

## A STUDY ON LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION AMONG SECONDARY LEVEL LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

Language anxiety is the feeling of anxiety, worry, nervousness, and apprehension proficiency in learning or using a second or foreign language. The feelings may branch from any second language structure whether it is related with the innovative skills of speaking and writing or the receptive skills of reading and listening. Fear of negative evaluation is observed among English language teachers when they are incompetent of assembly and lack of proper social thought, which is an apprehension towards evaluations by others and preclusion of evaluative situations. This study focused on the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary school language teachers in Salem district. The investigator adopted normative survey method. Language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation questionnaire was the tool used for data collection. 90 secondary level language teachers were taken as the sample of the study using purposive sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential analyses were used for analyzing the data. This study aims to examine the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in secondary level language teachers. The findings of the study showed that there is significant high positive relationship between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary level of language teachers.

*Keywords: Effect, Language Anxiety, Fear of Negative Evaluation, Second/Foreign Language Learning, Apprehension, Secondary Level Language Teachers.*

### INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language are school curriculum, need of improvement in professional life, living in a target society permanently or provisionally, interest in different cultures, and some other specific purposes. At the end of the learning process, learners are usually expected to become proficient in several areas of the target language, such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, discourse, and language skills. On the other hand, it is obvious that the learning of English as a foreign language is closely and directly related to the knowledge about certain individual differences, such as the thinking, attitudes, aptitudes, motivations, and affective states of learners. Among these variables, particularly language anxiety as an individual difference is an affective state

critically impeding attainment in a native language. Hence, one of the purposes of the present study is to examine the sources and levels of language anxiety among English language teachers. Anxiety as an emotional state is defined as a painful exciting state in which one perceives risk, feels powerless, and experiences tension in the face an expected danger. Horwitz et al. (1986) defined anxiety as "the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Language anxiety has three varieties. Communication apprehension occurs in cases somewhere learners lack of mature communication skills though they have mature ideas and thoughts. It refers to a fear of getting into real communication with others. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) describe the concept as

the communication apprehension experienced when a specific situation requires that the use of a second language in which the personality is not fully proficient. Language anxiety falls under the assembly of situation specific anxiety. Test anxiety, on the other hand, is a communication apprehension towards educational evaluation. It could be distinct as a fear of weakness in tests and a disagreeable experience held either consciously or unconsciously by learners in many situations. This type of anxiety concerns communication apprehension towards academic evaluation which is based on a fear of failure (Cheng, 2001; Choi, 2013). Finally, fear of negative evaluation is observed when English language learners feel unable of making the appropriate social impression and it is an apprehension towards evaluations by others and avoidance of evaluative situations. Fear of negative evaluation has also been associated with increased shyness, the development of eating disorders and lower self-esteem (Ohata, 2005). The research also aims to investigate the levels and sources of fear of negative evaluation on the part of secondary school language teachers, and it focuses on the effect of language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary school language teachers.

## 1. Operational Definitions of the Study

### 1.1 Language Anxiety

Language anxiety is the feeling of anxiety, worry, nervousness, and apprehension proficient in learning or using a second or foreign language. The feelings may branch from any second language structure whether it is related with the innovative skills of speaking and writing or the receptive skills of reading and listening (Carleton et al., 2007). Language anxiety has been viewed as a mainly negative psychological aspect in the English language learning process by many of the academics who have measured its impact on learners (Yang et al., 2008). In the dimensions of language anxiety refers to Anxiety in Performance, Self Perception, and Self improvement.

### 1.2 Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation is the nervousness about

other's evaluations, trouble over their harmful evaluations, and the prospect that others would estimate individual negatively (Stephan et al., 2016). Anxiousness, compliance, and social prevention are all related to fear of negative evaluation.

### 1.3 Secondary School Language Teachers

The secondary school teachers teach one or more subject areas to students of about 13 to 18 years of age at a secondary school. An English Second Language teacher must be very patient as his or her students will not be fluent in the English language. The English Second Language teacher could be required to be bilingual, but this is not always necessary. An English Second Language teacher will also be highly understanding of cultural difference as students could be from a range of backgrounds.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

A review of literature indicates that related studies conducted in India and foreign studies are too restricted. The findings of one of these studies (Zhanibek, 2001), which focused on the relationship between language anxiety and students' participation in foreign language classes revealed that there is a negative relationship between students' perception regarding their contribution and foreign language anxiety as measured by foreign English language classroom anxiety students. In another study, Elaldi (2016) focused on the Foreign language anxiety of students studying English Language and Literature: A Sample from Turkey, suggested that foreign language anxiety levels of the students were found at moderate level both in preparatory class and in fourth grade, students had slightly higher anxiety level in fourth grade than they had in preparatory class. However, foreign language anxiety among males was found higher than females. Finally, in a study conducted by Aydin (2008), an investigation on the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among Turkish English foreign language learners was performed. The findings of this study suggest that English foreign language learners suffer from language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Moreover, fear of negative evaluation itself was found to

be a strong source of language anxiety. General conclusions were drawn regarding the level of language anxiety level and the relationship between fear of negative evaluation and language anxiety. There are two basic reasons to explain for investigation into language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary school language teachers. First, the related studies conducted in Turkey are too partial to draw general conclusions. As for the second reason as was distinguished, the fear of negative evaluation is an issue that has involved little concentration in language learning research. Shabani (2012) investigated levels and sources of language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among Iranian English foreign language learners. The result of the study indicated that there is a significant correlation between foreign language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. In another study, Tzoannopoulou (2016) assessed foreign language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in the Greek University classroom. The findings point out to a negative correlation among language anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and language performance.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of language anxiety of secondary level language teachers in the following dimensions, viz., anxiety in performance, self perception, self improvement, group membership & Interaction, and fear of negative evaluation.
- To find out the level of fear of negative evaluation of secondary level language teachers in the following dimensions, viz., teachers' personality, teachers' social psychology.
- To find out the significant difference in the language anxiety of secondary level language teachers based on the selected background variables.
- To find out the significant difference in the fear of negative evaluation of secondary level language teachers based on the selected background variables.
- To find out the correlation between the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary

level language teachers.

The selected background variables are Gender, Type of schools, Marital status, and Academic qualification.

### 4. Hypothesis of the Study

Following hypotheses are formulated that are to be tested in the present study.

1. There is no significant difference in the language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with respect to selected background variables.
2. There is no significant difference in the fear of negative evaluation among secondary level language teachers with respect to selected background variables.
3. There is no significant correlation between the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary level of language teachers.

The selected background variables are gender, type of school, marital status, and academic qualification.

### 5. Research Methodology

**Method:** Normative survey method was adopted for the study.

**Sample:** Purposive sampling technique was employed. 90 secondary level teachers from Government, Government Aided, and Private schools were taken in Salem district as sample of the study.

#### *Instruments used for the Study*

The tool used to find the language anxiety of secondary level language teachers was language anxiety scale, which was developed and standardized by Hortwitz et al. (1986) which contains 15 items and it is a five point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Its reliability value was 0.97. The maximum range for the scale is 15 to 75. The scale consists of three dimensions, i.e. Anxiety in performance (AP), Self Perception (SP), and Self Improvement (SI). Fear of negative evaluation scale was developed and standardized by Watson et al. (1996), which contains 12 items and it is a five point scale. Its reliability value was 0.95. The maximum range for the scale is 12 to 60 (Table 1). The scale consists of three dimensions, i.e. Teachers Personality, Teachers Social

Variable Name	Author	Items	Scale	Reliability	Minimum and Maximum Value
Language Anxiety Scale (LA)	Horwitz et al. (1986)	15 items	5-point Likert scale. (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)	Cronbach's alpha 0.97. Cronbach's alpha 0.95	Maximum value: 75 Minimum value: 15
Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE)	Watson et al. (1996)	12 items	5-point Likert scale. (Always=5, Never=1)		Maximum value: 60 Minimum value: 12

Table 1. The Scale of Language Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation among Secondary Level Language Teachers

Psychology.

Subsequently, the collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Secondly, Pearson correlations were calculated with their significance levels in order to determine the relationship between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Finally, t-test and ANOVA were computed to detect the correlations between the subject variables of gender, marital status, and the dependent variables.

## 6. Data Analysis

### 6.1 Testing the Objectives

To find out the level of language anxiety among secondary level language teachers in the following dimensions, viz.

- Anxiety in Performance
- Self Perception
- Self Improvement

To find out the level of fear of negative evaluation among secondary level language teachers in the dimensions, viz.

- Teachers Personality
- Teachers Social Psychology

Table 2 inferred that 55% of Anxiety in Performance (AP), 44% of Self Perception (SP), and 41% of Self Improvement (SI) have moderate levels of language anxiety among

Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
AP	14	18.66	50	55.55	26	28.88
SP	25	33.33	40	44.44	25	27.77
SI	28	37.33	37	41.11	23	25.55

AP - Anxiety in Performance; SP - Self Perception; SI - Self Improvement

Table 2. Level of Language Anxiety among Secondary Level Language Teachers and its Dimensions

secondary level language teachers.

From Table 3, it is inferred that 51% of Teachers Personality (TP) and 62% of Teachers Social Psychology (TSP) in high level of fear of negative evaluation have secondary level language teachers.

### 6.2 Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the language anxiety among secondary level language teachers based on the selected background variables, such as gender, marital status, type of school, academic qualification, and difficulty in English language.

From Table 4, when the mean scores are considered based on gender, the calculated 't' values are less than the table value at 5% level of significance in their anxiety in performance, self perception, and self improvement dimensions of language anxiety. Hence the formulated hypothesis is accepted with respect to gender.

Dimensions	Low		Moderate		High	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
TP	20	22.22	19	21.11	51	56.66
TSP	12	13.33	15	16.66	62	68.88

TP - Teachers Personality; TSP - Teachers Social Psychology

Table 3. Level of Fear of Negative Evaluation among Secondary Level Language Teachers and its Dimensions

Dimensions	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Remark
AP	Male	36	21.11	2.240	0.819	**
	Female	54	21.48	2.007		
SP	Male	36	21.36	2.779	2.540	*
	Female	54	20.37	2.459		
SI	Male	36	20.97	2.547	3.622	*
	Female	54	20.76	2.599		

AP - Anxiety in Performance; SP - Self Perception; SI - Self Improvement  
(\*\* Not Significant; \* Significant)

Table 4. Difference in the Language Anxiety among Secondary Level Language Teachers with regard to Gender

From Table 5, it is found that the calculated 't' values are greater than the table value for 1.96 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis is rejected with regard to Self Perception (SP) and Self Improvement (SI) in the dimensions of language anxiety. But the calculated 't' value is less than the table value for 1.96 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis is accepted with regard to Anxiety in Performance (AP) dimensions of language anxiety.

From Table 6, the mean scores are considered based on type of school calculated, where F values are less than the table value at 5% level in their language anxiety

Dimensions	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Remark
AP	Married	37	21.29	1.927	0.135	**
	Unmarried	53	21.35	2.228		
SP	Married	37	20.94	2.273	1.777	**
	Unmarried	53	20.64	2.856		
SI	Married	37	20.32	2.392	0.384	**
	Unmarried	53	21.20	2.641		

AP - Anxiety in Performance; SP - Self Perception; SI - Self Improvement  
(\*\* Not significant; \* Significant)

**Table 5. Difference in the Language Anxiety among Secondary Level Language Teachers with regard to Marital Status**

Demographic Variables	Dimensions	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Remark	
Type of School	AP	Between Groups	0.082	1	0.082	0.018	**
		Within Groups	391.918	88	4.454		
		Total	392.000	89			
	SP	Between Groups	2.019	1	2.019	0.291	**
		Within Groups	610.081	88	6.933		
		Total	612.100	89			
	SI	Between Groups	16.997	1	16.997	2.630	**
		Within Groups	568.825	88	6.464		
		Total	585.822	89			
Academic Qualification	AP	Between Groups	21.434	2	10.717	2.516	**
		Within Groups	370.566	87	4.259		
		Total	392.000	89			
	SP	Between Groups	19.605	2	9.803	1.439	**
		Within Groups	592.495	87	6.810		
		Total	612.100	89			
	SI	Between Groups	2.510	2	1.255	0.187	**
		Within Groups	583.312	87	6.705		
		Total	585.822	89			
		Within Groups	577.166	86	6.711		
		Total	585.822	89			

AP - Anxiety in Performance; SP - Self Perception; SI - Self Improvement  
(\*\* Not significant; \* Significant)

**Table 6. The 'F' Values of Language Anxiety among Secondary Level Language Teachers with respect to Selected Demographic Variables**

dimensions of anxiety in performance and self perception, and self improvement. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and there is no significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to type of school and academic qualification.

### 6.3 Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the fear of negative evaluation among secondary level language teachers based on the selected background variables, such as gender, marital status, type of school, and academic qualification.

From Table 7, it is found that the mean scores are

Dimensions	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Remark
TP	Male	36	22.03	4.219	2.216	*
	Female	54	23.11	4.087		
TSP	Male	36	22.97	4.313	0.538	**
	Female	54	22.46	4.454		

TP - Teachers Personality; TSP - Teachers Social Psychology

**Table 7. Difference in the Fear of Negative Evaluation among Secondary Level Language Teachers with regard to Gender**

considered based on gender that the calculated 't' value is greater than the table value for 1.96 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis is rejected with regard to Teacher Personality (TP) dimensions of fear of negative evaluation. But mean scores are considered based on gender that the calculated 't' value is less than the table value for 1.96 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis is accepted with regard to anxiety in the Teacher Social Psychology (TSP) dimensions of fear of negative evaluation.

From Table 8, it is found that the mean scores are considered based on marital status that the calculated 't' values are less than the table value for 1.96 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance; the null hypothesis is accepted with regard to Teacher Personality (TP) and Teacher Social Psychology (TSP) dimensions of fear of

Dimensions	Locality	N	Mean	S.D	t value	Remark
TP	Married	37	22.56	4.438	0.209	**
	Unmarried	53	22.75	3.980		
TSP	Married	37	22.29	4.319	0.666	**
	Unmarried	53	22.92	4.445		

TP - Teachers Personality; TSP - Teachers Social Psychology

**Table 8. Difference in the Fear of Negative Evaluation among Secondary Level Language Teachers with regard to Marital Status**

Demographic Variables	Dimension	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F value	Remark	
Type of School	TP	Between Groups	0.763	1	0.763	0.044	**
		Within Groups	1532.892	88	17.419		
		Total	1533.656	89			
	TSP	Between Groups	8.572	1	8.572	0.444	**
		Within Groups	1699.428	88	19.312		
		Total	1708.000	89			
Academic Qualification	TP	Between Groups	31.916	2	15.958	0.925	**
		Within Groups	1501.739	87	17.261		
		Total	1533.656	89			
	TSP	Between Groups	79.139	2	39.569	2.113	**
		Within Groups	1628.861	87	18.723		
		Total	1708.000	89			
		Within Groups	1707.010	86	19.849		
		Total	1708.000	89			

TP - Teachers Personality; TSP - Teachers Social Psychology  
(\*\* Not significant; \* Significant)

**Table 9. The 'F' Values of Language Anxiety among Secondary Level Language Teachers with respect to Selected Demographic Variables**

negative evaluation.

From Table 9, the mean scores are considered based on type of school and the calculated F- values are less than the table value at 5% level in their fear of negative evaluation dimensions of teacher personality and teacher social psychology. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted with respect to type of school and academic qualification.

### 6.4 Hypothesis 3

There is no significant correlation between the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary level of language teachers.

The coefficient correlation obtained between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary level language teachers is 0.954 (Table 10). Hence there is a high positive correlation between them. Therefore, it is concluded that a significant positive relationship exists between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary school level of language teachers.

Variable	N	Correlated 'r' value	Remark
Language Anxiety	90	0.954	High Positive Correlation
Fear of Negative Evaluation			

**Table 10. Correlation between the Language Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation among Secondary School Level of Language Teachers**



## 7. Findings of the Study

Major findings of the studies are as follows.

- 55% of AP, 44% of SP, and 41% of SI have moderate levels of language anxiety, and 51% of TP and 62% of TSP in high level of fear of negative evaluation have secondary level language teachers.
- There was a significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to gender in the dimensions of Self Perception (SP) and Self Improvement (SI).
- There was no significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to marital status.
- There was no significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to marital status in the dimensions Anxiety in Performance (AP).
- There was no significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to type of school and academic qualification.
- There was a significant difference in the fear of negative evaluation among secondary level language teachers with respect to gender in the dimensions of Teacher Personality (TP).
- There was no significant difference in fear of negative evaluation among secondary level language teachers with respect to type of school and academic qualification.
- There was a significant positive relationship that exists between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary level of language teachers.

## 8. Discussion of the Study

There was a significant difference in language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to gender in the dimensions of Self Perception (SP) and Self Improvement (SI). Gandhimathi and Ganesan (2014) focused on finding the differences in the levels of anxiety in both male and female learners and whether the learner's background has an impact upon their level of

anxiety. In the present study, male and female secondary level language teachers do differ in their language anxiety.

There was a significant difference in the fear of negative evaluation among secondary school level language teachers with respect to gender in the dimensions of Teacher Personality (TP). The results of Brundage, Winters, and Beilby (2017) revealed that the persons who stutter with high fear of negative evaluation had significantly higher total social threat scores than the persons who stutter with low fear of negative evaluation.

In correlational analysis, a significant positive relationship existed between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary school level language teachers. These results are supported by the studies of Aydin (2008) and Shabani (2012), but Tzoannopoulou's (2016) study have revealed that negative correlation exist.

## Summary and Conclusion

The present study had made an effect of language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation in the secondary level language teachers. The findings of this study reveal that the 55% of anxiety in performance, 44% of self perception, and 41% of self improvement have moderate levels of language anxiety, and 51% of teachers Personality and 62% of Teachers Social Psychology in high level of fear of negative evaluation have secondary school English language teachers. It is found that the there was a significant difference in Self Perception (SP) and Self Improvement (SI) in the dimensions of language anxiety among secondary level language teachers with regard to marital status; there was a significant difference in the Teacher Personality (TP) dimensions' fear of negative evaluation among secondary school level language teachers with respect to gender, and there was no significant difference in the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among secondary school level language teachers with regards to type of school and academic qualification. It is observed that a significant and high positive relationship exists between language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of secondary level language teachers.

Teachers should be perceptive to the levels and desires of the second language learners. Some of the innovative programs of lessons for the English language should be adopted at the secondary level of language teaching.

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