



RESEARCH PAPER

An Analysis of English-Speaking Anxiety of University Students in Nangarhar, Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

The present study focuses on the anxiety level of undergraduates enrolled in private universities in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. The study used a survey descriptive design for data collection from a sample of two hundred students from four universities selected through a non-random convenient sampling technique. The data was collected through Likert Scale adapted from Horwitz & Cope (1986). The collected data was analyzed through SPSS, while the difference between the two groups was analyzed through t-test. The study found that communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety were causing anxiety among the students. Furthermore, no significant difference was found among male and female participants in communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Moreover, the difference for test anxiety was found out significant because the male participants were more anxious than female participants about their performance in tests. The findings of the study suggest that English speaking anxiety is a serious issue that has to be addressed because its occurrence influences students' performance in term of using their speaking skills of a foreign language.

Keywords

Afghan Students, Communication Apprehension, English, Speaking Anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Test Anxiety

Introduction

In Afghanistan, second or foreign language education has grown quickly over the last two decades. English being a global language, has been included in the curriculum of schools, colleges and universities in Afghanistan. As a result, Afghan students are expected to master English throughout their studies. But many English language learners/students in Afghanistan still struggle to understand and use their English abilities in terms of all four skills, especially, their speaking skills, because success in a foreign language learning is commonly measured by one's ability to have a conversation in the target language (Schmidt, 2010). One of the reasons of lacking in English speaking skills is speaking anxiety of a foreign language. Numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate the association amongst speaking and foreign language anxiety hindering learning outcomes of students in particular courses. Language anxiety as a separate feature of language education and as a psychological component of foreign language learning has been researched for some period (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Speaking, being a useful talent (Jack, Richards & Rodgers, 1992) is one of the four fundamental aspects that students must master in

order to learn English, demanding specific attention and instruction at all level of English language learning. Speaking, being a direct way to convey our thoughts, ideas, and opinions etc. (Rabiah, 2018) has many elements that hinder our progress in second or foreign language learning. Foreign language anxiety (stress, worry and fear of making mistakes among others factors) can have a negative impact on a speaker's overall performance and prevent him/her from correctly speaking the foreign language (Jansová, 2021).

Because of speaking anxiety, the crippling worry may increase the actual filter and establish a "mental barrier" that inhibits understandable input from being employed for dialectal acquisition (Krashen, 2013). Both sensory emotion (elicited by external stimuli, such as cool, sweet, fatigued, satiety, and hunger etc.) and cerebral emotion (intellectual feeling, social feeling, ethical feeling, aesthetic feeling, and definite feeling etc.) on a broader or weaker level change the physical or mental activity of an individual making a student's self (Sadapotto, Syamsu, Usman, Darmiani & Nadirah, 2022). When it comes to learning a foreign language, students' emotions are more discouraging than encouraging. Anxiety is one of the emotional states that makes such a process harder. Anxiety can be classified as a sensation of stress, concern, or worry, and it will obstruct learners' capacity to function well in a foreign language classroom. According to Oxford and Ehrman (1992, p.60) "Most linguistic research reveals a negative association between anxiety and performance".

Anxiety is "a sensation of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry as well as autonomic nervous system activation or alertness" (Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell & Crane, 1983, p. 113). Anxiety is characterized by a sense of not knowing who or what is causing the anxiety; this is why anxiety is accompanied by feelings of helplessness and in some cases, panic. Although fear and anxiety are closely related, people are more likely to be terrified of something concrete, something they are familiar with, whereas anxiety develops from a dread of the unknown in humans. Anxiety is normally characterized as a trait or a mood, however the phrase situation-specific anxiety has recently been coined to underline the long-term and multidimensional nature of some fears (Horwitz, 2001). There are different types of anxiety like trait anxiety, state anxiety and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety is a personality trait that is relatively consistent. An anxious person with trait is prone to be anxious in a variety of scenarios (Woodrow, 2006). As a result, trait anxiety is the proclivity or readiness to react anxiously in specific conditions. Contrarily, state anxiety happens in a given instant and is only brief. The focus is on here-and-now experience, meaning the emotional condition at a given instant. It is a mixture of trait anxiety and situational anxiety (Macintyre & Gardner, 1991). As a result, those who are nervous in general, or who have high levels of trait anxiety, are more likely to experience state anxiety in stressful situations. The situation-specific anxiety is the anxiety in specific situation like public speaking, arithmetic performance, English class engagement, and writing performances etc. (Macintyre & Gardner (1991).

Literature Review

Success in language learning is determined by a person's desire or the level at which he tries to achieve his goals. People will not put in the effort to learn the language if they are not motivated to do so (Gilakjani, 2012). Learners' thoughts, beliefs, expectations are important in determining language learning success. The confidence of learners helps in learning a second language, while the emotion of uneasiness, fear, nervousness, and apprehension hinders learning which is commonly termed as foreign language anxiety (Dewaele & Al-Saraj, 2013).

Nervousness is linked to both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive skills (listening and reading). Speaking skill, no doubt is one of the most important skills among others. But speaking could lead to a high level of anxiety because feeling stressed, frightened, and uncomfortable affect speaking skills more than any other skills of the targeted language (Suleimenova, 2013). Although, there is no universal definition for foreign language anxiety, there are a few that are commonly used. Many people have a mental barrier to learning a foreign language, while being competent learners in other circumstances and having a genuine affection for speakers of the target language. As a consequence, the issue here is a specific type of anxiety reaction that obstructs the entire effort and ability to function properly in various settings involving a foreign language (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986).

Learners, teachers, and the way instructions are delivered are all common sources of language anxiety (Young, 1991). Spielberger and Vagg (1995) asserted that symptoms including muscular trembling, perspiration of the palms and foreheads, and flushing of the neck and cheeks are all signs of worry. According to Liebert and Morris (1967), the two forms of anxiety reactions, i.e., emotional (characterized by physiological and behavioral responses such as squirming and hesitating) and agony (characterized by a cognitive response or active mental activity) were recognized. These intellectual or mental effects may be observed only under more controlled situations (Spielberger, 1972). Learning a language is different in different situations. Javed, Eng, Mohamed and Sam (2013) looked into the relationship between two crucial aspects in English learning, i.e., motivation and nervous situations. Optimism and anxiety are the two measures on which the official language is based. As pointed out and examined, Pakistani ESL students' opinions toward characterizing their status as non-English natives are influenced by sociolinguistic, geographical, economic, and political rather than linguistic considerations. That is why, in a non-native speaking environment, intelligibility and comprehensibility are checked in the perspective of classroom anxiety (Wilang & Singhasiri, 2017).

Due to a variety of design and technique modifications in prior studies conducted across numerous years and decades, researchers have derived rather confusing findings about the impact of various influences on learning foreign languages. Because of a wide range of outcomes, demonstrating a broad perspective on this topic and concisely explaining its consequences, factors, sources, and other variables have proven difficult. As a result, more research is needed before reaching any conclusions about foreign language anxiety.

According to Kitano (2001), gender and anxiety levels are linked along with number of learners and social and environmental factors (Kunt & Tüm, 2010) and personality factors (Kráová & Sorádová, 2015). "Females are more passionately developed than males in their responses to very frightening and relaxed settings" (Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell & Crane, 1983, p. 19), on the other hand, male learners were shown to be more anxious when they regarded their spoken language to be less proficient than many others; however, no such association was identified among female students (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). On the opposite, Machida (2001), looked at gender differences for foreign language learning in a classroom environment and anxiety and discovered that female students were more worried than male students. Speech concerns in ESL classrooms have been investigated identifying the impact of gender on speech fears among students (Hwa & Peck, 2017).

We have diverse mental levels when it comes to last understanding; thus, some are more likely to acquire a foreign language than others. Being a part of a lot

of learning, dependence is completely unworkable and unreasonable, resulting in worry among students. Learners' self-respect or self-consciousness of language dependability, peer competing attitudes of teachers, gender differences at different academic level, experience of visiting a foreign language nation, and work experience are all possible sources of anxiety for learners (Chan & Wu, 2004). Having anxiety in learning a foreign language is a personal capacity that varies from one person to another (Liu & Huang, 2011).

Many factors affecting language learning anxiety were identified, they included "cognitive (e.g., language aptitude and learning styles), affective (e.g., attitudes, motivation, and learning anxiety), metacognitive (e.g., usage of language learning strategies), and demographic characteristics" (Olivares-Cuhat, 2010, p. 99). Some of these factors contribute in language learning while others hinder learning with ease. Choy, Fyer and Lipsitz (2007), found a number of factors that contribute to speaking anxiety. During their research, they discovered that more than half of the respondents expressed dread while speaking English. For the analysis of anxiety, both educational and cultural components should be considered (Gardner, 2007) because second language is learnt by human being and every human is a product of a particular culture, and as a result, culture has an impact on many facets of a person's personality. Similarly, Weda and Sakti (2018), explored contributing factors for anxiety during English language learning. Teachers, low capabilities, an inadequate resources and assistance, and, maybe most importantly, student anxiety are all significant considerations. The main reasons of student anxiety in the EFL classroom, according to the findings of this study, were, first and foremost, the dread of failing English course. Second, as individuals ask questions, the learners become more apprehensive and upset because they do not grasp the answers. Third, when students forget to pay attention to their various talents, they become distracted, and when students fail to understand the themes covered by teachers in the EFL session, they feel frightened and nervous. When learners have a great level of speaking nervousness, commonly, one among the six principles of the causal factors of speaking anxiety has been explored. The classroom management factor was the most commonly experienced factor by the students during the learning speaking process (Handayani, Rozimela, & Fatimah, 2020). The size of the audience in the class was also found significant in determining the speaking anxiety (Raja, 2017).

According to Eddraoui and Wirza (2020), foreign language anxiety is a significant issue that has affected the development of students' speaking abilities over time. Anxiety, about speaking a foreign language, causes students to avoid speaking the target language. Fear of making mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, and other factors can all contribute to foreign language speaking anxiety. Most studies have shown that foreign language anxiety has a damaging effect on one's ability to achieve in the target language in a number of contexts. Research has demonstrated the negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement and how it is influenced by a variety of factors, including age, years of study, gender, prior reality of living in or visiting the target culture, academic achievement, prior experience learning foreign languages, self-perceived foreign language proficiency, self-perceived scholastic competence, perceived self-worth, and perfectionism (Kunt & Tüm, 2010). Debilitating anxiety, on the other hand, encourages the student to "flee" the new learning activity, therefore emotionally motivating the student to avoid the situation. According to Anandari (2015), students experienced foreign language anxiety, and self-reflection exercises assisted them in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses, as well as problem resolution, in order to improve their public speaking ability.

Anxiety does not always have a negative effect on language learning (Moyer, 2008), because "facilitating anxiety has a favorable effect on oral performance" (Young, 1990, p. 541). Horwitz (2010), on the other hand, claims that this would require language learners to feel slightly worried in order to work more. According to Scovel (1978), anxiety may facilitate a work if it is relatively easy; on the other side, the more difficult the task, the more detrimental it is. Scovel (1978, p.138), added that good performance in any (music; sport; language learning, particularly speaking) "requires enough anxiety to evoke the neuromuscular system to optimized levels of performance, but not so much that the complex neuromuscular systems underlying these skills are disrupted". We can consider anxiety as a beneficial aspect in language learning, according to Welsch, Terrell and Nadolski (1992), if by anxiety we mean "attentiveness" or "alertness." The learners require input, but they must also pay attention to that material in order to learn a language effectively. On the other hand, Krashen and Terrel (1983), claims that there is no benefit to anxiety in language acquisition, while there may be for language learning. There has been no conclusion on general aspects affecting the issue of foreign language anxiety due to ambiguous results in numerous studies. These two aspects should maintain a specific balance in order to keep the organism in constant balance with its changing environment.

There is a relationship between speaking anxiety and the use of affective language learning strategies used by learners (Ginting and Sebayang, 2021). Similarly, spontaneous activities should be used to alleviate nervousness when communicating with learners (Yalçın & İnceçay, 2014). There have been studies focusing on developing ways for overcoming public speaking anxiety in classrooms. It was suggested that learners require encouragement from the beginning of the learning stage to boost their confidence, so that the instructor may completely encourage students during class (Raja, 2017). The classroom exercises such as role play and presentation, practice and enumeration before presentations or speeches can reduce fear of public speaking (Garmston & Wellman, 1992, p.35). Similarly, class preparation has an impact on reducing foreign language anxiety (Saltan, 2003). Speaking anxiety has also been investigated from discourse analysis perspective (Zhiping & Paramasivam, 2013), an EFL learning interlanguage environment perspective and different systems of grammar perspectives (Mehmoodzadeh, 2012). Foreign language anxiety in a classroom has been explained from theoretical perspective as well. There are a number of domains of anxiety like communication apprehension (McCroskey's, 2015), fear of negative evaluation (Leary & Tangney, 2011) and test anxiety (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). According to Gaibani and Elmenfi (2016), speaking anxiety is a type of shyness that is distinguished by a dread of social interaction. speaking anxiety can be classified into four categories: trait-like (Richmond et al., 1998), generalized context (McCroskey, 2015), personal group (McCroskey, Richmond & McCroskey, 2002) and situational or state-like (Frantz, Marlow & Wathen, 2015). Speaking anxiety varies which is determined on whether the participants' intents or methods are employed to ease their nervousness or not (Yami, 2015). According to the point of view of Yoon (2012), there are three basic features of teaching anxiety amongst ESL teachers: lack of self-assurance, absence of groundwork and the use of main language. Anxiety is even prevalent among university students due to variety of reasons in the EFL classroom. Students at the higher education level experience more anxiety for spoken aspect of language in classroom (Ahmed, Pathan, & Khan, 2017) like foreign language speaking anxiety for other skills among university students (Karatas, Alci, Bademcioglu, & Ergin, 2016).

Martial and Methods

The population of this study was the private sector universities' students of Nangarhar, Afghanistan. A sample of four private universities in Nangarhar province was selected through a non-random convenient sampling technique, i.e., Khurasan, Alfalah, Al Taqwa, and Rokhan. Form these universities, a sample of two hundred students was selected having equal number of male and female students. The study was carried out using a survey descriptive research design to describe the characteristics of anxiety selected sample (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2011). The data was collected through a five Likert scale questionnaire having 33 items adapted from Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). The questionnaire contained questions about communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Out of these items, thirteen items focused on comprehension apprehension, thirteen on fear of negative evaluation and seven on test anxiety. The researchers removed and clarified the ambiguities in the questionnaire. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used an analytical framework in the present study. FLCAS consists of three domains: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative assessment/evaluation.

Communication apprehension is a distress or nervousness experienced by an individual in response to actual or expected communication with another person or group of people and test anxiety is an anxiety or apprehension felt before, during, or after a test as a result of worry, fear, or concern. On the other hand, fear of negative evaluation deals with worries about bad evaluation by others and the anticipation that others will assess one badly. All these three domains are generally focused and communication apprehension is specifically in the present study.

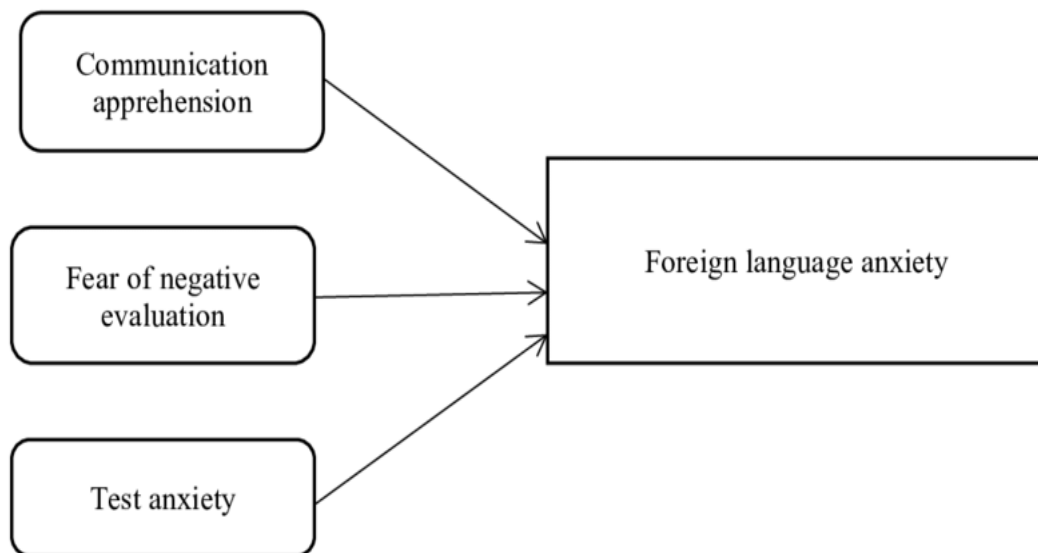


Figure 1: Model of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986)

The collected data was analyzed through descriptive statistics in SPSS (version 22). The mean and standard deviation were calculated which helped in defining the sources of English-speaking anxiety factors and causes amongst English language learners. An independent sample T-test was calculated to show the differences in anxiety level of males and female participants.

Results and Discussion

The thirty-three items in the questionnaire had questions about different domains of anxiety like communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. All these domains were hypothesized to affect speaking proficiency of the students. The following table shows the results for the specific domain of language anxiety communication apprehension for the first thirteen questions in questionnaire.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics of communication apprehension domain

Items	Mean	Std.
I feel tense and nervous while participating in English class.	3.07	1.117
I feel afraid to express my opinion in front of my classmates.	2.87	1.214
While speaking English, I get so nervous; I forget things I really know.	3.30	1.042
I feel frightened when the teacher asks me to answer questions in English class.	3.04	1.058
I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.	2.88	1.043
I feel afraid when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English class.	2.83	1.212
I feel nervous when I have to speak in English class without preparation.	3.44	1.078
I get depressed when the teacher corrects my answers in English class.	2.73	1.185
I feel shy when I speak English in front of the class.	3.13	1.176
I feel shy when I speak English in front of the classmates.	3.16	1.060
My heart beats faster when the teacher asks me to answer in English class.	3.18	1.133
I feel afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak in English class.	2.92	1.136
Even if I know the answer; I can't express myself in English class.	3.15	1.168

The means in the above table for each question were higher than 2.50 for all questions showing that most of the students had anxiety for specific domain of communication apprehension. The anxiety is more when the students speak in English class without preparation. It means that preparation before class reduces anxiety and students if not anxious do not forget what they have learnt. They do not feel shy in the class and feel normal and could perform better even if they are asked by teachers in front of the class. With preparation, they become able to face the teachers and classmates and so, their speaking anxiety reduces and they perform better. The overall mean in the following table also shows the mean of means which is higher than 3 showing anxiety for communication apprehension.

Table 2
The overall descriptive statistics of communication apprehension

Domain	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Communication apprehension domain	200	3.0535	.57704

The mean of the means above is over 3 suggesting that as a whole, the students feel anxiety in communication apprehension and would affect their speaking proficiency. Similarly, the following table shows the results for the second domain of language anxiety, i.e., fear of negative evaluation in thirteen questions of the questionnaire.

Table 3
Descriptive statistics of fear of negative evaluation domain

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel worried about making mistakes in English class.	3.41	1.028
I feel worried when my classmates correct my answers in English class.	2.75	1.194
I always feel that my classmates speak English better than me.	3.15	1.185
I feel worried when I make grammatical mistakes while speaking in English class.	3.12	1.172
I always feel that my classmates will laugh at me when I speak in English class.	2.75	1.184
I always make pronunciation errors while speaking in English class.	2.80	1.004
I feel afraid that my classmates will criticize me during group discussion because of my English.	2.72	1.228
I am worried about English teacher who might have negative feelings about me due to my bad performance in English class.	2.55	1.074
I forget the answers while speaking English if students and teacher keep looking at me.	2.93	1.126
I feel nervous when the teacher asks me questions, I haven't prepared in advance.	3.34	1.068
I am worried from the negative feedback I get from my classmates in English class.	3.46	3.138
I am worried from the negative feedback I get from my teacher in English class.	3.21	1.110
I feel worry about the impression I leave among my classmates after speaking English.	3.05	1.033

Like table 1, the means in the above table for each question are higher than 2.50 for all questions showing that most of the students had anxiety of fear of negative evaluation. Most of the worries here too about lack of preparation and the negative feedback provided by teachers in the presence of classmates. This anxiety is because of the fear of making mistakes and not having a positive impression on the classmates. In such a state of anxiety, even the look of the teacher and classmates and their corrections of mistakes in minded by students. For this self-perceived supposition of creating positive impression on other ideally, the performance is influenced and the students do not perform well in language class. The overall mean in the following table also shows the mean of means which is higher than 3 showing anxiety of fear of negative evaluation.

Table 4
Overall descriptive statistics of fear of negative evaluation

Domain	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fear of Negative Evaluation	200	3.0204	.56839

The domain of test anxiety was analyzed showing greater anxiety for students. The following table shows the results of test anxiety domain of the seven questions in questionnaire about this domain.

Table 5
Descriptive statistics of test anxiety domain

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel nervous before English test.	3.12	1.045

I feel nervous while I am taking English test.	3.08	1.098
I worry about the consequences of failing English test.	3.42	1.086
I feel my heart beating very fast during English test.	3.02	1.061
During English test, my emotions affect my performance negatively.	3.26	1.160
I feel pressured by time limits during English test.	3.28	1.033
I am worried even when I am well prepared for English test.	3.61	.976

The means in the above table for each question were higher than 3 for all questions showing that most of the students had test anxiety greater than other types of anxiety. The test anxiety (because of nature of our tests) is so much that students in spite of preparation feel anxious for test. This worry is mostly because of the fear of having bad grades for not performing good in tests. These like emotions affect their performance negatively. This anxiety is felt before, during and even after the tests. The overall mean in the following table also shows the mean of means which is higher than 3.2 showing greater anxiety for test anxiety.

Table 6
Overall descriptive statistics of test anxiety

Domain	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Test Anxiety	200	3.2543	.59880

The above mean is higher than the mean for other domains of anxiety suggesting that students are mostly worried about their performance in tests. An independent sample T-test was applied to calculate the statistically significant gender differences in anxiety level of the male and female participants. The gender differences in communication apprehension is given in the following table.

Table 7
Results for Gender differences in communication apprehension

Variables	Male		Female		t(198)	P	CI 95%	
	M	SD	M	SD			L	U
Sources	37.3	8.0	37.5	8.4	-.14	.88	-2.4	2.1

The above table shows that there was no significant difference in the anxiety of communication apprehension between the male and female participants. The p value is greater than the significance level ($p > 0.05$) and the null hypothesis is accepted that there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of communication apprehension and both the groups have almost the same level of comprehension apprehension in English speaking. Similarly, the independent t-test was also applied on the data for gender differences in fear of negative evaluation. The following table shows the results for this fear.

Table 8
Results for genders differences in fear of negative evaluation

Variables	Male		Female		t(198)	P	CI 95%	
	M	SD	M	SD			L	U
Sources	37.3	7.9	37.6	8.4	1.4	0.1	-0.6	4.0

The above table shows that there was no significant difference in the anxiety of fear of negative evaluation between the male and female participants. The p value is greater than the significance level ($p > 0.05$) and the null hypothesis is accepted that

there was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of fear of negative evaluation and both the groups have almost the same level of fear of negative evaluation in English speaking. The gender differences for test anxiety was also calculated by an independent t-test. The following table shows the difference.

Table 9
Results for gender differences in test anxiety

Variables	Male		Female		t(198)	P	CI 95%	
	M	SD	M	SD			L	U
Sources	19.3	5.2	17.6	5.4	2.2	0.02	0.1	3.1

The above table shows that there was significant difference in test anxiety between the male and female participants. The p value is less than the significance level ($p > 0.05$) and the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted that there was statistically significant difference between the two groups in terms of test anxiety. The mean for male participants is greater than the mean for female participants indicating that male students have greater test anxiety than female students. The results show that male participants were more anxious about English test than female students. The only difference that we found out in the data was the difference in test anxiety.

The findings reveal that students at the undergraduate level experience foreign language classroom anxiety due to foreign language speaking activities in the classroom. The students attributed their English language speaking anxiety due to the activities in the class and their expected participation therein. The learners were anxious about speaking English in class because they were fearful about making grammatical mistakes (Mehmoodzadeh, 2012). Surprisingly, no participants in the survey stated that they had difficulty in comprehending teachers' directions or that they were afraid of making mistakes in their learning unlike the findings by Pappamihiel (2002), where the teacher's teaching and fear of making mistakes were among the most repeatedly described causes of foreign language anxiety for learners. In Afghanistan, the gender difference was noticed unlike the findings by Ahmed, Pathan, and Khan (2017) in Baluchistan, Pakistan where they found out no significant difference.

Conclusion

The aim for the current research study was to explore English speaking anxiety and other aspects of anxiety among undergraduate Afghan learners in private sector universities in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. Students during their production part of language, feel more anxiety in speaking than writing being engaged in face to face interaction and having limited time for thinking and self-adjustment. The neglect of this skills is another reason for lack of proficiency in this regard. All the three domains of English language anxiety (communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety) were measured showing anxiety in English speaking for these students. The higher mean of anxiety in all domains can affect students' performance during speaking in English classes which could lead to nervousness when they come to class without preparation and they can forget things during English speaking when the teachers ask them during classroom's activities. As a result, their heartbeats may become faster and they may feel shy while speaking English in front of the class which make them unable to express their ideas properly

in English due to lack of self-confidence while using this language skill. Both male and female participants felt almost the same level of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation while speaking English and no statistically significant difference was found in the data. But when it came to test anxiety, the female students performed better than male students and were less anxious about their test having less test anxiety. The findings of this research show that Afghan learners are anxious as a result of a variety of problems that are essential to be addressed by Afghan higher authorities so they can be provided with grounds to reduce their nervousness. This study will also help EFL lecturers in Afghanistan, specifically in Nangarhar province, to understand the reasons that cause anxiety. The findings may also help Afghan EFL teachers to design their English courses in the light of the suggestions of the present study and adopting appropriate teaching techniques to reduce speaking anxiety in the class. The findings are helpful for researchers in the field of examining nervousness of students during learning a foreign language.

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