



Research Article

STUDYING ENGLISH SPEAKING ANXIETY AMONG MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS OF BAMYAN UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

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Anxiety is the condition in which an individual feels unpleasant and it imbeds tension, apprehension, and worries. Speaking anxiety is a type of anxiety that affects the process of speaking or oral performance. Regarding speaking, numerous studies have been conducted to find some anxiety-provoking factors. Afghanistan is a country where English is taught as a foreign language. Similar to other ESL/EFL contexts, Afghanistan EFL learners face various challenges such as being worried, losing self-confidence, communication apprehension, fear of being evaluated by others, etc when they speak in English. The purposes of this study are to find out the speaking anxiety-provoking factors and the differences between male and female speaking anxiety levels. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) and interview questions are used for data collection. The respondents of the study are 15 male and 15 female students who are randomly selected at Bamyan University, Afghanistan. Besides, 4 male and 4 female students were interviewed. As a result, the study found some speaking anxiety factors such as fear of negative evaluation, lack of linguistics capacity, communication apprehension, lack of preparation and some other factors. This study also highlighted that female students have more speaking anxiety than male students at Bamyan University in Afghanistan.

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INTRODUCTION

In fact, anxiety is a mood of being emotionally uncomfortable which is followed by negative effects, individuals feel powerless and they get tensioned by the effects (Horwitz & Cope, 1991, p.27-39). Anxiety is as permanent trait or feeling of the anxious situation which is contributed as part of personality (Scovel, 1978). Furthermore, the other classification as states anxiety which is called the individuals' apprehension in a specific situation as stimulus. The most important point in differences between the students are mostly personal which can be encountered as main problem (Horwitz & Cope, 1986, p.125). To support this more, it is indicated that in addition to those personal differences, another clear issue is speaking anxiety in the way of EFL/ESL learners and teacher's interactive role is effective in the classroom in order to avoid the anxiety problems (Hashim & Isa, 2012, pp.595-599).

Anxiety in EFL/ESL learning is the reason for negative emotional reactions of learners since learning a foreign language and culture is totally strange for them (Hofmann, Ehlers & Roth, 1995). It is believed that most anxious learners feel strange while communicating with a strange individual. All students of ESL and EFL experience the language anxiety (Hwa & Peck, 2017), while it is witnessed more in EFL learning (Naghadeh, 2013). 50 percent of students learning language, encounter levels of language anxiety (Stein, Walker & Forde, 1994). It is stated that

significant anxiety is seen on poor performance in the EFL mostly in speaking skills (Horwitz & Cope, 1991, pp.27-39). Anxiety in language is when individual is not skilful in ESL learning "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a SL with which the individual is not fully proficient, and physical feeling is related to it and it is not a general performance anxiety (MacIntyre, 1995). Other researchers find that the EFL learners' is anxiety is a type which is called foreign language anxiety.

In Bamyan University majority of the students are able read and write English language but when it comes in terms of speaking, they are not able express themselves well. The reason of these problem is anxiety during their speaking skill. The aim of these reseach is to find out the factor and cause of anxiety among Bamyan University male and female students.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

English language proficiency is an essential skill for academic and professional success, especially at the university level. However, many university students, both male and female, often experience anxiety and apprehension when using the English language. This phenomenon, known as "English language anxiety," can negatively impact students' academic performance, participation in class, and overall confidence.

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Existing research suggests that English language anxiety may manifest differently among male and female university students of Bamyan University due to sociocultural factors and gender-based expectations. Female students may experience heightened anxiety due to societal pressures to excel academically, while male students may feel additional pressure to conform to masculine norms that discourage the open expression of language-related fears.

By conducting a comprehensive investigation into English language anxiety among university students of Bamyan University, researchers can provide valuable insights to university administrations, language instructors, and student support services. This knowledge can inform the development of evidence-based strategies and programs to effectively address English language anxiety and create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students, regardless of gender.

Today English language is as important as it is necessary in all fields of life (Zia, & Norrihan, 2015). Similarly it is obvious that English language is a first need and first step for all individuals in developed and underdeveloped countries. English has covered approximately all parts of education and most importantly higher education. In Afghanistan, English language has become the key to impoverish this country as this importance has been dramatically increasing after the withdrawal of Taliban Regime and replacing it with presence of United Nations, US influences, international organizations both governmental and non-governemntal (NGOs), and overall new globalized system of life. This huge shift includes not only working for NGOs rather they needed English for government jobs, improving higher education, studying abroad, and etc BBC News (2009). University students in Afghanistan require English for improving their higher education and they need all English skills based on their own needs. The needs of writing, reading, listening as well as speaking skills are issues that sometimes are not achieved properly. Speaking skill for instance have been one of the difficult classroom tasks, on the other hand interesting. Since English is taught as foreign language in Afghanistan, it requires standard approaches to achieve the language skills and besides there must be troubleshootings for the challenges. More specifically, most university students face difficulties and crudity in speaking English and there might be reasons behind the problems. These problems must be explored in order to teach and learn speaking effectively.

Moreover, in other countries such as Turkey, based on studies (Gürbüz, 2013), about gender and its relation to learners speaking anxiety and motivation, the developed questionnaire (Dornyei, 1990), EFL speaking anxiety scale from FLCAS [5] and three interview questions, it was found that Turkish female students had more anxiety than male students. In addition, in terms of motivational level, female students have higher motivation than male students. Similarly, it was found that females' integrative and instrumental motivation was higher than males (Gürbüz, 2013). In comparison to Afghanistan, English speakers face those challenges and it might be different from a target group to another target group. There might be reasons such as strict believes, government rules and laws which have resulted to speaking anxiety in the country.

Indeed, the research is based on investigation of anxiety effects or in another word Foreign Language classroom Anxiety (FLCA) of university students who are learning in Afghanistan speacially in Bamyan. ESL and EFL learners often have anxiety when they perform in front of audience. It might be a big challenge if the learners have the competence but they lack performance. Therefore, this research will focus on an important portion of acquiring English as a Second Language,

speaking anxiety which is a big challenge among students of Bamyan University in Afghanistan. Since the students enrol at the university, for the first year and second, they feel shy and do not have self-confidence which results to speaking anxiety. This research will identify whether there are speaking anxiety or in what extend this problema exists among the learners. Additionally, is there any relation between the speaking anxiety and gender considering and analysing their oral performances/speaking skill. Anxiety in its nature is a negative mood of EFL/ESL learners during their speaking, thus it is essential to study about the issue and its solution.

Moreover, there is another angle of the research which is about gender effect. The relationship between the levels of anxiety effects on male and female is very necessary to be investigated in Bamyan University of Afghanistan. At the end of identifying the level of anxiety on both genders, some strategical method for avoiding anxiety will be suggested for those anxious learners. This will intend to identify the problems and solving them.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Considering the problems of university students in Afghanistan specially Bamyan province, there is a need of research on factors, challenges, angles, history, and strategies to overcome the speaking anxiety (problems of oral performance).

The objectives of the research are:

1. To identify factors that lead to anxiety among EFL students of Bamyan University in Afghanistan.
2. To highlight the level of anxiety on both male and female EFL students of Bamyan university in Afghanistan.

LITERATURE RRVIEW

ANXIETY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

And to consider othe studies, most relevant and similar context of research (Gürbüz, 2013), Foreign Language Anxiety is a construction which mixed and complexed with psychological terms considering the learners' emotion, self-esteem and confidence. Second relevant study in Afghanistan neighbouring country, Iran, where the most similarities are witnessed with the context of this research where it is stated that anxiety is an affective state by which individuals experience danger in the state of emotion, feel powerless, and aprehended (Fakhri, 2012). Besides, in some situations language anxiety is certainly a factor which most extendedly interfere and avoid the process of learning so a negative energy slow down the brain activities and the words and ideas are not being relevantly and quickly produced (Tahernezhad, Behjat & Kargar).

Speaking anxiety is a fear of public speaking which could be counted as an avoidance to the performance (Mannuzza, Schneier, Chapman, Liebowitz, Klein & Fyer, 1995). In addition, speaking anxiety means the lack of education, lower of income, and low rate of employment [Stein, Walker & Forde, 1994]. As far as anxiety in speaking is the most essential issue in ESL/EFL (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999) this study on anxiety have been conducted in many contexts and environment. The most recent studies which is approximate to the research of anxiety in Afghanistan context are such as Afghanistan, Iran (most similarities), Pakistan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Yemen, Turkey, Libya, Myanmar, Malaysia, Republic of Korea, Australia, Indonesia, and Japan. Iran and Pakistan are the most similar contexts with the common educational academic needs and background due to having social, environmental and cultural similarities.

ANXIETY AND GENDER

Infact, in relation to gender and anxiety consistent researches are being conducted but in Afghanistan context only few studies (Zia & Norrihan, 2015) emphasized on EFL learners' anxiety as a general and the next point he considered was determining reasons of anxiety among the Afghan learners in Nangarhar University. As a general, the finding illustrates that EFL/ESL learners have problems in speaking which is having high level of FL classroom speaking anxiety which highlights low level of oral performances (Zia & Norrihan, 2015). More studies with similar findings (Hashim & Isa) studied the two essential problems, the study still needs to be done focusing on level of anxiety among both male and female gender.

Considering this research, the similarity is the gender contribution but still there might be some political, historical, and geographical differences between the two countries which contribute to the anxiety and anxiety levels. Furthermore, according to study (Hanifa, 2018) emphasized on the difference of anxiety between Iranian male and female EFL students and they found that FLCAS shows female learners had more speaking anxiety than male regarding to being worried about making mistakes, preparation, linguistic complexities, rapport, and sociocultural factors which in terms were all speaking anxiety. Similarly on study of students in Kuching, Sarwak, Malaysia found that female learners have more anxiety than male learners, specifically when it comes in terms of oral speech, they feel shy and they start laughing (Wong, 2009).

FACTORS OF SPEAKING ANXIETY

Fear of negative evaluation from instructors, fear of oral mistakes (Hofmann, Ehlers & Roth, 1995), the quality of language programs, language skills, encouragement, proficiency, instructors relationship, exams (Ellis & Rathbone, 1987), and social customs (Young, 1990). can be most affective factors of speaking anxiety. In Afghanistan context specially in Bamyán, it is found that Most English language learners had high level of FLCSA on mainly three factors such as fear of negative evaluation, social communication apprehension, test fear, performance anxieties in the classroom and the FLCAS questionnaire results indicates that fear and worries of negative evaluation had the highest position in comparing to other two factors and communication apprehension is second highest factor followed by lowest factor; test anxiety (Zia, & Norrihan, 2015). In fact, the most essential aspect in this problem is the anxiety and motivation as two opposite phenomenon. On the other hand, it has been proposed that the anxiety is due to intrinsic motivation (Tanveer & Muhammad, 2008). Additionally extrinsic factors also places negative effects on speaking performance and those can be social, traditional, regional, and cultural environments affects (Tahernezhad, Behjat & Kargar, 2014). Meanwhile it is suggested that the main factors of anxiety are the anxiety caused by worries in making mistakes with grammatical aspects of language, pronunciation mistakes, lack of ability in fluency (Awan, Azher, Nadeem & Naz, 2010).

Meanwhile it is indicated that the teacher's negative behaviour, teaching method, negative evaluation, revealing mistakes, error correction with the highest reasoning level could be the factors of foreign language anxiety in speaking among learners (Mohtasham, Leila, Farnia & Maryam, 2017). It is also elaborated that male learners agrees that error correction is not a negative factor on their journey of learning English as a foreign language. Similarly some anxiety provoking factors are others perceptions toward learner's speaking, monitoring situation of English proficiency, negative manner of classrooms, criticizing on answers, being worried of making mistakes in

grammar, pronunciation, coherence of speech, and the most importantly the students' unpreparedness of the subject was the main factors of speaking anxiety (Naghadeh, 2013).

Other studies conducted in approximate similarities with Afghanistan context is the second neighbouring country of Pakistan which has similar life style, culture, social living, and many more aspects in common with Bamyán Afghanistan. The most recent study (Bhatti, Memon, & Pathan, 2016). found that factors such as poor academic background, fear of exams and quizzes, fear of making mistakes, teachers' correction and criticizing feedback, and lack of motivation are anxiety provoking among tertiary level in Pakistan. The academic experience in Bamyán Afghanistan shows that there seems to be some similar problems in the Afghani context. This mostly shows that in Afghanistan there are fear of teachers' evaluation, fear of tests, and low knowledge about English as a second language, which all causes speaking anxiety. Similar factors were found which provoked anxiety in speaking among Pakistani learners (Bhatti, Memon, & Pathan, 2016). These similarities could be in factors such negative evaluation, English proficiency (poor background). However; they could find some other factors which has never been mentioned before. They indicate that factors such as people in the region, culture of learner, and classroom atmosphere are also anxiety provoking. In addition, according to their finding most language teachers focuses only on writing and reading while ignoring listening and speaking which automatically reduces the learners' confidence and make them anxious. Furthermore; according to their findings the books and curriculums are not designed for improvement of learners' communicative skill. They indicate that the process of learning and teaching English is only exam based, and the last important factor they have stated is that the learners' method of learning such as memorization of linguistics rules and words increase their anxiety. It seems that their findings have elaborated the most consistent factors to Afghanistan context comparing to the other studies. Considering all these factors, it seems that in Afghanistan context the same challenges are anxiety provoking most importantly when the method is teacher-centred and the institution and teachers are dominating the environment, in addition, they use all strategies, method, and curriculum only as the purpose of dominating on students, which of course results in speaking anxiety. The other important factor that is highlighted is the students' background. The rural students are far more anxious than those living in urban areas because of being far away from homes, and different ways of living.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A general mixed qualitative and quantitative approach is used in this study. This research is conducted in an academic area in Afghanistan 2022. It is fulfilled in Bamyán University which is in central part of Afghanistan. Although all students of universities around Afghanistan were used as population, only students of Bamyán University are taken as a sample. The students were 15 male and 15 female. N (students of all universities in Afghanistan) and n (students from all faculties of Bamyán university, 15 male and 15 female). All respondents were familiar with English rules of speaking and their level of English could be counted as few of them intermediate and most of them advanced level.

The procedure started by spreading questionnaires to the participants and it was assisted by a lecturer from the English department of Bamyán University in Afghanistan. The settings of the conducting this research was a classroom in English department of Education Faculty, Bamyán University. All thirty students were invited to answer the questions of interview and questionnaire. The duration of responding to those questions,

took one hour and thirty minutes. Students were previously informed that the aim of the questionnaires was only to collect data about their reactions to the impact of anxiety on their oral performance in English. Each student had two copies of the questionnaires; one of FLCAS, and the students' questionnaire that were designed by the researcher. Students were also informed that their answers did not have any relation to their grades in the English class. After that, the researcher with the help of English department explained students on how to circle their answers, to read each statement carefully before circling their answers. They were also informed to circle only one answer for each statement. All participants were students from different year (different semesters) from different faculties of Bamyan University. Both males and females participated in answering the questions. The interview section also is added at the end. As they finish the Likert Scale, they will go with explanation on interview part. They will be informed to answer free and explain their own problem related to anxiety. It is not always necessary to write problems, they also can indicate that they are good at which situation of speaking English and which situation they feel comfortable and which situation annoys them and will make them feel anxious. As the research is investigating the anxiety of speaking among Bamyan University students of Afghanistan using both interview and questionnaires, the data are analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The questionnaires were analysed quantitatively. SPSS 25 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to calculate the information entered by participants. In order to obtain the objectives, the terms such as mean, percentage, and standard deviation were calculated. Furthermore, for the first research objective the responses from responses are analysed and factors are categorized based on their frequencies. For the second research objective, the Liker-Scale is analysed through using SPSS 25. In this part the mean, percentage, standard deviation is calculated the meanings are interpreted.

FINDINGS

The process of speaking in English language is affected by most dominant and least dominant factors. These factors are found qualitatively by analyzing each response according discourse analysis. The respnses are categorized as factors and and its relation to male and female responses as shown in percentage. For a speaker it is important to know why they feel anxious when they are speaking. Thus, it is necessary to find out the effects, reasons, and solution. Considering the research question 1, for finding the factors of speaking anxiety, 4 male and 4 female students were interviewed. The students felt free and responded honestly by considering different angles and their perspectives to the 5 questions about as about language speaking anxiety which finally answers the research question 1. The second findings are descryptively analyzed by showing mean and standard deviation to describe how male and female students respnded to each ítem. In addition, the comparison between both male and femal are described. This comparison has answered the research question 2.

RESULTS OF QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Considering table 1, as the result of data calculations, this study has found numerous factors causing anxiety of speaking among EFL students of Bamyan university in Afghanistan. The factors are categorized based on their order of frequencies among which fear of negative evaluation, is the most frequent factor. Following with that, lack of linguistics capacity, communication apprehension and lack of preparation are the most vivid factors found from data analysis. For more illustration, each factor is illustrated.

Table 1: Factors in Anxiety of Speaking and Its Frequencies

No	Factor		4 Male		4 Female	
	Component	Statement	F	%	F	%
1	Fear of negative evaluation	Teacher's evaluation	3	75 %	1	25 %
		Audience evaluation	1	25 %	3	75 %
2	Lack of Linguistics capacity	Vocabulary	4	100 %	3	75 %
		Grammar	2	50 %	3	75 %
		Pronunciation	2	50 %	2	50 %
		L1 influences	1	25 %	1	25 %
3	Communication apprehension	Trait	1	25 %	2	50 %
		Context	2	50 %	2	50 %
		Audience	1	25 %	1	25 %
		Situation	0	0 %	2	50 %
4	Lack of preparation	Lack of information about the topic	1	25 %	1	25 %
		No body language consistency	1	25 %	0	0 %
5	Other Factors	Low memory	2	50%	1	25%
		Gender discrimination	1	25%	2	50%
		Lack of Self-confidence	1	25%	1	25%

Fear of negative evaluation such as teacher's observation and audience evaluation are the dominant factors found as the participants responded. For instance, answering the first question, (*Please explain what disturbs you the most in speaking English? And why?*) One male student has responded, "*to be honest with you, I have no problem in English speaking but the only problem I suffer the most is that I lose my speaking skill when I face my English teachers. When I speak to them, I guess they will judge my speaking.*" Furthermore, this participant's answer to second question, (*what are some situations that you feel anxiety in speaking?*) is "*I feel worried more when I speak to those teachers who criticize me a lot.*" In addition to this factor, another respondent answers to first question, "*my classmates' interruption and judgment about my speaking disturbs me the most when I stand in front of the class to speak*" indicates that audience negative evaluation cause English learners to feel anxious.

To come up with other factors, the responses from participants indicates that the second dominant factor can be 'lack of linguistics capacity'. This is referred to as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and the interference of first language. "*3. Shortage of vocabulary: I know a lot of things to speak about a topic but the problem is that I know few words*" is an answer to the first question which supports that the second factor can be lack of vocabulary. Lack of expression and using idioms are also vivid in the response, "*I can't use idioms and expressions while speaking*". Similarly, another female student stated that, "*...and sometimes when I speak English, I can't structure the sentences according to grammar rules and it disturbs me a lot.*" In addition, some respondents' problem is the pronunciation of words which is important to make others understood. For instance, a respondent's answer to the third question (*What kinds of difficulties do you face during speaking English?*) is "*1. Mispronunciation: during speaking, I face with inability in*

pronouncing some tough words." Pronunciation problem is the factor which is found with equal frequencies among male and females. To illustrate it more specifically with some other parts of pronunciation, for a learner it is a challenge where to put stress and what intonation a word has. For instance, a female respondent explained that, *"I also sometimes, face with challenges for example while I am speaking, I can't pronounce some words well and I can't concentrate on intonation or stress because these are the most important elements in speaking English."*

Based on the table 1 one more factor for the anxiety of both male and female students is communication apprehension. Their communication apprehension can be contributed to trait, context, audience and situation. Considering the male students only 1 student stated that, *"when I start talking, sometimes I feel very relaxed and sometimes I feel uncomfortable because my characteristic shy and humble"*. Similarly, 2 female students had the same idea that their anxiety is mostly related to their trait, *"I feel anxious because my personality is from girls' personality and I have this characteristic."* In terms of context 50% of both male and female responded that one of the reasons that they are anxious during speaking, is the environment. According to two male students, where they speak is effective on their speaking. One of them stated that, *"when I am with my friends, I speak fast and without problems but when I get to academic area, I feel lost"*. Another female student supported this idea by answering that, *"In our room we speak very nicely when we come to class everything is forgotten."* Both male and female students moderately agreed that context of speaking is important in speaking. In terms of audience one male and one female student showed their agreement. A male students responded that, *"when there are a lot of people, I am not speaking very well in front of them"*. In addition, he added, *"I am more comfortable speaker when there are girls but with boys, I feel like they will laugh at me and make a joke on me."* Subsequently, one female student added that, *"when the audiences are mostly professional in speaking, I feel worried and cannot speak well"*. The same respondents elaborated more by stating that, *"I speak very well in front of my classmates but when I speak to a new class, I face with strange people and I feel anxiety. In fact, when there are native speakers, I feel more anxious."* In terms of speaking situation two female students answered that they feel speaking anxiety when situations are serious such assignments presentation or seminar. Overall considering communication apprehension, high number of females feel anxious in terms of trait, context, audience, and situation. Furthermore, considering communication apprehension this study finds out that context is the dominant anxiety provoking factor in which 50% of respondents showed their agreement. The least dominant factor is found to be situation whereas only 50% of female agreed with it.

Referring to table 1 only 1 female (25%) and 1 male (25%) shared their opinion that they lack enough information for speaking. One of the male students responded that, *"lack of information: it is a big problem for me when I am speaking with someone about something I don't have any information about."* This statement means that the students either didn't get preparation before or he was chosen randomly to speak about something that he does not know anything about. For instance, another female student answered that, *"in speaking subject the teacher gives us two topics to talk about; one is normal topic and another is random topic. For random topic I feel anxious how to speak with no information."* To witness more example, the third student stated that, *"I feel worried if there sudden speaking topic because I don't have enough idea to talk."* In addition to lack of information about the topic, this study found out that the students' lack of physical preparation also effects students'

speaking skill. The more they have physical energy the better they can speak. For example, only one male student added that, *"sometimes physically I am not ready to speak and when I speak my body shakes and I cannot make a good body language."* To interpret more on last students' statement, this study would come up with an idea that there must be a consistency between body language and what is being spoken. Overall, in terms of preparation, students' feedback was mostly from preparation about the topic.

Other findings from the study show that there are some other specific anxiety provoking factors. These factors such as low memory, gender discrimination and self-confidence are selected as dominant among those specific ones. To analyse more, low memory is one of the dominant factors in this part. 50% of male students stated that they have memory (brain) problem which results in speaking anxiety. One of the students' answers is, *"sometimes it happens to me forgetting the words during speaking."* According to this student's statement forgetfulness is a memory problem which slows down speaking and provoke more anxiety. In addition, another male student replied that, *"another reason in speaking English is that it is hard to memorize all of the vocabularies and all information which we don't know the meaning of them"*. Furthermore, in relation to memory capacity, a male student answer to the question, *"which one has more anxiety in speaking, males or females? And why?"* is seemed to be very different. He added that, *"I can say my own idea that females have more fear when they are speaking due to their memorizing but no analysis."* It can be analysed that in relation to memory (brain) works, female students are better but they lack analysis skill. From the last statement, it is clear that a speaker must have both speaking and analysis skill (memorized vocabularies and information does not always helpful in speaking skill).

Moreover, this study found that gender discrimination (sexism) can be anxiety provoking. Considering gender discrimination, female students showed more anxiety as 75% stated that their anxiety factor is related to gender discrimination. For example, a female student stated that, *"I am always prepared for speaking when I am with my female classmates but while there are boys in the class, I feel worried. I cannot speak well because they disturb and interrupt me."* According to this statement males are dominant ruling over females, which decreases their values both in academic and non-academic environment. Further examples can be found from another female student who explained that, *"one of the reasons that I feel shy in front of the class, is because culturally and socially women have been oppressed since decades ago."* This example seems to be very different from others because in terms of gender discrimination she has referred anxiety problem to social and cultural issues. To support this finding another example from a male student who answered that, *"I feel shy in front of girls because I feel like they look at my face and sometimes they whisper and saying bad things about boys."*

Self-confidence is another less dominant factor which is found as a result of the study. Only 1 male and 1 female agreed on self-confidence relation to anxiety in speaking. One male stated that, *"when I don't have self-confidence over myself, I cannot speak English with fluency."* In contrast another female student insists on possessing a moderate self-confidence by stating that, *"I am a fluent speaker because I have self-confidence and I don't feel shy."*

What are the factors that cause anxiety of speaking on students of Bamyan university in Afghanistan?

Overall, this qualitative analysis has answered the research question whether there are factors which cause anxiety of speaking among students in Bamyan University of Afghanistan.

As a result of respondents' view, many factors are found which are analysed and interpreted into categories such as fear of negative evaluation, lack of linguistics capacity, communication apprehension, lack of preparation, and some other specific factors. Among all, lack of linguistic capacity was found as dominant factor which causes anxiety.

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

2. Is there a difference between the speaking anxiety level of male and female students at Bamyan University in Afghanistan?

The data for second research question was collected by FLCAS to investigate students' language anxiety concerning communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991). Foreign Language Anxiety Scale is based on five-point Likert scale, containing 1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Neither Agree nor Disagree 4. Disagree 5. Strongly Disagree. The data were analysed by SPSS statistics version 25.

THE LEVEL OF ANXIETY ON MALE STUDENTS

Table 2 shows the mean score of each statement of the FLCAS questionnaire which is responded by male students. The number of students is 15 and for each individual students the mean and Standard Deviation (SD) are shown. For more analysis, each item is interpreted.

Based on table 2, the mean score for the first item "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class" is (3.3333) locating between 3 and 4. Between 3 and 4, it can be counted as 3 which means neutral (neither agree nor disagree). Similar meaning is followed by item #2 and #3 which shows neutral responses. For the item #4 as the mean score is (2.9333), male students of Bamyan University agreed that they keep thinking of other students are better than them. In addition, the mean score for item #5 is 3.4000 and for #6 is 3.2000 which is interpreted as neutral (related to these two items, male students are neither agreed nor disagreed). Furthermore, the mean score for item #7 is 4.3333. In fact, the meaning is that the male students would be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers. Consequently, 2.8 is the mean score for item # 8 which represents agreement on the item. To interpret more, the mean score represents although male students at Afghanistan universities are prepared for speaking, they have anxiety. For item #9 the mean is (3.5714) which shows neutral response. Moreover, the mean scores for items #10 to #14, are located between (2) to (3) which are counted as 2. This means that the respondents agreed on these five items. Finally, the mean for item #15 is (3.6667) which means neutral response.

Table 2: Male Students' Level of Anxiety

Statements (items)	N	mean	SD
1) I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	15	3.3333	.89974
2) I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	15	3.8000	1.14642
3) I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	15	3.0667	1.22280
4) I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	15	2.9333	1.27988
5) I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	15	3.4000	1.35225

6) It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	15	3.2000	1.26491
7) I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	15	4.3333	.89974
8) Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	15	2.8000	1.01419
9) I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	15	3.5714	1.01635
10) I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	15	2.0667	1.09978
11) I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	15	2.7333	1.22280
12) I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	15	2.4667	1.12546
13) I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	15	2.9286	1.07161
14) I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	15	2.2667	1.16292
15) I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	15	3.6667	1.04654

THE LEVEL OF ANXIETY ON FEMALE STUDENTS

According to table 3, the mean for the first item "I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class." is (2.5333). This represents that the score locates between 2 (agree) and 3 (neither agree nor disagree) which can be recalled as (agree). In other words, the female students at Bamyan University of Afghanistan never feel quite sure of themselves when they are speaking in their foreign language class. Furthermore, by considering second item, "I don't worry about making mistakes in language class." the mean score was (3.6000) which means that they feel neutral (neither agree nor disagree). The mean score for item #3 is (2.5333) which means they agreed on it or in other word, female students of Bamyan University in Afghanistan tremble when they know that they are going to be called on in language class. Consequently, the mean for item #4 is 3.4, and for item #5 is 3.4667 which means they agreed on both. The item #6 has a mean of (1.8667) which represents that it embarrasses students of Afghanistan universities to volunteer answers in their language classes. The mean for item #7 is (3.4667) which means they responded neutrally. For the item #8 there is a mean of (2.5333) which is interpreted as even if those female students are well prepared for language class, they feel anxiety in their speaking. Furthermore, the mean for item #9 which is (3.6000), means that they show neither agreement nor disagreement. A mean of (1.9333) for the item #10 represents that female student of Bamyan University are afraid that their language teacher is ready to correct every mistake they make. Moreover, the mean for the item #11 shows that the female students always feel that the other classmates speak better than they do. Consequently, item #12 with the mean of (2.7333) means that they agree in terms nervousness in speaking class. For the item #13 they show neutral responses while for the item #14 they agree on when they are speaking, they feel like the others laugh at them. For the last item, these students agree that they feel more comfortable with native speakers.

Table 3: Female Students' Level of Anxiety

Statements (items)	N	mean	SD
1) I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	15	2.5333	1.18723
2) I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	15	3.6000	1.05560
3) I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	15	2.5333	1.18723
4) I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	15	3.4000	1.40408
5) I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	15	3.4667	1.30201
6) It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	15	1.8667	.74322
7) I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	15	3.4667	1.45733
8) Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	15	2.5333	1.30201
9) I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	15	3.6000	1.29835
10) I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	15	1.9333	.79881
11) I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	15	2.8667	1.35576
12) I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	15	2.7333	1.16292
13) I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	15	3.0000	1.13389
14) I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	15	2.2000	1.08233
15) I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	15	3.7333	1.27988

Overall, this study found that students agreed with 10 items, responded neutrally to 5 item and no disagreement of FLCAS questionnaire. By this interpretation to each individual item, we obtain our objectives that students of Bamyam University feel anxious when they are speaking foreign language (English). A general difference between the levels of speaking anxiety on Afghanistan university students, the means of all items from table 2 and table 3 are calculated and compared between the two groups. As a result, considering the table this study highlighted that both male and female have speaking anxiety. To highlight the differences of each anxiety level, both groups' means are compared which shows that (male students $\mu >$ female students μ). In other word (3.1044 $\mu >$ 2.89 μ) male students are neutral which means sometimes they have speaking anxiety and sometimes they don't feel anxious while the female

students are more anxious. Hence, to answer the second research questions this study found that there are is difference between the level of anxiety on male and female students of Bamyam University regarding their speaking (oral performance). On the other hand, the total of means shows that generally students of Bamyam University have speaking anxiety.

Table 4: Differences of Anxiety among Male and Female

Gender/groups	N	Mean
Male	15	3.1044
Female	15	2.89
Both groups	30	2.99

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to find out factors of anxiety among students of Bamyam University in Afghanistan and as well as to highlight the level of anxiety among both male and female students. As a result, the data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively to find out answers to research questions. In fact language anxiety is different from other general anxiety which are based on three main components such as fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety and communication apprehension which are all considered to be an individual's beliefs, feeling, behaviours and emotion related to language classrooms (Horwitz & Cope, 1986) Students of Bamyam University in Afghanistan is also effected by speaking anxiety as highlighted that English learners suffer from three types of anxieties such as test anxiety, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation (Zia & Norrihan, 2015). Study resulted that the dominant factor of anxiety was negative evaluation following with communication apprehension second and test anxiety as third.

This study found out that all students of Afghanistan universities feel anxious when they start speaking in front of the classroom. In contrast to previous research in Afghanistan (Zia & Norrihan, 2015), the dominant factors related to anxiety of speaking was found to be 'linguistic capacity'. The anxiety level differs regarding each item and considering both gender. It is declared that one of usual anxiety provoking factors is fear of negative evaluation whereas it decreases self-confidence of students and gradually it effects on students' oral performance (speaking), (Worde, 2003). Lack of linguistic capacity is needed to be considered as fundamental factors (Sevinc, Yesim & Backus, 2017). Furthermore, this study found that the communication apprehension also effects the oral performance of EFL students since this skill of language is vital for communication. With consistency to other studies, it was elaborated that students from other contexts (social environment) such as Iranians, Nigerians and Algerians have moderate anxiety in speaking while Nigerians are the least dominant anxious speakers (Zhiping & Paramasivam, 2013). This study also found that males are less anxious than females due to the factors elaborated in this study. In addition to those factors, there cultural contribution to the anxiety problems. In most countries such as Nigeria, given as an example have the least anxiety of speaking due to their good culture speaking and their values of speakers. Considering Afghanistan, culturally people are modernized in communication which resulted many social issues such as speaking anxiety. Of course, there have been many other factors which generally provoked anxiety not only in speaking, it has covered all aspect of educational improvement.

To discuss about the level of anxiety on male and female and its differences, this study highlighted that female student have more anxiety than male students. However, in some specific terms, both groups are equal and few examples show that males are more anxious than females. Similarly, it was found that female students have more speaking anxiety than male students. Furthermore, with similar context of this study it was found that regarding speaking skill students in Afghanistan suffer from anxiety (Fakhri, 2012).

Considering all limitations of the study, this research presents some future recommendations. First, the findings proved that EFL students of Bamyan university have anxiety and some of the factors were also highlighted. This finding can help those responsible authorities to overcome speaking anxiety among learners. For instance, there must be some betterment of teaching and learning system to overcome the first dominant factor that was highlighted as lack of linguistic capacities. Further general factors are found from the study to help in improvement of teaching EFL in Afghanistan such as giving more opportunities to female students who are affected more. Some more specific recommendations are for the EFL teachers in Bamyan University of Afghanistan to consider their teaching system for the betterment and improvement of EFL teaching and learning. For instance, it is better to give more opportunities to female students and more encouragements. Considering the gender discrimination, this study specifically suggests that the gap between male and female learners must be decreased. The female groups who were more affected by speaking anxiety, must be given more social value and respect.

In consideration of participants, the target groups of this study were only university students while there are many other contexts such as school and private institution. Based on this, more future studies are necessary to be conducted either generally or specifically focusing on anxiety EFL students at schools and private institutions. In addition, more studies are needed to be conducted in some other areas of Afghanistan such as southern provinces where more limitations are witnessed basically absence of females in educational centers.

CONCLUSION

Anxiety affects the process of language learning and teaching. Basically, and most importantly speaking skill is affected by anxiety whilst. To overcome all those issues related to anxiety, investigation must have been done in order to evaluate multiple aspect, presenting the findings to target audience so that they benefit from it in overcoming those issues.

Similarly, this study was conducted to find out the issue, to highlight its factors and to analyze which groups of individuals are being under its influences. Not only the findings of this study bring solution to the issue, it gives more general concept of more researches to be conducted.

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