt to memorize the given dialogues, and sentences word by word... but during the test I find myself stuck because I cannot remember some of the words and phrases hence my sentence sound gibberish and make no sense”.*

#### **7.1.2.5 One size fits all – a lack of differentiation**

Although not mentioned explicitly by either the teachers or the students in my study, analysis of the students FG provided evidence of a lack of differentiation as a characteristic of the pedagogical approaches in the L2 classrooms studied. Many of the students in the current study cited their lack of learning comprehension strategies as a source of anxiety. In their own words, they struggled with the

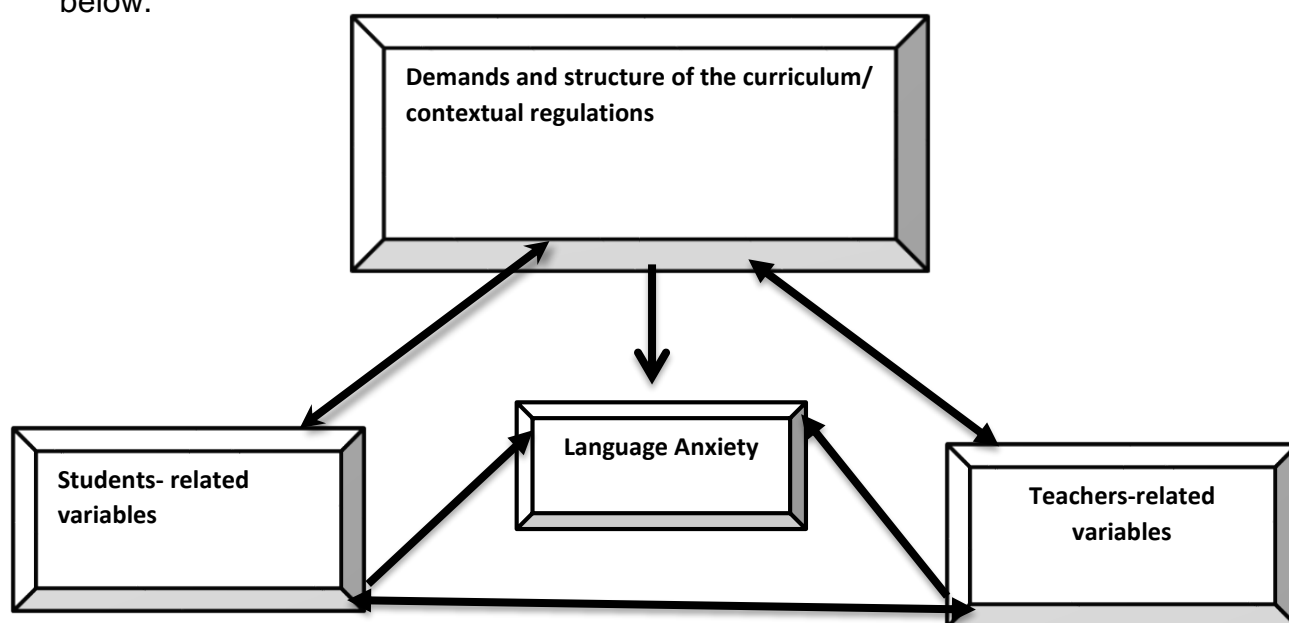
context in which they were listening or they felt they did not understand key words. In this respect, there is a need for teachers to assess students' prior knowledge to address any gaps and to consolidate students understanding. Thus, the difficulties that the students were experiencing in the L2 classroom could most probably related to ineffective use of differentiation according to ability in the classroom.

An additional evidence of lack of adequate differentiation in the classroom can be related to the momentum of the lesson. In this vein, both students and teachers attribute the occurrence of language anxiety to an accelerated lesson. Forty-six percent of students responding to FLCAS signalled that fast-paced lessons cause them anxiety. The teachers in the present study are quite aware that some students in an accelerated learning atmosphere might not be able to follow the pace of the lesson. This can lead to comprehension problems or inability of some students' to follow the teachers' directions. In the same regard, students blame the fast pace of the lesson for an increased level of anxiety. This becomes evident when they could not keep up with discussions in the classrooms. The implicit dissonance between teachers' perceptions and actual practice in the classroom becomes evident. Since the students are blaming a fast-paced lesson for their apprehension, then it follows that the teachers - who say they are operating under the umbrella of a student- centred approach - are in fact constrained by the demand and the requirements of keeping up with a curriculum that must be met within a certain time-frame. The teachers in this sense seemed to be powerless to resist a "one size fit" all dogma. The problem as I perceive it and which is supported by the data is entrenched within the following concerns: (1) the range in the students' linguistic abilities within one class; (2) the intensity of materials that need to be covered and (3) the great emphasis placed on assessments and benchmarking. These constraints are set to place a great pressure on the teachers who ideologically might wish to embrace differentiation but are unable to incorporate it into their practice due to the demands of the curriculum and assessment systems.

Thus far, the discussion has focused mainly on the students and teachers' perceptions of the causes of anxiety in language classroom, whereby the students

seem to identify factors related to the L2 classroom such as pedagogical practices and teachers' characteristics.

In this section, the teachers and students' perceptions of the origins of student language anxiety have been discussed. Drawing on the evidence of my study, I argue strongly that language anxiety amongst the L2 learners in the institution in which I undertook my case study in the UAE can be conceptualized as a complex interplay between teacher-related and student-related factors within the context of institutional/external factors. I have depicted this conceptualisation in Figure 6 below.



**Figure 6 The Complex Nature of Language Anxiety**

As signalled earlier and evidenced above, a particular feature of my findings has been the emergence of a dissonance between teachers and students' perceptions of the language anxiety with members of each group largely 'blaming' the other. In the next section, I discuss further the factors shaping students' and teachers beliefs about L2 language anxiety.

### **7.1.3 The Shaping of Students' and Teachers' Beliefs and Identities**

In this thesis, I touch on learner identity in relation to language learning and anxiety. It was not something that I had foreseen when I started the study and it was not something, which I specifically researched, with my own data collection

tools. It emerged as an area of interest following my analysis of my data, but I did not have the space to engage with it in any detail in this thesis. It would be interesting; therefore, to explore further Guiora and Acton (1979)'s notion of a 'language ego' and the extent to which a language learner may feel like a different person when speaking a second language. It could be fruitful for other researchers to take this as a focus for future study. Students are motivated to learn a second language in order to gain entry and acceptance in this global era of a knowledge society. Therefore, they strive to gain an acceptable level of proficiency and these demands an adjustment and negotiation of their identity. In this respect, if the learner believes that accent is important and that native speakers are the ideal speakers, the student may strive to speak with an accent, thereby trying to imitate native speakers in the process. Similarly, if a student believes that the language must be spoken free from grammatical errors then he or she will only participate in classroom discussions when the language structure is free from errors.

Furthermore, situations that trigger anxiety in the classroom have the potential to change the students' perception of second language learning. In instances whereby the student might have thought that two years are sufficient to gain proficiency in language learning and this perception was not materialized due to many linguistic constraints then this might ultimately lead to shaken the students' self-concept and might in turn lead to feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy. In this respect, a student consequently adopts a personal notion of the second language through which language learning is conceptualized.

Nevertheless, L2 students are not all or indeed always anxious and what appears to trigger anxiety at one point in time might cease to do so at another and vice versa. Thus, as the student adopts various identities at different times in his or her life, the situation (the contexts and teachers) which may trigger anxiety or the beliefs concerning the target language may differ and change accordingly. In highlighting the importance of the beliefs that students hold we need to keep in mind that their (beliefs) are context dependent, are the product of past and present experiences and transactions and are both static and fluid. Therefore, just like fluid identity and the beliefs that are embedded in students' personality; language anxiety can be considered fluid as well, waxing and waning at various times.

Teachers, as discussed above, perceive language anxiety as having its roots in learner-related factors as well as classroom related practices. Teachers' beliefs are shaped by an accumulation of past experience in learning a language, teacher education and their own experiences in the classroom. Teachers' beliefs are considered complex entities of personal (Flores & Day 2006; Pajares 1992); social and cultural factors (Borg, 2003); are context driven (Borg, 2003; Freeman, 2002; Hall 2005), theoretical and practical (Schulman, 1987); and are both dynamic and, at times, resistant (Ainscough 1997; Hall, 2005). A discussion about the origins of teachers' beliefs in relation to language anxiety is beyond the scope of this study and would benefit from further research. What is clear from this study, however, is that a mismatch exists and such discordances between teacher and learner perspectives has been empirically found to have a negative impact on students' learning and teaching context (e.g. Nunan, 1995; Entwistle, 2003). For instance, Peacock (1998, 2001) found that the discrepancies between teacher and learner beliefs had a negative impact on the students' self-confidence and satisfaction; and led to unwillingness to participate in classroom discussions; and consequently resulted in negative learning outcomes. In my own study, the dissonance between teachers and students' beliefs about the causes of language anxiety also had repercussions, as will be seen in the next section, for what each group considered could and should be done to alleviate this anxiety.

## **7.2. Alleviating Language Anxiety – teachers' and students' voices**

In this section, I address the following research question:

“What strategies do L2 teachers and students believe would be effective in reducing levels of anxiety in the L2 classroom”?

The findings from this case study shed light on some of the strategies that students use to cope with anxiety as it relates to a second language. In analysing the findings, I could not help but question whether the reported coping strategies are camouflaged as manifestations of language anxiety. These manifestations were depicted as entailing both facilitative and debilitating coping elements. Facilitative anxiety as related to language learning includes studying harder, seeking the help of their colleagues and the use of positive thinking; whilst in its debilitating form, the



students were motivated to flee the anxiety provoking situation through detachment or avoidance behaviours (my emphasis). Incidentally, many students resort to the following detachment behaviours from the learning process: skipping classes, not studying or succumbing to their anxious feelings, which are usually manifested in the adoption of resignation or indifference. Although limited empirical research has been undertaken that deals specifically with strategies that students use to deal with their language anxiety, widespread research has been done to help students cope with their anxiety in academic setting. In general, the alleviation of such anxiety has focused primarily on cognitive, affective and behavioural approaches (Hembree, 1988:67). A cognitive approach is based on the assumption that self-defeating thoughts that occur in the classroom are the primary sources of anxiety. Interventions that focus on cognitive approaches include rational-emotive therapy and cognitive restructuring. The affective approach centres on reducing the association between emotional arousals or physiological responses and the context. Remedies from this perspective include systematic desensitization, relaxation training, and biofeedback training. The behavioural approach postulates that anxiety occurs because of poor or inadequate academic skills. Consequently, training students in effective study skills is presumed to alleviate the feelings of apprehension and anxiety in L2 classrooms (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004:259). However, this approach alone would appear to place the 'blame' for language anxiety firmly on the learner's personality and characteristics. Young (1990: 1), in offering some solutions to language anxiety, has clearly taken a more holistic view of the causes of language anxiety, indicating that the teacher also has a role to play. While Young still lays some emphasis on the anxious learner, suggesting that they use an anxiety graph and/or ask for remedial instruction or join a support group, she also includes in her list items which are clearly aimed at teachers: using more pair and group work; playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving; and role-playing with preparatory activities to instil class rapport (Young, 1990). She also stresses that students feel more at ease when the teachers' manner of error correction is non-judgemental and when they are friendly, patient, adopt a good sense of humour, and are not rigid in their approach. Others, too, stress the key role that teachers can play in fostering a non-threatening environment for students to create a positive climate for learning (Yi,

2007). This is achieved by providing students many opportunities to communicate in L2 classrooms. Yi (2007) argues that effective classroom management is the key for effective teaching and learning to take place. Yi proposes strategies to create an effective EFL classroom. These include: (1) motivating the students to communicate with their classmates as well as their teacher in the target language; and (2) striving to create diverse classroom activities, which could potentially help in increasing students' motivation to communicate.

The students in my own study put forward a number of suggestions for reducing feelings of anxiety in the classroom. For example, they indicated that being informed beforehand about the next lesson objectives would certainly help in reducing their fear of the English language classroom. This will help to eradicate the element of surprise from the teaching learning process. Moreover, being informed will help them to prepare for the class. Additional practices cited by the students include minimizations of competition, giving fewer tests or quizzes, and the use of on-line interactive activities.

Interestingly, the teachers in my study reported that they are quite aware of the pedagogical practices that may alleviate or avoid anxiety in L2 classrooms. The practices they described echoed many of the students' accounts of making the classroom less stressful (please refer to chapters 5 and 6). Although there were clear indications that the teachers' accounts and perceptions were congruent with the students' beliefs and aspirations of making the classroom less stressful, yet a main theme emerged that could provide a key to understanding the dilemma of the language anxiety being exhibited in the institution I studied even further. During the course of my data collection and analysis, I found evidence of a dichotomy between what teachers say about how they teach and what they actually practice in the classroom. Despite what they had said, students' claims compounded with what I observed highlighted incidences of teachers generating a competitive atmosphere in the classroom, exhibiting favouritism towards some students; and not explaining sufficiently what students should expect in the lesson. Needless to mention, it is not possible to draw clear-cut conclusion based on the limited number of observations undertaken in this study however, the observations did shed a light on a mismatch between what they have claimed on the one hand and what I have

observed and heard from students' accounts. It was beyond the scope of this study to find out why there was such a dissonance between pedagogical intent and pedagogical practice; it may be due to cultural pressures – the male teachers wishing, in the interview, to impress me, the female researcher, with what they perceived to be the 'right' answers to my questions; and/or perhaps the constraints and demands placed on them by the curriculum and their institution. However, this dissonance between their 'beliefs' and their practice does need to be addressed.

In this chapter, I have so far tried to provide a comprehensive understanding on the complex nature of language anxiety. The present case study highlights the intricate nature of language learning; and has shed light on some of the broad themes that uncovers some of the students and teachers views on language learning. These themes are embedded in both students and situational variables. Students related themes points out to some of the beliefs that they hold with respect to language learning. Prominent among these beliefs is the emphasis placed on the following: (1) the importance of accent; (2) language should be spoken only when it free of errors and (3) the extent of support that teacher provides. Situational factors focused on the demands of the course and teachers practices -both past and present. Within this understanding, there exists a complex reality that attributes the emergence of language anxiety to interrelated factors that are perceived differently by both the students and the teachers. In this status quo, the teachers seem to attribute the emergence of anxiety among the students to factors embedded within the learners' repertoire, while the students on the other hand attribute the roots of their fears and apprehensions predominately to situational elements that take into account teacher practices and the demands of the curriculum.

It is very clear from my own students' data that students believe that their teacher can play a fundamental role in fostering a non-threatening environment for students. This can be achieved by boosting the self- esteem of students through giving them many opportunities for success, reducing competition, catering for variant learning styles, encouraging students to recognize symptoms of language anxiety, identifying anxiety-maintaining beliefs, and helping student practice positive self-talk.

### 7.3. Reflection

My study suggests that while not all learners will react with anxiety in the L2 classroom and even some of those who do feel anxious will find it a motivating, facilitating emotion, language anxiety is a problem in the L2 classrooms in the institution in which I undertook my case study. There is strong evidence of situation-specific anxiety. There is also strong evidence that the teachers do have the means within themselves and their pedagogical practices to make a difference. They have a number of desirable characteristics, content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge to effectively address students' concerns and needs in the second language classroom (my emphasis). My conceptualization of an effective teacher is an instructor who has both content and pedagogical knowledge - in addition to other personal variables such as beliefs, motivation, and a passion for teaching. The blend between pedagogical and content knowledge is referred to as pedagogical content knowledge. Shulman (1987) states that this blend of content and pedagogy provides an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized represented, adapted to diverse interests and abilities of learners. Content and pedagogical knowledge set the foundations for the formation of the professional identity of teachers. Beijaard et al. (2004) argue that identity is not a fixed attribute of a person, but a relational phenomenon (p.108). This depicts professional identity as a continuous process of interpretation and reinterpretation driven by professional experience and contextual factors. This concept also entails a combination of competing interactions between personal, professional, and situational factors.

The profile of the interviewed teachers in the present case study indicates that they have relevant pedagogical content knowledge to address the learning needs of second language learner. However, the dissonance between their perceptions of what is good practice and the actual implementation of pedagogical content knowledge could be interpreted as pertinent to external as well as internal factors by which teachers sometimes have little control over. These factors, as emphasized earlier, take into account both teachers' beliefs and the structure and demands of the curriculum. Educational beliefs, argue Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, influence a teacher's actions and their perceptions of themselves in their work as

teachers. In the same vein, O' Loughlin (1989) argues that teachers' cognitive structures are organized in a form of system, network, or pattern that teachers employ as a guide. He explained that teachers who believe teaching to be an authoritarian and a didactic activity appear to teach in a way consistent with their belief system and teachers who believe in a student-centred approach perform their teaching around learning activities, which encourage students' participation. Therefore, the complexity of teachers' identity, in which their personal beliefs are embedded, may help to explain the discrepancy between what they describe as good practice and the evidence of what they actually do in the classroom. Hence, the interplay of these factors (personal, professional and situational factors) become clearly pronounced when they clash with students' expectations and beliefs on the one hand and contextual regulations on the other, consequently, giving rise to the feeling of apprehension that the students experience in the second language classroom.

In conclusion, in order for effective teaching and learning to take place, EFL teachers need to be aware of and receptive to their students' beliefs, needs, expectations, interests and concerns. This conception emphasizes a more vigorous role by teachers, and requires teachers to question their current teaching practices and their students' learning to minimize any discrepancies between their intentions and that of their learners' expectations and interpretation of the learning context. In the same vein, students should also be willing to accept that some of the beliefs that they hold about second language learning may be 'erroneous' and an obstacle to their making progress, and they should be willing to be receptive to their teachers' attempts to reshape their thinking about L2 learning.

In the final chapter, I set out some potential implications for L2 teachers and curriculum developers. I also identify the limitations of my study and make suggestions for where fruitful future research in this field could focus.

## **CHAPTER 8 IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE**

### **8.0. Introduction**

In this chapter, I first provide a brief summary of the findings. I then consider potential implications of the findings for Foundation Level teachers and curriculum developers in the United Arab Emirates, in particular, and the Gulf region. The limitation of the research methods and tools employed in the present case study will also be outlined. The final part of this chapter concludes with a synopsis of the findings in terms of their contribution to knowledge.

### **8.1. A Brief Summary of Findings**

My study has provided strong evidence that language anxiety exists in the L2 classrooms in the institution in which I undertook my case study in the UAE. It can be conceptualised as multi-dimensional and dynamic in nature. Learners do not feel its impact evenly, however; it affects individuals differently and at different times depending on both learner traits and situation-specific variables and the interaction between these. There was some disagreement between students and teachers as to the causes of language anxiety but there was evidence from my interviews with students and teachers and my observations of L2 classrooms that the situation-specific characteristics of the L2 classroom (both past and present) can trigger language anxiety. In the setting which I researched, these included the nature of teacher-student relationships; a multitude of didactic methods of teaching; a lack of differentiation; emphasis on frequent summative assessment; and a crowded curriculum to be delivered within a tight time-frame.

### **8.2. Implications for Professional Practice**

A number of implications can be derived from this case study; chiefly I set out below the recommendations for teachers and curriculum developers.

#### **8.2.1. Implication for Teachers**

Teachers need to be aware of which students are suffering from language anxiety. As the literature and my own study has shown, LA may manifest itself in observable behaviours but it may also be kept hidden by students who do not wish to admit to their anxieties. As a preliminary measure, teachers could make use of the checklist that I have compiled based on a synthesis of the literature review on

the manifestations of anxiety as it relates to language learning (see **Appendix A**). This checklist may help the teacher identify any anxiety-related symptoms that a student might be experiencing in the L2 context.

Students in this study expressed the view that teachers are not even-handed in their relationship with students. Some talked of teachers having favourites, and these were often perceived by the students as being the more able students in the class. Less able students felt they received less attention and support. This is clearly not just an issue for the L2 classroom, but for teachers, in general.

However, there was a feeling amongst the students in my study that L2 teachers were more likely to tend towards favouritism than their other teachers. To become better learners, Young (1999) asserts that teachers must help students deal with and conquer their feelings of anxiety (p. 145), or alter their teaching practices so that the cause of anxiety is eradicated (my emphasis). L2 teachers must therefore aim to foster a positive relationship with all their students, a relationship that is based on partnership and trust rather than on status or favouritism. This partnership should enable students to share their problems and concerns with their teachers. It may be that this could be taken as focus for a professional development course, to make all teachers more aware of the problem and the potential solutions.

Horwitz (1988) asserts that “as students’ beliefs about language learning can be based on limited knowledge and/or experience, the teacher’s most effective course may be to confront ‘erroneous’ beliefs with new information. In some cases, students may never have had their views about language learning challenged” (p. 292). Foss et al (In Young 1991) emphasize that learners must identify their ‘erroneous’ beliefs and acknowledge their existence. This is a vital aspect in restructuring or disputing these beliefs through variant cognitive, emotive, and behavioural interventions. Therefore, as students’ ‘erroneous’ beliefs are believed by the teachers in my study to contribute towards their LA, teachers need to seek opportunities and ways of discussing these beliefs. It is imperative for teachers to help students develop realistic expectations of the language process. The use of BALLI as a diagnostic tool would be useful here. Once the teacher has identified ‘erroneous’ beliefs, they could then, for example, discuss with the students the

amount of time needed to learn a language, the type of study skills to be used and efficient learning strategies such as willingness to take risks and seek out communication opportunities in the classroom. For instance, the Foreign Service Institute believes that it takes at least 240 hours to produce an intermediate level speaker under ideal circumstances (small, intensive classes with highly motivated learners), so the students' goal of becoming fluent in a year or two certainly needs to be revised. The teacher needs to play a proactive and crucial role in discussing with students their 'erroneous' beliefs and makes them aware that they are not alone in their fears and beliefs.

Teachers need to consider where it is possible to introduce differentiation into their pedagogy. Many students experiencing LA said they were left behind in a lesson due to the amount of content covered, the level of the content covered and the pace of the teacher's delivery.

Teachers might find the following pedagogical strategies useful:

- Informing students about the lesson objectives or provide them with a detailed weekly agenda of expectations and lessons objectives, to enable them to prepare more effectively.
- Consistently reviewing previously learned materials at the beginning of a new lesson, to ensure understanding before moving on to new topics.
- Breaking down a task into incremental steps and accepting that some students will take longer to achieve a task than others.
- Slowing down the pace of the lesson.
- Speaking more slowly and checking for understanding before moving on.
- Using both visual and auditory cues to present information – to suit different types of learners.

As there is some evidence from my study that particular activities cause 'state' anxiety, such as 'tests', if these are deemed essential in language learning teachers could consider exploring the usefulness of teaching relaxation techniques, to be undertaken by the whole class before and after tension-producing activities in the class.



Some of the teachers in my study believed that LA was caused by deficient or ineffective study skills. Where this is the case, the institution or the teachers themselves need to ensure that study skills workshops and/or study groups are available and then to encourage students to attend them. It will need to be handled sensitively as attending such a workshop might be seen as a sign of their weakness by students. Students should also be encouraged to share their feelings with others.

### **8.2.2. Implications for Curriculum Developers**

This study has identified that the teachers felt constrained by the curriculum content, which they have to cover, and the assessment system. More specifically, they said they were subject to a fixed time-frame for the delivery of the course curriculum. The amount of content made it, they said, very difficult for them to assume anything other than a didactic approach to teaching – and this was often ‘teaching to the test’. Developers of the curriculum would benefit from discussing with teachers the strengths and weaknesses of the current curriculum and assessment, with a view to building in more flexibility for the different abilities of learners, and to making learning English a more enjoyable and rewarding experience, while retaining the rigour of the curriculum.

### **8.3. Limitations of the Present Study**

Some of the limitations of this research have already been discussed in Chapter 4. A key challenge for me as a researcher was being a female in the UAE, researching the views and experiences of male teachers and students, particularly as the focus was a sensitive one, anxiety. Arab men consider anxiety as a sign of weakness and therefore admitting to its presence was challenging for them. However, the use of FLCAS, BALLI and CUCEI enabled me to explore the scale of this phenomenon and its nature at one-step removed, with the identity of the participants completing those inventories protected. I sensed it was probably more of an issue in terms of the interviews, though I did find many FG members willing to discuss their views with me. Of course, it was not only my position as a female which was challenging; I was probably also perceived by my student participants as a ‘teacher’ figure; thus the power-relationship of teacher-student may well have

affected the data collection to some extent. However, the benefits of being an 'insider' in the institution and understanding the context well enabled me to, I believe, interpret more effectively the data that I collected.

A second limitation of the research reported in this thesis is the size of the study. This was one case study undertaken in one higher education institution in one country, the UAE. It is not therefore possible to make generalisations from my findings –Although, generalisation was not my aim. My aim was to develop a deeper, professional understanding of language anxiety in order to inform my own practice and hopefully to prompt others' to think about their own practice. In hindsight, this study might also help educators in understanding the occurrence of this phenomenon in HEI in the Gulf region where students share similar cultural and pedagogical backgrounds to the participants in this study.

A challenge to me in undertaking this research was working with so many different and diverse data collection tools. Others have used FLCAS on its own as a diagnostic tool to measure the extent and nature of L2 language anxiety. I decided to get as full a picture as I could so I used BALLI and CUCEI inventories as well – and I introduced the qualitative data element through the use of semi-structured interviews and observations. In hindsight, this was a lot to manage and generated a lot of data to be analysed but the combination of quantitative and qualitative research tools, in spite of the difficulty in integrating the data to produce findings, proved to be of great benefit in my investigation. Without the inclusion of both the students and teachers' voices in relation to L2 anxiety, the findings of my research would have been less rich and less illuminating. The use of multiple methods of inquiry has, I believe, enabled the complexities of the phenomenon of language anxiety experienced by some Foundation Level Emirati students to be effectively identified and explored.

#### **8.4. Contribution to Knowledge**

This study has provided valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of teachers and male students in a context, a higher education institution in the UAE, which has not previously been a key focus for research into language anxiety and its findings, should be helpful to teachers and curriculum developers in the UAE.

Many previous studies of language anxiety have used quantitative measures to investigate the phenomenon. In employing a case study approach, which used a combination of quantitative measures and qualitative data collection tools, this research has been able to provide a richer understanding of language anxiety than would have otherwise been gained through quantitative means alone.

Consequently, this study should be of interest to anyone considering what methods to use when researching in this field. The use of focus interviews with the students enabled me to probe the findings from the FLCAS, BALLI and CUCEI inventories and to thereby develop a deeper understanding. The use of lesson observations although limited in number enabled me to identify that what teachers said they did was often not, what they did in practice due to constraints which engulf both curriculum and contextual demands. As a L2 teacher myself, I have to admit that, before I started my data collection I probably believed, too, that most of the causes of language anxiety lay within the learner's own personality and disposition. It was very illuminating to be present, as a non-participant observer, with the space and time to watch and reflect on the interactions and activities in the L2 classroom. Furthermore, listening to both students and teachers' perception of anxiety has certainly highlighted the benefits of using a mixed methods approach to study this complex phenomenon.

Of particular importance in this study was the aim of listening to not only teachers' voices about language anxiety, but to foreground the students' perceptions and experiences. This is why I presented the findings from the student data first (in Chapter 5). A classroom is a setting in which complex interrelationships are played out which affect the quality of teaching and learning. By listening to both groups in this study, it has been possible for me to make strongly evidenced-based suggestions in relation to pedagogical practices in the L2 classroom.

### **8.5. Recommendations for Future Research**

Despite the valuable contributions of this study, I set forward a number of recommendations for future research. Others interested in this field may wish to explore the extent to which my own findings are transferable to other contexts: either in HEIs within the UAE or in other countries. In addition, I undertook my study only with male students; it could be interesting to explore the extent to which

female students exhibit language anxiety and whether the triggers are the same or different, just in case there is a gendered dimension. Other studies may also wish to explore further whether situation-specific anxiety exists in other subject areas and, if so, whether it is similar or different in terms of its causes, its manifestations, and effective strategies for preventing or reducing it.

Other researchers might also find it fruitful to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools in relation to student-related variables and situational related variables but over a longer period of time than I was able to explore and observe, perhaps also incorporating case studies of individual students to get a deeper understanding of individual L2 learner experiences. As stated earlier, students and teachers' identity emerged as a potential focus of future research. Therefore, it would be interesting for researchers to investigate identity in relation to language anxiety.

## **8.6. Final Reflection**

The final reflection of this thesis is concerned with the journey of this research. In the early phases of formulating a research proposal, my main concern, was to complete this project as soon as possible. Consequently, with the valuable input and help of my supervisors, I was able to select a topic that I could relate to and is significant for my role as an educator. The significance of this choice exceeds my immediate personal boundary to take into account the anticipated helpful outcomes that the findings might entail for the many students who are suffering silently and void of any helpful strategies to rely on. Since then, my preoccupation with completing the study as fast as possible diminished. I was more interested in investigating the complexity of this issue and trying to make sense of the different realities that I was confronted with. As an EFL teacher, this research taught me to use a broad lens in responding to my students' needs and concerns. It has also equipped me with the empirical knowledge to reach out to students' affective needs and expectations in L2 contexts. This research has certainly provided a deeper essence to my passion for both teaching and research.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **[A]**

Alrabia.F (2014). A Model of Foreign Language anxiety in Saudi Context. Research Gate.

Alrabia.F (2015). Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching. Innovation in language Learning and Teaching, 9 (2), 163-190.

Aida, Y. (1994). Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's construct of foreign language anxiety: The case of students of Japanese. The Modern Language Journal, 78, 155-167.

Ainscough, V. (1997). Reflection in action: Increasing teacher awareness of the learning. System, 25, 571-579.

Akkerman, S. F., & Meijer, P. C. (2011). A dialogical approach to conceptualizing teacher identity. Teaching and Teacher Education, 27, 308-3019.

Al-Saraj, T.M. (2013). Foreign language anxiety in female Arabs learning English: Case studies. Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching.5-22  
[http://www.academia.edu/4779243/Foreign\\_language\\_anxiety\\_in\\_female\\_Arabs\\_learning\\_English\\_case\\_studies](http://www.academia.edu/4779243/Foreign_language_anxiety_in_female_Arabs_learning_English_case_studies)

Arnolds, J. (Ed.). (2005). Affect in Language Learning. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

.

### **[B]**

Bailey, K. M. (1983). Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language learning: Looking at and through the diary studies. In H. W. Seliger & M. H. Long (Eds.), Classroom oriented research in second language acquisition (pp. 67-102). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Beauvois, M. H. (1992). Computer-assisted classroom discussion in the foreign language classroom: Conversation in slow motion. Foreign Language Annals, 5, 455-465.

Beijaard, D., Meijer, P. C., & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. Teaching and Teacher Education, 20:2,107-128.

Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (4th Ed.). New York, NY: White Plains.

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe and do. *Language Teaching*, 36, 81-109.

British Council. TNE in the UAE Research Findings. UAE Country Partnership Meeting 5 June 2009 Alison Devine, Regional Manager Education UK, Middle East.

## [C]

Campbell, C.M. (1999). Language anxiety in men and women: Dealing with gender differences in the language classroom. In D.J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere* (pp. 191–215). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Central Intelligence Agency. (23 May 2014). *The world fact book*. Retrieved May 23, 2011, from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ae.html>

Genoz, J. and Lecumberri, M. L. G. (1999). The acquisition of English pronunciation: learners' views. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9: 3–15.

Cheng, Y., Horwitz, E.K., & Schallert, D.L. (1999) Language anxiety: differentiating writing and speaking components, *Language Learning*, 49(3), 417-446.

Clément, R. (1980). Ethnicity, contact, and communicative competence in a second language. In H. Giles, W. P. Robinson, & P. M. Smith (Eds.), *Language: Social psychological perspectives*. Oxford, United Kingdom: PergamonPress. pp. 147-154

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education*. (Sixth Eds.). London: Routledge.

Cohen, Y., & Norst, M.J. (1989). Fear, Dependence and Loss of Self- esteem: Affective barriers in second language learning among adults. *RELC Journal*, 20, 61-77.

Country Profile: United Arab Emirates" (PDF). Library of Congress – Federal Research Division.

Creswell, J. (2003). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Creswell, J. (2009). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches. Los Angeles: Sage.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Clark, V. L., Gutmann, M., & Hanson, W. (2003). Advanced mixed methods research designs. In: A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research (pp. 209-240). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cummins, J. (2000). Language, Power, and Pedagogy. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

#### **[D]**

Da Costa, P.L. (2015). Reenvisioning Language Anxiety in the Globalized classroom. Through a social Imaginary Lens. Language Learning.504-532.

Davis, P., & Rinvolutri. M. (1990). The Confidence Book. Pilgrim Longman Resource Books.

Dewaele, J.M., Petrides, K.V. and Furnham, A. 2008. "The effects of trait emotional intelligence and sociobiographical variables on communicative anxiety and foreign language anxiety among adult multilingual: A review and empirical investigation". Language Learning 58: 911-960.

Dhal, S. (2014, April 9). UAE students score 'abysmally low in maths, problem solving'. The Gulf News. Retrieved May 14 2014 from

<http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/general/uae-students-score-abysmally-low-in-maths-problem-solving-1.1316989>

Dörnyei, Z., & Murphey, T. (2003). Group dynamics in the language classroom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Dörnyei, Z. (2005). The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

#### **[E]**

Ehrman, M. E., & Dornye, Z. (1998). Interpersonal dynamics in the second language classroom. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Eherman, M. E., & Oxford, R.L. (1995). Cognition Plus: Correlates of language learning Success. *The modern Language Classroom.*, 79. 67-89.

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005), Listening Comprehension and Anxiety in the Arabic Language Classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89: 206–220.

Ely, C. (1986). Language learning motivation: A descriptive and causal analysis. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70, 1, 28-35.

Entwistle, N. (2003). Enhancing teaching-learning environments to encourage deep learning. In E, De Corte (Ed.), *Excellence in higher education* (pp. 205-324). London: Portland Press.

Ernest, P. (1994). *An introduction to research methodology and paradigms*. Exeter: University of Exeter.

## **[F]**

Fecho, B. (2001). “Why are you doing this?” Acknowledging and transcending threat in a critical inquiry classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 36, 9–37.

Findlow, S. (2006). Higher education and linguistic dualism in the Arab Gulf. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. Vol 27 (1). pp. 19-36.

Flores, M. A. & Day, C. (2006). Contexts which shape and reshape new teachers ‘identities: A multi-perspective study. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22, 219-232.

Fraser, B.J., Treagust, D.F., Williamson, J.C., & Tobin, K.G. (1987). Validation and application of the College & University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI), In B.J. Fraser (Ed.), *The Study of learning Environments* (Vol. 2, pp. 17-30). Perth: Curtin University of Technology.

Freeman, D. (2002). The hidden side of the work: Teacher knowledge and learning to teach. A perspective from North American educational research on teacher education in English language teaching. *Language Teaching*, 35, 1-13.

## **[G]**



Ghaith, G.M., Shaaban, K.A., & Harkous, S.A. (2007). An investigation of the relationship between forms of positive interdependence, social support, and selected aspects of classroom climate. *System*, 35, 229-240.

Ghazala Biquise. "Study in UAE – UAE Educational System".  
Arabiancampus.com.Federal Research Division

Ganschow, L. & R. Sparks, (1996). Anxiety about Foreign Language Learning among High School Women. *The Modern Language Journal*, 80, 199-212.

Gardner, R.C, Smythe, P.C., Clément, R., & Gliksmann.L. (1976). Second language learning: A social-psychological perspective. *Canadian Modern Language Review*.

Gardner, R.C., Day, J.B., & McIntyre, P.D. (1992). Integrative motivation, induced anxiety, and language learning in a controlled environment. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 14, 197–214.

GDP to hit \$474.2b in 2018". *Khaleej Times*. 4 July 2013. Retrieved 5 January 2014.

Goldberg, L. R. (1992). The development of markers for the Big-Five factor structure. *Psychological Assessment*, 4, 26-42.

Gregersen, T. and Horwitz, E. K. (2002). Language Learning and Perfectionism: Anxious and Non-Anxious Language Learners' Reactions to Their Own Oral Performance. *The Modern Language Journal*, 86: 562–570. doi: 10.1111/1540-4781.00161

Gregoire, M. (2003). Is it a challenge or a threat? A dual process model of teacher's cognition and appraisal processes during conceptual change. *Educational Psychology Review*, 15, 147–179.

Gu, M. M. (2010). Identities constructed in difference: English language learners in China. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42(1), 139-152. doi:10.1016/j.pragma.2009.06.006.

Guiora, A. (1972). Construct validity and transpositional research: Toward an empirical study of psychoanalytic concepts. *Comprehensive Psychiatry* 13(2), 139-150.

Guiora, A., & Acton, W. R. (1979). Personality and language: A restatement. *Language Learning*, 29, 193-204.

## [H]

Hall, L A. (2005). Teachers and content area reading: Attitudes, beliefs and change. *Teacher and Teacher Education*, 2, 403-414.

Hakuta, K., Butler, G., & Witt, D. (2000) "How Long Does it Take English Learners to Attain Proficiency?" Policy Report 2000-1. The University of California Linguistic Minority Research Institute.

Hartup, W. W. (1989). Social relationships and their development significance. *American Psychologist*, 44, 120-126.

HCT Factbook 2012-2013). <http://www.hct.ac.ae/factbook/>

Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smith, B. (2004). Theoretical frameworks. Ch 2 In: *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Van Schaik Publishers. Pretoria.

Hembree, R. (1988). Correlates, causes, effects, and treatment of test anxiety. *Review of Educational Research*, 58(1), pp. 47-77.

Hijazi, R., Zoubeidi, T., Abdalla, I., & Harb, N. (2008). A study of the UAE Higher education sector in light of Dubai's strategic objectives. *Journal of Economic & Administrative Sciences*, 24(1), 68-81.

Hong, K. (2006). Beliefs about language learning and language learning strategy use in an EFL context: A comparison study of monolingual Korean and bilingual Korean-Chinese university students. PhD Dissertation. University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, USA.

Horwitz, E.K. (1986). Preliminary evidence for the reliability and validity of a foreign language anxiety scale. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 559-564.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope. J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70, 125-132.

Horwitz, E.K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal*, 72, 182-193.

Horwitz, E.K. and Young, D.L. (eds.) (1991) *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Horwitz, E. K. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 112-126.

Huang, Yi-Wen (2009). Listening to their voices: An in-depth study of language anxiety and cultural adjustment among Taiwanese graduate students in the United States. Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertation and Theses.

Huang, P; Hwang, Y. (2013). An Exploration of EFL Learners' Anxiety and E-learning Environments. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 4 one, 27-35, January 2013.

Hudson, P. (2013). *Tiptoeing Through the Minefield: Teaching English in Higher Educational Institutes in the United Arab Emirates*. Thesis submitted to Canterbury Christ Church University for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Hussien, S, (2013). (Doctorate thesis). *An investigation into the factors associated with writing anxiety for English Language learners in UAE Universities*.

## [J]

Jackson. (2002). Reticence in second language case discussion: anxiety and aspiration, *System*, 30, 65-84.

Joiner, E. (1986). "Listening in the Foreign Language," 43-70 in B. H. Wing, ed., *Listening, Reading, and Writing: Analysis and Application*. Middlebury, VT: Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages.

Jones, J.F. (2004). A Cultural Context for Language Anxiety. *EA English Australia Journal*, 21, 2, pp.30-39

## [K]

Kawach, N. (2004, June 4). *Nahyan Optimistic on Job Nationalization*, Gulf News. Retrieved Feb.4.2014 from [gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/general/nahyan-optimistic-on](http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/general/nahyan-optimistic-on)

Kelm, O. R. (1992). The use of synchronous computer networks in second language instruction: A preliminary report. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25 (5), 441-454.

Kern, R. G. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effects on quantity and characteristics of language production. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79 (4), 457-475.

Kim, Y. (2002). *Construction of a theoretical model of foreign language anxiety and development of a measure of the construct: Korean university EFL learner's case*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University.

Klienmann, H. (1977). Avoidance Behaviour in adult second language acquisition. *Language learning*, 27, 93-107.

Kormos, J. (2006). *Speech production and second language acquisition*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Koch, A.S. and Terrell, T.D. (1991) Affective reactions of foreign language students to Natural Approach activities and teaching techniques. In E.K. Horwitz and D.L. Young (eds) *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications* (pp.109-126). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language learning and acquisition*. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S. 1986. *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. London: Longman.

Kumar, R. (1996). *Research methodology: a systematic Guide for Beginners*, Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.

Kuntz, P.S. (1996a). *Beliefs about Language Learning: The Horwitz model*. (ERIC) Document Reproduction Service, No. ED397649.

Kuntz, P, S. (1996b). *Students of easy languages: Their Belief about Language Learning*, Eric Document Reproduction Service, No. ED397658.

Kuntz, P.S. (1997). *Beliefs about language learning held by students and their teachers: A pilot study*, (ERIC) Document production Service, No. ED407853.

Kuru-Gonen, I. (2005). *The Sources of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety of Students in a Turkish EFL Context*. Master Thesis, Anadolu Universities Egitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü.

## [L]

Landau, S., & Everitt, B. (2004). *A Handbook of Statistical Analyses Using SPSS*. Chapman & Hall: Boca Raton, Florida.

Lazarus, R.S. (1996). *Psychological Stress and the Coping Process*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Leary, M.R. (1982). *Social Anxiety*. In L. Wheeler (Ed.), *Review of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol.3, 97-120.

Leki, I. (1999). *Techniques for reducing second language writing anxiety*. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere* (pp. 64–88). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Levelt, W.J.M. (1995) *The Ability to Speak: from intentions to spoken words*. *European Review*, 3: 13-23.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

## [M]

MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner, R.C. (1989) Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification, *Language Learning*, 39(2), 251-275.

MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner, R.C. (1991a) Language anxiety: Its relationship to other anxieties and to processing in native and second languages, *Language Learning*, 41(4), 513-534.

MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner, R.C. (1991b) Methods and results in the study of anxiety and language learning: A review of literature, *Language Learning*, 41 (1), 85-117.

MacIntyre, P.D. (1995). How does anxiety affect second language learning? A reply to Sparks and Ganschow, *Modern Language Journal*, 79, 1, 90-99.

MacIntyre, P.D., & Gardner R.C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language, *Language Learning*, 44 (2), 283-305.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1994). The effect of induced anxiety on cognitive processing in computerized vocabulary learning. *Studies in second language acquisition*.16, 1-17.

MacIntyre, P. D., Noels, K. A., & Clément, R. (1997). Biases in self-ratings of second language proficiency: The role of language anxiety. *Language Learning*, 47, 265- 287.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1999). "Language Anxiety: A Review of Literature for Language Teachers". In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect In Foreign Language and Second Language Learning* (pp. 24 – 43). New York: Mc Graw Hill Companies.

MacCallum, R. C., Widaman, K. F., Zhang, S., & Hong S. (1999). Sample size in factor analysis. *Psychological Methods*, 4, 84-99.

Macpherson, R., Kachelhoffer, P., & El Nemr, M. (2007). The radical modernization of school and education system leadership in the United Arab Emirates: towards an indigenized and educative leadership. *International Studies in Educational Administration*. 35(1), 60-77.

Maslamani, K. Y. (2007). *Family background and learning English in the United Arab Emirates: Investigating the socio-cultural milieu*. Exeter University.

Mastuda, S., and Gobel, P. (2004). Anxiety and predictors of performance in the foreign Language Classroom. *System*, 32, 21-36.

McRobbie, C. J., Roth, W.-M., & Lucas, K. B. (1997). Multiple learning environments in a Physics classroom. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 27(4), 333-353.

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research [MOHESR]. (2007). *Educating the next generation of Emiratis: A master plan for UAE higher education*. United Arab Emirates.

Moos, R. H. (1986). *Work environment scale manual: Second edition*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.

Morgan. D. (1988). *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1988.

Moussly. R. (2012, May 27). Majority of Emirati students are unprepared for university Gulf News. Retrieved February 14, 2013 from <http://gulfnews.com/news/gulf/uae/education/majority-of-emirati-students-are-unprepared-for-university-1.1028071>

## [N]

Nikitina.L. & Furuoka.F. (2006), Re-examining Horwitz's Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) in the Malaysian Context. 2006, Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 209-219.

<http://e-flt.nus.edu.sg/v3n22006/nikitina.pdf>

Naffsinger, P. A. (1995). 'Face' among the Arabs. Retrieved January 2, 2014, from Central Intelligence Agency: [https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol8no3/html/v08i3a05p\\_0001.htm](https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol8no3/html/v08i3a05p_0001.htm)

National Media Council. (2009). *United Arab Emirates Yearbook 2009*. Abu Dhabi: National Media Council.

Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nunan, D. (1995). "Closing the gap between learning and instruction." *TESOL Quarterly*, 29, 1, 133-158.

Nunnally, J.C. & Bernstein, I.H. (1994). *Psychometric Theory* (3rd Edition).

McGraw- Hill Series in Psychology, McGraw-Hill, Inc., New York: NY, 264-265.

## **[O]**

O'Brien, M., & Martin, T. (2010). Local needs, external requirements: Balancing the needs of a country's educational system with the requirements of international recognition. In N. Reynolds & M. Banfa (Eds.). *Developing a nation through educational Emiratisation: Reflections on the development and implementation of a transformational teacher education program in the UAE*; Book 3 in M. O'Brien (Ed.), *New classroom voices*; HCT Teacher Education Series.

Ohata, K. (2005). Language Anxiety from the Teacher's Perspective: Interview with Seven Experienced ESL/EFL Teachers. *Journal of Language and Learning*, 3, 1, 133-155).

O'Loughlin, M. (1989). *The Influence of Teachers Beliefs about knowledge. Teaching and learning on their pedagogy: A constructivist re-conceptualization and research agenda for teacher education* Paper presented at the Nineteenth Annual Symposium of the Jean Piaget Society, Philadelphia, PA.

Onwuegbuzie, A.J., Bailey, P. and Daley, C.E. (1999) Factors associated with foreign language anxiety, *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 20, 217-239.

Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle.

Oxford, R. L. (1999). "Style wars" as a source of anxiety in language classrooms. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning*. Boston: McGraw-Hill College.

Oxford, R., M. Ehrman., & Lavine. R. (1991). "Style Wars: Teacher-Student Style Conflicts in the Language Classroom," in S.Magnan, ed., *Challenges in the 1990's for College Foreign Language Programs*. Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

## **[P]**

Palacios, L. M. (1998). *Foreign language anxiety and classroom environment: A study of Spanish university students*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin.

Pappamihiel, N.E. (2002). English as a second language students and English language anxiety: Issues in the mainstream classroom. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 36, 327-355.

- Park, G. P. (1995). *Language Learning Strategies and Beliefs about Language Learning of University Students Learning English in Korea*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. University of Texas at Austin.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd Ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Peacock, M. (1998). The links between learner beliefs, teacher beliefs, and EFL proficiency. *Perspectives*, 10, 125-159.
- Peacock, M. (2001). Match or mismatch? Learning styles and teaching styles in EFL *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 11, 1-20.
- Pekrun, R. (1992). The Impact of Emotions on Learning and Achievement: Towards a Theory of Cognitive/Motivational Mediators. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 41, 359–376.
- Philips, E. M. (1992). The Effects of Language Anxiety on Students 'Oral Test Performance and Attitude. *The Modern Language Journal*. 76, 14-26.
- Population leaps to 8.19 million". *Thenational.ae*. 30 May 2010.
- Price, M.L. (1991). The subjective experience of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with highly anxious students. In E.K. Horwitz & D.J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Pring, R. (2005). *Philosophy of Educational Research*. (2nd Ed.). London: Continuum.
- Prisbell, M., Dwyer, K. K., Carlson, R. E., Bingham, S. G., & Cruz, A. M. (2009). Connected classroom climate in the basic course: Associations with learning. *Basic Communication Course Annual*, 21, 145-165.

## **[R]**

- Robson, C. (2003) *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner—Researchers*.
- Rassaei, E. (2015). Corrective feedback, learners' perceptions, and second language development. *System*, 41(2), 472- 483.

## **[S]**



- Samimy, K.K. (1989). A comparative study of teaching Japanese in the audio-lingual method and the counselling-learning approach. *The Modern Language Journal*, 73(2), 169–177.
- Samimy, K. (1994). Teaching Japanese: Consideration of learners' affective variables. *Theory into Practice*, 33(1), 29-33.
- Samimy, K. K. & Rardin, J. N. (1994) Adult Language Learner's Affective Reactions to Community Language Learning: A Descriptive Study. *Foreign Language Annals*, (27), 379-389.
- Sarason, I.G. (1978). The Test Anxiety Scale: Concept and research. In: Spielberg CD, & Sarason IG (Eds.). *Stress and Anxiety* (Vol. 5). New York: Halsted.
- Sarason, I.G. (1986). Test Anxiety, worry and cognitive interference. In R.Schwarzer (Ed.), *Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Savage, T. V. (1999). *Teaching self-control through management and discipline*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Scarcella, R. & Oxford, R. (1992). *The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle
- Schmuck, A. R. & Schmuck, A. P. (2001). *Group processes in the classroom*. Boston: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.
- Shwarzer, R. (1986). Self-related Cognitions in anxiety and motivation: an introduction. In R.Schwarzer (Ed.), *Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation* (pp.-17).Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Scovel, T.L. (1978).The Effect of Affects: A Review of Anxiety Literature. *Language Learning*, 28, 129-142
- Scovel, T. (1991). The effect of effect on foreign language learning: A review of the anxiety research. In E. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 15-23). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Shulman, L. S. (1987) *Knowledge and Teaching: Foundations of the New Reform*, *Harvard Educational Review*, 57(1), 1-22.
- Saehan, P. (1989). *Individual Differences in Second Language Learning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Skinner, B.F. (1957).*Verbal Learning*, New York Appleton – Century Crofts.

Skinner, B.F. (1992). Verbal behaviour, (original pub. 1957; reprinted 1992 and 2002) Cambridge, MA: BF. Skinner Foundation ([www.bfskinner.org](http://www.bfskinner.org)).

Sparks, R., & Ganschow, L. (1991). Foreign language learning difficulties: Affective or native language aptitude differences? *Modern Language Journal*, 75, 3-16.

Spielberger, C. D. (1983). *Manual for the State–Trait Anxiety Inventory (Form Y)*. Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden.

Spielman, G. & M. Radnofsky. 2001. 'Learning language under tension: New directions from a qualitative Study'. *The Modern Language Journal* 85/ii: 259–278.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sullivan, N., & Pratt, E. (1996). A comparative study of two ESL writing environments: A computer assisted classroom and a traditional oral classroom. *System*, 29 (4), 491-501.

Swan, M. (2011, April 1). Relocated teachers' old jobs advertised. *The National*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenational.ae/news/uae-news/relocated-teachers-old-jobs-advertis>.

## [T]

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches (Vol. 46)*: Sage Publications, Incorporated.

Tóth, Zs. (2008). A foreign language anxiety scale for Hungarian learners of English. *Working Papers in Language Pedagogy*, 2, 55-78.  
<http://langped.elte.hu/WoPaLParticles/W2TóthZs.pdf>.

Tóth, Zs. (2010). *Foreign Language Anxiety and the advanced Learner*. Cambridge Scholars publishing.

Tanveer, M (2007). 'Investigation of the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language'. Unpublished Thesis,

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage .Buckingham: The Open University Press. Faculty of Education, university of Glasgow.

Thompson. G.L. (2000). The Real Deal on Bilingual Education: Former Language-Minority Students Discuss Effective and Ineffective Instructional Practices. *Educational Horizons*, 78 (2), 80-92.

Tobia, S. (1986). Anxiety and cognitive processing of instruction. In R. Shwarzer, Self-related cognitions in anxiety and motivation (pp. 35-53). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Truitt, S. (1995). Beliefs about Language Learning: A Study of Korean University Students Learning English. Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education, 2 (1), 1-14.

Turula, A. (2002). Language Anxiety and Classroom Dynamics: A Study of Adult Learners. English Teaching Forum, 28- 33.

## **[U]**

UAE National Bureau of Statistics

<http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/ReportPDF/Population%20Estimates%202006%20-%202010.pdf>

[UAE's economy growth momentum set to pick up](#)". Khaleej Times. 27 December 2013. Retrieved 5 January 2014.

UAE Ministry of Education official site, February 2008.

<http://www.moe.gov.ae/English/Lists/Interviews/Display.aspx?ID=29>

UNESCO. (2004). Comparing Education Statistics across the World.

[http://www.unesco.org/education/docs/EN\\_GD2004\\_v2.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/education/docs/EN_GD2004_v2.pdf)

US Library of Congress, Country Studies, United Arab Emirates: Education

retrieved. From [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+AE0030))

[bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+AE0030\)](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+AE0030)), Last accessed 19 January 2014.

## **[V]**

Vogely, A. (1998). Listening comprehension anxiety: Students' reported sources and solutions. Foreign Language Annuals, 31(1), 67-76.

## **[W]**

Walker, H. M. (1991). Coping with noncompliance in the classroom: A positive Approach for teachers. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.

Weiss, R.S. (1994). Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies. New York: Free Press.

- Weinstein, C. S. (1992). Designing the instructional environment: Focus on seating. Proceedings of Selected Research and Development Presentations at the Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 348 039).
- Wentzel, K. R. (1994). Relations of social goal pursuit to social acceptance, classroom behaviour, and perceived social support. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86, 173-182.
- Wenrich, W. W., Dawley, H. H., & General, D. (1976). *Self-directed systematic desensitization: A guide for the student, client and therapist*. Kalamazoo, Mich: Behaviordelia.
- Wilson, B. G. (Ed.). (1996). *Constructivist learning environments: Case studies in instructional design*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.
- Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and Speaking English as a Second Language. *RELC Journal*, 37(3), 308-328. Retrieved on September 26, 2010 from <http://rel.sagepub.com>
- Wörde, R. (2003). "Student's Perspectives on Foreign Language Anxiety", *Inquiry*, 8 1, Retrieved September 17, 2010 from <http://www.vccaedu.org/inquiry/inquiry-spring 2003/i-81- Wörde.html>
- World Bank Development Indicators. (19 May 2014). Retrieved 19 May 2011, from <http://www.worldbank.org/>
- Wragg, E.C. (1994). *An Introduction to Classroom Observation*. London, Routledge.
- Wright. T. (2005). *Classroom Management in Language Education*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- [Y]**
- Yang, N. D. (1999). The relationship between learners' beliefs and learning strategy use. *System*, 27, 515-535.
- Yan, J. X., and Horwitz. E. K. (2008). "Learners Perceptions of How Anxiety Interacts with Personal and Instructional Factors to Influence Their Achievement in English: A Qualitative Analysis of EFL Learners in China. *Language Learning* 58: 151– 183.
- Yi, F. (2007). *EFL Classroom Management: Creating a Positive Climate for Learning*.

Retrieved from [http://210.33.23.27/jpkc\\_nbu/daxueyingyu/download/013.pdf](http://210.33.23.27/jpkc_nbu/daxueyingyu/download/013.pdf)

Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Young, D. J. (1991). Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does the language anxiety research suggest? *Modern Language Journal*, 75, 425-439.

Young, D.J. (1992) Language anxiety from the foreign language specialist's perspective: Interviews with Krashen, Omaggio, Hadley, Terrell and Rardin, *Foreign Language Annals*, 25 (2), 157-172.

Young, D. J. (1994). New directions in language anxiety research. In: C. A. Klee (Ed.), *Faces in a crowd: The individual learner in multi-section courses* (pp. 3-45). Boston: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Young, D. J. (1999). *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

#### **[Z]**

Zhang, L. (2001). The effect of foreign language anxiety on speech fluency among international learners of Chinese. *Applied Linguistics*. 3, 44-49.

Zhao Na (2007). A Study of High School Students' English Learning Anxiety. *The Asian EFL Journal*, 9(3), 1-3

## List of Appendices

### Appendix A Manifestation of Language Anxiety Checklist

This appendix is a checklist that educational stakeholders might use in identifying anxious students in L2 classrooms.

| Signs of Language Anxiety  | Indicator |
|--|-----------|
| <b>General Avoidance</b>   |           |
| Forgetting the answer  |           |
| Carelessness   |           |
| Not going to class   |           |
| Complaining  |           |
| Tardiness  |           |
| Coming unprepared to class   |           |
| Low level of verbal participation  |           |
| Lack of volunteering in the class  |           |
| Inability to answer simple question  |           |
| <b>Physical Behaviours</b>   |           |
| Squirming, fidgeting   |           |
| Playing with hair or clothing  |           |
| Nervously touching objects   |           |
| Stuttering   |           |
| Unable to reproduce sounds or intonation of the target language even after repeated practice |           |
| Over-studying  |           |
| Conversational withdrawal  |           |
| Lack of eye contact  |           |
| Image protection (laughing, nodding, smiling, joking, hostility)                             |           |
| Excessive competitiveness  |           |
| Self-criticism   |           |
| <b>Physical Symptoms</b>   |           |
| Complaining of headaches   |           |
| Tight muscles  |           |

## Appendix B Summary of Strength and Weakness of Qualitative and Quantitative Research

This appendix gives a brief summary of the strength and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research

| Research Methods | Strength   | Weakness   |
|------------------|--|--|
| Qualitative      | <p>The data are based on the participants' own categories of meaning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* It is useful for describing complex phenomena.</li> <li>* Provides individual case information.</li> <li>* Can conduct cross-case comparisons and analysis.</li> <li>* Provides understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomena (i.e., the "emic" or insider's viewpoint).</li> </ul>   | <p>Knowledge produced may not generalize to other people or other settings (i.e., findings may be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study)</p> <p>It generally takes more time to collect the data when compared to quantitative research.</p> <p>Data analysis is often time consuming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies.</li> </ul> |
| Quantitative     | <p>Can generalize a research finding when it has been replicated on many different populations and subpopulations.</p> <p>Useful for obtaining data that allow quantitative prediction to be made</p> <p>Provides precise, quantitative, numerical data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Data analysis is relatively less time consuming (using statistical software).</li> </ul> <p>The research results are relatively independent of the researcher (e.g., effect size, statistical significance).</p> | <p>The researcher may miss out on phenomena occurring because of the focus on theory or hypothesis testing rather than on theory or hypothesis generation (called the confirmation bias).</p> <p>Knowledge produced may be too abstract and general for direct application to specific local situations, contexts, and Individuals.</p>  |

## Appendix C Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

This appendix displays the adapted version of the FLCAS

Directions -The purpose is to find out your opinions about the class you are attending right now. After reading each statement, mark “☑” under the column that indicates your opinion.

| العبارات   | لا أوافق بشدة            | لا أوافق                 | غير محدد                 | أوافق                    | أوافق بشدة               |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| لا أشعر مطلقا بالثقة من نفسي عندما أتحدث في حصة اللغة الأجنبية.<br>I do not feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني لا أشعر بالقلق عندما أخطئ في حصة اللغة.<br>I don't worry about making mistakes in language class  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أرتجف عندما أعرف بأنه سوف يتم مناداة إسمي في حصة اللغة.<br>I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أصاب بالذعر عندما لا أفهم أو أستوعب ما يقوله المدرس باللغة الأجنبية.<br>it frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| لا يزعجني علي الإطلاق أن أخذ المزيد من حصص اللغة الأجنبية.<br>It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أثناء حصة اللغة ، أجد نفسي أفكر في أشياء لا تعني مطلقا المقرر التعليمي.<br>During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| -أدوم علي الاعتقاد بأن الطلاب الآخرين أفضل مني في اللغات.<br>I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أكون عادة مرتاحا أثناء الإختبارات في حصة اللغة.<br>I am usually at ease during tests in my language class  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أبدأ بالذعر والإنزعاج عندما أكون مضطرا للتحدث بدون تحضير في حصة اللغة.<br>I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أشعر بالقلق من عواقب الفشل في حصة اللغة الأجنبية.<br>I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني لا أفهم أو أستوعب لماذا ينزعج بعض الأشخاص بشدة من حصص اللغة الأجنبية.<br>I do not understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| في حصة اللغة ، من الممكن أن أكون عصبيا أو متوترا من نسيان الأشياء التي أعرفها أو علي دراية بها.<br>In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| يخرجني القيام بالتطوع للإجابة في حصة اللغة.<br>It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| لا أصاب بالتوتر عندما أقوم بالتحدث باللغة الأجنبية مع متحدثي هذه اللغة (من تكون هذه اللغة هي لغتهم الأم).<br>I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني اصاب بالإنزعاج عندما لا أفهم ما يصححه المدرس.<br>I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| حتي لو كنت مستعدا بصورة جيدة لحصة اللغة ، فإنني أشعر بالقلق والتوتر تجاهها.<br>Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أشعر غالبا بعدم الرغبة بالذهاب إلي حصة اللغة.<br>I often feel like not going to my language class.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أشعر بالثقة عندما أتحدث في حصة اللغة الأجنبية.<br>I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| إنني أشعر بالخوف والرغبة من أن يكون مدرس اللغة مستعدا وجاهزا من أجل تصحيح وتصويب كل خطأ أقوم بارتكابه.<br>-I am afraid that language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أستطيع أن أشعر بدقات قلبي متسارعة عند مناداة إسمي في حصة اللغة.<br>I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| كلما ذاكرت من أجل إختبار اللغة ، كلما ازدت حيرة وإختلط الأمر علي.<br>The more I study for a test the more confused I become.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| لا أشعر بالضغط للتحضير لحصة اللغة.<br>I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| دائما أشعر بأن الطلاب الآخرين يتحدثون اللغة الأجنبية أفضل مني<br>I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر بالخجل من التحدث باللغة الأجنبية أمام الطلاب الآخرين<br>I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Language class تسير حصة اللغة بسرعة شديدة وأشعر بالقلق من أن أترك بالخلف.<br>moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر بالتوتر والقلق في حصة اللغة وذلك بصورة أكبر من حصص الأخرى.<br>أشعر بالقلق والإرتباك عندما أتحدث في حصة اللغة.<br>I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| عندما أكون في طريقي إلي حصة اللغة ، أشعر بالتأكد والثقة والإسترخاء الشديدين.<br>When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| أشعر بالقلق والتوتر عندما لا أفهم كل كلمة يقولها مدرس اللغة.<br>I get nervous when I do not understand every word the language teacher says                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر بالاستياء من القواعد التي يجب علي تعلمها من أجل التحدث بلغة أجنبية.<br>I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language.              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر بالخوف من أن يضحك الطلاب الآخرين ويسخروا مني عندما أتحدث اللغة الأجنبية.<br>I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر غالبا بالإرتياح حول مجموعة من متحدثي اللغة الأجنبية (من تكون هذه اللغة هي لغتهم الأم).<br>I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| أشعر بالقلق والتوتر عندما يسأل مدرس اللغة أسئلة لم أقم بإعدادها مسبقا.<br>I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I have not prepared in advance.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## **Appendix D Teachers' Profile**

This appendix gives an overview of teachers' participants' profile.

**Participant M:** *PM is a native western teacher who has a vast experience in teaching EFL students in variant contexts. She holds a Master's degree and a Delta certificate.*

**Participant N:** *PN is a non-native speaker. He holds a Master's degree in TESOL. He has been accepted to a Doctorate program and is planning to complete an EdD in TESOL. PN has approximately thirteen years of teaching experience in Europe and the Gulf Region.*

**Participant J:** *PJ is a native speaker. He has vast experience teaching in the Far East. He holds a Master's program in Education. He also has a Delta certificate.*

**Participant S:** *PS is a native speaker. She has been teaching ESL/EFL students for the past ten years.*

## Appendix E Adapted College and Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI)

This appendix displays the adapted version of the CUCEI.

Directions -The purpose is to find out your opinions about the English classroom. After reading each statement mark “☑” under the column that indicates your opinion.

الهدف من هذا الأستبيان هو معرفة آرائكم حول هذا الصف اذكر رأيك حول كل بيان من خلال وضع العلامة التالية ☑

| العبارات  | Strongly Disagree<br>لا توافق بشدة | Disagree<br>لا توافق     | Agree<br>موافق           | Strongly Agree<br>موافق بشدة |
|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| The instructor considers students' feelings.<br>يراعى المدرس مشاعر الطلبة   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The instructor talks rather than listens.<br>يتكلم المدرس بدلا من الاستماع  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The class is made of individuals who do not know each other.<br>يتكون الصف من اشخاص لا يعرفون بعضهم   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The students' look forward to coming to class.<br>ان التلاميذ يحبون الحضور الى الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Students know exactly what need to be done.<br>الطلاب يعرفون تماما ما يجب القيام به في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| New ideas are seldom tried out in class.<br>ان الافكار الجديدة نادرا ما تطرح في الصف  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| All students are expected to do the same work in the same way at the expected time.<br>يتوقع من جميع الطلاب القيام بالمهام المطلوب متبعا اسلوب معيناً ووقت محدد | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The instructor talks individually to students.<br>يتحدث المدرس بشكل فردي مع الطلاب  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Students put effort in what they do in the class.<br>يضع الطلاب الجهد في ما يقومون به في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Each student knows the other member of the class by their first names.<br>ان كل تلميذ يعرف اسم زميله في الصف  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Students are dissatisfied with what is done in the class.<br>ان الطلاب غير راضين بما يقام به في الصف  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Getting a certain amount of work done in the class is important.<br>انجاز ولو قسم من المهام أمر بغاية الأهمية في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| New and different ways of teaching are seldom used in the class.<br>نادرا ما تستخدم وسائل تدريسية جديدة في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Students are generally allowed to work at their own space.<br>يسمح للطلاب العمل على راحتهم في الصف  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The student gets out of his / her way to help students.<br>من الممكن أن يساعد الطالب زميله في الصف وان كان ذلك على حساب انجاز مهامه                             | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Students clock watch in this class.<br>ينظر الطلاب على الساعة طوال وقت الحصة  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |

|  |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Friendship are made among students in the class<br>تتكون الصداقات بين الطلبة في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| After the class, the students have a sense of satisfaction.<br>بعد الانتهاء من الحصة يشعر الطلاب بنوع من الرضا                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The group often gets side-tracked instead of sticking to the point.<br>يحصل نوع من التشتت ثناء الشرح   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor thinks of innovative activities for students to do.<br>يفكر المدرس في أنشطة إبداعية ويطلب من الطلاب القيام بها                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students have a say in how class time is spent.<br>يأخذ رأي الطلاب في كيفية ادارة الوقت خلال الحصة   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor helps each student who is having trouble with his work.<br>يقدم المدرس المساعدة للطلاب الذين يواجهون صعوبات بانهاء مهام ما          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students in the class pay attention to what others are saying.<br>يبدي الطلاب الانتباه والاهتمام إلى ما يقوله الاخرين في الصف                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students do not have much chance to know each other in the classroom.<br>ليس لدي الطلاب الفرصة ليتعارفوا على بعض في الصف                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Classes are a waste of time.<br>الصفوف هي مضيعة للوقت  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| This is a disorganized class.<br>ان هذا الصف فوضوي   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teaching approaches in this class are characterized by innovation and variety.<br>تتميز أساليب التدريس في هذا الصف بالابتكار والتنوع               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students are allowed to choose activities and how they will work.<br>يسمح للطلاب اختيار الأنشطة و الطريقة التي سيكملون بها المهام                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor seldom moves around the classroom to talk with students.<br>نادرا ما يتنقل المدرس في أنحاء الصف للتحدث مع الطلاب                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students seldom present their work to the classroom.<br>نادرا ما يقدم الطلاب أعمالهم في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It takes a long time to get to know the everybody by his /her first name in this class.<br>استغرق الأمر وقتا طويلا لمعرفة أسماء الجميع في هذا الصف | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Classes are boring.<br>الدروس مملة   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Class assignments are clear and everyone knows what to do.<br>المهام المطلوبة من التلاميذ واضحة والجميع يعلم ما يجب القيام به                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The seating in this class are arranged in the same way each week.<br>يتم وضع المقاعد في هذا الصف بالترتيب نفسه أسبوعيا                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teaching approaches allow students to proceed at their own paces.<br>منهجيات التعليم في الصف تتيح للطلاب باتمام المهام على راحتهم                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor is not interested in students' problems.<br>ان المدرس لا يهتم بمشاكل الطلبة   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| There are opportunities for students to express their opinions.<br>تتاح فرص عدة للطلاب في التعبير عن آرائهم  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students in this class get to know each other very well.<br>ان الطلاب في هذا الصف على معرفة جيدة ببعضهم بعض  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Students enjoy going to this class.<br>يحب الطلبة القدوم الى هذا الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The class seldom starts on time.<br>نادرا ما يبدأ الصف في الوقت المحدد  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor often thinks of unusual class activities.<br>يفكر المدرس بالقيام بأنشطة مبتكرة في الصف                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| There is little opportunity for the student to pursue his/ her interest in the class.<br>ان للطلاب فرص قليلة لمتابعة اهتمامته في الصف | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor is unfriendly and inconsiderate towards students.<br>ان المدرس غير ودي ولا يراعي مشاعر الطلاب                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor dominates class discussions.<br>يهيمن المدرس على المناقشات في الصف   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students are not interested in getting to know each other.<br>ان الطلاب غير مهتمين في التعرف على بعضهم بعض                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Classes are interesting.<br>ان الدروس مثيرة للاهتمام  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Activities in this class are clearly and carefully planned.<br>ان الأنشطة في هذا الصف موضوعة بشكل واضح ومخطط لها بعناية               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Students seem to do the same type of activity every class.<br>يقوم الطلاب بالنوع نفسه من الأنشطة في كل حصة                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The instructor considers what will be done in our class.<br>ان المدرس هو الذي يقرر ما يجب انجازه في الصف                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Appendix F Scale Name and Description

The appendix presents scales, their description, and sample item from the CUCEI.

| CUCEI Scale Name and Sample Items |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Scale Name                        | Description   | Sample Items  |
| <b>Personalization</b>            | Extent of opportunities for individual students to interact with the teacher and of concern for student's personal welfare.             | The teacher goes out of his/her way to help me.         |
| <b>Innovation</b>                 | Extent to which the teacher plans new, unusual activities, teaching techniques and assignments.   | The teacher often thinks of unusual activities.         |
| <b>Student cohesiveness</b>       | Extent to which students know, help and are friendly towards each other.  | I make friends easily in this class.                    |
| <b>Task orientation</b>           | Extent to which class activities are clear and well organized.  | Class assignments are clear and I know what I am doing. |
| <b>Cooperation</b>                | Extent to which students cooperate rather than compete with one another on learning tasks.  | I work with other students in this class.               |
| <b>Individualization</b>          | Extent to which students are allowed to make decisions and are treated differently according to ability, interests and rate of working. | I am allowed to choose activities and how I will work.  |
| <b>Equity</b>                     | Extent to which students are treated equally by the teacher.  | I am treated the same as other students in this class.  |

## Appendix G Item Distribution of CUCEI

This appendix displays item distribution of CUCEI with respect to Moos typology.

| Scales               | Moos | Item Numbers |
|----------------------|------|--------------|
| Personalization      | R    | 1-7          |
| Innovation           | S    | 8-14         |
| Student cohesiveness | R    | 15-21        |
| Task orientation     | P    | 22-28        |
| Cooperation          | R    | 29-35        |
| Individualization'   | S    | 36-42        |
| Equity               | R    | 43-49        |



## Appendix H Adapted BALLI Scale -Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory

### استبيان عن آرائك حول اللغة الأجنبية

This appendix presents the adapted version of the BALLI.

**Direction:** The statements below are beliefs that some people have about learning a foreign language, English in particular. After reading each statement, mark “☑” under the column that indicates your opinion.

الهدف من هذا الاستبيان هو معرفة آرائكم حول اللغة الأجنبية اذكر رأيك حول كل بيان من خلال وضع العلامة التالية “☑”

| Statements   | Strongly Disagree<br>لا توافق بشدة | Disagree<br>لا توافق     | Agree<br>موافق           | Strongly Agree<br>موافق بشدة |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| It is easier for children than adults to learn English.<br>مقارنة بالبالغين انه من الاسهل للأطفال تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Some people are born with a special ability, which helps them learn a foreign language.<br>ان تعلم اللغة الانجليزية مرتبطة بقدرات خاصة يلد بها الشخص.  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| Some languages are easier to learn than others.<br>من غيرها. ان بعض اللغات هي أسهل للتعلم  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| The language that I am learning is structured in the same way as the Arabic language.<br>ان اللغة التي اتعلمها شبيهة باللغة العربية  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| I believe that someday I will speak English very well.<br>أعتقد أن<br>يشكل جيد للغاية أتكلم اللغة الإنجليزية سوف يوما ما   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| It is important to speak the foreign language with an excellent accent.<br>ممتازة ولكن الأجنبية الفرد اللغة يتكلم فمن المهم أن   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to speak the foreign language.<br>لا بد من معرفة الثقافة الأجنبية لكي ان اتكلم لغتها  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| You should not say anything in English until you can say it correctly.<br>بصورة التحدث بها لحين التمكن من باللغة الإنجليزية قول أي شيء يجب عدم<br>صحيحة  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| It is easier for someone who already speaks a foreign language to learn another one.<br>فمن السهل على الشخص أن يتعلم اللغة الأجنبية ان كان يتكلم لغة أجنبية أخرى   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| It is better to learn a foreign language in a foreign country.<br>في دولة أجنبية. تتعلم اللغة الأجنبية أنه من الأفضل أن  | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| If I heard someone speaking the language that I am trying to learn, I would go up to him or her so that I could practice speaking the language.<br>لكي أتمكن أنضم لهم فأنني تعلمها أحاول أنا اللغة التي يتحدث أحدهم سمعت لو<br>معهم ممارسة مهارة التحدث من | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
| In English classes, I prefer to have my teacher provide explanations in Arabic language.<br>اللغة العربية في مدرسي الدروس يشرح أفضل أن حصة اللغة الإنجليزية فأنني في   | <input type="checkbox"/>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>     |

|   |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| It is O.K. to guess If you do not know a word in English.<br>انه من المقبول أن تخمن كلمة ما ان كنت لا تعرف ما هي الكلمة المعنية.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have a foreign language aptitude.<br>لدي موهبة في اللغة الأجنبية  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In learning English, it is important to repeat and practice a lot.<br>من الضروري ممارسة اللغة الأجنبية من أجل إتقانها   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I feel self-conscious to speak the foreign language in front of other people<br>أشعر بالإحراج عندما أتكلم اللغة الإنجليزية أمام الآخرين   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If you are allowed to make mistakes in the beginning, it will be hard to get rid of them later on.<br>إذا كان مسموحاً لك أن ترتكب الأخطاء في البداية، سيكون من الصعب التخلص منهم فيما بعد.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.<br>تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية هي في معظمها مسألة تعلم القواعد النحوية.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Listening to tapes and watching English programs on television are very important in learning English.<br>الاستماع إلى الأشرطة ومشاهدة البرامج الإنجليزية على شاشة التلفزيون هي مهمة جداً في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Women are better than men are at learning English.<br>النساء هن أفضل من الرجال في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If I learn to speak English very well, I will have many opportunities to use it.<br>إذا قمت بتعلم فن التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل جيد ، فسوف يكون لي فرص كثيرة لاستخدامها  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It is easier to speak English than to understand it.<br>فمن الأسهل على التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية مقارنة بفهمها.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning English is different from learning other subjects.<br>تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية تختلف تماماً عن تعلم أية مواد أخرى.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning English is mostly a matter of translating from Arabic.<br>تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية هي في أغلبها عملية ترجمة من اللغة العربية.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If I learn to speak English very well, it will help me get a good job.<br>إذا قمت بتعلم التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل جيد فذلك سوف يساعدني بالحصول على وظيفة جيدة.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| It is easier to read and write English than to speak and understand it.<br>أن القراءة و الكتابة باللغة الانجليزية هي أسهل بكثير من فهمها أو التحدث بها.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages.<br>ان الأشخاص الجيدين في مادتي الرياضيات والعلوم يواجهون صعوبة بتعلم اللغات الأجنبية.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| People who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.<br>الأشخاص الذين يتكلمون أكثر من لغة هم بشكل عام أذكيا جداً.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Emiratis are good at learning foreign languages.<br>الإماراتيون بارعون في تعلم اللغات الأجنبية.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| people in my country feel it is important to speak English<br>يعتقد الإماراتيون ان التكلم باللغة الأجنبية شئ مهم  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.<br>أريد من مدرسي أن يصحح كل أخطائي  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| If my teacher is a native speaker, he/she should be able to speak Arabic when necessary.<br>أن من الضروري أن تتكلم مدرستي الأجنبية اللغة العربية عند الحاجة   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| The language I am trying to learn is:<br>ان اللغة التي أحاول أن أتعلّمها هي: | Very difficult<br>صعبة جداً | Difficult<br>صعبة        | Medium Difficulty<br>متوسطة الصعوبة | Easy<br>سهلة             | Very Easy<br>سهلة جداً   |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | <input type="checkbox"/>    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long it would take him to become fluent?<br>أن امضى الفرد ساعة يومياً بدراسة اللغة الأجنبية فكم من الوقت يحتاج لإتقانها واستخدامها بطلاقة |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| less than a year (أقل من سنة )  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1-2 years (من 1-2 سنة)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3-5 years (من 3-5 سنوات)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5-10 years (من 5-10 سنوات)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## **Appendix I Interview Schedule (Faculty Members)**

This appendix presents the interview schedule that I used with faculty members.

The teachers' interviews are semi-structured in nature and aimed to investigate the following themes:

- Perception of language anxiety
- Perception of the causes of language anxiety
- Perception of the manifestations of language anxiety
- Perception of activities that may reduce language anxiety in the classroom

### ***Teachers' Interview Questions***

1. What is your perception on language anxiety in L2 classrooms?
2. What do you think are the causes of language anxiety among students?
3. How is anxiety manifested in students?
4. What activity or activities do you think triggers anxiety among the students?
5. What are some of the activities you use in order to reduce anxiety among your students?
6. What do you think is the role of the teacher in the classroom

## Appendix J Interview Questions (students)

This appendix presents the interview questions I used with the students.

Protocol of the semi-structured FG interview, used with college students (these questions were translated into Arabic as the interviews were conducted in the students' mother tongue).

### Note:

The questions are not necessarily being followed in the order given in the protocol. It all depends on the reciprocal give-and-take way of communicating with the participants while conducting the interviews.

1. What influence, if any does anxiety has on your performance in the classroom?
2. What are the effects of language anxiety on your academic performance?
3. What are the effects of language anxiety on your social performance?
4. What are the effects of language anxiety on your self-confidence and motivation to learn?
5. Have your teachers played a role in your feelings, either good or bad, about your English language class?
6. Tell me about your experience of learning English at school in terms of teachers, teaching method, and examinations.
7. Please give examples of the physiological, psychological, and behavioural manifestations of language anxiety?
8. What do you do when you experience any of these manifestations?
9. Do you have any ideas of ways to make the English language class less stressful?
10. How can teachers make the classroom less stressful?
11. What are some of the coping strategies that you use to make the classroom environment less stressful?
12. What role do teachers play in this process?
13. Are there any aspects of the classroom environment that increases your anxiety level?
14. What English language skills are most anxiety provoking?
15. What classroom activities do you think increases your apprehension level?
16. How do you think people in your classroom will react if you make mistakes?
17. How do your classmates react when you make a mistake in the classroom?
18. Please tell me what worries you the most in your English language class.
19. Are there other things that disturb you about your English language class that you can tell me about, and how do you react to them?
20. Please tell me what you like least about your English language class.
21. Please tell me what you like best about your English language class.

## Appendix K1 Example of Coded Transcript (Transcript 3: FG Interviews/ Number of participants: 13)

This appendix consists of the coded transcript of the FG interview conducted with 13 students. The column to the right of the transcript lists the initial codes assigned to the text. Reference to the codes listed displays the nature or style of coding employed in the initial data analysis.

Page Setup Page 1

**Transcript: Focus Group Interviews**  
Number of participants: 13

IQ\_ Are there any aspects of the classroom environment that increases your anxiety

|  | Teacher-related factors   |
|--|---|
| <p>SIK___ "Okay there are many things that increase my anxiety in the classroom for example .....When teachers <b>speak in a very fast manner, I find it very difficult to comprehend what she is saying, but with a slower pace I can get a general idea of what she is trying to tell us."</b></p> <p>او كسى... هناك أشياء كثيرة التي تزيد من قلقي في الصف مثلاً ..... عندما يتحدث المدرس بطريقة سريعة جداً أجد صعوبة كبيرة في استيعاب ما يقوله، ولكن عندما يتكلم بأسلوب أبطأ يمكنني الحصول على فكرة عامة عن ما يحاول أن يقوله لنا</p> | <p>العوامل المتعلقة بالمدرس</p> <p>Fast speech rate (SR)</p> <p>الكلام سريع</p> |
| <p>"SIB___ This is very true as.....is saying sometimes my teacher <b>speaks quickly</b> and I can not understand everything he is saying. But sometimes I do may because he uses simple words</p> <p>هذا صحيح مثلاً ما حكى... أحياناً أستاذي يتكلم بسرعة، وأنا ما بفهمه<br/>م كل ما يقوله. لكن في بعض الأحيان أظن لأنه بيستخدم كلمات بسيطة.</p>   | <p>Fast speech rate (SR)</p> <p>الكلام سريع</p>                                 |

## Appendix K2 Sample of Qualitative Work

This appendix includes sample of the interview data

Interview text derived from both students focus interviews and teachers interviews were initially treated as distinctive entities that once placed together yield a holistic picture of the phenomenon under study. Interview texts were read as a whole, while reading the interviews, themes emerged. I analysed these themes into categories, and placed the section of the interview text opposite to these categories. The overall data is divided into two major contexts that summarize the progression of the data interview data analysis chapters: micro-level context of the learner and macro-level analysis of the classroom.

| Categories and Descriptions  |               | Indicators: coded when interviewee said:   | Comments            |
|--|---------------|--|---------------------|
| Manifestations of language anxiety: The micro-level context of the student |               |  |                     |
| non-observable manifestations  |               | <p>"My heart beats very fast when my teacher calls my name."</p> <p>"Anxiety leads to feeling of uneasiness and frustration in the classroom. This feeling acts as a wall which blocks comprehension."</p>   |                     |
| observable manifestations  | Physiological | "My hands tremble; my knees become weak and even my voice shakes."   |                     |
|  | Behavioural   | <p>"I play on my laptop instead of completing an on-line listening task or I give the impression of completing an activity while my mind wanders to things unrelated to what is going on in class".</p> <p>"I am inclined to stay silent even though I know the answer to the teacher's question".</p> | Avoidance behaviour |

## Appendix L University of Exeter certificate of Ethical Research Approval Form

This appendix presents the certificate of ethical research approval form.

| Certificate of Ethical Research Approval   |  | RCH |
|--|--|-----|
| <b>Your student no:</b> 580035889/1  |  |     |
| <b>Title of your project:</b> Foreign Language Anxiety among College Students in the UAE: A Socio cultural Investigation of Classroom Climate  |  |     |
| <b>Brief description of your research project:</b><br>Research has recurrently indicated that language anxiety is a widespread phenomenon, especially among foreign or second language learning population. To date limited research has been reported about students' foreign language anxiety in the Arab world. Therefore, the lack of research on this issue in the UAE is one of the main reasons for conducting this research. The aim of this exploratory study is to find out how learners' belief about themselves learning English is related to foreign language anxiety. The focus is on the socio-cultural environment of the classroom as it shapes students' beliefs, and affective dimensions of learning. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be used to explore students and teachers perception. In the initial phase of the study, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety scale will be administered to students across semesters and semi structured focus interviews will be conducted to gather in-depth information about the students views with respect to anxiety. Whilst in phase two of the study a survey methodology using both a quantitative method for collecting staff and students' views and qualitative methods through semi-structured interviews of target groups will be adopted. BALLI and CUCEI will be used with students and semi structured focus interviews will be used with both teachers and students. Moreover, classroom observations will also be ensued. |  |     |
| <b>Research Questions:</b> The primary and secondary questions are as follows:<br><i>Main Research Question:</i><br>How does the socio cultural environment of the classroom affect foreign language anxiety of Emirati college students?<br><i>Secondary Questions:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. How is anxiety manifested in students?</li><li>2. What are the contributing factors that add to anxiety?</li><li>3. Which factors do students believe may help reduce anxiety?</li><li>4. How do Emirati college learners of English cope with anxiety?</li><li>5. What are students attitude toward learning English?</li><li>6. What are teachers' beliefs towards students?</li></ol>   |  |     |
| <b>Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):</b><br><br>Participants:<br>Students in this study will include college students in Abu Dhabi. Teachers teaching English as a second language will also be asked to participate in the study.   |  |     |
| <b>Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:</b><br><br>The research will be conducted in accordance to ethical principles adopted by the British Educational Research Association guidelines (1991). Participants will be informed about the goals of research and the type of information they would provide. The respondents will not be subject to any hazard to their health or psychological well-being and their confidentiality will be insured. Issues regarding respect, confidentiality and informed consent will be meticulously assured. Students and teachers perceptions are prominent in this study. I will make sure that their acuity and views are listened to and respected.  |  |     |
| Chair of the School's Ethics Committee<br>Updated: April 2011  |  |     |
| Chair of the School's Ethics Committee<br>Updated: April 2011  |  |     |



**a) Confidentiality**

I will also endeavor to store the data (including transcripts and any audio recordings in a secure place. Electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password. Information will also be coded to guarantee anonymity. Upon completion of the study, the collected data will be destroyed.

**b) Informed Consent**

Informed consent is an essential component of this study. Informed consent will be obtained from both students and teachers. The researcher will inform the participants of how the research findings will be used. Participants will be informed that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed.

**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:**

**Data Collection**

***Stage One of the Study***

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected in this phase. Foreign Language Classroom anxiety Scale will be used with students across Semesters. Semi-structured Focus interviews will also be conducted with students.

**Quantitative**

- Students' quantitative Questionnaire: College students across semesters will be offered the opportunity to participate in this part of the study. The students will be given an adapted version of the FLAC scale. This scale was developed by Horwitz and associates in 1986. It consists of three related anxieties: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation.

**Qualitative**

- Semi- structured interviews: A focus interview will be conducted with students. The students will be sampled based on the results of the FLACS. Classes which exhibited a higher level of anxiety as indicated by the FLACS will be randomly chosen to participate in the focus interview.

***Stage Two of the Study***

Both quantitative and qualitative data will be collected.

**Quantitative**

Two main instruments are going to be used in the current phase. One instrument is the Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI). This instrument was developed by Horwitz. It aims to describe teachers' and students' views of language learning. The second instrument is the College and University Classroom Environment Inventory (CUCEI). This inventory was developed by Fraser, Treagust Williamson & Tobin in 1987 to appraise perceptions of the psycho-social environment in university and college classrooms. CUCEI includes seven scales: Personalization, Student Cohesiveness, Satisfaction Involvement, Task Orientation, Innovation, and Individualization. The main objective of using CUCEI is to measure the students learning environment preferences and their learning environment experiences.

**Qualitative**

Focus group interviews with both students and teachers will be used to collect data about students' and teachers' perceptions. Classroom observations will also be ensued to investigate the socio-cultural environment of the classroom.

**Data Analysis**

- SPSS statistical package will be used to analyze the quantitative data. This will provide numerical data regarding students' attitudes, classroom climate and the level of anxiety among students. It will provide an overview of the descriptive statistics, including the mean scores, standard deviation and distribution of scores.
- NVivo 8 will be used to analyze the qualitative information. The data will be transcribed and uploaded for thematic coding and further analysis

**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.):**

Data collection, data analysis and write up, data (questionnaires, any audio recordings, observation records and interview data will be securely stored).

**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):**

This is a mostly sensitive issue as it deals with the affective aspects of students' learning. Informed consent and the right to withdraw from the research will be religiously adhered to.

---

*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 thesis.*

**I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my thesis 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: *Saleh Zuhairi* Date: *16/08/2011*  
*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:** *17/8/2011* **until:** *30/9/2014*

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): *[Signature]* (*A. D. WRIGHT*)  
Date: *17<sup>th</sup> August, 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:** *2.11/12/3*

Signed: *[Signature]* Date: *13/11/2011*  
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

---

This form is available from <http://education.exeter.ac.uk/students/>

---

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee  
Updated: April 2011

## Appendix M Students Consent Form

This appendix present student's consent form.

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision of whether to participate or not. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. The purpose of this study is to understand Emirati college students' experiences with Language learning in the UAE. Participation or non-participation will not affect the evaluation of your performance at the college. You will complete a questionnaire that should not take more than 15 minutes to complete. The items ask you to evaluate statements, using a 5- point Likert Scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by informing me. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be treated in strict confidence. If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign the statement below.

**Researcher:** Rola Lababidi EDD Candidate, Exeter University

**Telephone number:** 0503121820

**Email:** [rlababidi@hct.ac.ae](mailto:rlababidi@hct.ac.ae)/ rl280@exeter

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.
- Any information, which I give, will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.
- All information I give will be treated as confidential.
- The researcher will make every effort to protect my anonymity.

.....

(Signature of participant) (Date

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 N Students Consent Form (Interviews)

This appendix present students' consent form.

You are invited to participate in this research study. The following information is provided in order to help you make an informed decision of whether to participate or not. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. The purpose of this study is to understand Emirati college students' experiences with Language learning in the UAE. Participation or non-participation will not affect the evaluation of your performance at the college. You will participate in a focus group interview. I will ask you a number of questions related to you English language experience specifically on language anxiety. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw at any time by informing me. Upon your request to withdraw, all information pertaining to you will be destroyed. If you choose to participate, all information will be treated in strict confidence. If you are willing to participate in this case study, please sign the statement below.

Researcher: Rola Lababidi EDD Candidate, Exeter University

Telephone number: 0503121820

Email: [rlababidi@hct.ac.ae](mailto:rlababidi@hct.ac.ae)/ r1280@exeter

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.

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.

All information I give will be treated as confidential.

The researcher will make every effort to protect my anonymity.

.....

(Signature of participant) (Date

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 O BALLI Results

This appendix displays a summary of the BALLI results across its different components.

|   | Students' Foreign Language Aptitude Items  | SA %         | A % | D % | SD %      | Mean   | Standard Deviation |
|---|--|--------------|-----|-----|-----------|--------|--------------------|
| 1.  | It is easier for children than adults to learn English   | 41           | 41  | 14  | 4         | 1.8036 | 0.81842            |
| 2.  | Some people are born with special ability which help them learn English                        | 20           | 46  | 23  | 11        | 2.2500 | 0.89949            |
| 3.  | I have a foreign language aptitude   | 14           | 34  | 36  | 16        | 2.5357 | 0.93350            |
| 4.  | Women are better than men are at learning English.   | 20           | 20  | 43  | 18        | 2.5893 | 1.00502            |
| 5.  | People who are good at math and science are not good at learning foreign languages             | 16           | 21  | 50  | 13        | 2.5893 | 0.91008            |
| 6.  | It is easier for someone who speaks a foreign language to learn another one.                   | 16           | 61  | 16  | 7         | 2.2679 | 0.72591            |
| 7.  | People who speak more than one language are very intelligent.                                  | 23           | 41  | 32  | 4         | 2.1786 | 0.82631            |
| 8.  | Emiratis are good at learning a foreign language   | 21           | 34  | 38  | 7         | 2.3036 | 0.89279            |
| Nature of Language Learning Items                     |  |              |     |     |           |        |                    |
| 9.  | Learning English is mostly a matter of learning grammar rules.                                 | 23           | 43  | 27  | 7         | 2.0179 | 0.77439            |
| 10.   | Learning English is different from learning other subjects.                                    | 23           | 39  | 27  | 11        | 2.2500 | 0.93905            |
| 11.   | Learning English is a matter of translation to Arabic.   | 23           | 43  | 27  | 7         | 2.1786 | 0.87609            |
| 12.   | It is better to learn a language in a foreign country  | 34           | 48  | 14  | 4         | 1.8750 | 0.78769            |
| 13.   | The most important part of learning a foreign language is learning new words.                  | 45           | 33  | 12  | 10        | 1.8675 | 0.78745            |
| 14.   | It is necessary to know the foreign culture in order to learn a foreign language.              | 21           | 45  | 23  | 11        | 2.2321 | 0.91435            |
| Language Difficulty items                             |  |              |     |     |           |        |                    |
| 15.   | It is easier to read and write English language than to speak or understand it.                | 18           | 52  | 25  | 5         | 2.1786 | 0.78872            |
| 16.   | It is easier to speak English than to understand it.   | 30           | 52  | 16  | 2         | 1.8929 | 0.73059            |
| 17.   | I believe that someday I will speak English very well  | 25           | 50  | 16  | 9         | 2.0893 | 0.87960            |
| 18.   | Some languages are easier to learn than others   | 16           | 48  | 21  | 14        | 2.3393 | 0.92002            |
| 19.   | Difficulty Level of English Language   | Percent t(%) |     |     | Frequency |        |                    |
|   | Very Difficult   | 20           |     |     | 11        |        |                    |
|   | Medium Difficulty  | 34           |     |     | 19        |        |                    |
|   | Difficult  | 47           |     |     | 26        |        |                    |
| 20.   | If someone spent one hour a day learning English, how long it would take him to become fluent? |              |     |     |           |        |                    |
|   | less than a year   | 21           |     |     | 12        |        |                    |
|   | 1-2 years  | 64           |     |     | 36        |        |                    |
|   | 3-5 years  | 11           |     |     | 6         |        |                    |
|   | 5-10 years   | 4            |     |     | 2         |        |                    |
| Students' Communication and Language Strategies Items |  |              |     |     |           |        |                    |

|                  |  |    |    |    |    |        |         |
|------------------|--|----|----|----|----|--------|---------|
| 21               | It is important to speak a language with an excellent accent.  | 27 | 63 | 7  | 4  | 1.8750 | 0.68920 |
| 22               | You should not say anything in English until you could say it correctly.   | 18 | 34 | 34 | 19 | 2.4464 | 0.95193 |
| 23               | . If I heard, someone speak the language that I am trying to learn I would go up to them so that I could practice speaking the language. | 16 | 61 | 16 | 7  | 2.1429 | 0.77292 |
| 24               | It is ok to guess if you do not know the word in English.  | 14 | 63 | 18 | 5  | 2.1429 | 0.72434 |
| 25               | In learning English, it is important to repeat and practice a lot.   | 30 | 55 | 11 | 4  | 1.8750 | 0.74009 |
| 26               | I feel self-conscious speaking the foreign language in front of other people.  | 25 | 36 | 21 | 18 | 2.3214 | 1.04633 |
| 27               | If you are allowed to make mistakes in English, it will be hard to get rid of them later.  | 5  | 54 | 27 | 14 | 2.5000 | 0.80904 |
| 28               | I want my teacher to correct all my mistakes.  | 25 | 43 | 21 | 11 | 2.1786 | 0.93628 |
| 29               | If my teacher is a native speaker, she/he should be able to speak Arabic When necessary.   | 25 | 48 | 23 | 4  | 2.0536 | 0.79589 |
| Motivation Items |  |    |    |    |    |        |         |
| 30               | If I learn English very well; I will have many opportunities to use it with English speaking people                                      | 36 | 50 | 9  | 6  | 1.8393 | 0.80401 |
| 31               | People in my country feel it is important to speak English.  | 40 | 41 | 9  | 10 | 1.8457 | 0.8754  |
| 32               | I would like to learn English so that I can get to know English speaking people better   | 30 | 55 | 11 | 4  | 1.8752 | 0.74012 |
| 33               | If I learn English very well, it will help me get a better job.  | 54 | 29 | 14 | 5  | 2.1786 | 0.87609 |
| 34               | I want to learn to speak English very well.  | 25 | 44 | 20 | 11 | 2.1886 | 0.93434 |

## Appendix P FLCAS Findings

This appendix displays the students' responses to the FLCAS items.

|     | FLCAS Items   | SA % | A % | NA/D % | D % | SD % | Mean   | Standard Deviation |
|-----|---|------|-----|--------|-----|------|--------|--------------------|
| 1.  | I do not feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class                  | 16   | 25  | 20     | 20  | 20   | 3.0179 | 1.38158            |
| 2.  | I don't worry about making mistakes in language class   | 20   | 31  | 7      | 25  | 14   | 2.8036 | 1.39375            |
| 3.  | -I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class                             | 27   | 25  | 13     | 14  | 21   | 2.7857 | 1.52213            |
| 4.  | it frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language          | 34   | 25  | 12     | 23  | 5    | 2.4107 | 1.31808            |
| 5.  | It would not bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.                                | 41   | 38  | 7      | 9   | 5    | 2.000  | 1.15994            |
| 6.  | During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course. | 21   | 23  | 23     | 20  | 13   | 2.7857 | 1.33095            |
| 7.  | -I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.                         | 21   | 21  | 23     | 21  | 14   | 2.8671 | 1.36753            |
| 8.  | I am usually at ease during tests in my language class  | 20   | 18  | 11     | 27  | 25   | 3.1964 | 1.9447             |
| 9.  | I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class                         | 27   | 27  | 19     | 13  | 14   | 2.6071 | 1.38405            |
| 10. | I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class                                 | 27   | 27  | 18     | 14  | 14   | 2.6250 | 1.39561            |
| 11. | I do not understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.                     | 21   | 23  | 23     | 23  | 9    | 2.7500 | 1.28275            |
| 12. | In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.                                     | 25   | 23  | 14     | 20  | 18   | 2.8214 | 1.46607            |
| 13. | It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.  | 30   | 25  | 7      | 13  | 25   | 2.7679 | 1.60670            |
| 14. | I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.                          | 20   | 20  | 14     | 23  | 23   | 3.1071 | 1.47314            |
| 15. | I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.                                | 30   | 21  | 25     | 14  | 9    | 2.5000 | 1.30732            |
| 16. | Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.                             | 20   | 40  | 7      | 20  | 14   | 2.6964 | 1.888              |
| 17. | I often feel like not going to my language class.   | 16   | 23  | 7      | 16  | 38   | 3.3571 | 1.56587            |
| 18. | I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.  | 29   | 25  | 7      | 29  | 11   | 2.6786 | 1.47611            |
| 19. | -I am afraid that language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.                        | 20   | 32  | 11     | 11  | 28   | 2.9286 | 1.52384            |
| 20. | I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class                       | 11   | 30  | 13     | 11  | 37   | 3.3036 | 1.48837            |
| 21. | The more I study for a test the more confused I become.   | 27   | 28  | 15     | 11  | 20   | 2.6964 | 1.47611            |
| 22. | I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.                                     | 18   | 9   | 9      | 43  | 21   | 2.7321 | 1.43326            |
| 23. | I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do                   | 38   | 27  | 7      | 11  | 18   | 2.4464 | 1.52458            |
| 24. | I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students           | 20   | 23  | 18     | 15  | 25   | 3.0179 | 1.48318            |
| 25. | Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind                                   | 16   | 30  | 20     | 18  | 16   | 2.8750 | 1.33570            |
| 26. | When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed                                  | 20   | 18  | 14     | 32  | 16   | 3.0714 | 1.39944            |
| 27. | I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.                                 | 38   | 29  | 6      | 25  | 2    | 2.7679 | 1.30720            |
| 28. | When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed                                  | 20   | 18  | 14     | 32  | 16   | 3.0714 | 1.39944            |

|     |  |    |    |    |    |    |         |         |
|-----|--|----|----|----|----|----|---------|---------|
| 29. | I get nervous when I do not understand every word the language teacher says.                 | 27 | 38 | 13 | 9  | 13 | 2.4285  | 1.31919 |
| 30. | I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak a foreign language.       | 21 | 29 | 21 | 18 | 11 | 2.67866 | 1.29484 |
| 31. | I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language       | 18 | 16 | 13 | 25 | 29 | 3.3036  | 1.48837 |
| 32. | I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language             | 38 | 21 | 16 | 14 | 11 | 2.3929  | 1.39712 |
| 33. | I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I have not prepared in advance. | 27 | 38 | 14 | 9  | 13 | 2.6964  | 1.38721 |



## Appendix Q CUCEI Findings

This appendix gives a summary of students' responses on the CUCEI.

| CUCEI Items  | SA % | A % | D % | SD % | Mean   | Standard Deviation |
|--|------|-----|-----|------|--------|--------------------|
| <b>Personalization Items</b>   |      |     |     |      |        |                    |
| 1. The teacher considers my feelings                                       | 25%  | 30% | 24% | 21%  | 2.3393 | 1.08337            |
| 2. The teacher is friendly and talks to me                                 | 27%  | 32% | 21% | 20%  | 2.3393 | 1.08337            |
| 3. The teacher gets out of his/her way to help me                          | 26%  | 32% | 23% | 19%  | 2.375  | 1.07132            |
| 4. The teacher helps me when I am having trouble with my work              | 25%  | 32% | 23% | 20%  | 2.375  | 1.0713             |
| 5. The teacher moves around the classroom                                  | 38%  | 34% | 10% | 18%  | 2.0893 | 1.10003            |
| 6. The teacher is interested in my problems                                | 25%  | 30% | 24% | 21%  | 2.4107 | 1.09173            |
| 7. The teacher is unfriendly and inconsiderate towards me                  | 27%  | 31% | 22% | 20%  | 2.3571 | 1.08592            |
| <b>Cohesiveness</b>  |      |     |     |      |        |                    |
| 8. students' do know each other well                                       | 29%  | 30% | 21% | 20%  | 2.25   | 1.08293            |
| 9. Students' know each other by their first name.                          | 25%  | 30% | 23% | 22%  | 2.4107 | 1.09173            |
| 10. make friends easily in the classroom                                   | 24%  | 40% | 20% | 16%  | 2.2857 | 1.02184            |
| 11. Do not get much chance to know their classmates                        | 22%  | 32% | 21% | 25%  | 2.5    | 1.09545            |
| 12. It takes a long time to know each other                                | 20%  | 25% | 20% | 25%  | 2.5179 | 1.05298            |
| 13. Students in my class have the chance to know their classmates well     | 30%  | 32% | 20% | 18%  | 2.25   | 1.08293            |
| 14. students' are not interested to know their classmates in the classroom | 27%  | 19% | 23% | 31%  | 2.3929 | 1.10665            |
| <b>Task Orientation</b>  |      |     |     |      |        |                    |
| 15. Know what needs to be done in class                                    | 32%  | 41% | 14% | 13%  | 2.0714 | 0.98824            |
| 16. Getting work done in class is important                                | 27%  | 29% | 23% | 21%  | 2.3929 | 1.10665            |
| 17. Get side-tracked in class  | 32%  | 32% | 18% | 18%  | 2.2143 | 1.9069             |
| 18. The class is disorganized  | 40%  | 31% | 11% | 18%  | 2.0714 | 1.10958            |
| 19. The class assignments are clear  | 30%  | 32% | 27% | 11%  | 2.1786 | 0.99283            |
| 20. The class starts on time   | 20%  | 34% | 21% | 25%  | 2.5179 | 1.07857            |

|   |     |     |     |     |        |         |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|---------|
| 21. Activities are clearly and carefully planned                                      | 29% | 38% | 20% | 13% | 2.1954 | 1.01658 |
| <b>Cooperation</b>  |     |     |     |     |        |         |
| 22. students' cooperation with each other while doing their assignments               | 27% | 32% | 16% | 25% | 2.3929 | 1.13904 |
| 23. students' sharing their books and resources while doing their assignments         | 21% | 31% | 18% | 30% | 2.5714 | 1.14188 |
| 24. students' working with each other on the projects                                 | 26% | 32% | 21% | 21% | 2.3929 | 1.0901  |
| 25. students' learning from each other  | 16% | 34% | 21  | 29% | 2.625  | 1.07132 |
| 26. students' working with each other in the classroom                                | 23% | 32% | 23% | 22% | 2.4286 | 1.07631 |
| 27. students' cooperation with each other on class activities                         | 18% | 25% | 23% | 34% | 2.7321 | 1.11992 |
| 28. students' working with each other to achieve goals                                | 28% | 38% | 20% | 14% | 2.1964 | 1.01658 |
| <b>Individualization Items</b>  |     |     |     |     |        |         |
| 29. I am expected to do the same as all students                                      | 29% | 32% | 23% | 16% | 2.2679 | 1.05298 |
| 30. I am allowed to work at my own space  | 25% | 48% | 16% | 11% | 2.125  | 0.98675 |
| 31. I have a say in how class time is spent   | 24% | 30% | 25% | 21% | 2.4464 | 1.07736 |
| 32. I am allowed to choose activities and how I will work                             | 25% | 32% | 29% | 14% | 2.3214 | 1.01098 |
| 33. Teaching approaches in the classroom allow me to proceed at my own pace           | 23% | 32% | 23% | 22% | 2.4286 | 1.07631 |
| 34. I have opportunities to pursue my interests in the classroom                      | 20% | 32% | 23% | 25% | 2.5357 | 1.07812 |
| 35. The teacher decides what I will do in the classroom                               | 13% | 40% | 25% | 23% | 2.5893 | 0.98676 |
| <b>Equity</b>   |     |     |     |     |        |         |
| 36. The teacher gives as much attention to my questions as other students' questions. | 23% | 27% | 25% | 25% | 2.6071 | 1.00324 |
| 37. I get the same amount of help from the teacher as do other students               | 20% | 32% | 25% | 23% | 2.5179 | 1.06158 |
| 38. I am treated as other students in the classroom                                   | 23% | 29% | 21% | 27% | 2.5179 | 1.12801 |
| 39. My work receives as much as praise as other students do                           | 36% | 28% | 11% | 25% | 2.25   | 1.19469 |
| 40. I get the same opportunity to answer questions as other students                  | 23% | 27% | 25% | 25% | 2.5179 | 1.11177 |
| 41. I receive the same amount of encouragement as other students                      | 32% | 29% | 14% | 25% | 2.3214 | 1.17716 |
| 42. I have the same amount of say in this class as other students                     | 20% | 27% | 23% | 30% | 2.6429 | 1.1189  |
| <b>Innovation</b>   |     |     |     |     |        |         |
| 43. implementation of new ideas in the classroom                                      | 25% | 30% | 23% | 22% | 2.4107 | 1.09173 |
| 44. teacher's using new and different ways of teaching in the classroom               | 20% | 30% | 18% | 32% | 2.625  | 1.13718 |

|   |     |     |     |     |        |         |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|---------|
| 45. The teacher think up innovative activities for me to do                               | 30% | 30% | 16% | 24% | 2.3214 | 1.09722 |
| 46. The teaching approaches used in this class is characterized by innovation and variety | 21% | 32% | 21% | 25% | 2.5    | 1.09545 |
| 47. Seating in this class is arranged in the same way each week.                          | 25% | 30% | 23% | 21% | 2.4107 | 1.09173 |
| 48. The teacher often thinks of unusual activities  | 25% | 30% | 22% | 22% | 2.3214 | 1.09722 |
| 49. I seem to do the same type of activities in every class                               | 30% | 32% | 25% | 13% | 2.2679 | 1.05298 |

## Appendix R1-Observation Checklist

This appendix provides a sample of observation checklist

| Code                             | Categories   | + | - | Examples |
|----------------------------------|--|---|---|----------|
| Academic Support (AS)            | The teacher helps the students when they are having trouble with their works |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teachers goes out of her way to help students                            |   |   |          |
|                                  | The seating arrangement facilitated learning                                 |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teacher thinks up innovative activities for the students to do           |   |   |          |
|                                  | Activities were clearly and carefully planned                                |   |   |          |
|                                  | Class started on time  |   |   |          |
|                                  | Class assignments were clear   |   |   |          |
|                                  | Class atmosphere was warm, open and accepting                                |   |   |          |
|                                  | The students were allowed to work at their own pace                          |   |   |          |
| Teacher-Student Interaction (TS) | The teacher considers the students' feelings                                 |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teacher is friendly and talks to the students                            |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teacher praised the students' works                                      |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teacher gave equal attention to the students' questions                  |   |   |          |
|                                  | The teacher moves around the classroom to talk with the students             |   |   |          |
| Student-student Interaction (SS) | Students in this class know one another                                      |   |   |          |
|                                  | The students cooperate with each other                                       |   |   |          |

## Appendix R2 Observations Codes and Categories of one of the Observed Classes (C1)

This appendix provides a sample of observation data analysis.

The occurrences and type of student-teacher interaction during the observation session were coded under the following main categories: academic support (**AS**), student-student interaction (**SS**), teacher- student interaction (**TS**).

| Code | Categories   |  |
|------|--|--|
|      | <b>Academic Support</b>  |  |
| AS   | The teacher helps the students when they are having trouble with their works | One- on- one or referring students for extra help  |
|      | The teachers goes out of her way to help students                            | Stops the lesson to discuss any ambiguities.   |
|      | The seating arrangement facilitated learning                                 | Students were seated in a semi-circle which facilitated more communication vs. row seating   |
|      | The teacher thinks up innovative activities for the students to do           | The use of digital learning in the classroom   |
|      | Activities were clearly and carefully planned                                | Handouts and worksheets were clearly written.  |
|      | Class started on time  | The teacher starts the class on time, but some of the students were late.  |
|      | Class assignments were clear   | The teacher went to great length to give out clear assignments ( oral and written)   |
|      | Class atmosphere was warm, open and accepting                                | Non rigid approach, friendly and cheerful  |
|      | The students were allowed to work at their own pace                          | The students were given extra time to finish their in-class activities. For projects and assignment, students had to stick to specified dates.           |
|      | <b>Teacher-Student Interaction</b>   |  |
| TS   | The teacher considers the students' feelings                                 | The teacher were considerate, empathetic and sensitive towards students concerns   |
|      | The teacher is friendly and talks to the students                            | The teacher exhibited a friendly attitude in and out of class.   |
|      | The teacher praised the students' works                                      | Positive reinforcement verbal and bonus points were frequently given to praise and encourage students to do their best.                                  |
|      | The teacher gave equal attention to the students' questions                  | Most of the time, the teacher was attentive to students' questions   |
|      | The teacher moves around the classroom to talk with the students             | Most of the time the teacher moved around the classroom to check on their students' work whether they were engaging in individual, paired or group work. |
|      | <b>Student-student Interaction</b>   |  |
| SS   | Students in this class know one another                                      | The students know each other's name.   |
|      | The students cooperate with each other                                       | The students exhibited a high level of corporation among each other.<br>The students were sometimes tolerant toward each other.                          |

## Appendix S Observable and Non-observable Manifestations

This appendix provides examples of students' manifestation of anxiety.

|   |  |                                   |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <b>non-observable<br/>manifestation</b> | Fear<br>Nervousness<br>Lowered self confidence<br>Inability to retrieve information  | <b>Psychological<br/>Symptoms</b> |
| <b>Observable<br/>Manifestation</b>     | Tremors<br>Blushing<br>A blank or confused expressions<br>Nervous laughter   | <b>Physiological<br/>Symptoms</b> |
| <b>Observable<br/>Manifestation</b>     | Tardiness<br>Recurrent absences<br>Sitting in the back row<br>Evading eye contact<br>Giving very short answers<br>Engaging in activities that are not related to the lesson in an effort to divert teachers' attentions: laptop, reading a book, talking to peers... | <b>Behavioural<br/>Signs</b>      |