

From Madrasa to Private University: English language anxiety among madrasa background students in Bangladesh

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A thesis submitted to the Department of English and Humanities in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English.

Department of English and Humanities
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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The thesis submitted is my own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I have acknowledged all main sources of help.

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Approval

The thesis titled “**From Madrasa to Private University: English language anxiety among madrasa background students in Bangladesh**” submitted by Tahmin Mamtaj (22303031) of Fall, 2025 has been accepted as satisfactory in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in English on 9th June, 2026.

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Ethics Statement

The secondary sources used in the study are quoted and paraphrased with proper reference.

No information has been used from other sources without providing appropriate reference. I fully acknowledge the fact of disciplinary action due to the failure to follow these academic integrity principles. I also acknowledge that all forms of academic integrity violation may result in serious consequences, including being suspended from or dismissed from BRAC University. I assert my full responsibility to uphold guidelines of academic honesty to these principles throughout the research process.

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Abstract

English is an important medium of worldwide communication and is widely used in Bangladesh's education system. However, learning or utilising a second language effectively is often hampered by language anxiety. This study investigates the causes of language anxiety, how it affects students, and potential ways to lessen anxiety in students from madrasas who are presently enrolled in private universities in Bangladesh. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and semi-structured interviews were used in a qualitative focused mixed-methods approach to gather data. The results show that participants had different levels of anxiety. The causes of their anxiety come from their educational background as they had a lack of exposure to English. The study also demonstrates that anxiety has a detrimental impact on involvement in class and academic achievement. However, students use coping mechanisms like online resources, and self-practice. The study suggests more speaking practice, bridge courses, and supportive classroom environments.

Keywords: Language anxiety; Madrasa students; English-medium university; FLCAS; Coping mechanism; Bangladesh

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

English is the most widely spoken and influential language in the world. It functions as a global lingua franca and plays an important role in education. In Bangladesh, English is widely used in higher education especially in English-medium private universities. In the higher education sectors students need to use English not only as a subject but a medium of instruction for lectures and assessments. Bangladesh has one of the largest populations of English language learners, with over 17 million pupils studying the English language as a second language (Hamid & Honan, 2012). English is used as a foreign language in Bangladesh rather than as a second language. However, learning and applying a new language is not always an easy task for students. While learning English, many students go through some emotional and psychological difficulties especially when they have to use English for academic purposes. Language anxiety is one of the most important emotional variables affecting learning a second language.

Students in Bangladesh come from a variety of educational backgrounds including Bangla-medium, English-medium, English version and Madrasa. For higher education students shift from their previous institutions to different universities. Students from Madrasa background often face difficulties in an English-medium university setting. In their initial education system, there was little exposure to English language and almost no exposure to communication in English language. They may feel anxious when they enter a setting where English is the main language of teaching. English proficiency is important for finding a position in a job or other academic settings. Madrasa students might find it difficult to compete in the market for jobs or higher education if they face difficulties with being proficient in communicative English. These circumstances emphasize how important it is to assess how the students from the Madrasa

sector manage their language anxiety. It is also important to address the underlying causes of these problems that students face.

1.2 Global Perspectives on Religious Education

Around the world, religious education accomplishes more than simply providing religious knowledge. As an example of how adaptable religious education can be, many religious schools also offer formal education that address societal needs. They combine religious teaching and traditional teaching methods. There are many religion focused institutions around the world. For example, Catholic schools in nations like the US and Australia. In those nations, they place a strong focus on both academic success and moral growth. They also teach virtues like kindness, integrity, and service. According to Al-Atawneh (2009), the integration of Islamic education in national curricula in Middle Eastern nations like Saudi Arabia and Iran shows the importance in government and the society. Madrasa education is present in many countries of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East. Madrasa education has grown in popularity throughout South Asia, particularly in Bangladesh, where more than 4 million students are enrolled (Asadullah et al., 2009). Madrasas not only teach education focused on religion they also offer low-income families an inexpensive education and frequently provide inexpensive housing and board. According to Hussain & Herrera (2024), madrasas provide affordable boarding and housing to their students from low-income social groups, and they are more of a community learning centre than only an educational institution. In this way, children from less affluent households get an opportunity to receive an education when traditional schools become too expensive.

1.3 General Education System in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, there is a diverse and multi-stream education system. It consists of four main streams such as Bangla medium, English medium, English version, and Madrasa education. The national curriculum is followed by the Bangla medium institutions, which prioritize teaching topics in Bangla and with English as a secondary subject. In the Bangla-medium curriculum, every subject is taught in Bangla and the assessments are taken in Bangla except for the English subject. English is the primary language of teaching and communication in English medium institutions. They follow worldwide curricula such as Cambridge or Edexcel. The books and other materials in the English-medium curriculum are all written in English. In the English version system, on the other hand, they follow the Bangla medium curriculum and use the textbooks that are all translated from Bengali into English. Their syllabus and exams are taught and conducted entirely in English. The Madrasa education system consists of two main types: Alia and Qawmi. Alia madrasa system is affiliated with the government and the Qawmi madrasa system operates independently.

1.4 Overview of the Madrasa Education System

Bangladesh has a long history of madrasa education system. The famous Sufi scholar Sharaf Uddin Abu Tawama founded the first madrasa in Bengal in the middle of the 13th century in Sonargaon (Sarkar, 2023). But during British colonial time, it saw an acute downturn. In 1780, Calcutta Madrasa was founded under British rule. Muslims throughout the subcontinent showed opposition to the English language and strongly resisted British rule during this time. The link of English with political oppression was a major factor in this resistance. In order to maintain their religious and cultural identity, Muslim community therefore preferred teaching in Arabic and Persian.

There are two main divisions of Madrasa education in Bangladesh: Alia and Qawmi. In Alia madrasa, students learn both religious and general courses. The second kind of madrasah education in Bangladesh is called Qawmi, and it is run by private organisations. (Hasani, 2020) Qawmi madrasa teaches primarily Arabic and focuses on memorizing the Quran. Qawmi Madrasa has five levels referred to as Ibtediya (Primary), Mutawassitah (Secondary), Sanobiyah Uliya (Higher Secondary), Fazilat (Graduate), and Tamil or Daurah (Postgraduate) (Al-Hasani, 2017). Additionally, Alia madrasa's educational path has five years including Ibtedayee (primary), Dakhil (secondary), Alim (upper secondary), Fazil (undergraduate), and Kamil (postgraduate).

Although English is taught in madrasas, the communicative competence part is not particularly given much attention. Rather, they focus on the grammar and memorization of the rules. As a result, the students do not get to practice or communicate in English in the classroom. According to Al Hasani's article, Qawmi madrasa does not give standard quality of education to get a job in the future. In search of better education, madrasa students shift to public or private universities. More students are enrolling in Dhaka's private universities as many of the subjects and areas are not covered in the madrasa system (Al Hasani, 2020). Higher education in English is seen as a route to improved employment prospects and international communication by many students and their families. Many students opt for private universities as they have many subjects and courses that can offer better future prospects. According to Mahbubul (2023), the Bangladeshi government has requested that Qawmi Madrasah to improve its educational system by incorporating contemporary courses. However, many declined since they did not comprehend what "reform" meant. Various subjects like business, economics, computer science, and media studies are offered by private universities in Dhaka. Many students shift to universities as per their needs. Therefore, for many students, enrolling in such universities signifies both a cultural and academic shift. The shift that the madrasa

students face is not without challenges. The shift from Bangla and Arabic focus learning to English medium is a major change. The academic settings completely change due to the different mediums and language that is dominantly focused on English. This sudden change can often create language anxiety among the students.

1.5 Language Anxiety

Language anxiety occurs when learners face nervousness, fear or worry related to the language they need to use. Language anxiety can cause problems both in psychological and physiological ways such as increased heart rate, forgetting words, and avoiding communication with others. The levels of anxiety have an impact on how a learner performs. High levels of language anxiety can lower motivation, delay language acquisition, and have a detrimental impact on academic achievement, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994).

Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) say that it is a particular kind of performance anxiety that only occurs when learning a language. They categorized the language anxiety into three parts.

1. Communication apprehension: First of all, there is fear of speaking or engaging in a second language known as communication apprehension.
2. Test anxiety: Secondly, there is fear of doing bad in language assessments known as test anxiety.
3. Fear of negative evaluation: Lastly, the fear of negative evaluation, which is the anxiety learners feel of getting judged by teachers or peers for making mistakes in that language.

Language is not just a struggle with the usage of language for the madrasa students but also a problem related to their culture and identity. The students transition from a learning environment that emphasised on memorisation and religious studies to one that is

communicative and encourages English discussion and critical thinking. Their anxiety, fear of being judged may all be worsened by these sudden societal changes. In addition, a lot of students from madrasa experience social comparison anxiety as they come from a different academic background. Mostly, communicating in English might be a great difficulty for the student with less proficiency. As students from Madrasa were not in an environment which was predominantly in English, they may feel less capable while communicating in English. Due to the Dars-i-Nizamiyyah model's emphasis on oral memorisation of religious texts, students do not have much exposure to classroom-based English practice, which makes asking questions or speaking in English seem scary (Al Hasani et al. 2017). Additionally, the study points out that Qawmi graduates frequently lack contemporary abilities, which restricts their job prospects and increases their fear about engaging in nonreligious contexts.

Madrasa students face many constraints in their transitional journey from madrasa to higher education. Nonetheless, very few studies in Bangladesh have looked at language anxiety among madrasa students moving to English medium universities. Additionally, not much information is known about how these students manage their anxiety, what techniques they employ to cope with, and how institutions may help them.

Research Problem

Even though there are now a small number of madrasa students enrolled in English- medium private universities in Dhaka, their language learning experiences differ from the students from English or Bangla-medium backgrounds. English is typically taught in madrasa in a very conventional way. They hardly have the opportunity to communicate in English, or participate in group discussions. Moreover, they might not get to openly express their opinions in the language. Their exposure to the language is very limited and due to that, students from madrasa backgrounds encounter a sudden and challenging shift in their academic life. They frequently

find it difficult to cope up with the lectures and academic readings. Madrasa students face problems regarding comprehending lectures and interacting in English with lecturers and peers. Lack of confidence and fear are among symptoms of language anxiety they faced due to this significant shift. The majority of study exclusively examined students from Bangla-medium schools or colleges, despite the fact that language anxiety is a widespread problem throughout Bangladesh. Although Madrasa-background students have a distinct circumstance, very little study has focused on them particularly. They face not only the language barrier, moving from a traditional, religious learning environment to a contemporary, English-speaking university setting presents them with both a language barrier and a culture shift. Given the circumstances, there is a strong need to carry out educational research on this particular group of students from madrasa backgrounds. These students are a vital part of the country's labour and intellectual capital. Many students may continue to feel anxiety, academic challenges and obstacles in higher education if their experiences with English language anxiety go unresearched.

Research Objectives

1. To determine the primary causes of English language anxiety among madrasa students enrolled in English-medium private universities in Bangladesh.
2. To explore how previous learning experiences in madrasa influence students' language anxiety.
3. To investigate how their academic performance and participation in the classroom are impacted by language anxiety.
4. To comprehend what strategies these students employ to deal with their language difficulties.

Research Questions

1. What are the main causes of language anxiety among madrasa students studying in English-medium private universities?
2. What past learning experiences from madrasa make English learning difficult for them in university?
3. How does language anxiety influence their academic performance and classroom participation?
4. What coping mechanism do these students use to overcome their language anxiety?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Interpretation of Madrasa Education

There is a long history of madrasa education in Bangladesh. This madrasa education system gives valuable context for understanding the challenges of students who transition from this system to English medium private universities. The term Madrasa broadly refers to any institution providing a range of subjects. However, in its more specific sense, a madrasa focuses on the Quran, Islamic law (fiqh), the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (hadith), and Islamic legal concept. The Arabic root dars or darsun, which means teaching, education, and schooling, is the source of the word madrasa, which emphasises a learning process based on instruction and practice (Ali, 2009; Blanchard, 2008). Madrasa is the oldest educational institution and the first official madrasa was Nizamiyah Madrasa in Baghdad (Ellis, 2007). The structure, syllabus, and teaching methods of madrasa institutions, beginning from the early Nizamiya model, were mainly intended to preserve religious studies and strengthen Islamic knowledge (Al Hasani, 2020). According to Bano (2014), Bangladesh madrasa education board was established in 1979 and it created an integrated madrasa curriculum which made secular subjects to hold a prominent position. The madrasa system, especially in South Asia emphasizes on Quran, hadith, and Arabic language as its core elements, with little emphasis on communicative English or contemporary language teaching methods.

2.2 Structure and Types of Madrasa Education

The origins of Qawmi madrasa may trace back to the Indian subcontinent in the 18th century. They emerged as an alternative educational system to the government run Aliya madrasa during the British colonial period. Bengali Muslim scholars were aware that the British education

system was dividing the Muslim community, particularly with the implementation of the Aliya madrasa system. Bano (2014) states that, despite the expansion of Aliya madrasa, some fieldwork comparing Qawmi and Aliya madrasa shows that Qawmi ulama continues to be the primary authority. Aliya madrasas are mainly in competition with secular schools rather than Qawmi madrasas, as their growth reflects parental demand for a strong Islamic education alongside secular subjects. Students' attitudes towards the English language are also influenced by the historical differences between the Aliya and Qawmi madrasas. There are large gaps in educational input across madrasas. They have less trained teachers compared to nonreligious schools, only 4 percent of the madrasa teachers have formal training (Asadullah & Chowdhury, 2015).

2.3 Pedagogical Culture and Learning Environments in Madrasa

Due to general curriculum students' better foundational understanding of English, madrasa students suffered in most of the exams. According to Hussain & Herrera (2024), even though madrasas play a big part in the educational systems of many Islamic nations, their involvement in English language teaching (ELT) is still mostly unseen and neglected. The students of Qawmi madrasa learn English grammars in the conventional way, whereas the students of public school and Aliya madrasa learn communicative grammar and literature.

Alia Madrasa's testing system adheres to the mainstream curriculum, which includes filling in the blanks with and without clauses, suffixes, prefixes, narrative, sentence changes, etc. Nonetheless, students at Qawmi Madrasa, follow some ancient assessment methods that are not utilised in the current curriculum, for instance, fill in the blanks with word meanings and suitable word sentence construction etc (Golam, 2020).

Moreover, the instructional focus in Qawmi madrasas tends to be mostly text-centered. Thus, developing analytical skills is difficult for students. It can be difficult to comprehend the

lessons' concentration on the texts and their interpretations. This is consistent with Reetz (2010) as he mentioned, the majority of books and commentary are memorized and classroom debates primarily focus on explanation rather than developing language comprehension. Despite an increase of research on Islamism in Bangladesh, we have relatively little literature about Aliya and Qawmi madrasas (Bano, 2014).

2.4 Double Curriculum Models in South Asia

Under Ghayasuddin Balban and Allauddin Khilji, Madrasa education started in the 12th century. Madrasas primarily taught language, literature, and Hadith in their early years. Delhi developed into an important centre for Islamic scholarship. Over time, the curriculum shifted their concentration more on Hadith and Sunnah. Madrasas began to expand their curriculum by teaching maths, physics, and physiology in addition to religious teachings by the late 1500s and early 1600s. Madrasa curricula are adaptable and change based on the institutions' influence and regional context, and ideology. As of now, as Anzar (2003) stated, many Madrasas in Pakistan primarily teach religious subjects, other countries such as in Egypt, Indonesia, and Bangladesh also offer secular education.

Curricula of madrasas are adaptable based on ideological orientation and institutional influences. According to Beanish (2022), the Darse-Alia curriculum incorporates in-depth instruction in the natural sciences and practical tests, and was developed by the Bihar Madrasa Education Board. This curriculum makes a clear distinction between secular and religious subjects. They teach secular education more than religious education throughout the full curriculum. Approximately one-third of the subjects in their curriculum are exclusively secular (Qasmi, 2002).

The popularity of such integrated madrasa education systems is rising particularly in South Asia. For instance, Blanchard (2007) reports that almost 20–25% of elementary and secondary

school students in Indonesia, the country with the biggest Muslim population in the world, attend pesantren, or Islamic religious institutions.

2.5 Transition from Madrasa to English-Medium Higher Education

The transition from one institution to another marks a major academic and social change for the learners. Venezia (2013) asserts that high school graduates are not prepared for college for a variety of complicated reasons that vary depending on personal circumstances. There are both academic and non-academic aspects such as family dynamics and peer pressure. Schlossberg's transition theory looks at the individual taking into account both their advantages and disadvantages. The theory emphasizes how someone perceives the sense of their assets and deficits during times of transition (Schlossberg, 1983 as cited in Raquel, 2016).

Similarly, Conley (2008) claims that the transition from school to college might be challenging for students who are not comfortable with independent learning, analytical thinking, or unfamiliar academic jargon. Limited exposure to English causes language difficulties for Madrasa students, making speaking, reading, and writing more stressful. Because of this, they are often inadequately prepared for the transformation yet they need to swiftly adjust with it. Conley (2008) further mentioned, mastering essential study techniques like time management, stress reduction, task organisation, taking notes, and interacting with lecturers is also necessary for success in higher education.

Since English continues to predominate in academic and professional settings across the world, language anxiety has grown in importance in the field of second language acquisition research. Language anxiety becomes particularly noticeable for students who face changes in their learning contexts. Graduates "lack modern skills, limiting their employment options," according to (Al Hasani et al. 2017), and this deficiency "heightens anxiety about participating

in non-religious settings”. They may feel anxiety while they face such a transition from a non-English background to an English-medium university.

2.6 Language Anxiety: Theoretical Background

Anxiety is associated with the “arousal of the autonomic nervous system,” which means the body becomes alert and stressed. It feels like stress, nervousness, worry, and a lack of energy. This is an emotional state that manifests bodily symptoms and influences behaviour (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). This type of anxiety is frequently referred to as social anxiety, and it is characterised by negative self-evaluation, discomfort, and avoidance of interpersonal communication (MacIntyre, 1995). MacIntyre (1995) asserts that anxiety impedes a number of crucial second-language acquisition tasks, such as listening, picking up new knowledge, and comprehending what others are saying. Anxiety and bad performance are not synonymous, yet anxiety can make the performance issues worse. According to research, many learners feel more comfortable while they listen and feel more discomfort in a situation where they have to speak (Teimouri, Goetze, & Plonsky, 2019). When students are worried, they may exhibit physical symptoms in the classroom, such as stuttering or having a rapid heart rate. These physical symptoms further worsen the experience of their learning.

Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) established Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) as a distinct type of anxiety associated with language learning conditions and created the popular Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). This invention had a significant impact on the current study language anxiety. According to FLCAS, FLA is a situation specific construct that encompasses test anxiety, communication anxiety, and anxiety of receiving poor grades. Language anxiety is defined by Gardner and Macintyre (1993) as a fear or concern that arises when a learner is expected to perform in a second or foreign language. MacIntyre and

Gardner (1991) stated that, language anxiety is an unique affective construct that reflects worse performance on oral and listening tasks far more strongly than reading or writing tasks, while having a moderate correlation with overall anxiety. According to Spielberger (1983), anxiety is an emotional experience that results from the body's stress reaction including tension, anxiety and fear. Gregerson (2025) adds to that saying students find learning a second language more difficult and more challenging when they experience anxiety. According to Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, some people may still have difficulty learning a new language even after being exposed to a significant amount of understandable input (Lightbown, 2006). The filter acts as an emotion and the up and down of the filter hinders or benefits the learners to acquire language. Learners' affective filter rises when they experience anxiety or self-consciousness. When there is a high affective filter, it blocks the language acquisition process even if there is comprehensible input in front of them. This theory can be employed to comprehend madrasa students' anxiety level. Especially whose high levels of anxiety often make it difficult for them to participate in or learn efficiently in English-medium classrooms.

2.7 Types of Anxiety

Other studies have confirmed the idea that various linguistic tasks can generate varying degrees of anxiety. Kim (2009), observed that tasks which included oral ability caused second language learners to feel more nervous than reading assignments. In the same way, speaking in front of others in the second language raised students' anxiety (Awan et al., 2010). Additionally, anxious language learners show avoidance and concern, which has a negative effect on both their academic and everyday communication (Mills 2007).

According to Aydin's article "Test Anxiety among Foreign Language Learners: A Review of Literature," anxiety can be classified into three categories: situation-specific anxiety, state anxiety, and trait anxiety (Aydin 2009). A person's general tendency to feel uneasy or anxious

in a variety of everyday settings is referred to as trait anxiety (Steiner et al., 2017). MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) contend that trait anxiety is not very useful for measuring anxiety that occurs during language learning since it is more closely associated with an individual's personality.

Communication apprehension is an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person," according to McCroskey (1997). Communication anxiety can be linked to a number of personality qualities, such as hesitation, shyness, and quietness. Students' performance in communication-focused educational contexts, such foreign language training, is adversely affected by communication apprehension, according to McCroskey and Anderson (1976).

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), the second type of anxiety is the fear of negative evaluation. The concept describes a person's fear of being judged because of their performance. They tend to avoid situations where they might be assessed because of their belief that they would be viewed negatively by others. Aydin (2001) mentioned that learners are frequently worried about their linguistic competence which led them to correlate their social image when they worry about projecting a negative image.

Another form of anxiety is test anxiety which is a situation-specific trait that consists of two main components: worry and emotional arousal as stated by Sarason (1990). The degree to which each person experiences these varies. Anxiety while giving an examination is unpleasant as it is a common part of our education system. According to Aydin (2001), when students expect that they would fail in the test their anxiety level increases. During the test preparations phase, students not only study for the exam but also constantly review the efficacy of their preparation which heightens their feelings of nervousness.

2.7.1 Effects of Language Anxiety

It is challenging for language learners to acquire a language successfully when they experience anxiety. It can directly or indirectly have an impact on learners. As Oxford (1999) stated, it has an impact directly by reducing classroom participation and indirectly by creating self-doubt. Having language anxiety slows down the process of acquiring as (Tobias, 1986 cited in MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) stated that, anxiety impairs cognitive processing on more challenging, requiring memory, and unorganised activities. Each of them raises the processing time requirements. Similarly, according to Arnold and Brown (1999), anxiety in the classroom produces a vicious loop in which unpleasant feelings and poor academic performances affect each other.

2.8 Empirical Research on Language Anxiety

Numerous scientific studies have examined the impact of language anxiety on different SLA components. Researchers discover that there is a connection between linguistic anxiety and academic achievement. According to Young (1991), students who have higher levels of language anxiety generally obtain lower grades in language classes. Their nervousness causes them to receive poor grades since they are unable to perform confidently. Language anxiety is a strong predictor of academic failure in second language learning contexts as stated by (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999). Individual factors can play an important role in shaping language anxiety. Factors can include introversion, confidence, and past experiences of learning. Dörnyei (2005) stated that students with poor self-efficacy frequently have doubt in their own ability to do well on language assignments. This self-doubt acts as an emotional barrier which raises their anxiety levels. Extroverted and introverted learners act differently when they are required to perform in English as they have different personality traits. Ellis (2004) mentions that learners may experience stress in particular settings (situational anxiety) along with having

a natural tendency to feel anxious (trait anxiety) regardless of their personality qualities. According to Horwitz (2001), linguistic anxiety is a unique type of anxiety. It does not just emerge from other forms of anxiety like test anxiety or interaction anxiety because it only has a minor correlation with general trait anxiety. Rather, language anxiety is a distinct factor that only arises in situations involving second languages (L2) (Dörnyei, 2014).

2.9 Bangladesh's English-Medium Private Universities and General Education

The 1990s saw the emergence of English-medium private universities in Bangladesh as a result of globalisation and the growing demand for higher education in the English language. According to Islam (2013), in 1992, English was designated a required subject in elementary schools. Private universities started offering English-only courses and English-medium instructions (EMI) in the early 1990s, giving students access to a separate linguistic environment. Islam (2013) found that many students had difficulty EMI while conducting research at a reputable private university. They believed that if Bangla was the MOI (medium of instruction) then it would be easier. Some students run the risk of losing both the subject matter and their command of English due to this mismatch between their language skills and the institutional language policy. This could result in what Mohanty et al. (2010, as referenced in Islam, 2013) refer to as “cosmetic” English knowledge, which is shallow and not really significant.

Students are expected to take part in interactive learning environments, group projects, and classroom debates. These standards require a solid basis in academic vocabulary, confidence and speaking ability in English. These expectations put a lot of stress on madrasa students, who tend to be unaware of these academic standards (Kabir & Jahan, 2021). According to Alam (2017), due to the fact that the majority of applicants attend Bengali-medium schools, many of

them lack the subject-area preparation and English competence needed for EMI programs, resulting in “academically poor” cohorts that still get higher marks.

Literature Gap

Foreign language anxiety has been extensively studied especially in the context of learning a second language. The impact of anxiety on learners’ proficiency in speaking, writing, reading and listening skills in foreign languages has been the subject of numerous studies. Researchers have also looked at the connection between language anxiety and factors like motivation, academic achievement and self-confidence. Previous research has found a number of typical causes of anxiety in the context of learning English, including a lack of vocabulary, a fear of making mistakes, and a worry of receiving a poor grade.

In Bangladesh, recent years have also seen the rise of research in English language learning experience. Several researchers have looked into the challenges students face when they shift from Bangla-medium to English-medium learning environments. These research have focused on topics such as grammar-focused teaching techniques, rote learning, and exam-centered English learning.

However, students from Madrasa educational backgrounds, especially those who transfer to English-medium universities have received very little attention. Despite the expanding body of language anxiety research on students, the Madrasa education sectors have left unnoticed. Students from general education systems follow a different educational path than those from madrasas. Their curriculum may offer little opportunity for expressive English language development and frequently places an emphasis on religious topics. Their experiences and difficulties in English-medium learning contexts may therefore be very different from those of others.

Another gap in the literature is an absence of qualitative research into Madrasa students' personal experiences and perceptions of language anxiety. Most of the studies on language anxiety have been done using scales and surveys while ignoring the more profound emotional experience students face.

Therefore, there is a clear need for research that focuses on Madrasa background students studying at English-medium universities and examines how language anxiety affects their learning experiences. This study intends to fill this gap by exploring their challenges, perceptions, and coping methods to contribute to a better understanding of language anxiety in various educational settings.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Nature of the Research

This study investigates language anxiety in students enrolled in private universities with English-medium instruction who previously attended madrasa institutions using a qualitative dominant mixed methods approach. The paper is mostly qualitative in nature, with a focus on understanding students' personal experiences, emotions, and obstacles in more depth. However, a Likert scale is also used to measure the overall level of anxiety in an organized manner, adding a small quantitative component. Because of this combination, the study is able to record both the quantifiable pattern in students' anxiety level and the emotional depth of their experiences.

3.2 Methods of Data Collection

In order to collect data, this study uses a Likert scale and semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews help participants give detailed accounts of their experiences with English language anxiety, their transition from Madrasa to private universities and their backgrounds. These interviews offer flexibility which allows the researcher to look deeper into the situation by asking clarifying questions as needed. The interview took place in Bangla depending on the participants' preferences. Each of the interviews lasted approximately 10-15 minutes.

The Likert-scale questionnaire is used to acquire numerical data on students' general anxiety levels. On a scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with statements on speaking anxiety, test anxiety, fear of receiving a poor grade, communication anxiety, and confidence levels. By providing a clearer picture of the intensity with which the students experience various forms of worry, this numerical data

bolsters the qualitative findings. This numeral data from the scale supports the qualitative findings by providing a more precise indication of the extent with which students experience distinct types of anxiety.

3.3 Research Instruments

This study uses a Likert scale, interview questionnaire, and a demographic information sheet. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale is specially created to recognize and measure various forms of language anxiety. It was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) to measure anxiety level in a foreign language classroom. The scale consists of 33 Likert-scale items which range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. The items of the scale emphasize on the three major areas of language anxiety such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The FLCAS helps provide an organized understanding of participants’ anxiety levels.

The interview questions include open-ended questions that help to explore the participants’ experiences with the English language, their experiences in Madrasa classrooms, their current academic environment, and their overall anxiety during English-based activities in the classroom.

A demographic sheet is used in the study to gather information about the participants. Basic background data such as age, gender, years spent in Madrasa, types of Madrasa and present university is collected through the demographic information sheet. All interviews are recorded and translated where necessary for analysis. Two of the interviews are completely transcribed and translated as sample transcriptions for the study.

3.4 Sampling Method

For this research, participants were selected through the process of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling guarantees that only people with the necessary educational backgrounds are selected. As the study only focuses on former madrasa students who are currently enrolled in private universities, purposive sampling helped in the process.

3.5 Sampling Size

The study involves 10 participants who are from madrasa and now studying in English-medium private universities. All of them spent at least five years in either Aliya or Qawmi or both of the madrasa environment before enrolling into private universities where English is the medium of instruction. There are 6 male and 4 female participants. These students range in age from 21 to 25 and are currently enrolled in various departments. Additionally, they have taken English language classes or participated in English-medium academic activities. Their experiences make them eligible for their insights to comprehend the transition from madrasa to private universities with different language instruction systems.

Participant code	Gender	Age	Type of Madrasa attended	Years studied in madrasa	Current University	Current year of study
P1	Female	21	Aliya Madrasa	8 years	BGMEA	1st year
P2	Male	23	Aliya Madrasa	12 years	International Islamic University Chittagong	4th year
P3	Female	23	Aliya Madrasa	12 years	Port City International University	3rd year
P4	Female	24	Aliya Madrasa	12 years	International Islamic University Chittagong	4th year

P5	Male	23	Aliya and Qawmi Madrasa	12 years	Chittagong Independent University	3rd year
P6	Male	22	Aliya Madrasa	12 years	International Islamic University Chittagong	2nd year
P7	Male	24	Aliya Madrasa	5 years	University of Creative Technology	3rd year
P8	Male	24	Aliya and Qawmi Madrasa	12 years	Brac University	4th year
P9	Female	25	Aliya Madrasa	10 years	Chittagong Independent University	2nd year
P10	Male	23	Aliya Madrasa	12 years	BGMEA	4th year

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

For the data analysis, this study follows a thematic analysis approach. Following the collections of transcriptions of the interview, the researcher went over the transcriptions many times in order to fully understand what the participants have said about their experiences. During this stage, the key parts of the interviews are highlighted. The process of thematic analysis includes identifying, assessing, and presenting qualitative themes or patterns in the data, according to (Clarke and Braun, 2017). Later, the interviewer turned those highlighted answers into codes that convey the main point of what the participants are hoping to express. Once the coding is completed, these small units of information are combined to generate broader themes. These themes highlight the key areas of concern seen across the data that were collected.

All interviews were recorded using the recorder from a laptop with participants' consents. All of the participants were contacted online. The interviews took place online while the

participants were on loud speaker and the recorder of the laptop was on to capture the responses. Two recordings were later transcribed and translated as sample transcripts. Alongside the qualitative data analysis, the responses received from the Likert scale questionnaire are examined through simple statistical methods. Ten participants were given access to the online survey via Google Forms. The overall anxiety scores were calculated by adjusting the reverse-scored questions and assigning numerical scores to the responses. According to the FLCAS framework, greater mean scores correspond to lower levels of anxiety, whereas lower mean scores refer to higher levels of anxiety.

Microsoft Excel was used to analyse the data; responses were numerically written, average scores were computed for each item. The pie charts were used to visualize the responses of the participants. Every response had been converted into a number between 1 and 5. Reverse scoring was used to guarantee consistency in evaluating anxiety because some of the FLCAS's items include positive wording. Statements 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32 were among the reverse-scored items. Higher scores consistently indicated higher feelings of anxiety related to learning a foreign language after this adjustment. The researcher determines how frequent certain responses appear, the percentage of students who have selected each level of agreement, and the mean score for each statement. This numeral information helps the qualitative finding by highlighting which language anxiety related issues were most common or most acute among the participants. The statistical data is shown through pie charts for a better visual representation.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Throughout this study, ethical considerations were carefully considered in order to respect the participants' rights and privacy. Participants were made aware of the goal of the study, the procedures involved, and the purpose of the data before the interviews were conducted. Each

participant gave their informed consent prior to data collection, and their participation was entirely voluntary. Participants' names have been replaced from the research in order to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Instead, participants' codes were employed. Transcripts of interviews, audio recordings, and associated research materials were safely kept. Every piece of information gathered was only applied for scholarly study purposes. Care was taken to make sure that interview questions did not create undue discomfort or psychological suffering because the study examined participants' experiences of language anxiety. Participants could choose not to respond to any question that made them uncomfortable. Throughout the interview, the researcher remained kind in order to foster a secure setting where participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences. The study also maintained the idea of academic integrity. Responses from the participants were reported truthfully without any misinterpretation. In order to represent the experiences of the participants, the results were presented truthfully. Additionally, all of the sources used in the study were properly cited and referenced.

Chapter 4

Finding and discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study based on both quantitative and qualitative data. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used to measure the quantitative data. The qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews from participants who are currently enrolled in private universities and previously studied in madrasa. The objective of the chapter is to interpret the findings in relation to the research questions and to connect them with existing literature.

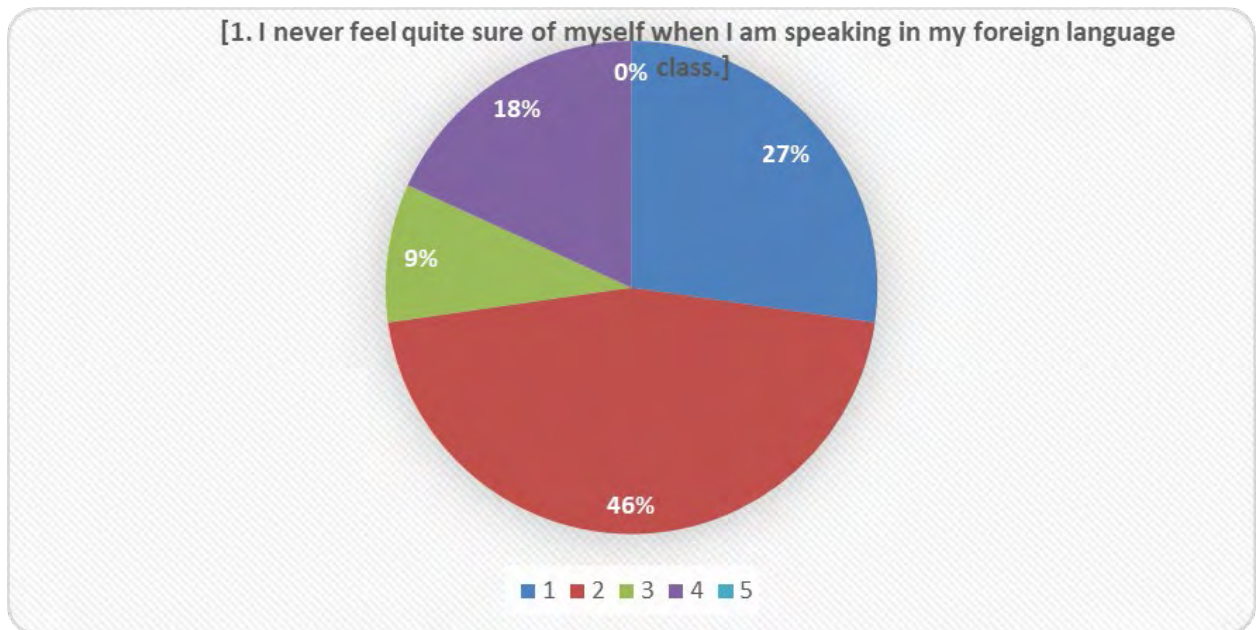
4.2 Levels of anxiety among students

This section presents the quantitative data collected through the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The goal of this study is to look into the degree of anxiety experienced by students in an English-medium classroom. Data were obtained from ten individuals using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree). The overall analysis of the dataset shows that the participants had a moderate level of foreign language fear. There are also some participants with low level anxiety and one is with high anxiety.

Moreover, there are 33 statements ranging from 33 to 165 which is minimum to maximum scores. Low anxiety consists of low scores such as from 33 to 75. Then, from 76-119 is the range of moderate anxiety. Lastly, 120-165 is the score range for higher levels of anxiety.

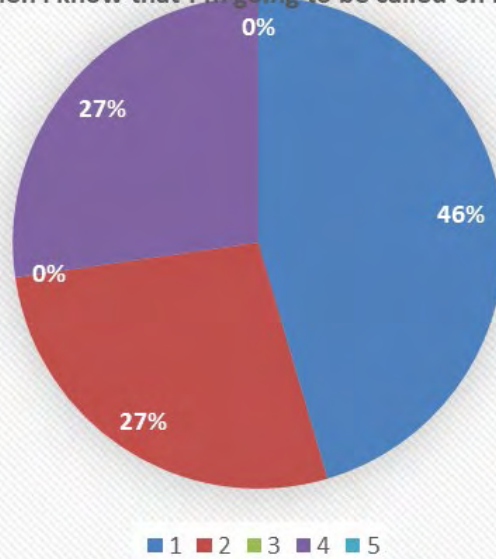
This pattern shows that although students' anxiety levels are moderate to high, they are nevertheless not entirely at ease. Their anxiousness is situational and becomes more noticeable in certain situations, especially when they are using language actively.

4.2.1 Communication Apprehension



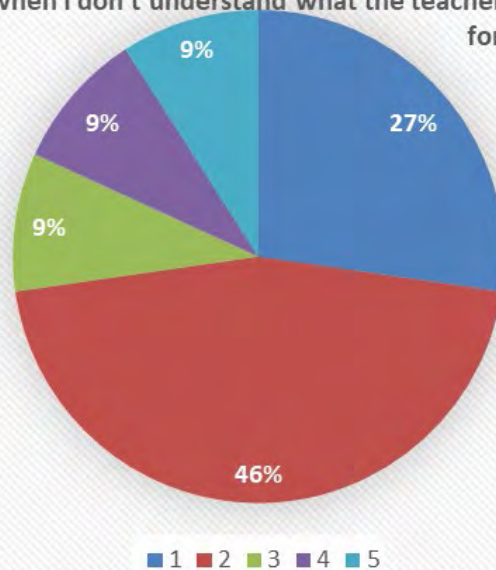
Most of the participants agreed with the statement that they do not feel sure about themselves when they speak in English at the class. The pie chart shows 27% of them strongly agreed and 46% of the participants agreed with it. It suggests that a high degree of them feel insecure while speaking in a foreign language classroom. Whereas, only 9% of them neither agreed nor disagreed. In contrast, the remaining 18% of the students disagreed with the statement, indicating that a small proportion feel confident about themselves while speaking in class.

[3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.]

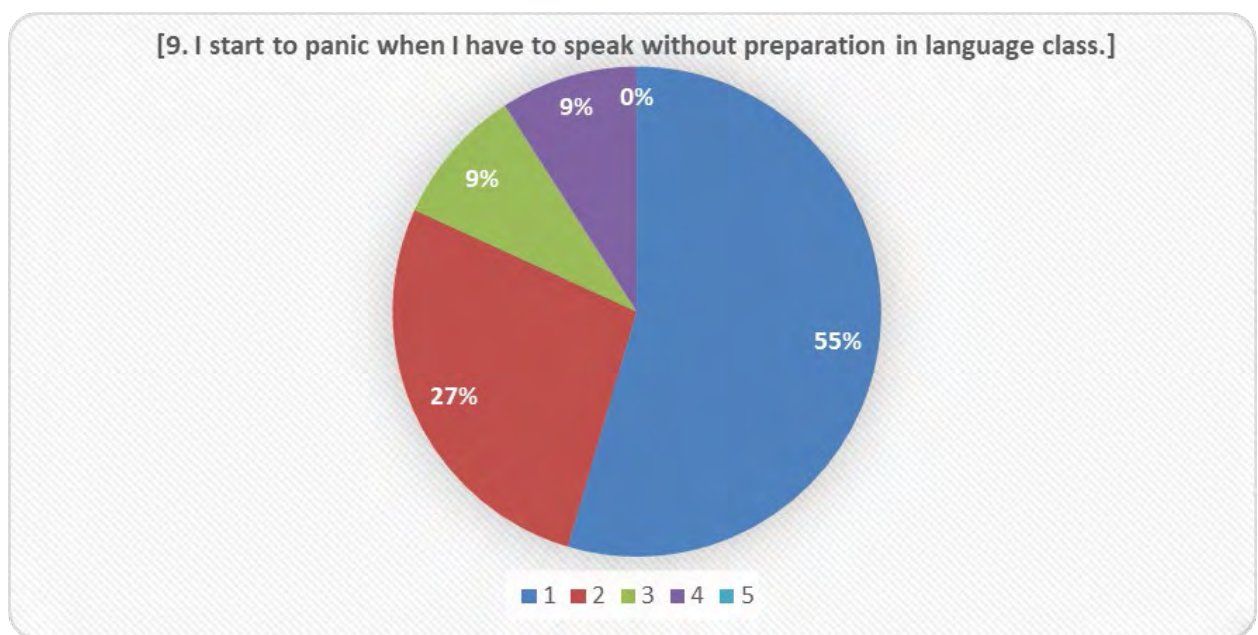


For this statement, 46% of them strongly agreed about trembling in the class whenever they feel they are going to be called on in language class, followed by the rest of 27% agreed. It indicates that the majority of participants have the anxiety about being called on in class. On the other hand, the remaining 27% of participants disagreed with the statement. The amounts of participants do not have anxiousness regarding this context.

[4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.]



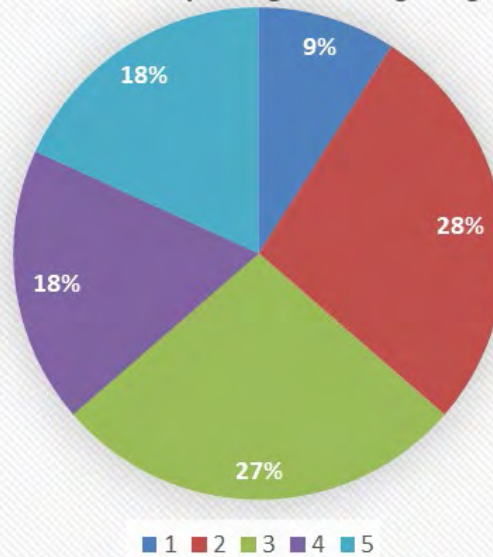
27% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement that they get frightened when the teacher says something in English. Majority of them being 46% of them agreed with it. Most of them showed agreement with the statement which indicates they have anxiety. Whereas, 9% neither agreed nor disagreed, 9% disagreed and the remaining 9% strongly disagreed. A small percentage of people do not get frightened in the classroom.



The majority of the participants (55%) strongly agreed that they start to panic if they have to speak without preparation in language class, followed by 27% of them. The percentage for agreement indicates that most of them have speaking anxiety during language class.

Only 9% stayed neutral and the remaining 9% did not agree with the statement. The result shows few participants do not panic during speaking and a small percentage do not agree nor disagree with the statement.

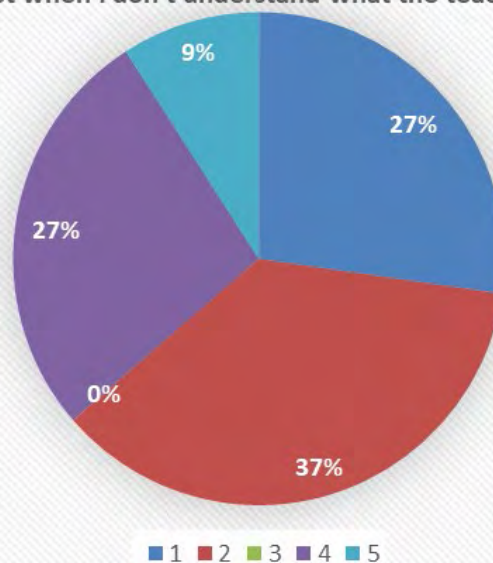
[14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.]



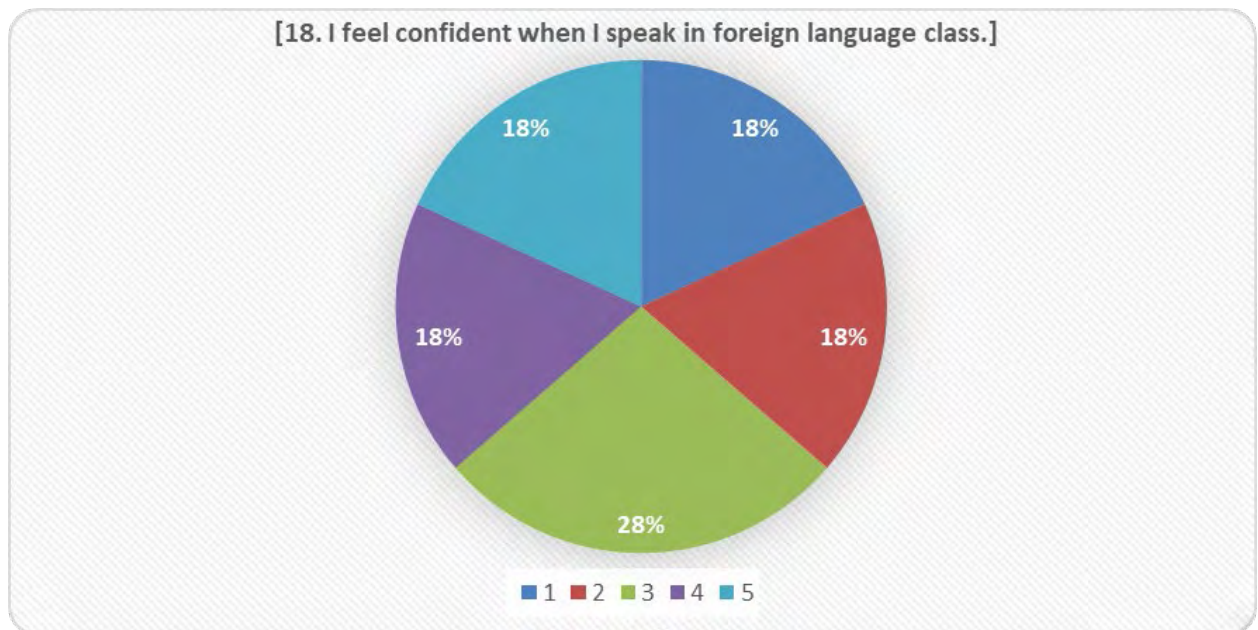
According to the percentage, 9% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement and 28% of them agreed. 27% of them stayed neutral, meaning that they have conflicting perspectives whether they would be nervous speaking with native speakers of a foreign language or not. 18% of the participants disagreed and the other 18% of them strongly disagreed with the statement.

The result suggests that there are mixed feelings about the nervousness while speaking with native speakers.

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



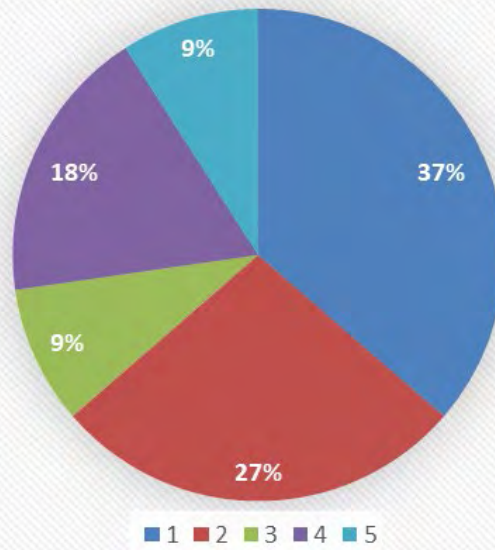
A majority of the participants, 37% agreed, while a significant proportion of the participants (27%) strongly agreed, indicating that most of them get upset when they do not understand the correction given by the teacher. Meanwhile, 27% of them disagreed. The remaining 9% of the participants strongly disagreed. It shows that comparatively few students felt confident.



According to the results, 18% of participants strongly agreed and 18% agreed, suggesting that some respondents felt comfortable speaking in a foreign language classroom. However, an equal percentage of participants disagreed (18%) and strongly disagreed (18%), indicating that similar numbers of respondents may feel anxious and lack confidence. Interestingly, the majority of participants (28%) chose neither agree nor disagree, indicating uncertainty or opposing feelings regarding their degree of confidence.

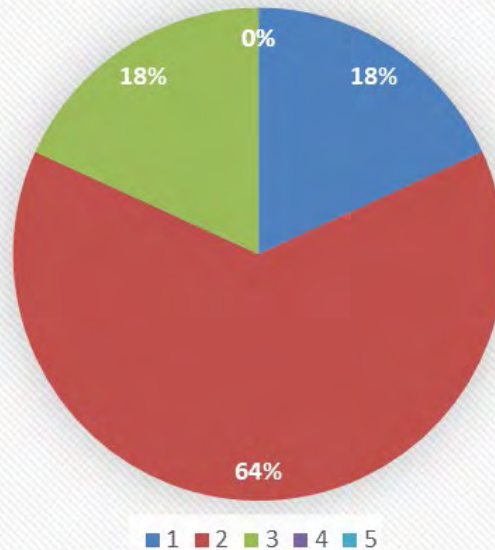
Overall, the replies are rather evenly distributed, indicating that individuals' speaking confidence varies. While some students are self-assured, a significant portion lack confidence, suggesting that a significant number of the group suffers from anxiety related to learning a foreign language.

[20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.]



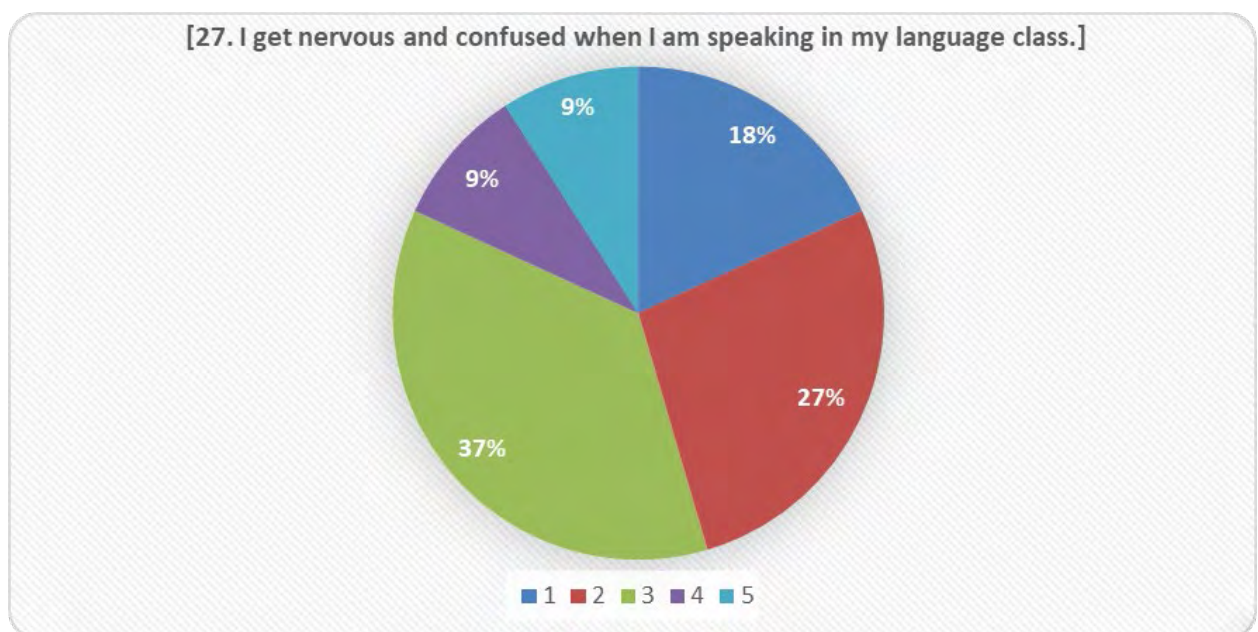
The result shows that the majority of the participants strongly agreed with this statement. Followed by the largest percentage, 27% of them agreed. The results indicate that most of them feel anxious when they are going to be called on in language class. In contrast, the percentage for disagree and strongly disagree are 18% and 9%, showing fewer of them do not feel nervous regarding this. The remaining 9% neither agreed nor disagreed.

[24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.]



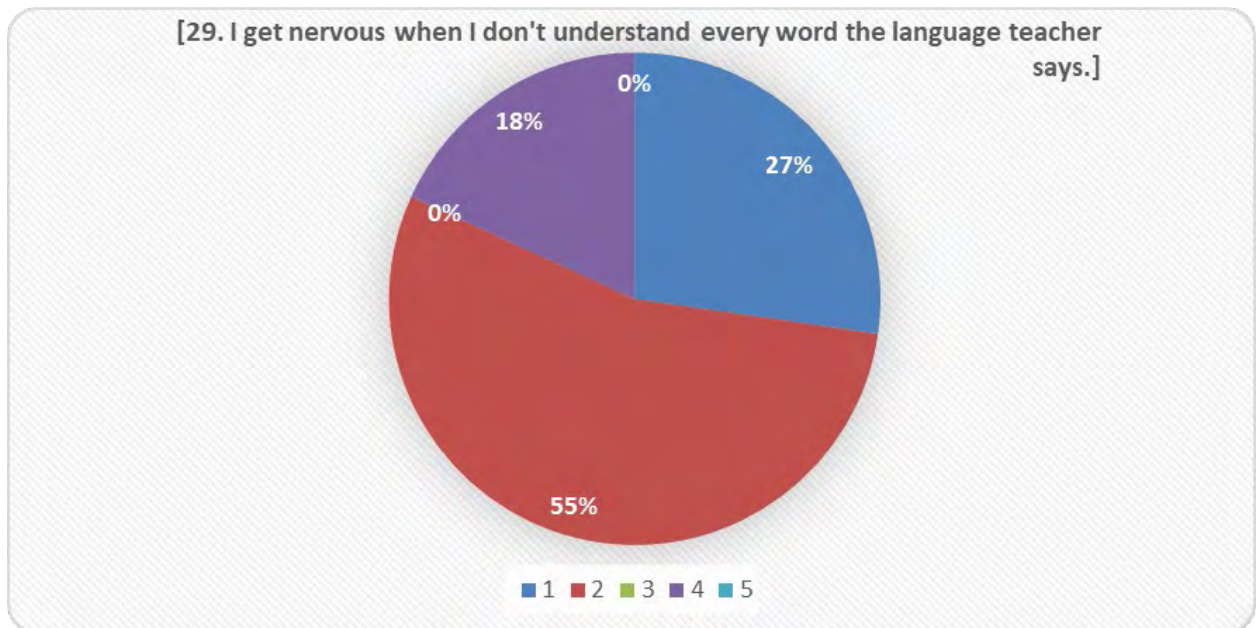
A majority of the participants (64%) agreed and 18% of them strongly agreed feeling self-conscious when speaking in a foreign language class in front of others. This shows that the students have a higher degree of speaking anxiety.

Meanwhile, 18% of the participants chose neither agree nor disagree, indicating a neutral view that could represent doubt or conflicting feelings regarding their confidence in such situations. Interestingly, none of the participants disagreed with the statement, which supports the general inclination toward worry.



It can be seen that 27% agreed and 18% strongly agreed, showing that a significant proportion of the participants feel anxious and confused when speaking in the language classroom

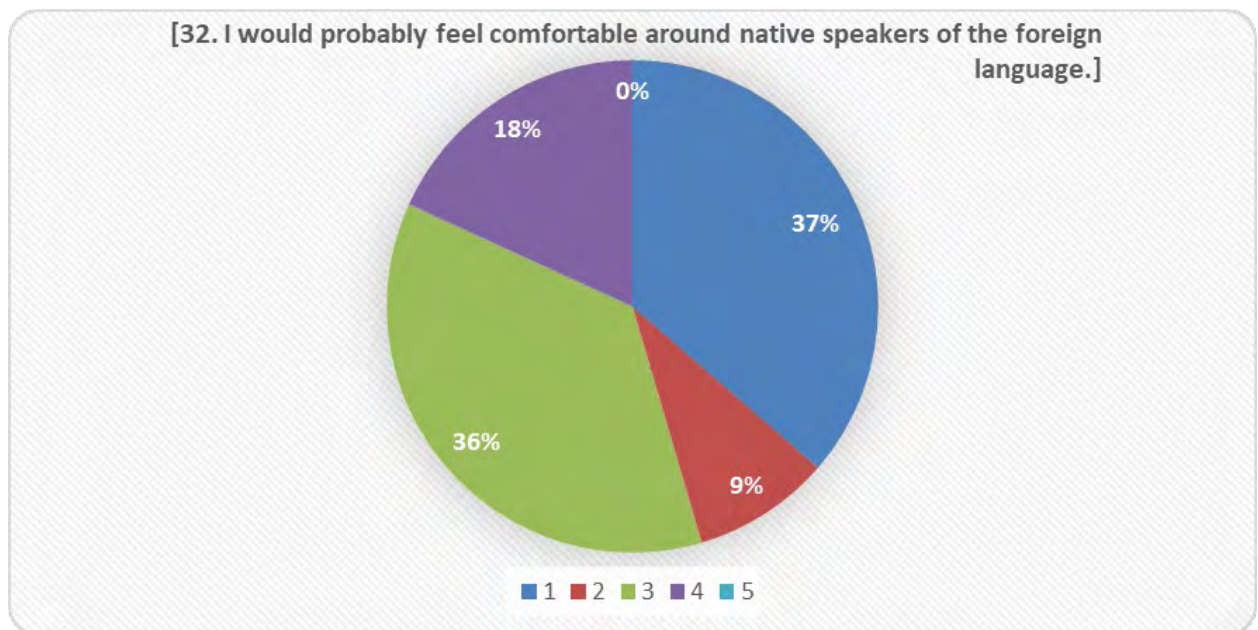
The greatest proportion, 37%, chose neither agree nor disagree, indicating that many people have conflicting emotions regarding their worry in this situation. This would suggest that their experiences differ according to the circumstances or degree of difficulty. Conversely, only 9% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed, indicating that a comparatively small percentage of people are self-assured and do not feel this kind of fear.



The majority of participants agreed with 27% strongly agreeing and 55% agreeing with the statement that most respondents become nervous when they do not understand every word the language teacher says.

Only 18% of participants, on the other hand, disagreed, indicating that a limited percentage of people do not experience anxiety under these circumstances. Interestingly, none of the responses were neutral or strongly disagree, indicating a definite leaning toward anxiousness among the participants.

Overall, the results show a major cause of language anxiety for the majority of students is a difficulty to fully understand the teacher's speech.



The result shows that 37% of the participants strongly agreed and 9% of them agreed, suggesting that a significant portion of the participants feel confident around native speakers of the foreign language. However, a roughly equal percentage (36%) chose neither agree nor disagree, indicating a considerable amount of uncertainty regarding the statement. In contrast, 18% of participants disagreed, showing some level of uneasiness.

Overall, while a significantly higher percentage of participants feel comfortable near native speakers, the huge neutral response indicates that many are still hesitant.

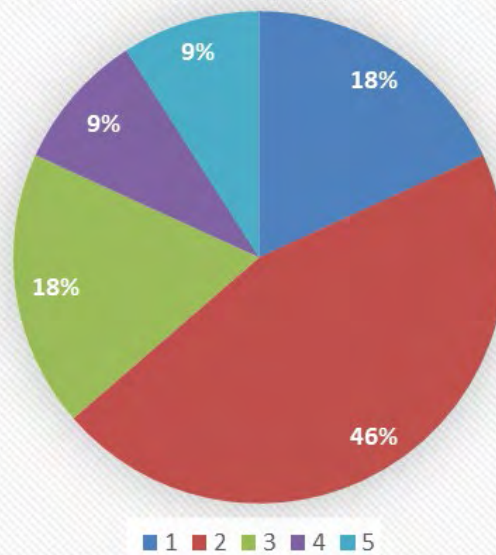
4.2.2 Fear of negative evaluation



In this pie chart, 27% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement. The majority of them, about 37%, agreed that they feel embarrassed to volunteer answers in class. Additionally, 27% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining 9% of them disagreed with it.

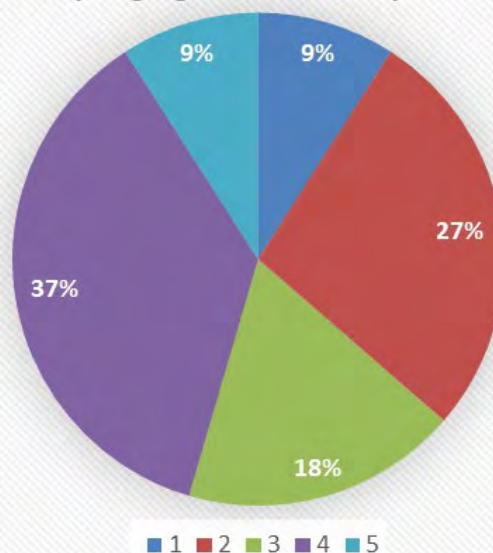
The percentages in the pie chart highlight that the majority of the participants feel embarrassed to volunteer answers in their language class. This can be the cause of anxiety they experience in the language class.

[16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.]



The pie chart shows that 18% of participants strongly agreed and 46% of them agreed, indicating a high level of anxiety. In contrast, 9% disagreed and 9% strongly disagreed, reflecting lower anxiety levels. Additionally, 18% of them stayed neutral. Overall, the findings show that most of the participants experience language anxiety in this context.

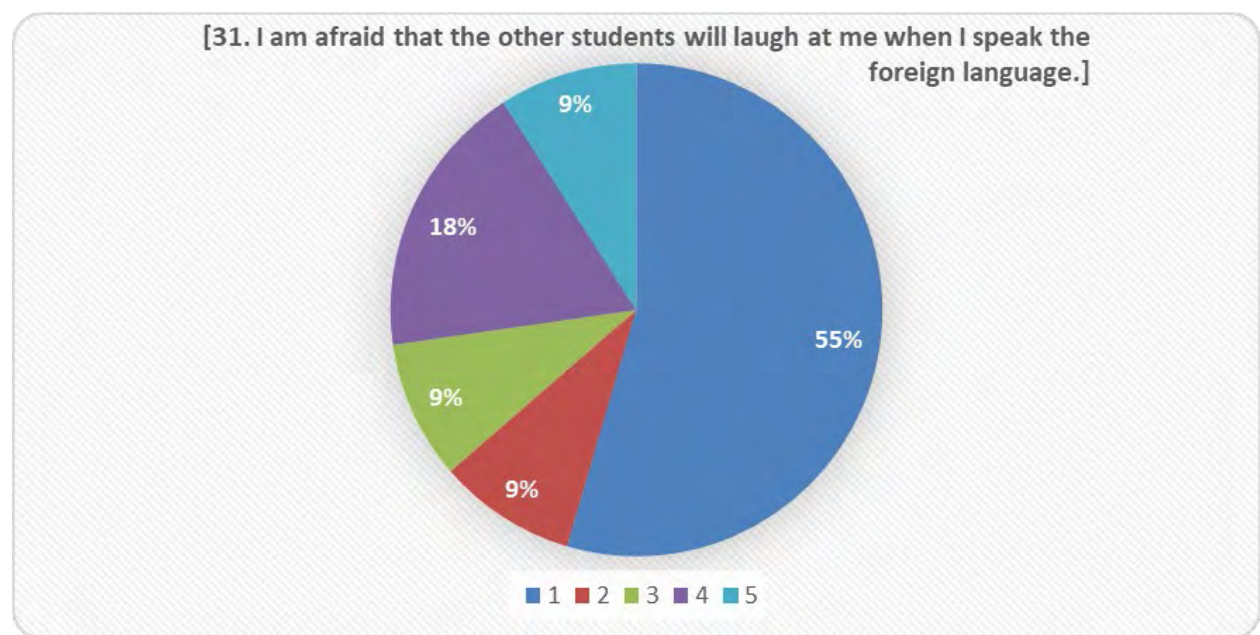
[19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.]



The pie chart shows that 9% strongly agreed, 27% agreed with the statement. 18% of them neither agreed nor disagreed, suggesting that some of them feel anxious about teachers' frequent corrections. However, the majority of participants (37%) disagreed and 9% of them

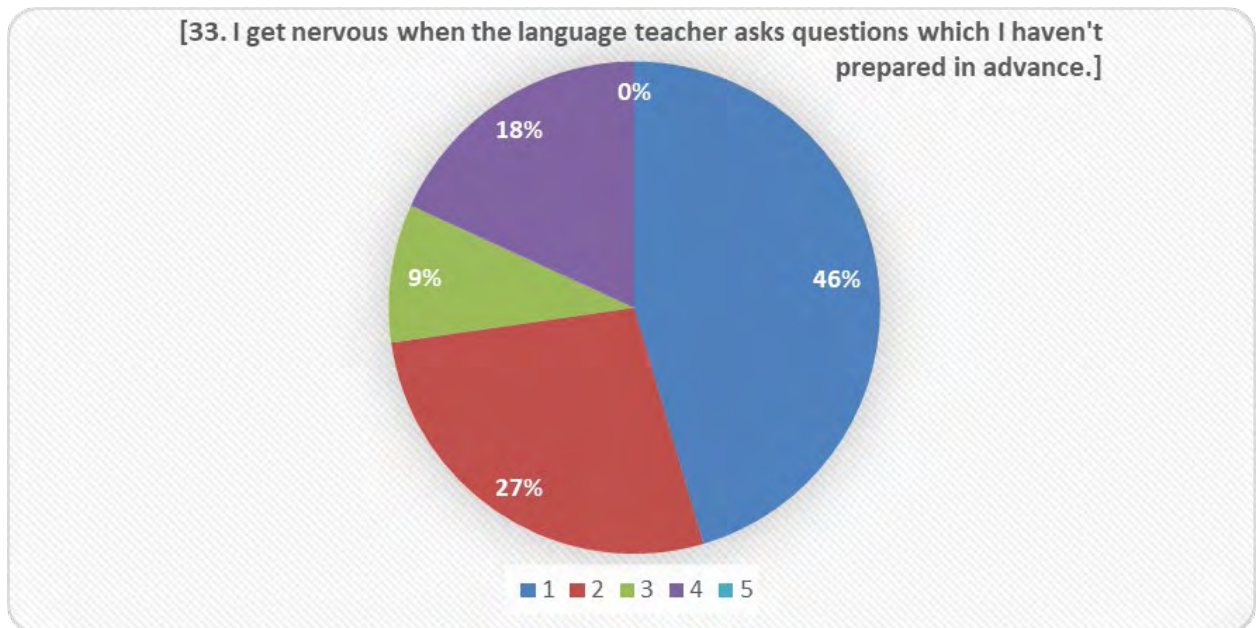
strongly disagreed with it. It shows that the majority of them do not feel anxiousness in this context. Moreover, 18% of the participants chose to neither agree nor disagree, indicating ambiguity.

Overall, the findings show that although some individuals feel anxious about corrections made by the teacher, most seem to view it as non-threatening, indicating a relatively low degree of anxiety in this situation.



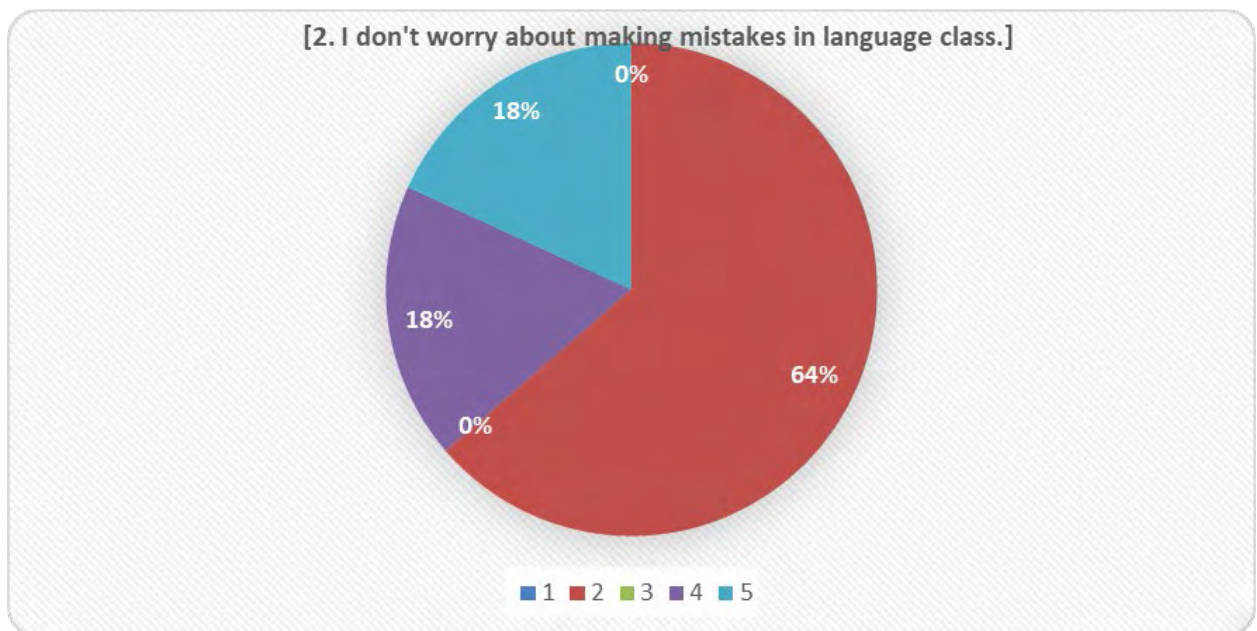
The majority of participants (55%) strongly agreed and an additional 9% agreed. This suggests that a significant number of participants had a strong fear of being made fun of in a foreign language classroom. This also suggests a higher level of anxiety related to peer evaluation. Meanwhile, 9% of them neither agreed nor disagreed, indicating a conflicting emotion towards this statement. However, 9% of respondents strongly disagreed and 18% of them disagreed, indicating that a lesser percentage of participants do not have this anxiety.

Overall, the results show that one of the main causes of the participants' anxiety related to learning a foreign language is their fear of being judged, especially their fear of being made fun of by their peers.



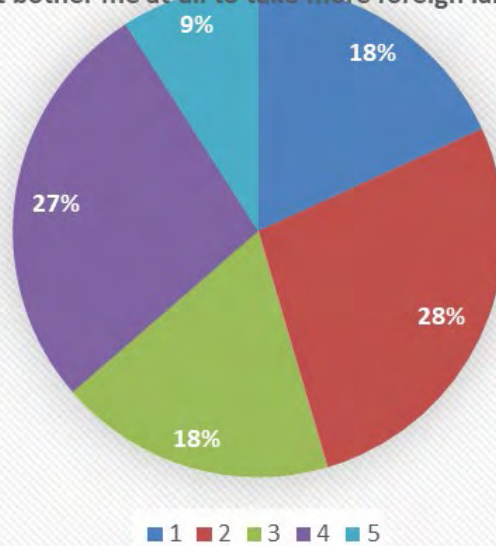
According to the result, 47% of the participants strongly agreed which is the majority of the percentage. Then, 27% of them agreed with the statement that they get nervous when there is no prior preparation for answering a question. 9 % neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. 18% of the participants disagreed, indicating that they do not feel nervous when the teacher asks questions.

4.2.3 Test Anxiety



The majority of the participants agreed with the statement showing 64% of agreement, it shows that they do not worry about making mistakes in the language class. In contrast, 18% of them disagreed and 18 % of them strongly disagreed. It shows that some participants do worry about making mistakes. There are none of the participants who have selected neither agree nor disagree, that means all of them know whether they do worry or do not worry about making mistakes.

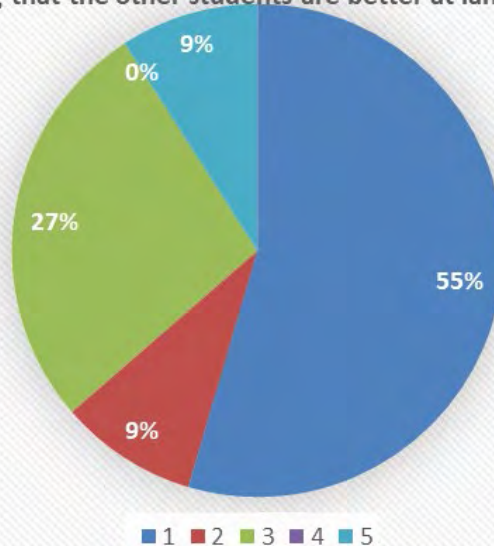
[5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.]



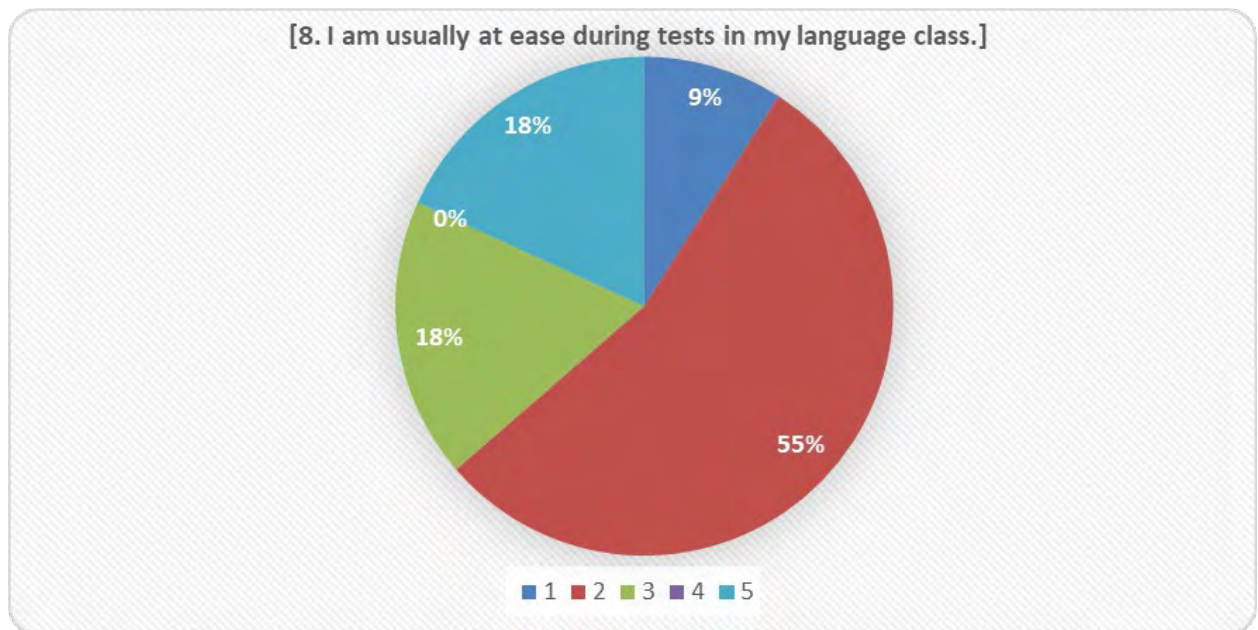
About 18% of the participants strongly agreed and 28% agreed with the statement, showing that they are not bothered by taking foreign language classes.

Whereas 18% remained neutral, meaning they are not sure about it. The remaining 27% disagreed and 9% of them strongly disagreed. Overall, some proportion of the participants are bothered and some are not in this context.

[7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.]

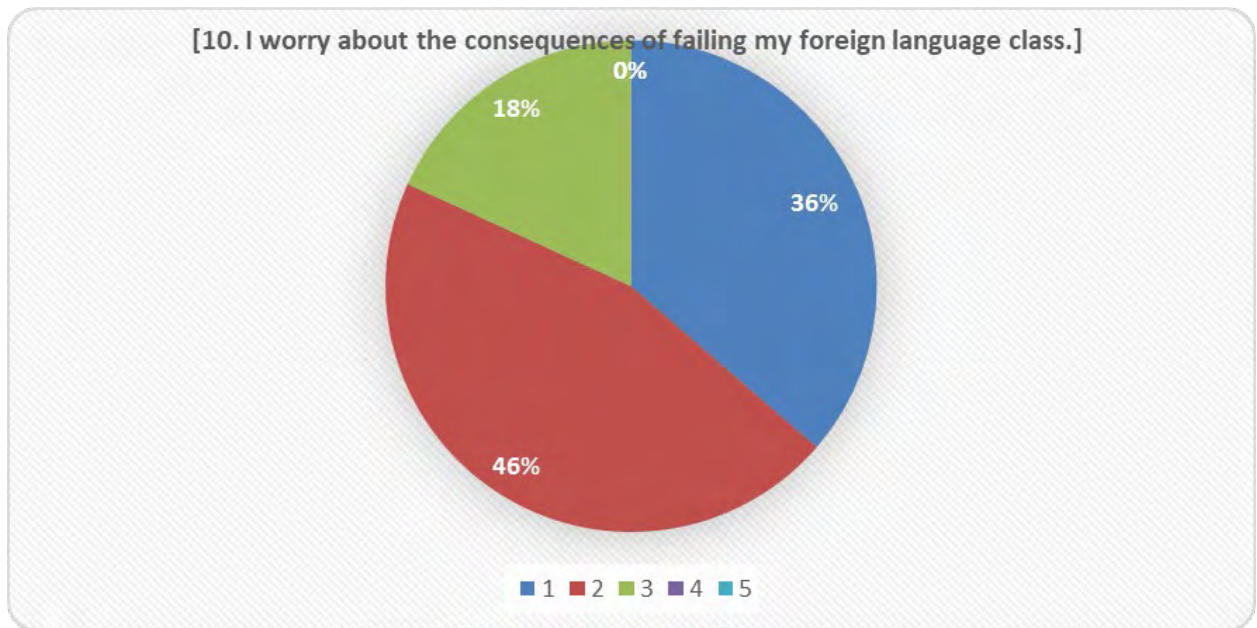


The majority of the participants, that is 55 % of them, strongly agreed with the statement that they think other students are better at language than they are, followed by 9 % of them who agreed. 27% of them stayed neutral and the other 9% of the participants strongly disagreed. Overall, the result indicates that most of them keep comparing themselves with other students' language competence.



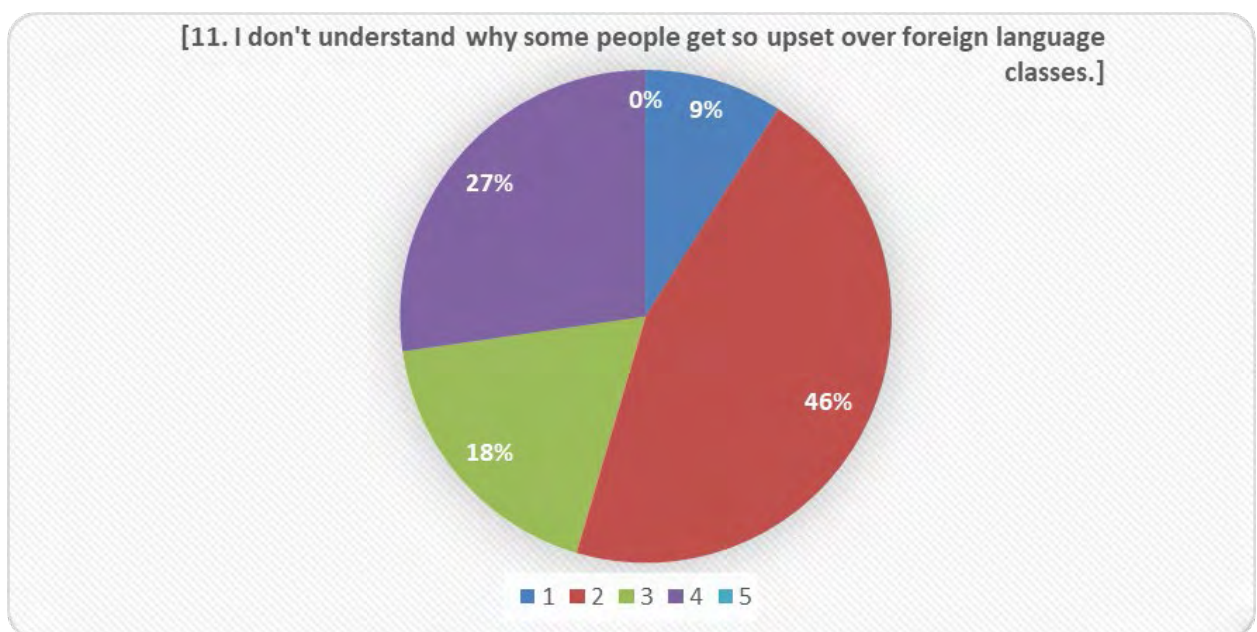
9% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement. Majority of the participants, 55% of them agreed that they are usually at ease during language tests. 18% of them did not agree or disagree. 18% of them strongly disagreed, which means that they do not feel comfortable during tests in their language class.

Overall, this trend highlights that during language tests, the majority of them do not feel anxiety. However, a small proportion of them do not feel at ease during tests.



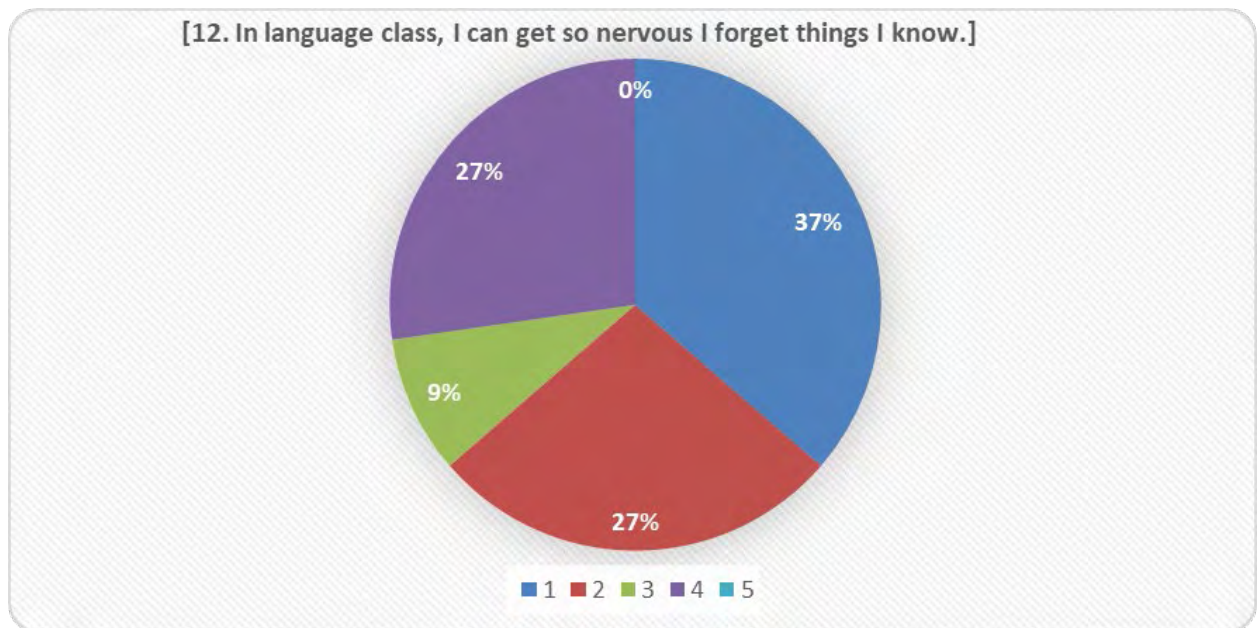
The data reveals that 36% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement. The highest proportion (46%) of them agreed that they worry about the consequences of failing a foreign language class. The remaining 18% neither agreed nor disagreed. Interestingly, none of the participants disagreed that they do not worry about failing in language class.

Overall, the results show that most participants experience anxiety about failing in foreign language class



The pie chart shows that 9% of the participants strongly agreed with the statement. The majority

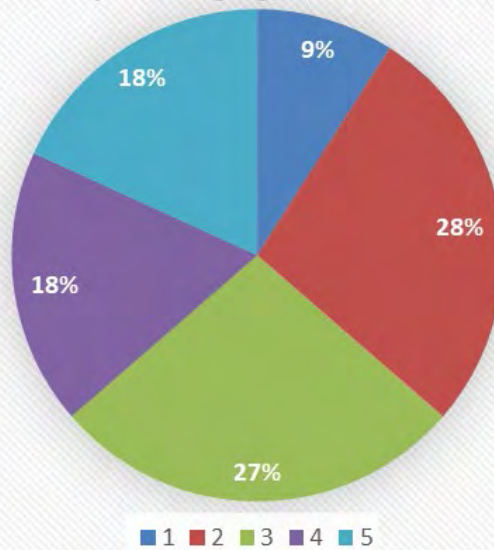
of the students, 46%, agreed with it. The percentage of agreement shows that they agree they do not understand the upsetness over foreign language class. Additionally, 18 % of them neither agreed nor disagreed. The remaining 27% of the participants disagreed and none of them strongly disagreed with the statement. The results indicated that though the majority of them agree with the statement but a handful of them disagreed.



The largest proportion (37%) strongly agreed and 27% agreed with the statement that they get nervous to the extent that they forget the things they know. 27% of the participants disagreed. The remaining 9% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed.

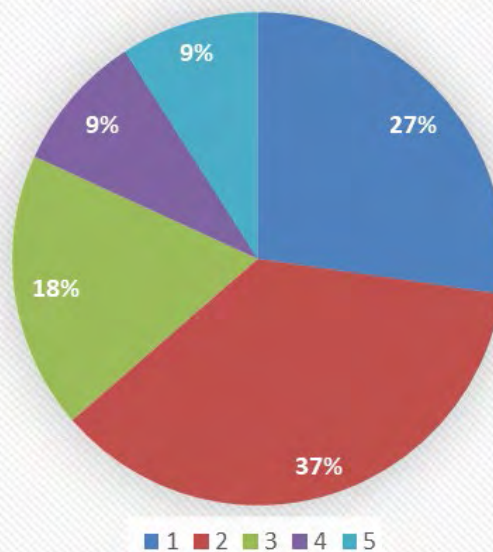
Overall, the result indicates that due to their anxiety most of the participants forget what they know in a language class which hampers their language learning. In contrast, a small percentage do not feel anxiety regarding this context.

[21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.]



It is evident that the combined proportion of participants who strongly agreed (9%) and agreed (28%) is higher than those who disagreed (18%) and strongly disagreed (18%), indicating that confusion is more prevalent among the participants. A moderate percentage of participants (27%) selected neither agree nor disagree, which reflects mixed perception regarding the statement.

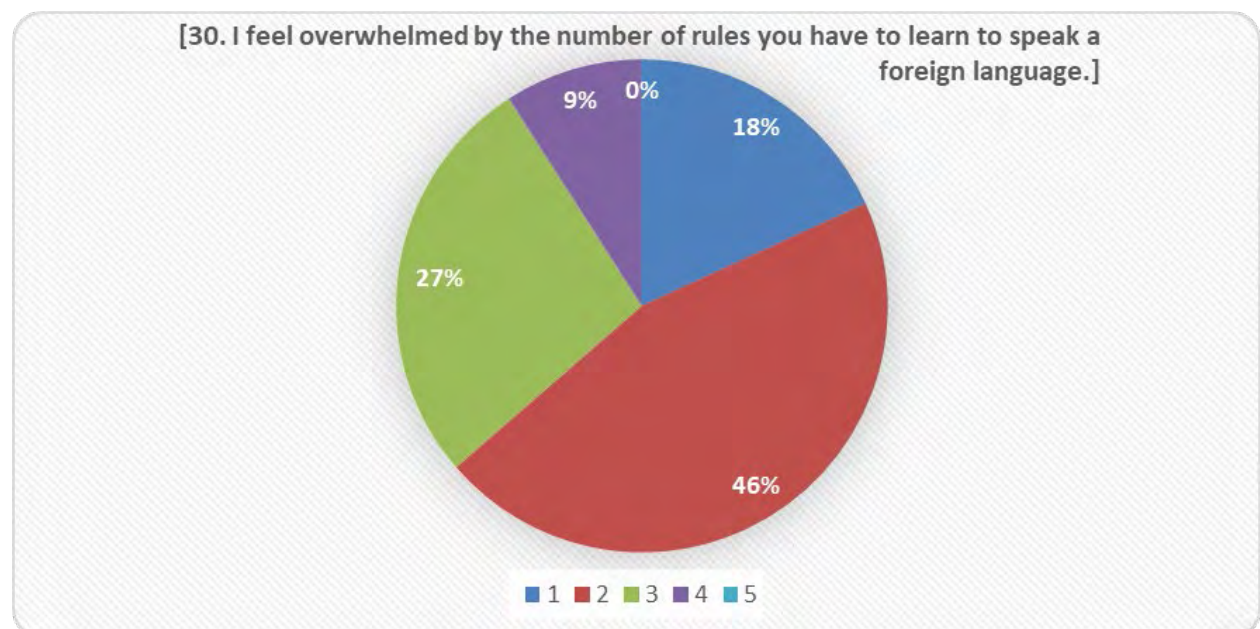
[26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.]



The majority of participants reported feeling more nervous in language class than in other classes, as shown by the high percentage of respondents who strongly agreed (27%), and agreed (37%). However, 18% of them selected neither agree nor disagree indicating that they are unsure about the statement. In contrast, a lower proportion of individuals disagreed (9%) and strongly disagreed (9%), indicating that very few students do not believe language classes cause increased anxiety.

Overall, the results show the presence of increased stress in language learning situations and indicate that foreign language classes are a major cause of worry for the majority of participants.

Overall, the results show the variety of language anxiety across the participants, indicating that while a sizable portion of learners have speaking-related anxiety, a sizable portion of them stayed neutral.

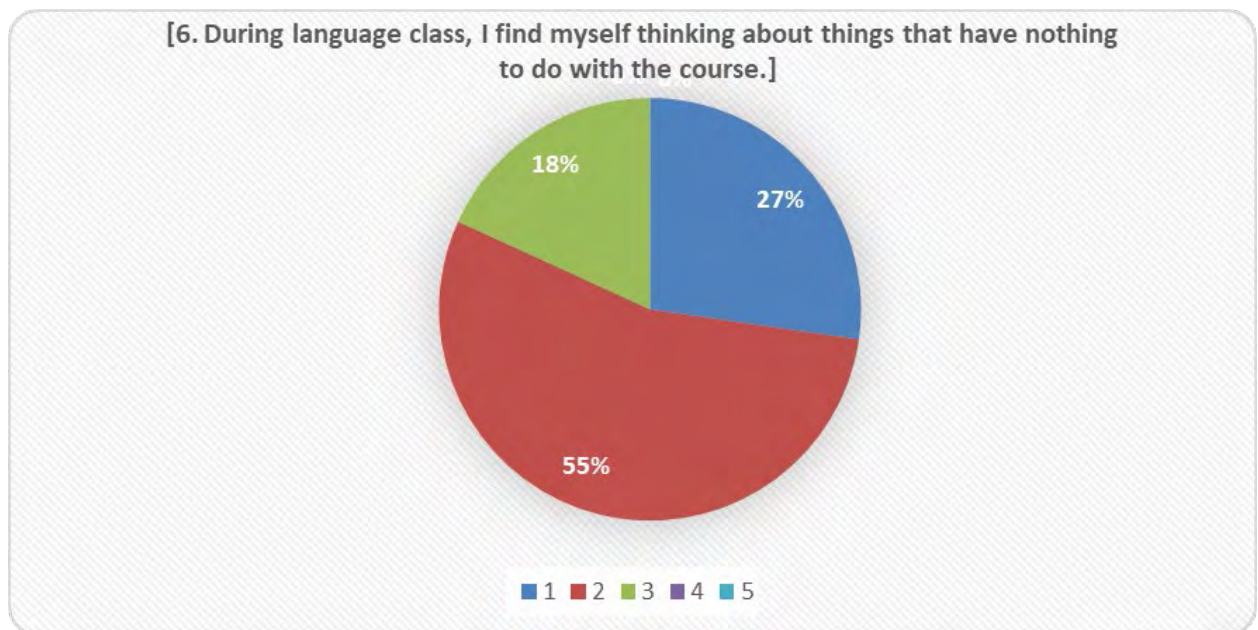


Most of the participants feel overwhelmed by the number of language rules, as seen by the higher percentage of them who strongly agreed (18%) and agreed (46%) with the statement. Even so, 27% of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. On the other

hand, only 9% of them disagreed and none strongly disagreed, showing that very few feel comfortable with the language rules that involve speaking.

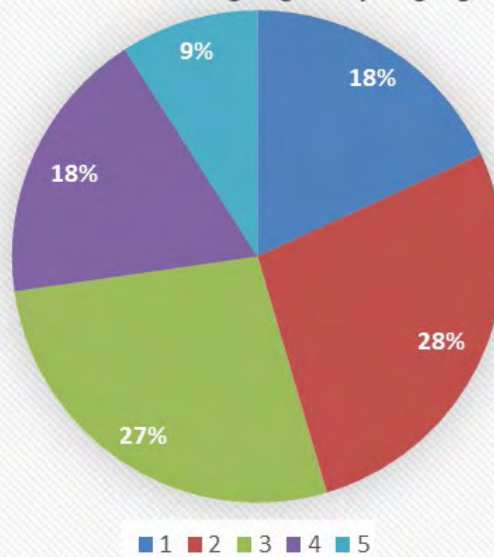
Thus, the results indicate that participants' worry about learning a foreign language is largely caused by the complexity of rules.

4.2.4 Avoidance behavior



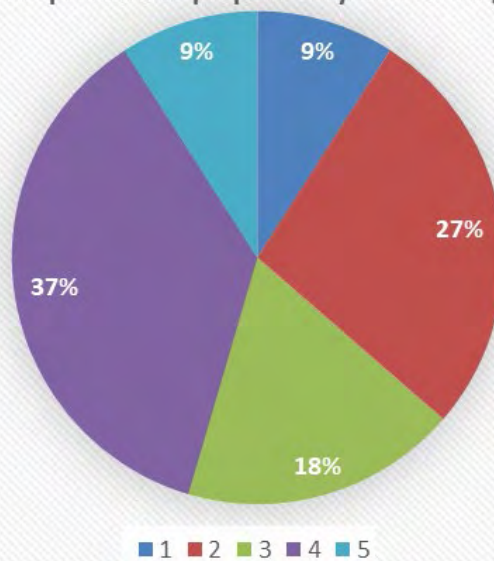
The results show that 55% of the participants strongly agreed and 27% of them agreed with the statement that they think about other things instead of the language class. Only 18% of them did not agree or disagree with the statement. However, none of the participants disagreed with the statement. It shows that the majority of them are agreeing with the statement as there is none of the participants who disagreed.

[17. I often feel like not going to my language class.]

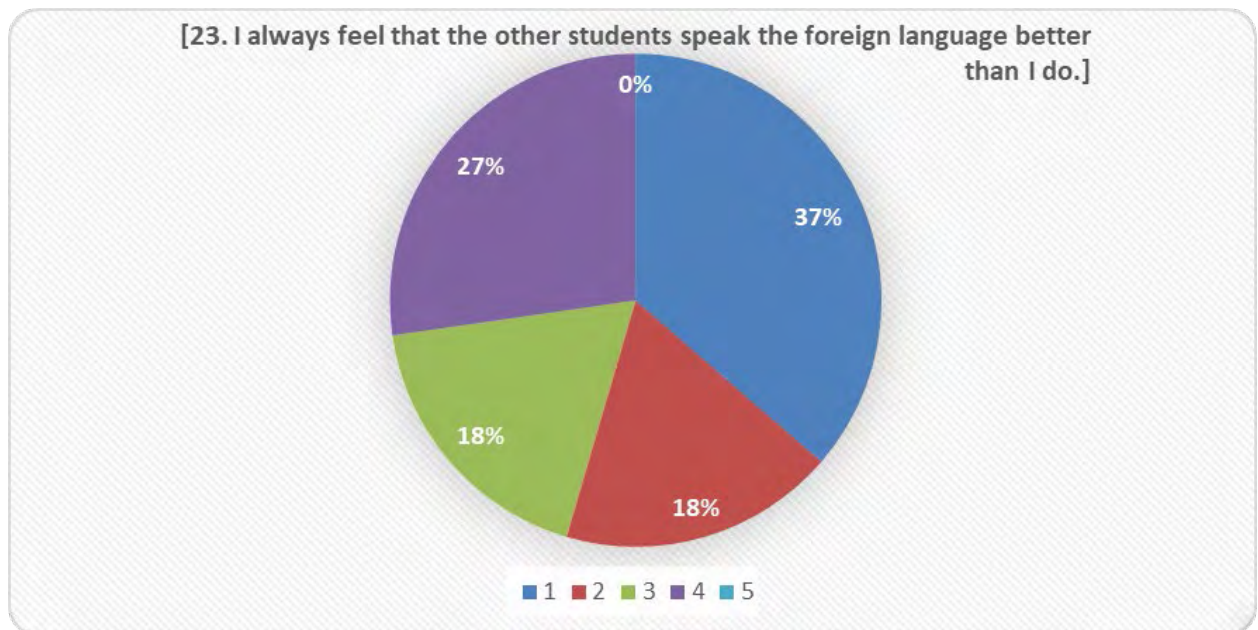


The pie chart highlights the overall trend participants' responses toward the statement. The largest segment is represented by agreement (28%). 18% of participants strongly agreed with the statement. Followed by the next largest category (27%) neither agreed nor disagreed, showing that many participants experience it and some are not sure of it. In contrast, the percentages for disagree (18%) and strongly disagree (9%) is less, suggesting that fewer people feel comfortable.

[22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.]



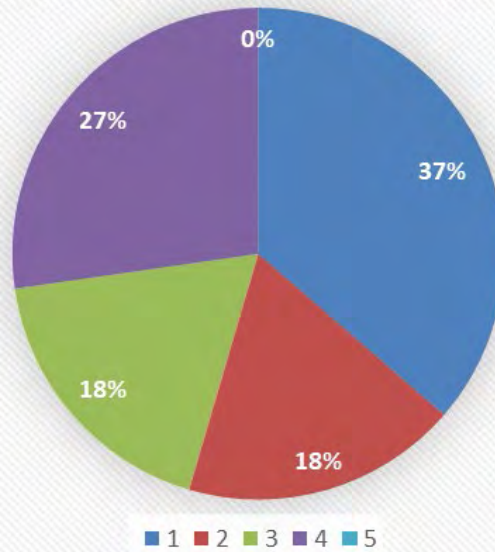
The majority of participants (37%) disagreed, followed by 9% who strongly disagreed, indicating that a significant number of participants actually feel pressure to prepare for their class. In contrast, 9% of participants strongly agreed and 27% of them agreed, suggesting a small percentage of participants do not experience such pressure. Additionally, 18% of them selected neither agree nor disagree reflecting a neutral position.



A significant percentage of participants (37%) strongly agreed, and an additional 18% agreed, suggesting that over half of the respondents felt inferior to others when comparing their language proficiency. This implies a high degree of self-doubt when learning a foreign language.

Conversely, 18% of the people chose neither agree or disagree, which could be a sign of conflicting opinions on their own skills. However, 27% of respondents disagreed, suggesting that a smaller portion of participants do not believe they are less capable than their colleagues. Overall, the results show that most participants frequently suffer from comparison-based anxiety, a prominent component of anxiety in foreign language classes.

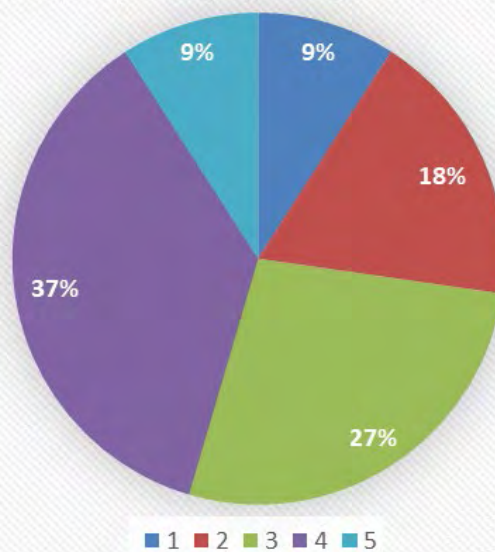
[25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.]



A significant proportion of participants strongly agreed (37%) and agreed (18%), showing more than half of participants experience anxiety due to the fast pace of language class. Meanwhile, 18% of participants neither agreed nor disagreed. It highlights conflicting opinions regarding the proposition. However, 27% of them disagreed, showing that a sizable percentage of students do not view the class's pace as an issue.

Overall, the results show that while some participants are at ease, the majority feel anxious about the pace of class, which could have a detrimental effect on their educational experience.

[28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.]



The majority of participants (37%) disagreed, with 9% strongly disagreeing. This suggests that quite a number of participants do not feel comfortable or confident prior to starting language sessions.

However, 18% of individuals agreed and 9% strongly agreed, indicating that a smaller percentage feels at ease in this circumstance. Moreover, 27% of respondents chose neither agree nor disapprove.

Overall, the results show that many participants experience anxiety rather than comfort before the language classes, suggesting that a significant percentage of the respondents suffer from foreign language anxiety.

4.2.5 Overall discussion

According to the FLCAS results, participants have moderate to high anxiety related to learning a foreign language. This shows that many students from madrasa backgrounds still find studying English to be a difficult and emotionally stressful task. Items related to speaking in the class and the fear of making mistakes in English, in particular, obtained higher agreement. This indicates that participants are often more anxious about communicating. The most common causes of anxiety among the many categories seems to be communication anxiety and fear of being negatively judged. Many of them have anxiety when speaking in English in class or when they thought their peers would be critical of their performance. Test-related anxiety, on the other hand, contributed to overall anxiety levels but was comparatively less prevalent. The results are in line with earlier studies by Horwitz et al. (1986), who found that communication anxiety and fear of being judged negatively are the main causes of anxiety related to learning a foreign language. Some participants reported statements that show avoidance behavior among them. The participants past educational experiences can account for the study's comparatively high anxiety levels. In Bangladesh, madrasa education frequently

prioritise reading, grammar, and exam-oriented instruction above spoken communication. Students may therefore have less confidence in their ability to communicate in English on their own when they enter university lectures, which makes them more nervous in interactive learning settings.

4.3 Causes of Language Anxiety among Madrasa students

4.3.1 Communication Apprehension

The FLCAS data show that madrasa students have a high level of language anxiety in English language classes. These pie charts for communication related statements showed a higher level of anxiety among the participants. Statements 1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 20, 24, 27, 29, 32 are items related to speaking or responding orally in English spontaneously. When using English, particularly in speaking tasks, a sizable percentage of them expressed emotions of nervousness and lack of confidence. For example, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement related to experiencing anxiety and insecurity while being called on to speak in English. A high degree of them feels insecure while speaking in a foreign language classroom. The majority of them strongly agreed that they start to panic if they have to speak without preparation in language class. According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), communication apprehension is one of the causes of anxiety relating to learning a foreign language. This reflects among the participants that they feel high anxiety during oral production or the learning process of English.

The qualitative findings also add more insights on these quantitative trends. The interview responses showed that students often connect speaking English with embarrassment and fear. A number of participants were afraid of communicating because they thought everyone would judge how they talked and the accent they talked with. P10 mentioned during group discussions or pair work he gets nervous thinking about what his classmates would think about his accent.

In academic settings, participants often reported experiencing feelings of nervousness and anxiety when speaking a second language. Many respondents reported that their emotions were more intense during speaking tasks, such as presentations or discussions, since they felt their speaking abilities were being examined. P4 mentioned, “I used to feel numb when my teacher gave me the task to speak in front of the class”. Fear of speaking and making a mistake was a major issue and they could not find the confidence to speak. Anxiety while learning a foreign language can be caused by various factors including lack of preparation, and fear of making mistakes (Marwan, 2008). Learning English was sometimes an easy process but when it comes to speaking they faced various challenges. They emphasized that they frequently experienced anxiety due to a fear of making mistakes since they thought it would result in shame or criticism. This shows what McIntyre and Gardner (1994) refer to as a psychological obstacle that prevents language learners from obtaining it. Additionally, some participants mentioned that being called on to speak in the classroom by the teacher made them nervous. Their nervousness later prevented them from participating in the group discussion or class participation.

4.3.2 Fear of Negative Evaluation

Apart from communication apprehension, the findings also indicate a high degree of anxiety of being judged negatively by others. Many individuals were concerned about making mistakes in the classroom and being criticized by peers or teachers. Statements 13, 19, 23, 31 and 33 are related to fear of negative evaluation. The pie charts reveal that a lot of participants worry about other people’s opinions of them. A significant portion of students chose “Strongly Agree” and “Agree” on a number of topics relating to fear of negative evaluation, suggesting that they are concerned about making mistakes, receiving corrections, or being made fun of by classmates. However, some participants chose “Neither agree nor disagree”, indicating that they still feel

some discomfort even though they are not entirely nervous. Only a small fraction of students feels totally assured in this aspect, as evidenced by the comparatively low percentage of “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree” responses. This supports the claim by Horwitz et al. (1986) that one of the main causes of anxiety in language classes is the worry of receiving a poor grade, especially when students believe their language proficiency is lacking. The competitive academic environment of English-medium universities, where students frequently compare themselves to peers with greater English backgrounds, causes the anxiety.

Another important factor that emerged was peer pressure and comparison. In a classroom, there are students from different backgrounds such as Bangla-medium, English-medium, English-version, Madrasa background etc. Participants reported in the interview that they often compare their English with those from English-medium background students. It made them feel inferior that their competency level was not up to the mark compared to others. Their willingness to contribute in the class discussion is diminished by these feelings of inferiority. Such comparison can increase language anxiety, especially in multicultural educational contexts as stated by Liu and Jackson (2008). P9 reported having “almost zero confidence” and feeling far inferior to classmates from English-medium backgrounds, which at first made her nervousness and lack of confidence worse due to this sudden educational change.

Depending on the context, there was language anxiety among the participants. Some specific classroom activities served as triggers for them to have anxiety. Some of the anxiety inducing tasks for the participants were oral presentation, group discussion and exams. Most difficult tasks for them to use the second language were presentation and group discussion. P5 said in the interview, “While I was presenting in front of the class, sometimes I even forget about the easy words that I know.” Anxiety has some detrimental effect on their performance and cognitive memories. Even though group talks were a bit easier if the peers were helpful towards them than solo presentations, they still felt nervous. Kitano (2001) highlights the link between

anxiety and fear of bad evaluations, showing that students who frequently worry about unfavourable evaluations are more likely to experience anxiety in second language learning environments. In this study, the scenario can be seen among the participants. Many participants indicated anxiety about discussing with their peers and if they would judge them. According to Rajitha and Alamelu (2020), who cite MacIntyre (1995), students frequently experience anxiety due to unpleasant emotions when learning or using a second language. The results of this study's surveys and interviews also demonstrate that many students experience anxiety when speaking in English. They clarified that the fear of making mistakes, particularly in front of their peers, is one of the primary causes of this anxiety. They felt their ideas would be wrong and the classmates would criticize them. The fear of public speaking is common with individuals having language anxiety.

4.3.3 Educational Transitional Shock

Another important theme emerged from the qualitative data is the transitional shock participants encounter when they enter in English-medium universities. The constant use of English in class was described by many participants as overwhelming. Participant 1 mentioned the transition made her feel very uneasy at first, while participant 8 said use of English in every class and other academic processes was a big change for him. This suggests that they are uneasy and anxious due to the sudden change in language usage. When students encounter a change in their learning environment, language anxiety becomes more apparent. In this case, the change from a non-English background to English focused instruction adds to the stress. Al Hasani et al. (2017) claim that graduates frequently "lack modern skills, limiting their employment options" and that this shortcoming "heightens anxiety about participating in non-religious settings." As a result, when adapting to the new academic and social environment, students may experience increased anxiety and decreased confidence.

Additionally, participants also emphasized the lack of prior knowledge regarding the requirements of English language in university. P4, for example, stated that he did not realize the use of English would be very large in the classroom. Similarly, P9 first thought that English would only be needed for tests and presentations, but she eventually discovered that it was also necessary for daily interactions.

This difference between expectations and reality caused increased anxiety. According to Conley (2008), students who are unfamiliar with autonomous study, analytical thinking, or advanced academic language may find it difficult to make the transition from school to college. The findings of the study also suggest that the shift from madrasa to university is sudden rather than gradual. This sudden change can have a negative effect on students' confidence.

4.4 Influence of Madrasa Background on English learning experience

4.4.1 Limited exposure to English

The qualitative findings show that the participants' current challenges in English-medium classrooms are significantly shaped by their madrasa background. The majority of the participants stated they were not prepared for the demands of English communication at the university level by their previous learning environment. They mentioned English was taught to them for passing the exams and not for communication. This problem was made worse by a lack of speaking practice. Several participants stated that speaking English in class was never a requirement. For example, Participant 7 stated that speaking was not a part of classroom activities, and Participant 2 said, "teachers never asked us to communicate." The gap between academic understanding and real language use got worse by this lack of oral experience. The exposure to English language was very limited for the madrasa students. Lack of English in madrasa is another problem brought up by participants. According to Oxford (1999), limited involvement and increasing self-doubt can impede successful language learning. In this

instance, the gap between academic understanding and real-world language use grew due to the lack of practice. Their class time was mostly dedicated to Arabic lessons. Real-world English communication was absent. Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis states that the development of fluency depends on language production, including speaking and writing. Students' nervousness and lack of confidence are worsened by a lack of such options in madrasa education.

In Aliya and Qawmi madrasa, participants were taught English as a secondary subject. Only about 45 minutes were allocated for teaching English and Bangla subjects as mentioned by P8. The focus was heavily on religious studies, Hadith and Quran. As a result, participants did not have any interaction or practice using English in their classroom. This result is consistent with Krashen's (1982) input hypothesis, which states the importance of sufficient input in language learning. Individuals cannot acquire fluency or competence in the language without receiving a sufficient amount of input. As madrasa students do not get exposure in the language, they struggle with the language and hence face language anxiety in social context.

4.4.2 Exam-centered teaching

Moreover, the exam-centered teaching approach where success depends on memorization rather than understanding. Participants mentioned they would memorize notes for the English exams. The tasks included summarizing, fill in the gaps and translation and participants would only study those during the exam. Participant 1 mentioned that, while studying in Madrasa, they learned English mostly to pass the exam. Grammar rules were taught but not for real-life use. Therefore, they did not get any chance to practice English for real-life usage. When students move to an English-medium environment, the focus is shifted to communicative English and active involvement with the language and this creates a significant gap for the madrasa background students. Despite having theoretical understanding, learners who lack

effective communication skills are often unable to utilise language spontaneously, as noted by Lightbown and Spada (2013). The rote-based approach did not foster communicative competence, as one P6 states that it “did not help” in practical usage, limiting their ability to engage with real-life English beyond basic reading, such as understanding product labels. Also, P8 stated “I used to follow some guidebooks that included grammatical rules. Before an examination, I would memorize those.” Similarly, P3 said in the examination, the tasks included filling in the gaps with verb, prepositions and he tried to memorize the rules as much as he could. That’s why when they shift into university their English language learning experience becomes hard.

4.5 Impact of language anxiety on academic performance and participation

4.5.1 Poor Academic Result

The results from the FLCAS shows language anxiety has a significant impact on students’ academic behaviour in the classroom. Many participants agreed with the statements about feeling anxious and afraid of speaking in the classroom. Question 8, 10, 16, 18, 21, and 26 are related to exams, preparation pressure and the fear of failing in the language test. The participants’ answers to the test-related statements are inconsistent. Responses to these items are more evenly split throughout the groups. Compared to speaking-related issues, there is a greater proportion of “Neutral” and “Disagree” replies, even though “Agree” responses are still present. This suggests that students have somewhat less anxiety when faced with structured tasks like written assignments, or assessments. Because they do not require instant vocal responses and give time for preparation, these tasks could seem more doable.

For example, most of the respondents agreed that speaking in front of others makes them uneasy and they panic to talk without preparation. Many of them agreed that they feel anxious volunteering answers in their classroom. This fear of participation makes them forget about the

things they know. Students' willingness to communicate may be restricted by communication anxiety. Communication anxiety has a detrimental impact on students' performance in communication-based learning environments, especially in foreign language contexts, according to (McCroskey and Anderson1976). Therefore, the results of this study support their claim, demonstrating that nervous students typically avoid engagement, which eventually affects their academic performance.

Similarly, a high percentage of participants acknowledge that they feel anxious during language tasks. Although tasks are a crucial component in university evaluation, many participants have fear regarding their ability to participate. As a result, their fear makes them stress more rather than performing well. Regarding academic performance, a number of participants during the interview confirmed their poor English proficiency has a negative impact on their academic performance. One participant (P3) reported he feels so nervous before presenting that he cannot articulate his ideas. P5 mentioned that even though he understands the topic very well, during the assessment, he makes a blunder while writing in English due to nervousness. As a result, their grades get hampered. This is consistent with the findings of Elaldi's (2016) study, which claims that test anxiety is an additional factor that increases anxiety in the classroom, especially when students are evaluated frequently.

4.5.2 Difficulty Understanding Lectures

From the FLCAS data, the majority of the participants agreed about not understanding and getting frightened when the teacher says something in English (Statement 4). Sometimes, they face problems even when understanding the correction given by the teacher (Statement 15). Additionally, confusion about language tests is seen to be more prevalent among the participants (Statement 21). The majority of participants agreed with statement 29, showing 27% strongly agreed and 55% agreed that they become nervous when they do not understand

every word the language teacher says. Another important finding is that madrasa students find it difficult to understand lectures sometimes when the medium of instruction is English. They get overwhelmed about learning a foreign language, which is largely caused by the complexity of rules (Statement 30). This creates a serious academic issue as English is the primary language of instruction at most of the universities. Because of their anxiety they struggle to understand class lectures, hence, it has a direct impact on their grades and academic performance.

Another prevalent problem is communication barriers as mentioned by the participants. P5 mentioned he would refrain from asking questions in the class even when he did not understand the lecture. Later on, he performed poorly because of this. “Even if I have questions regarding the course, I don’t find the courage to speak in the classroom” mentioned P4. Other participants stated they frequently struggle to articulate their ideas in English and it led to problems during group projects. As a result, they lose out on opportunities for collaborative learning. This can be explained through the role of language anxiety in the process of learning. (Tobias, 1986 cited in MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) asserts that anxiety has a detrimental impact on cognitive processing, particularly when it comes to tasks needing higher order thinking, memory, and organising. As a result, anxiety may make it more difficult for learners to comprehend information, express their thoughts accurately, and participate in class activities.

4.5.3 Avoidance Behaviour

The FLCAS data revealed that participants’ behaviour and thought processes are impacted by anxiety. A lack of focus was shown by the majority of participants’ reports of thinking about irrelevant topics during class such as in statement 6. In statement 17, about not feeling like going to language class, the majority of respondents agreed. Additionally, a lot of them agreed that anxiety causes them to forget information they already know (Statement 12). According

to Dörnyei (2005), students who have low self-efficacy often mistrust their own capacity to perform effectively on language assignments. Their anxiety levels rise as a result of this emotional barrier caused by self-doubt. This demonstrates the cognitive effects of anxiety, where the stress about language impairs performance and memory. These results support the notion that language anxiety affects learning effectiveness and classroom engagement and is both emotional and cognitive.

From the interview data more detailed understanding of the participants' view can be looked into. Many participants stated that they avoid class participation because they are afraid of making mistakes or receiving negative feedback from others. P1 she was worried that her grammar or pronunciation would be wrong and that's why she chooses to remain silent even when she knows the right answer. Several of them reported leaving the classroom deliberately. For example, Participant 8 reported leaving the classroom during speaking assignments, whereas Participant 3 completely avoided such classes. These behaviours clearly indicate avoidance. As Mills (2007) stated, anxious language learners exhibit avoidance and worry, which negatively impacts their everyday and academic communication. This shows how anxiety prevents them from participating in their learning. The idea of social anxiety helps understand the avoidance behavior of the participants. As defined by MacIntyre (1995), discomfort, avoidance of social interaction, and negative self-evaluation are all strongly associated with language anxiety.

4.5.4 Difficulties in Completing Tasks

As it is found in the study, those who reported having anxiety in the classroom had trouble giving presentations and finishing tasks. Participant 2 mentioned he was always tense about making mistakes when speaking in English. Similarly, participant 5 said that sometimes he could not complete tasks because of the fear that he would write the wrong answer. These

challenges were not entirely based on their lackings, but are closely related to anxiety. Anxiety can be classified into three categories: situation-specific anxiety, state anxiety, and trait anxiety (Aydin 2009). In this case, they faced state anxiety as it happened during their task completion. Eysenck et al. (2007) claim that anxiety depletes cognitive resources, making it more difficult for students to efficiently process information. This difficulty to process information happened with participant 1, she mentioned she misunderstood lectures in the classroom.

4.6 Coping Mechanisms Used by Participants

Despite the challenges participants faced, they also talked about a variety of coping strategies to control their language anxiety. The qualitative data shows many of them used online resources to practice English on their own, peer interaction and learning English through media. The use of online resources was one of the most frequently used tactics. Participant 2, for instance, stated that online apps such as Duolingo helped him to practice pronunciation. This shows that in order to make up for their lack of communicative skills, they depended on language-learning apps. “There is a feature in Google where I need to write synonyms and antonyms for some words, which helped me with learning vocabularies,” stated Participant 4 in a similar manner. It indicates a focus on expanding one's vocabulary as a crucial area for development, probably as a result of madrasa education's prior lack of language exposure. It can be linked to Islam (2013), who discovered that many students had difficulty in EMI while conducting research at a reputable private university, believing learning would be simpler at first if the instruction was in Bangla. This suggests that the expectation and the language skills of the students do not align. Therefore, it is possible to interpret the coping mechanisms found in this study such as self practice, and use of online resources as an attempt to fill this gap and adjust to the demand of English-medium classrooms.

In addition to their own effort, peer interaction also helped them and it emerged as a coping mechanism. Several participants highlighted that group works became an opportunity for them to have meaningful language interaction. Participant 1 said he practiced speech with his friends and communicated with peers due to group projects. This suggests that academics need help to overcome their anxiety by indirectly encouraging language use. “Once me and my friends exchanged voice messages in English and that became a regular habit of ours later,” said participant 8, describing a more casual approach. This demonstrates how peer support lowers anxiety and creates a stress-free atmosphere for daily practice. These findings are consistent with Young’s (1990) assertion that supportive learning environments such as peer cooperation, supporting groups can reduce anxiety among language learners. Students can reduce their interpersonal and personal anxiety by participating in group-based interactions, which makes language learning less stressful and more successful.

Another important method found was learning through the media including watching movies and TV shows. According to the participants, this approach was both entertaining and helpful in enhancing their language proficiency. “Watching films and series was the only thing I enjoyed and was also helpful for learning English,” said participant 6, indicating that motivation and interest are important factors in language learning. Similarly, Participant 10 said they learned accents such as the British and American accents and the related vocabularies through watching films. This indicates that exposure to real-world language input helped in the development of learners’ vocabulary, pronunciation awareness, and listening comprehension.

Chapter 5

Limitations and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the study's limitations and provides recommendations based on the findings, especially the qualitative information gathered from the interviews. Certain limitations should be considered, even if the study provides insightful information about language anxiety among madrasa students in English-medium private universities. At the same time, participants' experiences reveal a variety of practical and instructional implications for students, teachers and institutions.

5.2 Limitations of the study

First of all, the study was conducted by using a small sample of participants. Both the FLCAS survey and interviews only comprised ten participants. Even though the qualitative data provides deep insights, it is challenging to project the result to all Bangladeshi madrasa students due to limited sample size. A larger sample size from multiple universities and madrasa backgrounds might give a more accurate representation.

Secondly, the study focused on only students from private universities. Language anxiety may appear differently in madrasa students at public universities or other educational institutions. As a result, the findings cannot reflect the experiences of all students with madrasa backgrounds.

Moreover, it was observed that some participants could not express themselves when they wanted to talk about their madrasa education. They hesitated to share their experiences like they wanted to. Furthermore, the study did not conduct a thorough comparison between

different madrasa types such as Aliya and Qawmi. Though participants were from different types of madrasas, it was not possible to get all the information based on different madrasas. It was mainly focused on Aliya madrasa students', only few of the students were from the Qawmi madrasa background. The students from the Qawmi madrasa also studied in Aliya madrasa too for a few years. As a result, only focusing on Qawmi madrasa background participants' experience was not possible to get. A more detailed examination could highlight the differences in language anxiety because these systems have different curricula and might have different exposure to English. This may change how the participants from each curriculum feel about English.

Lastly, time restrictions limited the scope of the longitudinal study. As students adjust to new situations, their language anxiety can evolve over time due to different circumstances they are faced with. However, through the interview, this study was able to capture only some part of their experiences rather than their ongoing development.

5.3 Recommendations based on interview findings

The interview findings provide important information on how to alleviate language anxiety among madrasa students. This section's recommendations, which highlight the need for reforms at several levels, including early education, university curriculum design, and classroom practices, come directly from the personal experiences and suggestions of the participants.

5.3.1 More speaking practices

The need for more English speaking opportunities is one of the most important recommendations that was found from the interviews. A number of individuals talked about the contributing factor to their language anxiety is their lack of speaking experience. For example, P6 said communication skills can be developed if there are enough opportunities to

speak in class, whereas P3 recommended that practice should start early whether in madrasa or at home. Similarly, P8 suggested that students should get more opportunities to speak before joining university. These responses suggest that inadequate exposure to English, especially during their early years is strongly associated with language anxiety. Therefore, both pre-university and university level should put priority on communication competence by including frequent interactive assignments. Early exposure can help students to feel more confident with the language.

Some participants emphasized self practice. They believe practicing in the English language can help to have a better competence in the language. As a result, it will help decreasing anxiety among them as they will get used to with the language and its usage.

5.3.2 Bridge courses

The development of bridge or foundation courses created specifically for students from madrasa backgrounds in another suggestion. Participants emphasised the importance of language help at the start of university education. For instance, P4 suggested there should be mandatory English introductory courses for everyone so that they can become comfortable with it. P1 said universities should provide basic English courses. In a similar vein, P7 emphasised the necessity of first-year university courses that concentrate especially on communicative English. These recommendations show the disparity the participants had in their previous learning experience and present language requirements of university-level courses. Implementing bridge courses can help close this gap by giving students the necessary language skills, especially in speaking and listening. These courses can also help to make the transition from madrasa to university more easier.

5.3.3 Inclusive teaching method

The necessity of inclusive teaching methods that take into account students' various educational backgrounds was also pointed out by the participants. Some participants pointed

out that students from madrasa backgrounds become more anxious when teachers presume a consistent level of English competence from students. For example, P5 said that teachers might need to slow down and repeat explanations when needed, while P1 said that teachers should recognise that students come from diverse backgrounds and have different competence levels. If the classroom recognizes the diversity among the students, it will help them to adapt with the language. To make the students at ease, P6 stressed about how crucial it is to establish a welcoming and respectful learning environment. These answers emphasise the necessity of educational flexibility and sensitivity. The development of a welcoming environment in the classroom is a crucial component in lowering language anxiety. Participants emphasised about peer support and a nonjudgemental atmosphere. As P1 mentioned, peer encouragement boosts confidence, and P7 emphasised having time to translate ideas from Bangla to English helps reduce nervousness and improve participation. Therefore, a classroom that promotes encouragement and mutual respect can enhance students' willingness to communicate as well as boost confidence.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This study examined the experiences of English language anxiety among Bangladeshi madrasa background (Aliya and Qawmi) students shifted to English-medium universities. This study used both qualitative and quantitative methodologies such as semi-structured interviews and the Foreign Language Anxiety Classroom Scale (FLCAS) to look into the causes, effects and coping mechanisms of foreign language anxiety in students. The purpose of the study also was to understand how madrasa educational background affects students' experience in English language setting, and how anxiety undermines their classroom participation. The results show that a challenge for many students from madrasa backgrounds throughout their transition to university is English language anxiety. The survey results show different types of issues in the English language classroom participants went through due to anxiety. Many participants said in the interview they were anxious during presentation, speaking assessments, concerned about making grammatical errors. A significant number of participants reported feeling uncomfortable about their ability to communicate successfully compared to other students. These results imply that though they want to communicate in the classroom, their confidence is impacted by language anxiety. Their educational background did not provide enough exposure in English, the assessments were focused on exams. As a result, even if they were theoretically knowledgeable, many students were unable to communicate. They found it challenging to adjust in an English-medium environment due to their past educational experience. The study adds to the current research on foreign language anxiety in Bangladesh by concentrating on madrasa background students as this area of research has not got much attention. It highlights that students' anxiety is mostly caused by educational systems, language exposure and classroom expectations rather than having lack of intelligence. The study

concludes that students from madrasas in English-medium universities are impacted by English language anxiety that affects their academic experience, confidence and participation in class. Nevertheless, the results also highlight that students can overcome these struggles through individual effort, institutional assistance and regular exposure. In order to help students transition more effectively in English-medium institutions, they should implement communicative English support applications, mentorship opportunities, and anxiety-friendly teaching techniques.

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Appendix A

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

This scale was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) to measure anxiety level in a foreign language classroom.

1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither agree or disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
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1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	1	2	3	4	5
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	1	2	3	4	5

15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Research Questions

1. What are the main causes of language anxiety among madrasa students studying in English-medium private universities?
2. What past learning experiences from madrasa make English learning difficult for them in university?
3. How does language anxiety influence their academic performance and classroom participation?
4. What coping mechanism do these students use to overcome their language anxiety?

Interview questions	Background information	RQ 1	RQ 2	RQ 3	RQ 4	Overall thoughts
1. How are you doing? May I know a brief overview of your educational background, particularly the years you spent studying at a madrasa and the kind of madrasa you attended (Qawmi or Aliya)?	x					
2. When did you start learning in an English-medium environment, and how would you describe your experience with the transition?	x					
3. Can you describe your overall experience of studying in an English-medium university so far?	x					
4. Could you explain the circumstances in English-medium classes that make you feel the most nervous or uneasy speaking the language?		x				
5. How do you feel about your English proficiency in comparison to learners from general or English-medium schools?		x				
6. Do you think the classroom environment affects your language anxiety? How?		x				
7. In your madrasa, how were you taught English? Was it mainly focused on exams or			x			

communications?						
8. Are there any differences that you noticed about learning English in your Madrasa and in your university?			x			
9. Did you have enough practice in speaking in English while you were in Madrasa? How does it affect your language learning now?			x			
10. Do you believe that your confidence in speaking and writing English is impacted by your prior Madrasa education? If so, how?			x			
11. How does using English in your university affect your learning experience and participation in the classroom?				x		
12. Did you ever misunderstand class lectures or contents? How did it affect your learning process?				x		
13. Have you ever avoided a class or dropped a course because of your anxiety? Why?				x		
14. When you feel anxious in the classroom, what do you usually do to cope with it?					x	
15. When you are outside of your classroom, do you ever practice English by watching movies, talking to friends, or reading? How does it help?					x	
16. Have you found or applied any strategies when you feel anxiety about language in the classroom? How do those strategies help you to reduce anxiety?					x	
17. Do online resources or seeking help from friends help when you feel insecure about English? How effective do you think taking help is?					x	
18. When you have anxiety about language, what kind of behavior from the teacher makes you feel more comfortable?						x
19. In your opinion, how should teachers handle mistakes made by students in English so that students feel less anxious?						x
20. What suggestions would you give to support students particularly students from Madrasa						x

background in an English-medium setting?						
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Appendix C

Demographic Information Sheet

Study Title: Language Anxiety among Madrasa-Background Students in English-Medium Private Universities in Bangladesh.

Purpose:

This form is designed to collect basic background information about the participants. The information will be used only for academic research purposes. All responses will remain confidential and participants will be identified using codes instead of names.

Participant Code: P8

Section 1: Personal Information

1. **Age:** 24 years
2. **Gender:**
Male ✓
Female
Prefer not to say

Section 2: Madrasa Educational Background

3. **Type of Madrasa attended:**
Qawmi Madrasa
Aliya Madrasa
Both ✓
4. **Total number of years studied in Madrasa:**
12 years

5. Highest level completed in Madrasa:

Dakhil / Equivalent

Alim / Equivalent ✓

Fazil / Equivalent

Kamil / Equivalent

Other:

Section 3: Current University Information

6. Name of the University:

Brac University

7. Department / Program:

English and Humanities

8. Current Year of Study:

1st Year

2nd Year

3rd Year

4th Year ✓

Other: _____

1.1.1 Section 4: Interview Information

9. Preferred language for the interview:

English

Bangla ✓

Both

10. Consent to audio recording of the interview:

Yes ✓

No

Appendix D

Transcript_P8

1 Interviewer: Tomar kache prothom question ta holo tomar
2 educational background ta diba. Tumi koto bochor madrasay
3 chila, kon dhoroner madrasa chilo? Qawmi naki Aliya? (My first
4 question to you is about your educational background. How many
5 years did you study in madrasa? What type of madrasa was it,
6 Aliya or Qawmi?)

7 Participant 6: Ami Tawfiqul Bari Turjo. Ami bortomane English
8 department e porchhi, Brac University te. Amar previous study
9 ta chilo madrasa. Qawmi madrasa chilo oikhane ami Quran,
10 hadis, fiqh eshob niye poralekha korechhi. Oikhane arki olpo
11 kinchu English porato. But oita oto valuable chilo na. Dekha
12 gese je 24 hour e 1 ghontar jonno Bangla, English porato. (I
13 am Tawfiqul Bari Turjo. Currently I am studying in the
14 English department at Brac university. Previously, I was in
a

15 Qawmi madrasa. I learned the Quran, hadith, and fiqh in
16 madrasa. I was taught a little bit of English but that was
17 not very valuable. Out of 24 hours, we had 1 hour for Bangla
18 and English studies.)

19 Interviewer: Tumi hoccho English-medium environment e kokhon
20 theke learning shuru korso? (When did you start learning in
21 an English-medium environment?)

22 Participant 6: Ami amar life e to English- medium er kono
23 ostityo chilo na shuru theke. Ami chotobelay jokhon school e
24 poralekha korechi, school theke madrasay giyechi. Qawmi
25 madrasa theke abar Aliya madrasay back korechi. Oikhane
26 hocche ami SSC complete korechi science theke. Erpor amader
27 ekhane ekta shorkari college ache ekhan theke HSC complete
28 korechi commerce theke. And right now ami brac e ekhane eshei
29 ami prothom english-medium envirnment er shathe porichito
30 hoyechi. (In my life, there was not any presence of

31 English-medium from the beginning. When I was young, I
32 started my education in a school, then I moved to a madrasa.
33 I later shifted from a Qawmi madrasa to an Aliya madrasa. I
34 completed my SSC there from science stream. After that, I
35 completed my HSC from commerce background in a government
36 college of my area. Right now, after coming to Brac
37 university, I am familiar with the English-medium environment
38 for the first time.)

39 Interviewer: Tomar je ekta transition holo madrasa theke
40 english-medium environment ashar, ekhane kemon experience
41 hoyeche? (How was the experience you had during the
42 transition from madrasa to an English-medium environment?)

43 Participant 6: Prothomoto ekdom shurute jodi ami boli brac
44 university te shurute ami jokhon gesi. Tokhon mohakhali
45 campus chilo ar protti deyale deyale lekha thakto- we shall
46 communicate in English. Amar English eto kharap chilo je
47 oitao ami google translate e camera te dhore dekhsi je etar
48 meaning ta ashole ki. Jokhon dekhlam je we shall communicate
49 in English tokhon aro ghabraye gesilam. Tarpur ami na kono
50 facultyr shathe jogajog korechi, na kono official kaj kortam.
51 Shob amar friend der diye koratam. Ami bhoy petam je gelei
to

52 English bolte hobe ar ami English bolte pari na. Ejonno amar
53 3,4 semester CGPA onek kharap ashche. Because of shobkichu
to

54 English e, ami cope up korte parchilam na konovabe. Dhire
55 dhire jokhon RS e giye ami shobar shathe misha shuru korlam
56 tokhon aste aste amar jonno shobkichu easier hoy. (If I talk
57 about my very beginning of Brac university life, that was in
58 Mohakhali. In the Mohakhali campus, on every wall there was
a

59 sign that said "We shall communicate in English". My English
60 was so weak that I had to use a google translator to see what
61 it meant. When I understood the meaning, I became more

62 nervous. After that, I did not communicate with any faculties
63 nor deal with any official work myself. I relied on my
64 friends. I was afraid that if I deal with these I will have
65 to speak in English, which I could not do. Because of this,
66 my CGPA was low in my first 3-4 semesters. As everything was
67 in English, I could not cope up at all. Gradually, when I
68 started interacting with everyone in RS, things became easier
69 for me.)

70 Interviewer: English-medium class gula te kon situation e
71 tomar beshi nervousness kaj kore ba uneasy lage? (In the
72 English-medium class, which situations make you the most
73 nervous?)

74 Participant 6: Obossho ekhon temon ekta lage na jehetu last
75 porjaye chole ashchi. Shurur dike amar shob theke beshi
76 nervousness kaj korto jokhon ma'am kono question korto ba.
77 Sir, ma'am ba faculty kono question korle ami oitake joto
78 partam avoid kortam. Jodi online class hoto ami kortam ki,
79 net off kore ditam je amar net chole gese. Ar offline class
e

80 jokhon step nito question ask korar ami class er baire chole
81 jetam je amar washroom e jete hobe. (Now I don't feel that
82 much nervous as I am in my last year of university. In the
83 beginning, I felt the most nervous when a teacher asked me a
84 question. Whenever a sir, a ma'am, or any faculty member
85 asked something, I would try my best to avoid it. If it was
86 an online class, I would turn off my internet as if my
87 connection was gone. In offline classes, when it was my turn
88 to answer, I would leave the classroom saying I needed to go
89 to the washroom.)

90 Interviewer: Tumi ki kokhono tomar English proficiency ta ke
91 English-medium theke jara ashche oder shathe comparison
92 korso? (Did you ever compare your English proficiency with
93 students who came from English-medium backgrounds?)

94 Participant 6: Ha, shurute onek comparison kortam. Ora kotha

95 bolto ami kheyai kortam. Bhabtam je oder 1 percent o amar
96 moddhe nai. Dhire dhire ekhon dekha gese je ekhon match korte
97 pari oneker shathe. (Yes, I used to compare a lot at first.
I

98 would observe how they talk and think I didn't even java 1%
99 of their ability. Gradually, now I can see that I can match
100 with most of them.)

101 Interviewer: Tomar ki mone hoy classroom environment ta
101 tomar language anxietyr upor effect fele? (Do you think the
102 classroom environment affects your language anxiety?)

103 Participant 6: Language anxiety bolte ami bujhi nai. (I
104 didn't understand what language anxiety meant.)

105 Interviewer: Mane dhoru class e jokhon question korto tumi
106 sheta avoid korte try korta. To oishob khetre classroom
107 environment ta tomar language anxietyr upor kivabe effect
108 felse? (I mean for example, when you tried to avoid
109 answering questions in your classroom-how did the classroom
110 environment affect your language anxiety?)

111 Participant 6: Eta onek bhalobhabai effect felse. Dhire
112 dhire jokhon bujhechi je eta to amar face kora lagbe. Jokhon
113 face kora shuru korechi tokhon amar ei communicaton gap ta
114 dur hoye gese. Ekhon ami shob facultyr shathe easily
115 communicate korte pari. (It affected me very strongly. When
116 I started realizing that I need to face it. The
117 communication gap disappeared gradually. Now I can easily
118 communicate with my faculty members.)

119 Interviewer: Ar tomar madrasay tomader English ta kivabe
120 shekhano hoto? Eta ki mainly exam er upor focused chilo naki
121 communication er jonno porano hoto? (How were you taught
122 English in your madrasa? Was it mainly focused on exams? Or
123 there was communicative English too?)

124 Participant 6: Eta mainly exam er upor focused chilo.

125 Basically, ager Qawmi pattern ar ekhonkar Qawmi pattern onek
126 beshkom. Ager Qawmi pattern chilo je maximum class 3

127 porjonto porano hoto. To tokhon khali etai focused thakto
je

128 exam ta pass korte parlei hoise. Amader to sharabochoh Arbi,
129 Farsi egula thakto. Majkhan diye 40 minutes er jonno ekta
130 Bangla, English class hoto. Tao hoto shudhu 3 years mane
131 class 3 porjonto erpor ar chilo na. Ekhon to Qawmi madrasay
132 masters porjonto add kora hoise. (It was mainly focused on
133 exams. Basically, the previous Qawmi pattern was different
134 from the present Qawmi pattern. In the earlier systems,
135 English studies were conducted upto around class 3. At that
136 time, the main focus was passing exams. Throughout the year,
137 we mostly learned Arabic and Farsi. In between, there would
138 be a 40 minute Bangla or English class. But that only
139 continued upto class 3. After that, there were no such
140 classes like this. Now, the Qawmi madrasa system has
141 extended up to the master's level.)

142 Interviewer: Tahole ekhon tumi jevabe English shikhteso ar
143 madrasay jevabe Englosh shikhso tar moddhe kirokom
144 difference tumi notice korso? (What differences have you
145 noticed between the way you are learning English and how you
146 learned it in the madrasa?)

147 Participant 6: Onek onek tofat. Onek tofat bolte gele
148 madrasar English chilo ekdom basic English. Amaderke
149 shikhano hoto fill in the gaps. Tarpore kono story dile
150 shetar Bangla sharmormo likho. Egula normally amra notes
151 dekhe mukhosto kore feltam je ei golpe egula bolse erpor
152 oigula amra likhe diye ashtam. Ar ekhane to practical life
153 er English shekhano hocche beshi. Madrasar English ta ashole
154 kono vabe help kore nai amake. Maximum ami kono ekta chips
155 er packet, biscuit er packet theke ingredients gula porte
156 partam ei arki. (There is a huge difference. Really a very
157 big difference as the English that was taught in madrasa was
158 very basic. We were taught things like fill in the gaps.
159 Then we were given stories to write the summary in Bangla.

160 Usually, we memorized those from notes, we memorized what
161 the story contains and then wrote it in the exam. But here,
162 English is more practical, real-life English is taught. The
163 English I learned in madrasa did not really help me. At
164 most, I could read the ingredients on a packet of chips or
165 biscuits.)

166 Interviewer: Ekhon tomar jei confidence ache speaking ba
167 writing English er khetre sheta tomar past experience er
168 shathe kivabe connect korba? Mane tomar confidence ki komse
169 naki barse? (How would you connect your current confidence
170 in speaking or writing English with your past experiences?
171 Has your confidence increased or decreased?)

172 Participant 6: Madrasay thakte to obosshoi kom confidence
173 chilo English er khetre. Mane ekdom zero confidence.

174 Madrasay thakte ek page English likhleo mone hoto je onek
175 kichu. Onnanno student ra shobai amra same category te
176 chilam. To ek page likhle mone hoto je oder theke better
177 kore felsi. Erpor jokhon varsity te uthsi tokhon to obosshoi
178 ami onek low feel korsil. Jara naki 10 percent pare tader 1
179 percent o ami partam na erokom feel hoto. Ekhon to
180 alhamdulillah amar English er upor confidence ache. (I had
181 very low confidence in English when I was in madrasa.
182 Almost zero confidence. Even writing one page in English
183 felt like a great achievement. All of us were in the same
184 category. So when I could write one page, I felt I was
185 better than them. Then when I entered university, I used to
186 feel low. I felt like even students who knew 10% were far
187 ahead of me. I didn't even have 1% of their ability. Now,
188 Alhamdulillah, I have confidence in my English.)

189 Interviewer: Ekhon university te English ta tumi jevabe use
190 korteso sheta ki shudhu discussion er jonno naki class e
191 teacher der shathe participation eo use koro? (Do you use
192 English for class discussion or you also use it for

193 participation with the teachers in class?)
 194 Participant 6: Teacher der shathe participation e use kori,
 195 class discussion e use kori English ta. Even office er kaj
 196 eo English use kore thaki ami. Kono academic kaj hole,
 197 supervisor er shathe discussion korte hole shei shomoy ami
 198 English ta use kori. (I use English both for participation
 199 with teachers and discussion in the classroom. I even use
 it
 200 for office-related worl. For any academic issues or when I
 201 need to discuss with my supervisor, I use English.)
 202 Interviewer: Emon ki kokhono hoise je English er karone tumi
 203 class lecture kokhono bujho nai ba bujhte oshubidha hoise?
 204 (Was there any situation where you did not understand class
 205 lectures because of English?)
 206 Participant 6: Ha, erokom shurur dike onek hoto. Jemon
 207 boltesilam shurur dike amar ekdom cgpa onek kharap chilo.
 208 Dhire dhire ekhon better hoise. Ekhon dekha gese je jinish
 209 gula amar jonno easy. Kintu shurute to ami jantam na eshob.
 210 Tokhon na kono idea chilo, na erokom kichu bujhtam je kivabe
 211 ki korte hobe. Jevabe english diye findout korte hobe eshob
 212 kichui bujhtam na. Tokhon amar jonno shobkichu chilo
 213 difficult. Tokhon ami arekjon ke diye bangla bolatam je
 214 amake Bangla te shobkichu bujhaye de. Erpor ami nije ber
 215 kore kore portam, milaye milaye portam. (Yes, it happened a
 216 lot in the beginning. As I mentioned, my CGPA was very low
 217 at first. Gradually, it has improved. Now, many things feel
 218 easier to me but I did not know that at first. I had no idea
 219 about anything—I didn't understand how to do things or how
 220 to figure things out in English. Everything was difficult
 221 for me. At that time, I would ask someone else to explain
 222 everything to me in Bangla. Then I would study on my own by
 223 comparing and matching things.)
 224 Interviewer: Ar classroom e jokhon anxious lagto language
 225 niye je ekhon tomar kotha bolte hobe ba shurur dike jokhon

226 lagto tokhon eta cope up korar jonno ki korta? (What did you
227 do to cope up when you felt language anxiety?)

228 Participant 6: Shurur dike arki ja bollam je jototuku partam
229 faki diye choltam. But ekhon ar faki ta dewa lage na. Ekhon
230 alhamdulillah easily cope up korte pari shobkichute arki
231 English er khetre. (In the beginning, I used to skip as
232 much as I could. But not I do not need to skip any classes.
233 Now I can cupe up with everything related to English.)

234 Interviewer: Classroom er baire English practice kora hoy?
235 Movie dekhlar maddhome ba friend er shathe kotha bolar
236 maddhome, eta tomake kivabe help kore? (Do you practice
237 English outside of your classroom by watching movies or
238 talking to friends? How does it help you?)

239 Participant 6: Maximum shomoy amar hoilo netflix e series
240 ache. Series gula dekhlar karone definitely amar English ta
241 amar kache mone hoise je ami ekhon English ta bolte partesi,
242 shunle bujhte partesi. Age jeta bujhtam na ekhon sheta
243 series er maddhome, netflix e kichu series er maddhome cope
244 up kore feltesi. Dekha gese onek shomoy messenger e onek
245 group discussion e ba class discussion e onek shomoy English
246 e group der shathe text korte hoy. Egula easily korte
247 partesi arki ekhon. Egulai arki amar daily use kora lagtese.
248 (I watch series from netflix most of the time. Watching
249 series has helped me feel that now I can speak in English
250 and understand when I hear it. Earlier, I couldn't
251 understand. But now through watching the series on netflix
I

252 have been able to cope up with it. Often, in messenger we
253 need to have group discussions in English. I can easily
254 communicate now and these have become part of my daily use
255 of English.)

256 Interviewer: Jokhon tomar language niye chinta hoito tokhon
257 teacher der theke ki dhoroner bebohar tomake comfortable
258 feel koraito? (When you used to have language anxiety, what

259 kind of behaviour from the teachers made you feel
 260 comfortable?)

261 Participant 6: Jodi kono teacher amake shundor vabe politely
 262 Banglay amake kichu jiggesh korto. Kono topic je eta eta
 263 bolo tokhon arki ami onek easy ar comfortable feel kortam.
 264 Amake teacher Banglay ask korse to ami tokhon easily Banglay
 265 answer korte partam. (If a teacher politely asked me
 266 something in Bangla, I would feel more comfortable. If they
 267 asked me to talk about a topic in Bangla, I could easily
 268 respond in Bangla.)

269 Interviewer: Tomar mote class e jokhon student bhul kortese,
 270 English bolar khetre specifically tokhon eta teacher der
 271 kivabe handle kora uchit jate studentder anxiousness na
 272 thake? (In your opinion, when students make mistakes while
 273 speaking English in class, how should the teachers handle
 it
 274 so that the students do not feel anxious?)

275 Participant 6: shurur dike jodi hoy tahole ami bolbo je jodi
 276 kono student dekha gese English e bhul kortese. Shekhetre
 277 teacher ra ektu Bangla bole bole oderke ektu help kora ba
 278 support kora. Bangla bhashar shathe amader shei attachment
 279 ta ekdom jonmo thekei. Tokhon dekha gese amra jodi English
 280 er bodole ektu Bangla shunte pari tokhon amader bhitor theke
 281 nervousness ta, anxiousness er jei beparta sheta kome ashe.
 282 Ami mone kori je Bangla kono discussion thakle English er
 283 pashapashi tokhon onek ta arki helpful hoy student der
 284 jonno. (In the beginning, if a student makes mistakes in
 285 English, I think teachers should support them by using some
 286 Bangla with English. We have a deep emotional attachment to
 287 Bangla from birth. If we hear some Bangla along with
 288 English, our nervousness and anxiety may decrease. I think
 289 using Bangla alongside English in discussions is very
 290 helpful for students.)

291 Interviewer: Tumi kono suggestion diba jara madrasa

292 background theke English-medium university te ashtese. Ki
293 dhoroner suggestion dite paro jate oder ektu support thake,
294 ektu help hoy oder ei transition er khetre? (What
295 suggestions would you give to students from madrasa
296 backgrounds who are entering English-medium universities?)
297 Participant 6: Ami maximum ekta support ami bolte pari je
298 eta amakeo help koreche. Asha kori eta onnoder o help korbe
299 sheta hocche English kei series gula ache. Kemon bibhinno
300 series ache Big Bang Theory, tarpor Friends. Tarpor hocche
301 aro jodio mone ashtese na. Egula ektu dekha, focus diye
302 dekha. Prothom dik diye ektu boring lagte pare, biroкто
303 lagte pare. Jokhon series gulafr kahinir shathe porichito
304 hoye utha jay tokhon dekha gese egulai nijer language er
305 moto lage, ekdom Bangla language er moto. Ei jinishta ashole
306 onek improve korse amake. And asha kori eta onekkeo improve
307 korbe ei jinishta. (One major suggestion I can give because
308 it helped me, is watching English series. For example, shows
309 like *The Big Bang Theory* and *Friends*. There are many others
310 too. At first, it may feel boring or difficult, but once one
311 becomes familiar with the story, it starts to feel natural.
312 Almost like your own language, like Bangla. This has
313 improved me a lot, and I believe it can help others too.)
314 Interviewer: Accha thank you! (Okay, Thank you!)

Appendix E

Qualitative Data Analysis

This section presents a qualitative thematic analysis of interview data collected from ten participants who transitioned from madrasa education (Qawmi and Alia) to English-medium university settings. The students have low, moderate and high anxiety toward the English language.

Theme	Code	Participant Excerpt
Educational Background and limited exposure to communicative English	Exam oriented English	In my Madrasa, we learned English mostly to pass the exam. Grammar rules were taught but not for real-life use. (P1) We generally gave importance to English before the night of our exam. We did not have enough practice speaking English. (P3)
	Madrasa only background	I studied in Qawmi madrasa for 10 years and did not use English except for exams. (P5) I shifted from Qawmi to Alia

		madrasa and I was not familiar with communicative English. (P8) I had limitations in utilising English. We had English exams in Madrasa but it only helped us with the writing. (P9)
	Lack of English speaking	I never had to speak in my madrasa class and the teachers never asked us to communicate with it. (P2) There were some reading exercises but we did not need to read aloud in the classroom, it was given as homework. (P5) During my Madrasa education, I never had to speak English in the classroom. (P7)
	Translation based teaching	We had two English books, 1st and 2nd paper. For the readings, the teachers would translate the texts for us. (P5)

		Most of the time we were taught the translated version of the English text. (P9)
	Rote-learning	I used to memorize the grammar rules. In the examination, the tasks included filling in the gaps with verb, prepositions. I tried to memorize the rules as much as I could. (P3) I used to follow some guidebooks that included grammatical rules. Before an examination, I would memorize those. (P8) For grammar, I memorized those from books and the sheets they provided from the madrasa. (P10)
Educational transition shock	Language shift	For me, it was a big change as I started attending class in my university. The use of English in the classroom made me feel really uneasy at first. (P1)

		In the university classroom, the instructors used English mostly. The classroom environment was completely different from the madrasa. The use of English in every class and other academic processes was a big change for me. (P8)
	Lack of prior knowledge about English-medium environment	Before admission, I did not realize the use of English would be very large in the classroom. From the classroom discussions to giving presentations, everything was done in English. (P4) I used to think that for the examination and presentation, I would need to speak and write in English. But speaking in English was also needed for class discussions with the peers too. (P9)

Sources of language anxiety	Fear of making mistakes	I was always tense about making mistakes when speaking in English. (P2) The feeling of nervousness was always present in me whenever I was given a task to complete. Sometimes I could not complete my task because of the fear that I would write the wrong answer. (P5) Exams create a particular type of anxiousness. They don't need speaking, which is my major cause of anxiety, but they do call for a solid grasp of writing, grammar, and vocabulary which I make most mistakes in.
	Pronunciation anxiety	I worry a lot about making the wrong pronunciation. (P1) Whenever I speak in the class discussions, I could feel that I am making the wrong pronunciation and then

		stopped speaking. (P6)
	Presentation anxiety	Giving presentations is still the hardest for me, I get really nervous. (P8) Whenever I see a course that needs a presentation I try to avoid it. (P5)
	Fear of negative evaluation	I always get the feeling that everyone will criticize my English. (P3) I worry that teachers will only focus on my lack of English even if I do well in other tasks. (P5)
	Fear of peer judgement	Students from Englis-medium background spoke with a good accent. I feared I would get criticized by them. (P7) There is always the anxiety about what other people would think about me. In the classroom, the anxiousness is the same for me. Whenever I

		communicate I feel others are talking about my pronunciation or my writing abilities. (P8) When I try to talk in group discussions or pair work I get nervous thinking about what my classmates would think about my accent. (P10)
Impact of language anxiety on learning	Hesitation to ask question	Even if I have questions regarding the course, I don't find the courage to speak in the classroom. (P4) There were many situations where I did not find the courage to ask a question in my class. In my head, I was uttering the questions but could not say it out loud (P8) I tend to stay quiet when the teachers ask us to come up with questions. I send emails instead of asking the question in the classroom. (P9)

		There are some question answers sessions where I tend to stay quiet for most of the time. (P10)
	Feeling inferior	I often get the feeling I don't belong in the classroom whenever there is too much communication using English. (P2) Compared with others' fluency in speaking English, I could see the lackings in mine very clearly. (P3)
	Low self- confidence	Oftentimes in the classroom I did not find any confidence to communicate. (P5) I used to compare myself with others' using English during my first and second semester of my university life. It made me even less confident than I was before. I was confident that I would do better in my next semesters, but whenever I

		compare, the confidence starts to decrease from myself. (P6)
	Misunderstanding class contents	Class lectures that were conducted in English I tend to lack behind catching up with those lectures. (P1)
Avoidance behaviour	Skipping classes	I skip the classes where I know it was scheduled for speaking activities. (P1) Sometimes I would rather go outside of the classroom instead of participating in the discussions. (P4) When the teachers would ask individually to answer a question in English I avoided that class, often I would go to the washroom for that specific time period. (P8)
	Avoiding participation	In the group discussion, I always request my peers to answer the question on my behalf. (P3)

		The activities that require raising hands and answering the question as fast as they can, I would not receive any marks in them as I did not participate in them. (P7)
Coping strategies	Using online resources	Online resources helped me a lot with English pronunciation. I used apps such as Duolingo for practicing. (P2) There is a feature in google where I need to write synonyms and antonyms for some words, that helped me with learning vocabularies. (P4)
	Practicing with peers	Due to the group projects, I needed to communicate with my classmates. I tried to practice the speech with my classmates. (P1) Once me and my friends exchanged voice messages in

		English and that became a regular habit of ours later. It helped both of us to communicate in English more fluently. (P8)
	Learning vocabulary through movies	Watching movies and series was the only thing I enjoyed and was also helpful for learning English. (P6) I get to learn many accents such as the British and American accents and the related vocabularies through watching movies in my passtime. (P10)
Teacher's role in reducing language anxiety	Positive feedback	Whenever teachers correct my mistakes with supportive behaviour I get very encouraged. (P6) When teachers say that it's okay for us to make mistakes and make wrong pronunciations in the classroom, that puts me at

		ease. (P7)
	Supportive behaviour	Teaching methods and classroom activities can help reduce anxiety. Teachers can normalise mistakes as a necessary part of the process of learning. (P3) Students may feel more in control and experience less anxiety if they are given the freedom to select how they participate. For example, some students may choose to express themselves in or through audio recordings rather than speaking in front of the class. Providing different ways to contribute guarantees that all students, regardless of their language proficiency. (P5) Teachers can speak in Bangla at first when the students feel most anxious as the

		attachment with Bangla language for us is by birth. When we hear Bangla instead of English it helps decrease our anxiousness. (P7)
	Friendly classroom environment	When my peers are supportive and eager to help me develop, I feel more at ease taking chances with the language. For example, when somebody helps me find the correct term or reassures me after a mistake, it boosts my confidence and encourages me to keep trying. (P1) I feel more at ease expressing my opinions in a friendly environment where everyone is equally interested. (P3) When teachers give us time to gather our ideas and they understand that I am translating the words inside my head from Bangla to

		English that's why it's taking a lot of time, it helps me participate more in the classroom without having any nervousness. (P7)
Suggestions for improvement	More speaking opportunities	I think the practice for communicating in English should start at an early age whether it is in a madrasa or at home. (P3) Communication skills can develop among students if there are enough opportunities for them to speak in the language in their classroom. (P6) There should be more speaking opportunities for students before they get admitted into a university, especially for speaking English. (P8)
	Bridge courses	Focusing on the madrasa students, universities should

		provide basic English courses. (P1) It should be mandatory for everyone to have an introductory English course that the students can take to be more comfortable with the language that is the medium of instruction. (P4) Students can improve their English if there are courses that only focus on communicative English in their first years of university. (P7)
	Inclusive teaching	If the instructors understand people from different backgrounds will have different proficiencies in English it will help. (P1) Teachers in our classroom should understand that madrasa background students did not have a lot of exposure

		in English. They may need to slow down and explain multiple times if required. (P5) Teachers should create a supporting environment where students from different backgrounds will feel welcomed. (P9)
	Teachers' awareness	Teachers can switch to Bangla whenever students are struggling. (P6) Teachers can use Bangla when they see a student struggle communicating in English. It will help them become more comfortable and gradually they will be able to speak in English more fluently. (P8) In a university, there are a lot of students from different backgrounds. For me, if the teacher understands that I am from a madrasa background and be more understanding

		with my lackings it would help me learn better. (P9)
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