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## **THE RESEARCH ON ANXIETY EVALUATION OF FOREIGN STUDENTS**

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### **Abstract**

*Studying a foreign language is not a piece of cake and it demands a lot of time and effort from the learners. According to the technological development, studying a foreign language is becoming more leisurely day by day, since speaking is the most crucial skill of the basic four skills for everyone.. Every learner desires to speak fluently by learning a language, but anxiety wholly hinders their attempts. The anxiety is one of the main three psychological factors such as anxiety, self-esteem, and motivation that can affect the students' troubles, especially speaking in Mongolian. In this paper, our study aimed to analyze students' speaking anxiety in the Mongolian Language Preparatory Program at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science. We tried to find out the foreign students' anxiety ranks and causes of speaking the Mongolian language. The survey participants of the research were foreign students at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science in the 2022-2023 academic year. We used a questionnaire to carry out a survey. As a result of the study, students' anxiety in speaking Mongolian was defined and classified by several indicators of speaking.*

Anxiety, Evaluation, Psychological Factors, Foreign Language

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## **1. Introduction**

When the democratic system was established in Mongolia and moved to a market economy in 1990, we could communicate freely with the world's countries not only to study abroad, travel, and run a business but also to communicate in all fields due to the doors of the world opened for Mongolians.

A few recent research have revealed that the anxiety of students who are studying a second language has a contrary impact not only on learning the language but also on teacher evaluation. (Coulombe, 2000; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Yan & Horwitz 2008; Kameron zaman 2013)

Second language teaching and studying methods and environment have changed wholly since the period (in 2000) I started teaching English firstly, related to the rapid development of science and technology, globalization, and internet access. Learning a foreign language is not easy for students. On the other hand, the basic main four skills listening, reading, writing, and speaking, and all these are correlated to each other accurately. Hence, every skill is important to acquire a foreign language. I have read the research, which emphasized that listening and reading are easier than writing and speaking. Additionally, as a communication tool in our daily lives, speaking is the most important skill in the English language. (Parma Wati 2018: 21) Scholar Ur, (1996:120) writes that speaking is the most essential of the basic four skills. It was confirmed as true not only for my experience but also for my students.

Three types of psychological factors impact undergraduate students' difficulties in speaking such as anxiety, motivation, and self-esteem. In this study, we emphasized the anxiety pressure to reveal foreign language classroom anxiety. To improve their speaking ability students not only have to improve their primary Mongolian language knowledge such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation but also must build their confidence and fluency in speaking. Speaking Mongolian as a second language is not easy for foreign students due to feeling nervous and anxious. This kind of phenomenon can be named second language anxiety in the classroom. The anxiety of a second language is defined as a worry or dread appearing once a student is anticipated to accomplish within foreign and second languages by Gardner & Macintyre. Researcher Krashen (1982) mentioned that the sentimental elements impact the acquisition of a second language in his Affective Filter Hypothesis. In other words, the construct of anxiety plays a catalytic role in second language acquisition. In Merriam-Webster Dictionary, anxiety is defined as "A fear or nervousness about what might happen". Additionally, Spielberger's theory on anxiety describes it as an emotional state that is characterized by tension and nervousness coupled with activation or arousal of the autonomic

nervous system with distinctive forms being known as “state” and “trait” (Spielberger, 1966) and Spielberger (1983) suggested that anxiety consists of both psychological and physical components in response to consciously perceived tension related to one’s self-concept. Furthermore, per Ando's (1990) definition; Language anxiety is the feeling of fear and nervousness that results from individual anticipation about potentially harmful occurrences while learning another language.

Feelings of anxiety and anxious thoughts resulting from experiences during the study process led to decreased academic performance among students. Therefore, one key issue at university is highlighting academic performance. Experiencing anxiety while in a classroom setting does not contribute to a better comprehension of topics. The majority of students were unaware of their academic pursuits due to anxiety disorders. Not understanding the subject or having low motivation led to feelings of anxiety among students.

The research paper aims to define foreign students’ anxiety in speaking Mongolian and clarify the reasons clearly at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science. Finally, the main goals of the research are:

1. To evaluate the general anxiety of the respondents
2. To evaluate the anxiety of Mongolian speaking by gender
3. To reveal the reasons for Mongolian speaking anxiety

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

Horwitz et. al., (1986) description characterizes Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety as a complex construct consisting of feelings and perceptions associated with the experience of learning languages within the classroom. The research on foreign language anxiety and strategies of cognitive and metacognitive usage implemented by scholars Lu and Liu in 2011, and the result of the survey showed that approximately 33 percent of the respondents had an anxiety experience in second language classes because of the fear of inadequate grades, and most of them were nervous when they gave a Mongolian spoken exam.

Researcher Han's (2015) finding represents that the anxiety level of girls was higher than boys. On the contrary, the situation was different at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science. On the other hand, it was observed remarkably that male students' Mongolian-speaking anxiety is higher compared with female students. In this research, we tried to confirm or show the differences from the previous research on speaking anxieties.

### 3. Methodology

In this study, we used the qualitative descriptive method and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) in the questionnaire using the Google form platform. The question sheet has 20 questions. However, the original questionnaire had 33 items, here we used 20 of them on the 5-point Likert Scale. On the other hand, 13 items were omitted related to the research goal, the features and characteristics of foreign students, and other reasons. Generally, students' classroom anxiety is a natural aspect of university students. Statistical processing and results were analyzed descriptively using SPSS-24 software.

	Type of questions	Number	%
Respondents (N=91)		Chinese (n=69)	
		Laos (n=22)	
1	Female	47	51.6 %
	Male	44	48.4 %
2	Age	21-35	
3	How long have you studied Mongolian?	1-3 year	
4	How many included in the Mongolian Language Preparatory Program?	91	100%
5	<u>Mongolian level:</u>		
	Beginner	21	21.9%
	Intermediate	70	78.1%
6	Mother language	Chines -69	75.8%
		Laos -22	24.2%
7	<u>English level</u>		
	Beginner	Beginner-63	69.2%
	Intermediate	Intermediate - 8	0.8%

### 4. Participants

Our research exists to determine the foreign students' level of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science. In total, 91 foreign students (69 are Chinese and 22 are from Laos) consisting of 47 (51.6%) females and 44 (48.3%) males, aged between 21 and 35, were enrolled in Mongolian Language Preparatory Program for the second part of the 2022-2023 academic year. The selected students are different from ordinary four-year bachelor's degree students at the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian National University of Medical Science for their age. Only 91 students included in our survey of 150-160 foreign students.

According to the gender classification, 1 is the highest, and 3 is the lowest. The Mongolian Language Level of the participants was different, in other words, 21 (23.1%) students were at the beginner levels; and 70 (76.9%) students had an intermediate Mongolian language level. As concerns English, 83 had elementary, and 8 had an intermediate level of English out of all 91 students.

## 5. Allocation of the attendees

1. Total Participants		91	100%
2. Gender	Male	44	48.4%
	Female	47	51.6%
3. Level (Mongolian Language)	Intermediate	70	76.9%
	Beginner	21	23.1%

### 5.1. Instruments

We used a questionnaire composed of 20 anxiety items that drew inspiration from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale by Horwitz et al, Horwitz, and the class told that they could indicate their viewpoint using either A or D with SA and SD defining the highest and lowest of agreement respectively.

We used the following scale and description to clarify the explanation of the anxiety level.

Range	Explanation
3.00-4.00	Low anxiety
2.00-2.99	Moderate anxiety
1.00-1.99	High Anxiety

### 5.2. A Collection of Data and Analysis

First, a Likert Scale-based questionnaire consisting of 20 items was prepared to investigate psychological factors impacting students' speaking, by the authors of this paper and approved by the Head of the Foreign Language Training Center, School of Sciences and Arts, National University of Mongolia.

Second, the survey implemented from the students aged between 21 and 35, who enrolled in Mongolian Language Preparatory Program classes for the second part of the 2022-2023 academic year from the National University of Mongolia and Mongolian National University of Medical Science.

Finally, in this survey, we used the means to determine the overall anxiety level of participants. We compared them by gender and anxiety levels.

## 6. Results and Discussion

### 6.1. Anxiety level of the students

#### Students' Anxiety Level

Area	Mean
Anxiety	3.0

As a result of the survey, the anxiety level of the foreign students who are studying the Mongolian language was "Low anxiety" (M=3.0). Alternatively, the anxiety level of foreign students of affective factors in second language acquisition was low or the lowest level. Additionally, the survey outcome also reported that the maximum three particulars with a leading status of anxiety

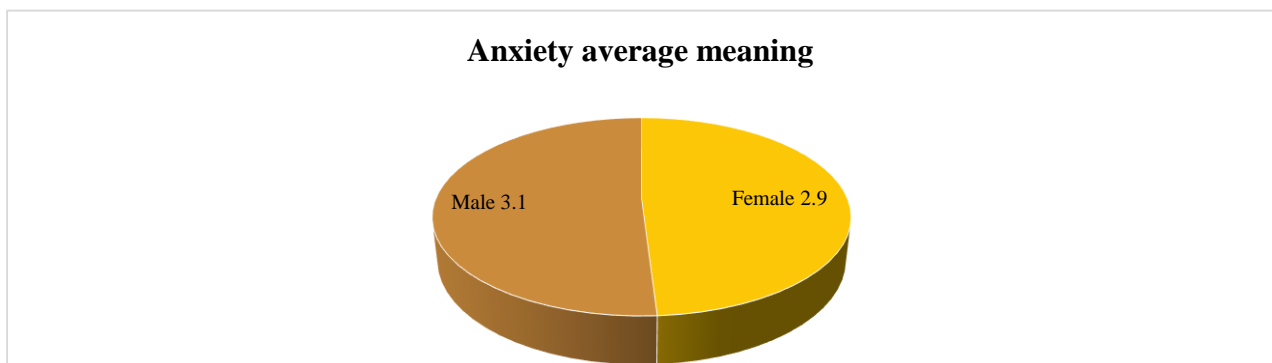
were Questionnaire 5. (*I start to panic when I must speak without preparation in Mongolian class*) In total, 85% of the participants answered agree and strongly agreed. Questionnaire 15. (*I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my Mongolian class*) In total, 67% of the respondents answered agree and strongly agree. Questionnaire 20. (*I get nervous when the Mongolian teacher asks questions that I haven't prepared in advance*) 78% of the respondents answered agree and strongly agree.

It means that the learners are very fearful, and they seem to be nervous when they speak Mongolian both with and without preparation in the Mongolian classroom, the instructor inquires them to communicate Mongolian in the classroom, and they are distressed or shy that they will stumble in the Mongolian class.

Lui and Chen’s study (2013) that exposed widespread feelings of discomfort about doing well in foreign language classes, as well as a lack of self-assurance when it comes to speaking abilities, has been validated, and the research by Huang and Hwang (2013) indicates that college students are anxious about getting humiliated in front of teachers or friends. As a result, they avoid making mistakes while talking.

#### **Anxiety Levels of Foreign Students According to the Gender**

Category	Anxiety
Total (N-91)	3.0
Male (N-44)	2.9
Female (N-47)	3.1



According to the findings, the anxiety rate of the female students was low, and male students’ anxiety rate was moderate level by gender classification. Generally, male students had a slightly higher (M=2.9) level of anxiety compared with females (M=3.1). On the other hand, males were more nervous, embarrassed, and anxious in their classroom, especially, when speaking Mongolian.

## **7. Conclusion**

Finally, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), created by Horwitz et al. (1986), and the qualitative descriptive approach were both applied in this study. However, the original questionnaire contained 33 items, and we used 20 of them on a 5-point Likert scale. On the other hand, 13 elements about the research goal, the qualities and characteristics of foreign students, and other topics were left out. The statistical processes and results were evaluated descriptively using SPSS-24 software.

According to the data, female students had low anxiety rates, while male students had intermediate anxiety levels. Male students reported slightly higher levels of anxiousness ( $M=2.9$ ) than females ( $M=3.1$ ). Males, on the other hand, felt more scared, ashamed, and anxious in class, particularly when speaking Mongolian. The survey findings indicated that international students learning Mongolian had “Low anxiety” ( $M=3.0$ ) anxiety levels. On the other hand, foreign students’ anxiety levels about affective elements in learning a second language were either minimal or nonexistent. When the instructor asks the students to communicate in Mongolian in the classroom, they appear anxious and afraid that they won't be able to speak the language fluently. They may even be afraid that they won't be able to speak the language correctly.

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**Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., Cope, J., 1986<sup>1</sup>**

No	Questions	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1.	My confidence wavers while speaking Mongolian in classroom settings.					
2.	When I speak Mongolian in the classrool, I do not fret over errors.					
3.	When the professor speaks in Mongolian, and I don't understand what they're saying, and it makes me feel frightened.					
4.	Tests taken for my Mongolian classes usually leave me feeling at ease.					
5.	I become anxious when required to speak without preparation during my Mongolian lessons.					
6.	My nerves tend to overcome my knowledge when I comes to Mongolian classes depends on me to forget things.					

<sup>1</sup> Foreign language classroom anxiety. *Modern Language Journal*, 70 (2), 125–132. 33 Items



7.	Participating actively in my Mongolian class makes me embarrassed.					
8.	I am not afraid of speaking Mongolian with people who grew up speaking it.					
9.	The inability to understand the tutor's correction upsets me.					
10.	My Mongolian class is something that I often don't feel like going to.					
11.	I am filled with confidence when speaking Mongolian in class.					
12.	I get nervous each time I must answer a question in Mongolian class, and my heart starts racing.					
13.	The longer and harder I study for my Mongolian test the more perplexed I get					
14.	My degree of tension and nervousness is much greater when attending a Mongolian class in comparison to all the others.					
15.	The thought of speaking during my Mongolian lesson makes me uneasy and bewildered.					
16.	I am filled with certainty and relaxation while on the way to my Mongolian class.					
17.	I feel worried when there are some words that I fail to comprehend within my Mongolian professor's words and expressions.					
18.	The sheer volume of linguistic regulations for speaking Mongolian has left me feel overburdened.					
19.	It's possible that I would be at ease around native Mongolian speakers.					
20.	Unrehearsed questions from my Mongolian teacher make me feel tense.					