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Taking the "Foreign" Out of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

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Anxiety Scale: Anxiety in an ESL Setting

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of
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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

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Anxiety in the language classroom is an important issue because it affects student performance (Woodrow, 2006). The majority of research conducted has focused on anxiety or apprehension that language learners experience in a foreign language classroom, including students learning English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Only a few studies have been done, however, that address the needs of learners experiencing anxiety in an ESL setting. Data were gathered from 179 students attending a university sponsored intensive English program using a modified version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) and focus groups. Initial scores on the FLCAS were obtained via student survey responses. In addition to the survey results, students also identified additional factors affecting their anxiety in the ESL classrooms in the areas of student beliefs (Price, 1991) and communication with peers. Furthermore, statistically significant results were found when comparing the students' first language (L1) with the survey results. Different types and levels of anxiety were shown to occur for Spanish and Portuguese students as well as Chinese, Korean, and Japanese students. The data gathered from the focus groups and open-ended questions provided clarity too to the overall scores obtained on the FLCAS.

Key words: anxiety, FLCAS, ESL, communication apprehension

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PREFACE

This thesis was written in partial fulfillment of the MA TESOL degree at Brigham Young University. As such, it was written in such a way that it could be submitted as a manuscript to a journal. *Language Learning* is the journal that was selected in part because it has published several studies that have dealt with communication anxiety. Those who read *Language Learning* may find this study of interest in light of the anxiety research that has been done previously.

The length requirements stated by the journal indicate that submitted manuscripts must be less than 10,000 words which is why the length of this manuscript is shorter in comparison to other traditional manuscripts. It is a goal of the Department of Linguistics and English Language to help students in the MA TESOL program publish their work in academic journals, hence another reason for the shorter length.

Other possible publication venues for this thesis manuscript, include the *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* and the *RELC Journal.* These journals were selected because they have published research related to anxiety in the past. They would serve as a secondary publication venue if *Language Learning* does not accept this manuscript for publication.

Introduction

Ana is an ESL student from Peru studying in an intensive English program (IEP) in the United States[1]. Her goal is to learn English so that she can pass the TOEFL, enter an English-speaking university, and eventually become a physical therapist. In her first semester studying English she faced many challenges. She was a very soft-spoken person who lacked confidence in herself and in her ability to communicate in English. She would often mumble under her breath in Spanish or use Spanish in her questions to the teacher or to classmates. She also had many false starts and hesitations when trying to communicate her ideas in English. One of the biggest issues she faced was asking questions. If the teacher did not understand her the first time she asked the question, she would withdraw and not even attempt to ask the question again. What was causing this behavior? Was it difficulty with pronunciation, grammar, or something else? After talking with friends, she determined that anxiety was keeping her from being successful in her quest to learn English. For the first few months of the semester, she was very unsure of herself and lacked the confidence to accomplish her desired goals. Over time and through individualized help, she gained more confidence and today is a thriving student in the very same intensive English program (IEP) where she began.

Ana's story is not unlike many other ESL students who leave their home countries to study English in the United States. In fact, students learning English as a second language (ESL) in the United States number in the hundreds of thousands (Open Doors, 2016). In this new environment, many of them deal with a variety of challenges ranging from cultural adjustment to unfamiliar teaching methods to experiencing loneliness (Isibor, 2008). Some students also come from areas of the world that do not have resources to learn English which is why many make

[1] Based on a true story. Name has been changed to preserve anonymity.

their way to the United States—hoping that they can finally learn English. Some students find the environment for learning is very different in the United States than it is in their native countries. The amount and quality of resources as well as the skill of the teachers possibly exceed what the student's home country may be able to provide. The clash of cultures in addition to these other factors could also be challenging for some students.

In addition to the variety of cultural challenges experienced, students may also struggle with language anxiety that influences their attendance and participation in class because they do not have prior experience working in groups, giving presentations, and asking questions to name a few examples (Al-Saraj, 2014). Inside the classroom, students are often required to interact with peers and their teachers as well as complete various tasks that challenge their language ability. Outside of the classroom, students may find themselves forced to talk with native speakers of the language, interact with bosses, cashiers, clerks, and a variety of others. Anxiety in the language classroom is not an anomaly. It is in fact a common occurrence (Al-Saraj, 2014). This anxiety manifests itself for various reasons and at various times throughout a class or course (Al-Saraj, 2014; Effiong, 2016; Shvidko, 2012; Toth, 2008; Young, 1991). Anxiety may prohibit students from producing accurate language as well as keep them from improving their own language knowledge base in the classroom along with interacting with native English speakers outside the classroom. While existing empirical research has identified the powerful impact that anxiety can have on learners in a second language classroom (Al-Saraj, 2014; Woodrow, 2006), the majority of these studies have been conducted in foreign language contexts.

Examining this anxiety in an ESL context leads to some important questions. What concerns do learners living in the target language environment say about those factors that contribute to feelings of anxiety and stress? Are there key factors that learners identify as having

a dramatic impact on their ability to function effectively in the language classroom and outside the classroom as they interact with native speakers of the language?

This study had two main goals. The first goal was to gain an understanding of what factors influence English language learners' anxiety in an ESL setting. This was investigated through a survey of participants and follow-up focus groups. The second goal of this study was to identify common themes in the data in hopes of further delineating characteristics that might help construct a profile describing the characteristics of anxious students. This profile could then be used in subsequent research to help ESL teachers identify students who may be struggling with anxiety so that proper help might be received.

Review of Literature
Background

The purpose of this literature review is to provide a contextualized understanding of language anxiety and why it is an important element to be researched in language classrooms. First, this section will provide helpful definitions for understanding anxiety in language learning. Next, it will discuss the importance of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) in relation to this research. The FLCAS is a survey instrument constructed by Horwitz et al. (1986) that was designed to provide a greater understanding of the foreign language anxiety learners experienced. In addition to describing research which explains the contexts and ways in which the FLCAS has been used, there will also be some discussion regarding factors that research has identified as affecting anxiety. Finally, the gap in the research and how this research aims to fill that gap will be discussed.

Defining Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986) describe foreign language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behavior related to classroom language learning." In the literature discussing language anxiety, researchers have made the distinction between three types of anxiety: state, trait, and situation specific anxiety (Al-Saraj, 2014; MacIntyre & Gardner 1991; Woodrow, 2006). *State* anxiety is where a person is in a condition of anxiety due to a specific event that occurs such as being called on to volunteer an answer in class. The class itself is not anxiety-inducing, but the event itself is what appears to cause the anxiety. After this event has concluded, the person's physical or mental state reverts back to not being anxious. *Trait* anxiety is where a person inherently has a trait in their personality that makes them more prone to anxiety no matter the situation. Essentially, trait anxiety is a part of that individual's makeup or personality and affects them frequently in situations where anxiety is not normally experienced. The final type of anxiety—*situation-specific* anxiety—is anxiety that some researchers say is the type of anxiety that language learners experience in the classroom (Al-Saraj, 2014; Chakrabarti & Sengupta 2012; Woodrow, 2006). In other words, situation specific anxiety is anxiety that someone experiences in a specific context, in this case, the language learning environment due to the inherent nature of such an environment. In contrast to state anxiety, situation-specific anxiety encompasses broader experiences, such as public speaking.

In a review of previous studies examining anxiety in language learning, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) further clarify a description of state, trait, and situation specific anxiety as it relates to language learning and how these types interact with each other. They define state anxiety "is apprehension experienced by an individual at a particular moment in time" (p. 90). The question could be asked, for example, "Are you nervous now?" (p. 90). Trait anxiety, on the other hand, depends on the individual's personality and can be influenced by context such as

school or work (p. 88). Next, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) explain that situation-specific anxiety is where the majority of anxiety research studies in language learning have focused their attention. Instead of trying to explain anxiety as trait or state-based, researchers are opting to ask participants what they think is causing them to be anxious. Often what participants express is the kind of anxiety that occurs when participating in such activities as public speaking and tests (p. 90-91). It centers on the particular circumstance or situation in which language learners may find themselves. The examples of state, trait, and situation-specific anxiety are one way that researchers have sought to clarify the ways in which learners may experience anxiety.

Another way researches have sought to understand anxiety in the language learning context is to study the difference between foreign language anxiety (FLA) and second language anxiety. These two contexts differ in that second language anxiety occurs in a situation where the language being learned is spoken in the environment outside of the classroom, such as those language learners studying English in an English language setting such as the United States, Canada, or Australia. In foreign language anxiety, however, the language is not widely spoken outside of the classroom environment (Chakrabarti & Sengupta, 2012, p. 58) as in situations where English is being learned as a foreign language (such as in China, Japan, or Korea). This distinction in environments is important to make because the nature of the environment might have an effect on the level and taype of anxiety the learner experiences (Woodrow, 2006, p. 309). In the current study, the research focus is on second language anxiety for the purpose of better understanding the types of anxiety that ESL learners experience while actively studying in an intensive program in the United States.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The majority of research in the area of language anxiety has concentrated on the foreign language classroom, and the anxiety

that learners experience in these contexts. Horwitz (2010) provides a nice summation of these studies and their results. In order to study anxiety in this setting and its related causes, researchers tried to isolate these factors. An early attempt at capturing this data occurred through the use of an anxiety scale created by Horwitz et al. (1986). The scale they created was a survey designed to assess specific types of anxiety and their levels experienced by foreign language learners. The scale was called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). This scale or survey consisted of 33 questions and was created to help delineate what the researchers at that point in time had determined were three distinct parts of anxiety as it occurred in the foreign language classroom, namely communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986). Other researchers who have subsequently used this scale also report how the scale does test for communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Aida, 1994; Al-Saraj, 2014; Di Loreto & McDonough, 2013; Woodrow, 2006). Horwitz et al. (1986) define communication apprehension as "a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people" (p. 127). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) also add that communication apprehension can also be explained as frustration in not being able to communicate. The next distinction Horwitz et al. (1986) make is about test anxiety which is described by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) as "worry over frequent testing." The last distinction made is fear of negative evaluation. Watson and Friend (1969) state that fear of negative evaluation is said to be "apprehension about others' evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, [and] the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (p. 449). Furthermore, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) add that this evaluation is both "academic and personal" meaning that it is not only related to language performance but it is also a threat to learners' self-concept or ability to "present themselves" in the target language like than can in

their L1. This scale was originally evaluated with seventy-five university students studying Spanish in the U.S. (Horwitz et al., 1986). Since then, the scale has been used in subsequent research numerous times (Aida, 1994; Al-Saraj, 2014; Mak 2011).

Language anxiety appears has been a focus of research studies for several years. For example, studies have been done involving university students learning a foreign language in the United States (Aida, 1994), Kazakhstan (Suleimenova, 2013), Chile and Russia (Gregersen, 2006), Hungary (Toth, 2008), Saudi Arabia (Al-Saraj, 2014), and China (Mak, 2011). Many of these studies used the FLCAS or an adapted version of it to capture data. For example, Toth (2008) used a translated version of the scale in Hungary for his research investigating the relationship between language proficiency and anxiety. Other researchers adapted the scale to fit their purposes for research. For example, Chakrabarti and Sengupta (2012), in evaluating an Indian population changed the words 'language class' to 'English class' and 'foreign language to 'English language'. The frequent use of the FLCAS as an instrument to study classroom language anxiety through the past three decades appears to be due to its ease of use and its ability to quantify the types of anxiety it states that language learners experience in a classroom setting.

Factors in Foreign Language Anxiety. Another means of discussing language anxiety is through articulating its various symptoms, or in other words, clarifying what appears to cause language anxiety. These causes are not specific to any one context, but are identified as factors that induce anxiety. One early report identified six factors in the literature as causing anxiety: *personal and interpersonal anxieties*, *learner's beliefs about language learning, instructor's beliefs about language learning, instructor-learner interaction, classroom procedures,* and *language setting* (Young, 1991, p. 427). The relationship between instructors and learners and their beliefs about learning are likely to be key factors resulting in anxiety in the language

classroom. As one of the earlier lists of causes for anxiety, this list includes some detailed areas that affect students who learn a second language.

Research in the past 10 years has further identified other factors inducing anxiety in the language classroom. Toth (2008) mentions the *presence of other learners* (p. 235), *Target Language (TL) competence* (p. 236) or how accurate and fluent a speaker is, *instructional practices* (p. 237) such as attention being given to what students felt was irrelevant material, and *the lack of practice in authentic target language communication* (p. 238) as factors that cause anxiety. Despite the large gap in time from Young's 1991 research to that done by Toth (2008), the research shows some similar causes of anxiety are being identified, especially with Toth's mention of instructional practices. Xu & Li (2010) list *pace* (of class), *amount of speech (*from the teacher), *speed of [teacher's] speech*, *wait time*, *teacher's feedback*, and *error correction* (p. 251-252) as factors affecting a student's likelihood to develop anxiety. In 2014, Al-Saraj argues that "unfamiliar or unexpected teaching methods and teacher behavior can cause students anxiety" (p. 53) especially when they are not familiar with the types of activities or instruction (p. 55).

More recently, Effiong (2016) has also contributed to the research investigating the causes of anxiety in language learning by identifying the importance of variables relating to the teacher and the type of instruction provided. He found that teacher dress code (p. 141), teacher age (p. 143), teacher gender (p. 144), classroom atmosphere (p. 144-145), classroom humor (p. 145), peer collaboration and competition (p. 147), and peer familiarity and gender (148) can all affect anxiety in learning another language. These factors appear to be worthy of further research to better understand how the teacher and instructional context may influence anxiety that language learners are experiencing.

ESL Classrooms. It is apparent from the research that the majority of studies focused on language anxiety have centered on the foreign language context. The present research, however, is focused on the type(s) of anxiety that students experience in an ESL setting rather than an EFL setting or a foreign language setting. Woodrow (2006) makes an important statement when saying that "[a] distinction is made…between learning English as a foreign language and learning English as a second language. It is argued that living in an environment where the target language is also the language of everyday communication may influence anxiety" (p. 309). This statement implies that the environment in which a language is learned is a contributing factor to anxiety level. It seems reasonable to assume that a student learning English in the United States would experience more anxiety because of the necessity to use English outside of the classroom (e.g. at the grocery store). Effiong (2016) also adds that "[w]ith different results emerging from different FLA studies, it is clear that anxiety is not stable across instructional contexts" (p. 137). These "instructional contexts" include ESL, EFL, and university students studying second or additional languages. Both Woodrow (2006) and Effiong (2016) make it clear with their comments that more research exploring ESL anxiety is needed.

Given that the number of studies researching anxiety in an ESL setting is limited, it is important to see what insights have been gleaned from these studies. One study investigating anxiety in relation to an ESL setting is that of Woodrow (2006). Her study focused on anxiety that 275 students studying English in Australia were experiencing. The majority of these students (83.2%) were Asian with 34% of them being from China. These students were studying English in order to be admitted to an Australian university. These students were towards the end of their experience in an intensive English program and were preparing to take the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam. Therefore they had likely achieved high English

proficiency. Woodrow found that anxiety is different for students depending on if they are inside the classroom or outside the classroom setting. She also claimed, based on tests of reliability of the instrument, that the Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (SLSAS) was valid. Furthermore she learned that there were a variety of reasons why students were anxious. For example, oral presentations were among the things that students said caused them the most anxiety. A difficulty with Woodrow's study, however, was that it focused on students at only one level of proficiency. While she does not give their level, it can be inferred from the write-up that they were a high level because she states that they were ready for university study. With a focus on higher proficiency level students, she did not examine the possibility of anxiety in lower level students, nor did she test the validity of her scale with that population. Another potential difficulty with her study is that she created her own scale. Despite the availability of other instruments, she believed they were "not considered appropriate" for her study because they did not account for the dynamics of an ESL context. However, this was the only study that used the SLSAS and though she says it was validated, her findings cannot yet be generalized to other groups because it appears to have only been used once. There seems to be no other data or implementation of the instrument with which to compare her results to. A final difficulty with Woodrow's study was that the overwhelming majority of students were from an Asian background (83.2%), therefore the lack of variety in students may indicate that the findings are specific to Asians but not representative of other L1 groups.

Research into "English only" policies in an intensive English program (IEP) setting provide other insights into anxiety-inducing factors occurring in ESL programs. Shvidko (2012) said that one factor influencing students could be fear of negative evaluation (p. 113-114), a factor Horwitz et al. (1986) also identified as related to anxiety. In Shvidko's study, this fear of

negative evaluation was manifested in students who were required by program policies to only speak English while at school. Students' comments indicate trying to balance speaking English as required by program policy and avoiding negative evaluation by peers for language errors (p.113-114). This type of anxiety could possibly extend to encompass all the language skills students must learn in an ESL program (reading, writing, speaking, listening). Thus, students fear what others think of them when they speak English or when they are not speaking English as required by program policies. Other causes Shvidko mentions that could possibly be linked to language anxiety are cultural communication patterns or knowing how or when to communicate with others of different status, low-language proficiency, personality type (extrovert versus introvert), lack of confidence in self, and teacher factors such as providing motivation for students to speak English (p. 114-131).

Specific ongoing research in ESL settings is needed to help clarify just how anxiety impacts learners in these settings. As much of the previous research has dealt with EFL or other similar settings, research into the ESL setting can add valuable insights regarding the usefulness of testing a validated scale such as the FLCAS within an English-speaking environment. In an effort to further explore the nature of anxiety in the ESL context, it appears that some effort should be made to utilize data collection measures beyond the FLCAS to assure that concerns specific to this population have been gathered as represented by more recent studies which have also used the FLCAS to measure student language anxiety (Al-Saraj, 2014; Mak, 2011; Toth, 2008). To this effort, free response questions could be added to the survey to provide ESL learners the opportunity to share data specific to the language learning context in which they are studying.

Research Questions

The following questions were investigated in this study:

1. What factors do students in an intensive ESL language school say cause them communication anxiety?

2. Is there a relationship between the participants' L1 and anxiety experienced by ESL students?

3. Does the FLCAS survey accurately represent the anxiety experienced by ESL students when compared to the feedback received in their responses to open-ended questions?

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Research Design

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Participants

The participants in this study were originally 202 intermediate to advanced level ESL students studying English as a second language at a large private intensive English program in the Western United States. After incomplete responses were removed, there were 179 remaining. Respondents included 103 female and 75 male participants, with one person not indicating gender. All participants had lived in the United States ranging from as little as one month to nine years, with the average length of time being close to nine months. Participants also ranged in age from 17 to 63 years old. The students' native languages were quite diverse (see Table 1) with the most frequent first languages (L1s) being Spanish and Portuguese (74%) followed by those who spoke Korean, Chinese, and Japanese (17%). The length of time in which participants had been studying English ranged from two months to twenty years.

Table 1

Participants' L1s

Language	Number	Percentage
Spanish	115	64.2%
Portuguese	18	10%
Chinese	12	6.7%
Korean	12	6.7%
Japanese	7	3.9%
French	4	2.2%
Russian	3	1.6%
Albanian	2	1.1%
Kazakh	2	1.1%
Chuvash	1	0.5%
Malagasy	1	0.5%
Mongolian	1	0.5%
Thai	1	0.5%
Total	**179**	**100.0%**

Instruments

Given the extent to which the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) has been used in previous research to study language anxiety and that it is a validated instrument, it was the primary tool used in this study. This scale is comprised of 33 questions designed to measure three distinct types of anxiety including communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al., 1986). According to Chakrabarti & Sengupta (2012) and Yuan (2011) a total of 11 questions relate to communication apprehension, 15 relate to test anxiety, and seven questions relate to fear of negative evaluation as seen in Table 2.

Table 2

Anxiety Types for FLCAS Questions

Type	Questions

Communication Apprehension	1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 30, 32
Test Anxiety	3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2, 7, 13, 19, 23, 31, 33

In order to use the FLCAS with English language learners, however, in an ESL setting, some wording changes were required. These changes included replacing the words "foreign language" with the word "English" each time this occurred (See Appendix A). This approach is similar to what Chakrabarti & Sengupta (2012) did in adapting the FLCAS to fit an Indian context. The scaling used for each question was also adjusted, changing the selection process to a 6-point Likert scale rather from a 5-point Likert scale used in the original study. The Likert scale change was made in an effort to motivate ESL students to choose a value that indicated either a positive or negative response with no middle option. A total of six demographic questions were also added to the beginning of the questionnaire in an effort to collect data from participants on independent variables that could be used to more clearly identify learner characteristics that might be intervening variables influencing the ESL students participating in the study. These variables included such things as L1, length of residence, and age. Lastly, seven open-ended questions created for this study were included at the end of the survey to provide ESL students with the opportunity to describe their respective feelings to some specific scenarios designed to elicit possible feelings of anxiety that participants might have if they were in those situations. Figure 1 shows the instruments as they were used in this study.
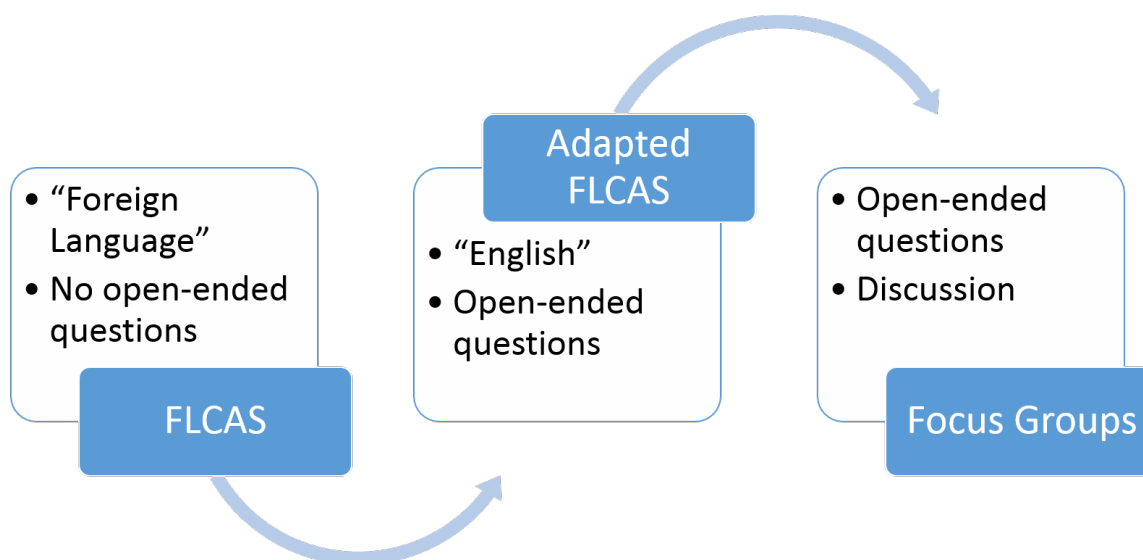
Figure 1. Research instruments utilized in the current research study

Procedures

All intermediate to advanced level students at a large private intensive English program in the Western United States were invited to complete the modified FLCAS survey during the fourth week of the Fall 2016 semester. Given that the FLCAS is designed to measure types of anxiety learners are experiencing at a given point in time, a decision was made by the researcher to administer the survey four weeks into the semester. In this way, it was hoped that students would be more likely to report on types of anxiety that they had been experiencing for a certain period of time and it would not be measuring only initial concerns which new students may experience such as adjusting to a new housing environment or learning to live with roommates. Before administering the FLCAS survey, two pilot studies were conducted during the previous semester, each with a small population of students, to determine if any wording or content changes needed to be made to the survey instrument before its official administration. The pilots also served the purpose of identifying any administrative issues with the survey such as broken Internet links or other computer related issues. In the first pilot test, 38 low-intermediate students

participated. No issues were identified through this process. In an effort to establish reliability and consistency, a second pilot was administered. During the second pilot study 65 low-intermediate to advanced students were invited to participate. Only 18 responses from those 65 students were received. Again, no changes in the wording of questions seemed to be needed as a result of this pilot.

After completing the pilot studies, the survey was administered to all low-intermediate to advanced-mid students at the ELC during the fourth week of the Fall 2016 semester. Teachers were asked to use previously scheduled lab time as a means of encouraging students to complete the survey. If this was not possible, they were asked to encourage students to complete it at a later time period. As a means of follow-up, reminder emails were sent via the survey software to increase the number of responses. After a two-week period, the survey was closed and responses were collected. At the end of the survey as a final question, students were invited to share their email address if they were willing to participate in one of three focus groups. A total of 56 students responded to this invitation. Of this number, 15 students actually participated in the focus groups. Each focus group was held at the institution where the research was carried out, and lasted approximately 45 minutes. All the focus groups were conducted by a teacher not associated with the institution. This was done in an effort to allow the students to talk freely and for them to know that their responses would be confidential. Prior to starting each focus group, the participants were invited to sign an additional consent form giving the researcher permission to have their responses included as data in the study.

A list of the questions used during the focus groups is included in Appendix B. During the sessions, participants were probed with specific questions such as "Which of your classes (reading, writing, speaking/listening, etc. makes you feel most anxious? Why?" An attempt was

made, by the interviewer in asking questions, to capture the degree of support by each participant to the questions being asked. The focus groups were held a week after the survey had closed and participation was completely voluntary. Those who did participate were treated to an ice cream party at the conclusion of the study.

Analysis

Quantitative data

This data was collected using Qualtrics, an online data collection software tool. The data obtained from the survey were responses to 33 Likert-scale questions and seven open-ended questions where students typed in a response. For the quantitative data obtained from the survey, measures of central tendency (means and standard deviations) were used to run a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The ANOVA helped determine whether a relationship existed between the anxiety types and the participants' first language and anxiety level.

Qualitative Data

In addition to the quantitative analysis, data obtained from the open-ended questions in the survey were analyzed using Grounded Theory (Titscher, Meyer, Wodak & Vettter, 2000). This approach requires the researcher to read all the responses and allow common categories to emerge from within the data. Categories from comments expressed in the open-ended comments were then used to help construct a taxonomy of categories regarding issues centered on anxiety types and factors inducing anxiety. Findings from the survey's open-ended questions were further substantiated by student comments collected during the focus groups.

Inter-rater reliability. In an effort to ensure that the data gathered from the open-ended questions was categorized in a more valid and more reliable way, an additional researcher who had a master's degree in TESOL and is an experienced ESL instructor, analyzed a 10% random

sample of the students' comments. The open-ended responses were put into an Excel file where they were randomized using the =RAND() function. They were then sorted from smallest to largest using the Sort & Filter feature. After this, the randomized comments were given to the additional rater along with a taxonomy of categories that had been created from the data delineating factors that students reported influenced the anxiety they experienced. An initial attempt at establishing inter-rater reliability showed that a few of the categories in the taxonomy were not specific enough leading to some confusion for the second rater.

The taxonomy was refined and example comments were included with each category in the taxonomy. At this point, a second attempt was made to determine the inter-rater reliability of the taxonomy. In comparing the results from the second rater and the researcher, 96% agreement was achieved with the revised taxonomy. There were a total of three responses to which the two raters were unable to agree on a specific classification. These three responses were retained in the data but were labeled according to the category that had been determined by the first rater given that the overall inter-rater reliability for the data was above the 90% percentile.

In the results section, data will be reported out as it relates to each of the research questions asked in the study. In this way, results from the Qualtrics survey can be further clarified by the qualitative data from the open-ended responses and the focus groups. To share data relating to the third research question the researcher employed data analysis software (SPSS) to create a distribution of students' scores on the FLCAS. This distribution was used to establish quartiles for further analysis of the relationship between the numerical scores on the FLCAS and the responses to the open-ended questions.

Results

There were two main goals in this study. The first was to understand what factors non-native English speaking students learning English in an ESL setting reported made them feel anxious. The second goal was to identify common themes in the open-ended questions and focus group responses collected in this study.

Research Question #1

Likert Scale Data . The first research question asked what factors students in an intensive ESL language school identify as causing communication anxiety. Data from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) survey questions were analyzed using an ANOVA. Table 3 shows the means and standard deviations of the anxiety types in the Likert-scale data. Results showed a statistical significance across the three types of anxiety, $F(2,5901)=4.209$, p=.015. While a Tukey HSD post-hoc test showed a statistically significant response between communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation, $p=.011$, the effect size, however, was too small to be very meaningful, $d=0.104$, although it was the largest of the three groups of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety.

Table 3

Score reports according to the anxiety type tracked in the survey

	M	*SD*
Communication Apprehension	3.13	1.41
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2.99	1.44
Test Anxiety	3.09	1.41
Total	3.08	1.42

Open-Ended Responses . In addition to the data from the Likert Scale, data was gathered from open-ended questions. Using Grounded Theory (Titscher et al., 2000), open-ended responses were grouped according to categories that emerged from the data. These categories included anxiety due to factors associated with students, teachers, and performance. The categories that were identified within the data can be seen in Table 4. While the taxonomy includes factors in anxiety related to students, teachers, and performance each section also contains subsections which provide additional details.

Price (1991) identifies speaker beliefs as an important factor in why students become anxious. While analyzing the data, it was apparent that the beliefs of the participants in this study contributed to their anxious feelings. For example, one student said "I don't feel confident with myself when I see people more prepared than me."

In addition to speaker beliefs, students' type of preparation was perhaps one of the most prevalent items mentioned in this study. Student preparation was key because responses indicated that students would prepare in some way for a situation where they felt they would likely become anxious. With this preparation, they said they would be able to eliminate or control their anxiety. The following are examples of what students said, "Maybe I could practice my presentation before with a native speaker," "Ask for help from my teacher," and "For sure I had been studying all night long." All of these responses suggest the notion that students consciously avoid feeling anxious in certain situations by preparing ahead in some way. This preparation appears to include putting in additional study time prior to class, seeking help from the teacher or even a native speaker prior to an in-class presentation or performance. Some students also indicated that a desire to avoid embarrassment in class was a preparation strategy.

In addition to preparation, students' comments indicated the effect teachers have on anxiety. This section is simply explained as things that students felt teachers do or fail to do that cause students to be anxious. Teacher factors was a relatively small category when considering comments received from the open-ended responses, however, responses from the focus group showed that teachers have a large impact on student anxiety. For example, students mentioned that the way corrective feedback is given can cause anxiety. If feedback is given in front of the other students, it may cause anxiety or embarrassment for the student being corrected. On a related note, students expressed that being told they are doing well causes anxiety, because they know that even though they were given positive feedback, there is still much to improve in their language ability. According to Effiong (2016) and Shvidko (2012), there are factors such as teacher dress, grooming, and personality that may cause a student to be anxious, some of which are seen in the previous comments.

A third general anxiety-inducing area expressed by the students was that of performance. This area included any situation where the student was communicating with peers or native speakers in English, or where they were performing in a specific skill in class such as reading aloud, or where they felt their performance showcased a particular skill deficiency such as in pronunciation or writing. For example, one student said that when they speak "sometimes [other students] laugh." This comment also supports the findings of Shvidko (2012) where she indicated that fear of negative evaluation was a factor in students' willingness to speak English. As for native speakers, one student said the following when discussing feedback from interlocutors: "Depend[s] on who, if it is my boss, of course I would be afraid but students or teacher don't make me afraid." As far performance was concerned, some student responses included anxiety caused by the type of skill area class in which he or she was participating.

Examples include, "I feel more anxious when I am in grammar class, because I am not good at grammar" and "I am afraid about speaking and listening class."

Focus Group Responses. Responses from the focus groups further reinforced categories in the taxonomy that were developed from the responses to the open-ended questions. In fact, many of the responses students gave in the focus groups provided additional clarification regarding the impact of teachers and how anxiety in the classroom can depend on ways the teacher gives correction or how the teacher provides feedback. For example, one student complained, "I don't like it when a teacher says that I am doing great, because I know that there is always more room for improvement." In other words, this type of positive affirmation from a teacher can cause some students to feel anxious because the student takes issue with the teacher's statement. In other words, what a teacher thinks is a good idea backfires. Similarly, another student mentioned that teachers need to be careful in giving correction to a student in front of the rest of the class because it can also cause students to get anxious and sometimes disengages the class or student.

Another comment was made regarding how teachers sometimes think they have answered a student's question adequately and yet the student still does not understand. One student reported that despite this, the teacher continues with the lesson, leaving the student feeling anxious and frustrated. This situation is also supported by a comment from students that some teachers assume that all their students have the same language experience and knowledge. Because there is a mix of returning and new students each semester, however, this is an unfair assumption to make. Even though they are placed in the same level, students' background

Table 4

Students' comments about anxiety-inducing factors

Taxonomy	Comments
I. Students	
a. Beliefs	
i. Perfectionism	"I want to make sure everything will be the way I want"
ii. Lack of Confidence (in self/teacher)	"I don't feel confident when I see people more prepared"
iii. Personal Expectations	"I know I speak choppy and I don't like it"
b. Feelings	
i. Overburdened	"In grammar we get too much information in class"
ii. Nervous/Afraid/Panicked/Unsure	"I feel really anxious"
iii. Apprehensive (shy, timid)	"I feel a little shy but I have to try"
iv. Embarrassed	"I am embarrassed because I didn't do my homework"
c. Preparation	
i. Lack thereof	"I'm nervous because I'm not prepared"
ii. Strategy use/application for preparation	"Maybe I could practice before with a native speaker"
II. Teachers	
a. Instructional/Other	
i. Teacher Methods	"My teacher speaks very fast"
ii. Teacher Strategies	"All teachers have different ways to teach"
iii. Inability to answer student questions	"When the teacher can't help me I get anxious"
iv. Personality	"His personality makes me nervous. I don't know why"
III. Performance	
a. Communication with Peers	
i. Facial Expressions	"Their faces can reflect what they're thinking"
ii. Laughter	"Some people laugh at me while I try to explain an idea"
iii. Peer pressure	"Other students don't speak English to me"
iv. Know-it-all	"Sometimes students think they know everything"
v. Comparing self to others	"It seems they know English better than me"
b. Communication with Native Speakers	
i. Facial expressions	"Their faces can reflect what they're thinking"
ii. General discomfort (i.e. judgment)	"Sometimes they change their way of speaking with me"
c. Skill-specific	
i. Anxious in listening class/test	"Listening is my weakest area of communication"
ii. Anxious in speaking class/test	"I need more practice with pronunciation"
iii. Anxious in writing class/test	"I feel anxious because I'm not a good writer"
iv. Anxious in reading class/test	"In reading class I am anxious"

and experience are not equal. Therefore, as a teacher explains a concept they feel students should already know, they may not clarify as much as some students require which leads to those students feeling anxious. There were other responses concerning the relationship with peers and how students became anxious due to negative feedback from their peers, such as laughter when they misspoke. However, the majority of data gathered from the focus groups was about teachers and the effect they have on anxiety. One student's response summed up the effect teachers might have on anxiety when she said that "the teacher makes the class," indicating that teachers have a huge influence on students and what happens in the class.

Research Question #2

The same process used in analyzing data regarding the first research question was used to analyze the data connected to the second research question. The question being investigated was if there is a relationship between the participants' L1 and anxiety experienced by ESL students? The ANOVA yielded several interesting results that were statistically significant across languages, $F(12, 5891)= 7.059$, $p<.001$. Of the 13 languages included in the study, there were several instances with meaningful effect sizes. Spanish speakers were statistically different from Chinese speakers ($p=.003$, $d=.210$), Korean speakers ($p<.001$, $d=.311$), and Japanese speakers ($p=<.001$, $d=.309$). The results for Portuguese speakers were also statistically different from the Chinese ($p<.001$, $d=.304$), Korean ($p<.001$, $d=.413$), and Japanese students ($p<.001$, $d=.405$). In addition, the Korean speakers' scores were statistically different from the Kazakh speakers ($p=.006$, $d=.601$) and Japanese speakers' scores were also statistically significant from Kazakh speakers ($p=.008$, $d=.578$). Students who spoke Spanish or Portuguese appeared to be the least anxious based on the results of the ANOVA. Chinese, Korean, and Japanese students on the other hand, showed that they were more likely to exhibit higher levels of anxiety. Table 5 shows the means and standard deviations for each language. It is important to keep in mind that for

several languages, there were few participants, including just one participant for Chuvash,

Malagasy, Mongolian, and Thai.

Table 4

L1 and Anxiety

	M	SD
Spanish	3.02	1.45
Portuguese	2.89	1.41
Chinese	3.33	1.44
Korean	3.45	1.26
Japanese	3.47	1.41
French	3.24	1.16
Russian	3.36	1.21
Albanian	3.20	1.08
Kazakh	2.71	1.19
Chuvash	2.79	1.71
Malagasy	3.18	1.10
Mongolian	3.16	1.46
Thai	3.12	0.60
Total	3.09	1.42

Qualitative comments made by students from the different L1s represented in this study

were also limited in their value given that many of the language groups were only represented by

one participant. Except for the Spanish speakers (who comprised 64% of the participants), the

rest of the participants had 12 other languages as their L1. Given the diversity of L1s, feedback

by a larger numbers of participants would be needed to determine in any meaningful way how

L1 may have affected the students' anxiety levels.

Research Question #3

Research question 3 asked if the FLCAS survey accurately represented what these ESL

students taking English classes at an IEP were feeling—when compared with data from the open-

ended questions. Various researchers have used the FLCAS in their studies with the intent being

to understand the levels of particular types of anxiety language students may be experiencing, however, there have been no consistent answers for how to interpret the students' survey responses in terms of high or low anxiety (Liu, 2006; Mak, 2011; Sparks & Ganschow, 1996; Sparks & Ganschow, 2007). Due to the lack of a widely accepted procedure in previous analyses, a simple procedure was employed in this study to determine high and low anxiety scores as a means of further interpreting the data and answering the third research question. The data was graphed according to scores on the FLCAS (See Figure 3). In this representation of the data, the first and third quartiles which refer to a geographical location in the Likert scale data, were used to determine both high anxiety (HA) and low anxiety (LA) groups in this study. The first quartile represented the median of the lower third of the respondents' scores based on participants' overall score from the FLCAS. The third quartile represented the median of the upper third of the respondents' scores on the FLCAS. The FLCAS contains 33 questions and each question had six possible choices, each with a number value (e.g. Strongly Disagree=1, Strongly Agree=6). Each quartile (first and third) contained approximately 40 participants. Those who were determined to be in the HA group scored between 114 and 198 on the FLCAS and those in the LA group scored between 33 and 92. The distribution of scores is shown in Figure 2. The total score possible on the scale was 198 and the lowest score possible was 33.

Based on the analysis of the first and third quartiles, there was evidence from the responses to the open-ended questions that supported the overall scores on the survey. For example, a high score on the survey, indicating high anxiety, was supported by open-ended question responses that also showed high anxiety. Examples of open-ended responses supporting high anxiety include, "I feel that I have to do perfect" and "I feel afraid with other people, specially native speakers." In the HA group, three subsections from the taxonomy proved to be

especially interesting when comparing the HA group to the LA group. Table 6 shows the comparison in student responses between HA and LA students. These are the areas which students most frequently indicated as anxiety-inducing. Each subsection indicates the number of responses in the open-ended questions that showing how students felt that particular subsection influenced their anxiety.
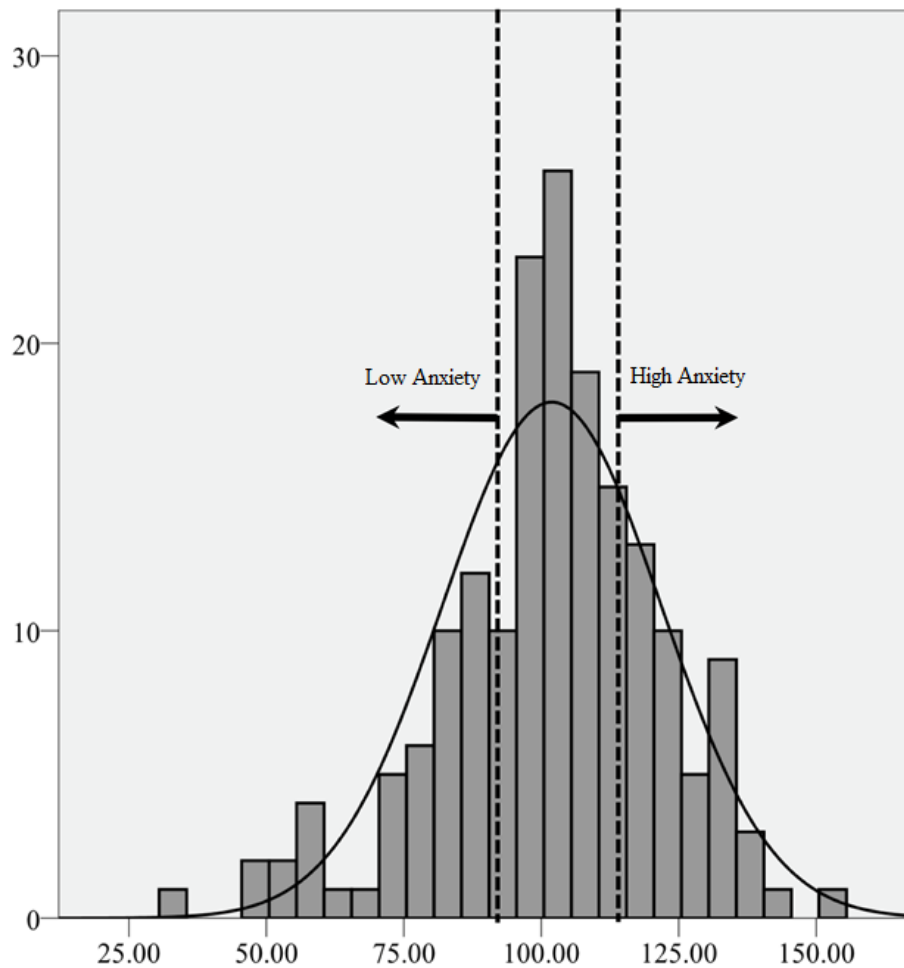
Figure 2. High and low anxiety groups based on quartiles in the data

Table 5

Frequency of HA and LA student responses from the open-ended questions

		Anxiety-based responses			
		Low		High	
Type	Category	*n*	*%*	*n*	*%*
Student	Beliefs	4	1.35%	29	9.76%
	Feelings	41	13.80%	89	29.97%
	Preparation	36	12.12%	34	11.45%
Teacher	Instructional	6	2.02%	5	1.68%
Performance	Peer communication	4	1.35%	21	7.07%
	NS communication	7	2.36%	5	1.68%
	Skill specific	5	1.68%	11	3.70%
Total		103	34.68%	194	65.32%

The first subsection distinguishing high anxiety from low anxiety students was Speaker Beliefs. There were 29 instances where HA students indicated that they were anxious due to one of three things: perfectionism, personal expectations, or lack of confidence in self or the teacher. To contrast these results with the group that fell in the lower quartile and was considered LA, only four instances regarding Speaker Beliefs were identified. These examples included students expecting perfection from themselves as well as students who compared themselves to other students. This expectation could possibly lead to the conclusion that students who are more anxious may be so because of perfectionism, high personal expectations, or lack of confidence. At least in this study, it appears that Speaker Beliefs were more important to those who experienced more anxiety. Student Feelings was another area of the taxonomy with a disproportionate number of responses that were classified as HA. There were 89 instances where students listed a feeling such as "anxious," "afraid," or "nervous." While there were half as many instances of students in the LA group who also listed Student Feelings (41) as a factor. It is reasonable to predict based on these results that HA students and LA students are both likely to report feelings associated with anxiety.

The final area of the taxonomy that appeared to occur with some frequency for the HA group was in the Performance category, that of *Communication with Peers*. This subcategory includes reaction from peers such as facial features or laughter while the other student is trying to communicate in English. In fact, one of the most frequent responses here was the idea of comparing themselves to others. Comments included students expressing they knew that other students were better than them at speaking English or knowing more vocabulary. There were several comments along these lines, which seem to indicate that for these HA students, peers are an important part of their learning process. For the entire HA group, there were 21 comments relating to peer communication whereas with the LA group there were only four.

There was one last area on the taxonomy which showed a large number of responses for both the HA and LA groups. Student Preparation appeared to be an important area of anxiety for both HA and LA groups. Their comments indicated that they used some strategy to manage their anxiety or their lack of preparation was anxiety-inducing. This subcategory also included students feeling embarrassed by their lack of adequate preparation for class which then led them to become anxious. The number of responses was very similar for both the HA and LA groups. Responses indicating either positive or negative feelings toward preparation were included in this analysis. This could lead to the conclusion that this category did not distinguish well between the HA and LA groups or perhaps that the rating was not accurate. Despite this, it is interesting to note that both HA and LA students seem to value using some sort of strategy to prepare for situations where they may become anxious when learning language.

Discussion

This section will provide a detailed discussion and synthesis of the data gathered from this study in relation to the three research questions. Each research question was analyzed using quantitative and/or qualitative data in an effort to assess the role of anxiety for adults learning English as a second language.

Factors Connected with Communication Anxiety

The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there was a statistical difference between the anxiety types measured by the FLCAS with communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation being the most representative forms followed by test anxiety. This finding suggests that IEP students are more likely to experience anxiety related to circumstances that require them to communicate and risk being evaluated negatively, such as speaking in class, speaking with a native English speaker, or being reluctant to speak English at all. It appears that test anxiety may be less of an issue for IEP students than communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. One possibility is that test anxiety, for these learners, is being accounted for in the areas of communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. In fact, several students, in their comments, agreed that taking tests was not the most stressful thing they experienced in learning English as a second language. This result may be due to institutional policies regarding tests on Fridays instead of during class time.

The adapted FLCAS used in this study helped to capture more detailed information about the anxiety that ESL students experienced due in large part to the added open-ended questions at the end of the survey. Previous studies (Liu, 2006; Mak, 2011; Sparks & Ganschow, 1996; Spark and Ganschow, 2007) mainly categorized students as anxious or not anxious based on their FLCAS score as determined by the 33 Likert scale questions they answered. This method of

reporting a number for level of anxiety is not particularly helpful because it does not explain why a student is anxious. Therefore, the picture of anxiety in language learning is incomplete. Instead of relying solely on data gathered from the FLCAS regarding communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety, the open-ended questions provided participants with an opportunity to better articulate the sources of anxiety they were experiencing and it provided a deeper analysis in to the issues learners felt they were facing. Students reported out categories regarding anxiety that were grouped into three main areas: Students, teachers, and performance factors. Each of these areas provided more detailed information regarding why students were experiencing anxiety.

Data gathered in the focus groups helped provide additional clarity to the factors students identified in the open-ended responses. It was found that teachers play an important role in students' anxiety level. Without the open-ended questions added to the FLCAS, this would likely have never been discovered along with the impact that students have on their own and others' anxiety. As was previously mentioned, 15 participants attended three different focus groups, yet their responses reinforced the data collected from the survey. Besides knowing that there were student, teacher, and performance factors that influenced the types of anxiety learners were experiencing, students reported on what class made them feel most anxious and how group dynamics within the class either reinforced or helped alleviate feelings of anxiety they were experiencing. This was a typical response from students who were classified as highly anxious. Another similar answer they provided was that a "class where [they] don't understand" can cause anxiety. There was one area that was most salient in their comments about anxiety: *teachers*. While the open-ended questions did provide evidence of the effects teachers have on anxiety in the classroom, the focus group provided additional information that was valuable in this regard.

For example, several students made comments about how teacher correction should be individualized and done outside of class in order to avoid causing a student to become anxious. Students also commented that teachers should have clear goals and purpose for the classes that they teach. In other words, if the teacher had clear goals and objectives for each day and each class, then the students felt much less anxiety than if the teacher had demonstrated less direction. These comments from students are consistent with previous research on how teachers affect anxiety in the classroom (Effiong, 2016; Trang, Baldauf, & Moni, 2013) through things such as teacher methods and strategies.

Furthermore, there were several other comments from students throughout the focus groups that reinforced responses to the open-ended portion of the survey. In the focus groups, participating students said that facial expression of other students cause them to be anxious. An additional cause of anxiety was when they were asked to repeat themselves which often led to the teacher or interlocutor becoming impatient. In the focus group, they were also asked to identify how they knew their classmates were anxious. They responded saying that classmates would become really quiet and their body language would change (i.e. avoiding eye contact). Most of these comments given in the focus group are represented in some way in the taxonomy as well, indicating that these focus groups provided consistent information with the data collected from the survey.

Anxiety Factors Influencing Students as Shaped by Participants' L1

There were several instances where the ANOVA showed statistical significance between type of anxiety and how students responded to survey questions and between how students speaking Spanish and Portuguese differed in level of anxiety when compared to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean speakers. The effect sizes also confirm that these differences were

important because they show a trend in how the students responded to the survey. Spanish and Portuguese made up a significant portion of the data in this research. Neither of these languages were statistically significant from each other, however, they were both statistically significant from the following three languages: Chinese, Korean, and Japanese. According to (Newman, 2014), there is some importance to this trend. The fact that both Spanish and Portuguese were statistically significant from the same three languages may indicate a fundamental difference in the way that speakers of similar languages responded to the survey. While Spanish and Portuguese are not as close as some languages in terms of language distance, they are certainly more similar to each other than they are to Chinese, Korean, or Japanese.

It could be argued that there is evidence to support that L1 may have had an effect on the students' comments regarding anxiety because those who participated in the focus groups were only of Spanish and Portuguese backgrounds. Since there were no other students who spoke Chinese, Korean, or Japanese in the focus groups the answer remains unclear. However, based on the results of the ANOVA, it may be reasonable to assume that responses from Asian students to questions in the focus group may have been different than those given by the students who spoke Spanish or Portuguese. Another point to consider may be that students from Spanish and Portuguese language backgrounds may be more willing to participate in focus groups where they have the opportunity to voice their opinions regarding issues that cause discomfort and anxiety in the classroom. Asian students, on the other hand, may be more reticent to share or complain about the language learning context or their teachers. As a result of the relationship between L1 and anxiety, IEPs need to be aware that students from different L1 backgrounds may respond quite differently to classroom factors that induce anxiety in those learning English as a second language.

Effectiveness of the FLCAS in Evaluating Adult ESL Students' Anxiety

As was previously mentioned, the FLCAS provides only a numerical score for the anxiety level of each student, which is useful in part. It provides a snapshot of how each student may be feeling with regards to the three types of anxiety the survey measures. For teachers and administrators, it can be very helpful to know if students in their program are experiencing high degrees of anxiety or not. Unfortunately, the survey does not provide any additional detail regarding these factors, which is where adding open-ended questions could be quite helpful. Allowing students to give clarification through open-ended questions for why they feel anxious could provide additional insights which could lead to helping train teachers to be sensitive to the issues that may induce anxiety in students, and organize instructional techniques which make students feel more comfortable in their language learning experience.

The analysis of the open-ended questions lends itself to a particular profile for students in both the HA and the LA groups. The concerns of highly anxious students are focused on their beliefs, especially concerning confidence and perfectionism when communicating with their peers. In addition, these students self-identify as "afraid," "nervous," or "anxious" in relation to language learning. Therefore, based on the results of this study, a teacher who identifies a student exhibiting these same qualities may assume that this student is anxious. On the other hand, if a teacher identifies that a student shows no signs of these qualities, they may assume that the students is not anxious. While this research is not representative of all students learning language, this discussion of a profile could be helpful for classroom teachers to identify if their students are anxious or not.

Teachers and administrators in other ESL programs can use this research as a starting point to evaluate the anxiety in their IEPs. This research has shown the importance of using a

validated instrument in the FLCAS, while also adding additional avenues for obtaining responses from students. If teachers and administrators want to understand why their students are experiencing anxiety, then they need to do more than administer the FLCAS to their students. The FLCAS is a useful instrument. However, its results alone are insufficient for understanding the extent of student language anxiety.

Limitations

Using an existing instrument to capture data from a new population has some benefits as well as limitations. First, one benefit of using the FLCAS to measure types and levels of anxiety in adult ESL students was because it is a validated instrument. The results from this study can be compared to results from earlier studies. Unfortunately, as seen in the description of the results, a limitation to the survey was that making minor modifications in the instrument such as changing the words "foreign language" to "English" and moving from a 5 point Likert scale to a 6 point Likert scale did not appear to be enough of an adequate change to appropriately capture the specific issues that ESL students may be experiencing while learning English in the host language environment. The question, "How long have you been learning English?" was discovered to be an ineffective question because the researcher defined "learning English" as intensive studying of the language. Several students, however, interpreted this question to mean that the length of time that they had studied in any type of English class they had ever taken. While the results of the question could be useful, the quality of their English learning experiences would certainly be called into question.

While the number of participants in the focus groups was small, a possible limitation was that only speakers of Spanish and Portuguese participated. Having a more representative sample

of speakers from other languages in the program may have provided a more complete picture of the types of anxiety students expressed they were experiencing in the program.

Feedback from teachers who observed students completing the survey during class time indicated that a third limitation in the study may have occurred in the data collection process. A few teachers mentioned that the language of the scale itself could have been a challenge for some students. If the student was unable to clearly understand what the question was asking, it is likely that he or she may have some difficulty in responding appropriately. This is what Newman (2014) calls the "language of the instrument itself." This concern with the language of the instrument was an overarching concern for the researcher as well. Since the FLCAS was originally developed for native English speakers studying a foreign language, the difficulty of the vocabulary used in the survey could certainly be an obstacle for ESL students, as the teachers indicated. Another limitation related to data collection could have been the time required to complete the survey. One teacher commented on how long the survey took for students to complete. It was anticipated that it would take approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey, yet some teachers reported it took as long as 30 or more minutes in some cases. The addition of the seven open-ended questions may have made the survey longer than was originally intended.

Implications

Anxiety is a real issue that administrators and teachers should be aware of in their students. In fact, Horwitz et al. (1986) mention that "teachers should always consider the possibility that anxiety is responsible for the student behaviors…before attributing poor student performance" to other factors such as "lack of ability" or "poor motivation" (p. 131). IEP administrators and teachers should also know that the level of anxiety students experience may vary greatly within a program. Administrators should realize that while the FLCAS is a well-

validated and respected instrument, this study found that the FLCAS was insufficient to fully capture the factors that ESL students felt expressed the anxiety they were experiencing. This study showed that communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation were more important than test anxiety, therefore others who want to assess their IEP students' anxiety levels should account for this. An additional instrument, similar to the FLCAS, could be created to account for the differences in L1 backgrounds and prior English learning experience. Not all students in an IEP come from the same language background as students learning a language at a university, which is another reason the FLCAS is insufficient.

Using only the FLCAS to determine anxiety types and levels does not help identify specific areas within an IEP which may be impacting its students. Modifying an instrument to meet the needs of the IEP setting and including open-ended questions for further clarification could be a helpful way to understand the unique factors that promote or induce anxiety in an ESL setting. Regarding the results of this study, IEP administrators and teachers should identify ways in which they can take an active role in identifying and overcoming anxiety that negatively impacts students' progress and performance.

Suggestions for Future Research

Given the limitations in this study, it is clear that much more research could be done on the topic of anxiety with English language learners. There are hundreds of thousands of international students in the United States learning English as a second language and pursuing the completion of academic coursework (Open Doors, 2016). Understanding and validating the feelings they experience while learning English is extremely important for their success in the language programs in which they are enrolled.

The first suggestion is what has previously been discussed and involves creating a better survey that is tailored to capture the types of anxiety expressed by learners. This survey should also include open-ended questions designed to elicit data that will provide additional clarity to the Likert scale questions. These questions could be better clarified with more data collected. In addition to this survey, a focus group should also be incorporated, allowing one additional source of data to be collected that provides for a comparison of responses among the survey, the open-ended questions, and the free responses in the focus group.. In relation to this suggestion, further studies and research should be done in order to determine the reliability of a new instrument. In like manner, the results of this study have shown that anxiety is more complex than the FLCAS shows on its own. Creating an instrument that captures a more complete picture of anxiety that occurs in the English language classroom could be very helpful.

Next, teachers need to learn to recognize the positive or negative influence that they can have on student anxiety. Additional research could be done to further clarify teacher-related issues and to design training materials that could be used in teacher orientation sessions to help teachers become an anxiety reducing influence rather than an anxiety inducing influence. These materials should focus on preparing teachers to understand what factors may cause anxiety in an ESL classroom and how to make changes to environment, motivation, methods, strategies, and feedback in their classrooms to lessen anxiety in students.

Another suggestion for future research is to do a similar study to this, but do it longitudinally over several semesters and if possible at different IEPs. Doing so would provide additional insights into how anxiety interacts with time and student familiarity with their environment. One important fact to bear in mind for this research as a whole is the reality expressed by Yan & Horwitz (2008) who said that in their study of student perceptions of

anxiety "some participants perceived little or no anxiety. Others recalled that they had experienced anxiety about language learning at some time in the past, but that they had overcome it" (p. 160). This idea of change from being anxious to not being anxious appeared in the findings from this study as well. There were participants who mentioned that they were initially anxious when learning English, but that they were no longer nervous several weeks into the program for some unknown reason. A longitudinal study could possibly help reveal attitude changes over time and what factors induce this change.

Finally, an additional area for investigation is to better understand why testing was not as much of an issue for ESL learners in terms of anxiety-inducing factors. In a setting where students are preparing to take the TOEFL exam (a high stakes test) in preparation for applying to attend an American university, it would seem that test anxiety would be an important factor influencing their study of the target language.

Conclusion

In short, this study clarifies the various types and levels of anxiety that adults learning English in an intensive English program (IEP) do experience. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) created by Horwitz et al. (1986) proved useful in showing the levels of communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety that may exist among IEP students, but the addition of open-ended questions and focus group data helped to provide greater clarity to the numerical scores students reported on the FLCAS. While considerable research in the area of anxiety has been done in second language classroom contexts, this research shows that more thorough analyses need to be considered in an effort to inform learners, teachers, and administrators regarding the factors that shape these types and levels of anxiety

learners experience. These findings can then be used to help learners adjust and cope with the types of anxiety they may experience while learning English as a second language.

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Appendix A

Foreign Classroom Anxiety Scale (adapted for this study)

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Adapted from Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. The Modern Language Journal, 70(2), 125-132.

Strongly Agree | Agree | Slightly Agree | Slightly Disagree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree

1. I struggle to feel confident when I am speaking in my **English** class.

2. I don't worry about making mistakes in **English** language class.

3. I get nervous when I know that I'm going to be called on in **English** class.

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in **English**.

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more **English** language classes.

6. During **English** class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at **English** than I am.

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my **English** class.

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in **English** class.

10. I worry about failing my **English** language class.

11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over **English** language classes.

12. In **English** class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.

13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my **English** class.

14. I would not be nervous speaking **English** with native speakers.

15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

16. Even if I am well prepared for **English** class, I feel anxious about it.

17. I often feel like not going to my **English** class**es**.

18. I feel confident when I speak in **English** language class.

19. I am afraid that my **English** teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in **English** class.

21. The more I study for a**n English** language test, the more confused I get.

22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for **English** class.

23. I always feel that the other students speak **English** better than I do.

24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking **English** in front of other students.

25. **English** class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my **English speaking** class than in my other classes.

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my **English** class.

28. When I'm on my way to **English** class, I feel sure and relaxed.

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the teacher says.

30. I get stressed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak **English**.

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak **English**.

32. I will probably feel comfortable around native speakers of **English**.

33. I get nervous when the **English** teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared **for** in advance.

Added Material

Demographic Questions:

1. Are you male or female?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been in the United States?
4. What is your native language?
5. What is your current level at the ELC?
6. How long have you been studying English as a second language?

Case Scenarios

Scenarios/Open-ended questions:

1. You didn't do the homework for class today, but you have been called on to provide an answer in class about the homework. How are you feeling right now?

2. Today is the day you will give a presentation. Because this is an assignment, it will be graded by the teacher based on your pronunciation and speaking ability. How anxious are you? What are you feeling right now? What would you do in this situation to make sure you are successful?

3. In class you've been working on the correct pronunciation of the past tense "-ed" in English. Today, your teacher asks different students to give the correct pronunciation of the word that the teacher gives you. You don't know when, or even if, you will be called on to give an answer. How are you feeling right now? What would you do this in situation?

4. Do you feel that other students contribute to the anxious feelings you have in the language classroom? Please explain why or why not and give some reasons.

5. Are you afraid that others judge you when you speak in English? Why or why not?

6. What is your learning style? (i.e. What helps you learn best?)

   1. Visual (I learn best when I can see what I'm learning)

   2. Auditory (I learn best when I can hear what I'm learning)

   3. Tactile (I learn best when I can physically touch and interact with what I'm learning)

   4. 1 and 2

   5. 1 and 3

   6. 2 and 3

   7. All three

   8. I don't know

7. You are preparing for a speaking test. Do you experience anxiety when you are preparing for and taking the test? Why or why not?

8. Think about your different teachers. How do they contribute to the anxiety that you feel in the classroom? Do you feel more anxious in one of the classes more than the others?

9. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group about language anxiety?

Appendix B

Focus Group Questions

1. Describe the type of classroom helps you learn best? (i.e fun, comfortable, slow pace, etc.) What can a teacher do to create this type of classroom?
2. Which of your classes (reading, writing, speaking/listening, etc.) is most enjoyable? Why?
3. **At this point give a definition of anxiety: nervous, lack of confidence, sick feeling (stomach), inability to think clearly, etc.**
4. Which of your classes (reading, writing, speaking/listening, etc.) makes you feel most anxious? Why?
5. How does this anxiety affect your desire to communicate?
6. What things for you make a class stressful? (**group these**)
7. It make you anxious when your teacher corrects your English in class. **Agree/Disagree**
8. Has your anxiety in learning English increased or decreased since coming to the ELC? Why? **On a scale of 1-10**
9. How do you know if your classmates are anxious? Give examples.
10. Would you consider yourself to be detail-oriented? Why or why not?
11. How many of you have studied in another school? (raise hands) How does this experience learning English at the ELC compare to other schools where you have studied English? Similarities? Differences? Explain.
12. How does the fear of negative evaluation (i.e. people laughing at your mistakes, others making fun of you) influence your willingness to communicate in English?
13. What suggestions do you have for how teachers at the ELC can control the amount of anxiety occurring in their classrooms?
14. Did you learn anything about yourself from taking the survey?
15. In what ways has the language learning experience at the ELC positively influenced your ability or desire to learn English?
16. Are you anxious when communicating in English outside of your English classes? (I.e. English for Lunch) (In other words, does just being in the classroom with others learning English make you anxious? Are you anxious when you just happen to be speaking to a native speaker outside of class?)