A Low-Anxiety Classroom Model for ESL Learners at State Universities in Sri Lanka

Rajapaksha Wasala Mudiyanselage PGIK Weerakoon

MA in Linguistics (Kelaniya), BA in Languages (Honours) (SUSL)

For the award of

Doctor of Philosophy

University of New England

2024

Abstract

Language anxiety (LA) is a prevalent issue for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. However, there is a paucity of comprehensive exploration of ESL learners' LA sources and effective strategies for managing LA within the Sri Lankan context. As sources of LA are context-specific, LA management strategies investigated in other contexts cannot be generalised to Sri Lanka's unique sociocultural milieu. This qualitative study sought to examine ESL learners' sources of LA and identify strategies for managing LA, with the aim of developing a low-anxiety classroom model specifically tailored to the needs of the tertiary education setting in Sri Lanka by integrating approaches informed by Traditional Psychology (TP) and Positive Psychology (PP).

Data were collected from ESL teachers and learners at state universities in Sri Lanka using four research methods. First, a questionnaire survey was administered to 75 teachers across all state universities in Sri Lanka. Second, nine ESL teachers selected from three state universities were interviewed in depth. Third, four focus-group interviews were conducted with learners of the previously-interviewed teachers. Finally, six ESL classrooms of previously-interviewed teachers were observed. The collected data was analysed using the Thematic Analysis method.

The study reveals the complexity and multifaceted nature of LA. Three main source types of LA were discovered among ESL learners, including those that originate from the learners themselves (i.e., learner-specific), those that are related to classroom factors (i.e., in-class), and those that arise from socioeconomic and cultural factors beyond the ESL classroom (i.e., out-of-class). These three source types are inextricably interrelated, requiring a holistic approach to successfully addressing them.

A myriad of strategies were implemented or proposed by ESL teachers and learners to manage LA among ESL learners. These strategies were mainly reflective of approaches based on TP. Although they were effective in addressing learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources, they were less effective in handling anxiety sources that are outside the classroom. PP offers strategies for redressing this issue.

By investigating LA sources and anxiety-management strategies specific to the Sri Lankan context and integrating TP-informed and PP-informed strategies, the study offers a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. It drew on Fredrickson's Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions and recommended creating opportunities for learners in ESL classrooms to frequently experience positive emotions (PEs). Frequent experiences of PEs help reduce learners' LA and develop their resilience, which is crucial for thriving as an English speaker in a country with a complex relationship with English.

The findings of this study have significant implications for policymakers, curriculum planners, university administrators, and ESL teachers in managing ESL learners' LA. By implementing the low-anxiety classroom model in state universities in Sri Lanka, teachers can expect to foster a more relaxed, safe, and supportive environment for ESL learners to speak English. This, in turn, can help enhance their English-speaking skills and improve their chances of employability after graduation.

List of Publications

Journal Articles

* Weerakoon, I. K., Zhang, Z., & Maniam, V. (2023). A systematic review of sources of English language anxiety. *Sri Lanka Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, *3*(1), 117-125. DOI: http://doi.org/10.4038/sljssh.v3i1.92

Conference Presentations

* Weerakoon, I. (2023, November 22-23). *English speaking anxiety among English as a second language learners at state universities in Sri Lanka*. [Paper presentation]. Research Pathways Conference, University of New England, Armidale, Australia.
* Weerakoon, I., Zhang, Z., & Maniam, V. (2023, September 24-25). *What makes learners anxious in ESL classrooms?* [Paper presentation]. 2nd Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Research, Social Science and Humanities (APCERSSH), Bangkok, Thailand.
* Weerakoon, I., Zhang, Z., & Maniam, V. (2022, June 23-25). *Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities.* [Paper presentation]. Psychology of Language Learning Conference 2022 (PLL4), Cape Breton University, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Certification

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, software and conclusions reported in this thesis are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award, except where otherwise acknowledged.

02/04/2024

Candidate Name Date

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to my principal supervisor, Dr Zuocheng Zhang, for providing me with invaluable guidance and unwavering support throughout the duration of this study. His dedication to excellence has been inspiring, and his confidence in my potential has given me renewed strength during moments of doubt. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr Vegneskumar Maniam for his valuable expertise, insightful feedback, and constant encouragement, which have greatly contributed to enriching this work. I want to acknowledge Dr Vanessa J. Bartley for her exceptional emotional support and guidance in navigating various software tools. I am also thankful to my professional editor, Dr Sara Cotterall, for proofreading and editing the thesis. Furthermore, I extend my heartfelt thanks to the academic, non-academic, and administrative staff of the UNE and Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka for their continuous support during this journey. In addition, I am extremely grateful to all the ESL teachers and students in Sri Lankan state universities who took part in this study.

Special appreciation goes to AHEAD Operation-Sri Lanka and the British Council, Sri Lanka, for awarding me scholarships to pursue my PhD in Australia. I would also like to express my gratitude to the UNE for awarding me the IPRA scholarship, which enabled me to focus completely on my research and academic pursuits. I am truly honoured to have been selected for these scholarships.

Most importantly, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my husband, Thilantha Dammalage, for his enduring love, patience and understanding. I am also immensely grateful to my daughters, Hansali and Oleena, for their resilience in bearing my absence and always showering me with love. Their unwavering affection has been my greatest source of strength throughout this journey.

Dedication

Dedicated with immeasurable love and gratitude

to

my beloved husband, *Thilantha,*

who sacrificed his own dreams to nurture mine

&

my wonderful daughters, *Hansali* and *Oleena,*

whose unwavering support and love are the inspiration behind these pages.

Table of Contents

Abstract i

List of Publications iii

Certification iv

Acknowledgements v

Dedication vi

Table of Contents vii

List of Tables xiii

List of Figures xiv

List of Acronyms xvi

Chapter One: Introduction 1

1.1 Introduction 1

1.2 Sri Lanka 1

1.3 English in Sri Lanka 2

1.4 ESL in the Sri Lankan Education System 4

1.5 Research Problem 5

1.6 Research Questions 10

1.7 Significance 10

1.8 Thesis Organisation 14

Chapter Two: Literature Review 16
2.1 Introduction 16
2.2 Language Anxiety 16
2.3 Phases of Language Anxiety Research 17
2.3.1 Confounded phase 18
2.3.2 Specialised phase 21
2.3.3 Dynamic phase 23
2.4 Sources of Language Anxiety 26
2.4.1 Learner-specific sources of anxiety 27
2.4.2 In-class sources of anxiety 33
2.4.3 Out-of-class sources of anxiety 36
2.5 Effects of Language Anxiety 41
2.6 Manifestations of Language Anxiety 43
2.7 Language Anxiety in ESL Learners of Sri Lankan State Universities 45
2.8 Different Perspectives on Strategies for Managing Language Anxiety 49
2.8.1 Strategies informed by traditional psychology 50
2.8.2 Strategies informed by positive psychology 57
2.9 Directions from the Literature Review and Conceptual Framework 68
2.10 Summary 72
Chapter Three: Methodology 74
3.1 Introduction 74
3.2 Research Objectives and Questions 74

3.3 Research Design ... 74

3.4 Research Context ... 76

3.5 First Research Phase of the Study ... 78

3.5.1 Online open-ended questionnaire for teachers ... 79

3.5.2 Semi-structured, in-depth interviews ... 90

3.6 Second Research Phase of the Study ... 98

3.6.1 Focus group interviews ... 99

3.6.2 ESL classroom observations ... 104

3.7 Summary of the Data Collection Process ... 109

3.8 Data Analysis ... 110

3.8.1 Thematic analysis ... 111

3.8.2 Thematic analysis in the study ... 112

3.8.3 Thematic analysis steps ... 113

3.9 Establishing Authenticity and the Credibility of the Study ... 121

3.10 Summary ... 124

Chapter Four: Sources of Language Anxiety ... 125

4.1 Introduction ... 125

4.2 Sources of Language Anxiety ... 125

4.2.1 Learner-specific anxiety sources ... 126

4.2.2 In-class anxiety sources ... 150

4.2.3 Out-of-class anxiety sources ... 164

4.3 Summary ... 173

Chapter Five: Classroom Strategies for Managing ESL Learners' Language Anxiety 174

5.1 Introduction 174

5.2 Strategies for Managing Learner-Specific Anxiety Sources 174

5.2.1 Strategies for managing fear of negative evaluation and derision 177

5.2.2 Strategies for managing lack of motivation 182

5.2.3 Strategies for managing negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers 188

5.2.4 Strategies for managing learners' lack of self-confidence to speak English 191

5.3 Strategies for Managing In-Class Anxiety Sources 196

5.3.1 Strategies for managing in-class social context 197

5.3.2 Strategies for managing ESL teacher-related factors 204

5.3.3 Strategies for managing in-class speaking activities 211

5.4 Strategies for Managing Out-of-Class Anxiety Sources 218

5.5 Summary 220

Chapter Six: Discussion 221

6.1 Introduction 221

6.2 Learner-Specific Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them 222

6.3 In-Class Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them 246

6.4 Out-of-Class Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them 275

6.4.1 Out-of-class anxiety sources 275

6.4.2 Strategies for managing language anxiety arising from out-of-class anxiety sources 282

6.4.3 A positive psychological approach 283

6.5 A TP-PP Integrated Low-Anxiety Classroom Model 294

6.5.1 Improved teacher characteristics 295

6.5.2 Refined pedagogical practices 295

6.5.3 Enhanced classroom rapport 296

6.5.4 Conducive classroom design 296

6.6 Summary 298

Chapter Seven: Conclusion 300

7.1 Introduction 300

7.2 Answers to Research Questions 300

7.2.1 Research question one 300

7.2.2 Research question two 302

7.3 Significance and Implications 302

7.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions 305

7.5 Summary 307

References 308

Appendix A: Online open-ended questionnaire for ESL teachers 338

Appendix B: Approval of Human Research Ethics Committee for collecting data from ESL teachers 345

Appendix C: In-depth interview protocol 346

Appendix D: Information sheet for interview participants 348

Appendix E: Consent form for interview participants 351

Appendix F: Focus group interview guide (English and Sinhala translation) 352

Appendix G: Approval of Human Research Ethics Committee for collecting data from ESL learners.....355

Appendix H: Information sheet for student-participants in focus group interview (English and Sinhala translation).....356

Appendix I: Consent form for student-participants in focus group interview (English and Sinhala translation).....361

Appendix J: Information sheet for student-participants in classroom observation (English and Sinhala translation).....363

Appendix K: Consent form for student-participants in classroom observation (English and Sinhala translation).....368

Appendix L: Observation schedule.....370

Appendix M: Observation points.....371

Appendix N: Consent form for teacher-participants in classroom observation.....373

Appendix O: Information sheet for teacher-participants in classroom observation.....374

Appendix P: Sample online open-ended questionnaire.....376

Appendix Q: Sample teacher interview transcript.....382

Appendix R: Sample focus group interview transcript.....404

Appendix S: Sample observation schedule.....412

Appendix T: Sample observation points.....413

List of Tables

Table 1.1	ESL Performance of Candidates in G.C.E. (O/L) and G.C.E. (A/L) Examinations 2021 and 2022	6
Table 2.1	VIA Classification of Virtues and Strengths	59
Table 2.2	Positive Emotions and the Resultant Action Tendencies	65
Table 3.1	Characteristics of Participating Universities	77
Table 3.2	Information on the ESL Teachers Selected for Semi-Structured Interviews	95
Table 3.3	Faculties of Teacher-Participants	96
Table 3.4	Student-Participants in Focus Group Interviews and Observation Sessions	108
Table 3.5	Summary of the Data Collection Process	110
Table 3.6	Phases of Thematic Analysis	114
Table 3.7	Examples of Data Extracts with Initial Coding	116
Table 5.1	Strategies for Managing Sources of Language Anxiety	176

List of Figures

Figure 1.1	Location of Sri Lanka in the World	2
Figure 2.1	Summary of the Language Anxiety Research Phases	26
Figure 2.2	Cycle of Positive Emotions Based on Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions	64
Figure 2.3	Conceptual Framework of the Study	71
Figure 3.1	Structure of the Online Open-Ended Questionnaire	80
Figure 3.2	Presentation of the Online Open-Ended Questionnaire	82
Figure 3.3	Indication of Preference to Participate in the Next Stage of the Study	93
Figure 3.4	Request for Official Email Addresses of the Participants	94
Figure 3.5	Flyer Uploaded to Moodle Inviting Interested Students to Participate in the Study	102
Figure 3.6	Initial Thematic Map for Research Question 1	117
Figure 3.7	Initial Thematic Map for Research Question 2	118
Figure 3.8	Final Thematic Map for Research Question 1	120
Figure 3.9	Final Thematic Map for Research Question 2	121
Figure 4.1	Sources of Language Anxiety	126
Figure 4.2	Learner-Specific Sources of Anxiety	127

Figure 4.3 In-Class Sources of Anxiety 150

Figure 4.4 Out-of-Class Sources of Anxiety 164

Figure 6.1 TP-PP Integrated Low-Anxiety Classroom Model 298

List of Acronyms

BBTPE	Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions
DELT	Department of English Language Teaching
ELT	English Language Teaching
ELTU	English Language Teaching Unit
EMPATHICS	Emotion and empathy, Meaning and motivation, Perseverance, Agency and autonomy, Time, Hardiness and habits of mind, Intelligences, Character strengths, and Self factors
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FG	Focus Group
FL	Foreign Language
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
G.C.E. (O/L)	General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level
G.C.E. (A/L)	General Certificate of Education Advanced Level
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language

LA	Language Anxiety
PD	Professional Development
PE	Positive Emotion
PP	Positive Psychology
SEUSL	South Eastern University of Sri Lanka
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TL	Target Language
TP	Traditional Psychology
UGC	University Grants Commission

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The research was undertaken to devise a low-anxiety classroom model tailored to learners who study English as a Second Language (ESL) at state universities in Sri Lanka. The study aimed to achieve this by investigating the sources of these ESL learners' language anxiety (LA) and identifying effective strategies to manage it.

This chapter provides an overview of the study, which includes a description of the country's context, a brief discussion of the status of English in Sri Lanka, and an outline of ESL as a subject in the Sri Lankan education system. It also presents the research problem, research questions, and the significance of the study. The chapter concludes with a description of the thesis organisation.

1.2 Sri Lanka

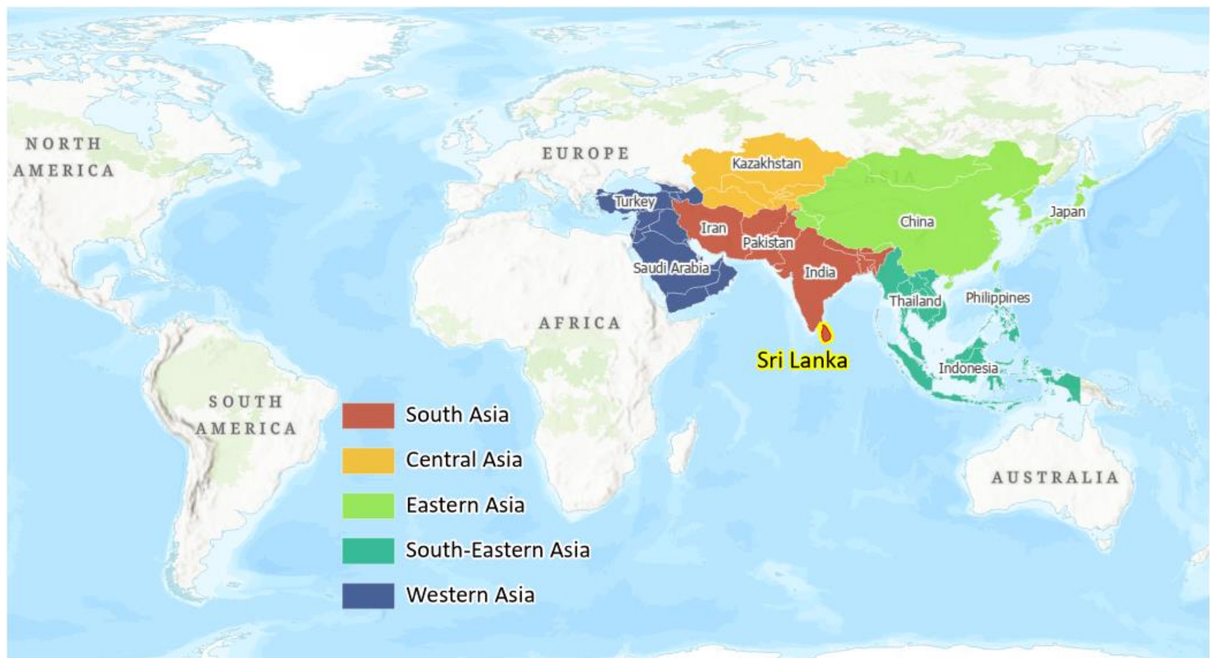
Sri Lanka, officially known as the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, is an island country in South Asia (see Figure 1.1).

Sri Lanka has a total land area of 65,610 square kilometres. As of 2022, it has a population of 22.1 million people (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2023). The majority ethnic group are Sinhalese, constituting 74.9% of the total population. Tamils represent the largest minority group, making up 15.3% of the population. Sri Lankan Moors account for 9.3%, while others, including Burghers and Malays, represent 0.5% of the total population of Sri Lanka (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2023). The population in Sri Lanka is unequally distributed, with 77.4% residing in rural areas, 18.2% in urban areas, and 4.4% in estate areas (i.e., areas dedicated to plantation agriculture). Sri Lanka is a developing country with a GDP

per capita of USD 3474. As of 2022, the unemployment rate in Sri Lanka is 4.7% of the labour force (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2023).

Figure 1.1

Location of Sri Lanka in the World



1.3 English in Sri Lanka

Over the past four centuries, Sri Lanka has experienced colonisation under three different Western powers, namely (i) the Portuguese (1505-1658), (ii) the Dutch (1658-1796), and (iii) the English (1796- 1948) (Herath, 2015). The former two colonisers were only interested in commerce and trade and maintained the vernaculars of the country (Sinhala and Tamil) as the languages of administration (Herath, 2015).

Contrarily, the enforced governance in 1796 by the British East India Company resulted in an unparalleled impact on language use in Sri Lanka (Saunders, 2007). For instance, to make the colonial administration easier in the country, English was sanctioned by the British as the official language of Sri Lanka (Gunesekera, 2005). Consequently, all native

headmen were required to learn to read and write English if they wished to be appointed to local administration positions (Dhanapala, 2021). Hence, fee-levying Missionary schools were established to teach Standard British English to locals. However, only the local officials who were rich and resided in cities could send their children to these Missionary schools (Jayawardena, 2009), which made up only 5% of all schools in the country (Ratwatte, 2015).

English education was not provided in 95% of vernacular medium schools (Ratwatte, 2015). Consequently, society was bifurcated between the English-educated elite and the vernacular-educated commoners, with English becoming a scarce commodity for everyday Sri Lankans (Lim, 2013). According to J.E. Jayasuriya, an educational historian, "[e]ven after nearly a century and a half of British rule, only about 6 per cent of the population was literate in English but they constituted an elite" (as cited in Lo Bianco, 2011, p. 50). This situation has made the English language a symbol of power and prestige in Sri Lankan society (Gunesekera, 2005).

After gaining independence in 1948, with the aim of building an autonomous nation-state, Sri Lanka banned English-medium instruction from the education system. However, English was still in demand as it was the medium of "higher education, commerce, communication, technology and travel" (Canagarajah, 2005a, p. 423). Consequently, to ensure that all students had equal access to English, in 1956, the government decided to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) to all students in Sinhala and Tamil medium schools. Despite this effort, English bifurcation continued. The elite maintained English as their first language (L1) and then passed on their proficiency to their children. Eventually, this resulted in the development of two variants of English: "Standard Sri Lankan English" and "Non-standard Sri Lankan English" (Gunesekera, 2005, p. 34).

Standard Sri Lankan English has its own unique pronunciation, intonation patterns, vocabulary, word order, idioms and discourse features that set it apart from other indigenous variants. It has also been referred to as "educated English" (Ratwatte, 2015, p. 114). However, Standard Sri Lankan English is not a "culturally neutral" variant and has an "elitist cultural baggage" attached to it, which may be used to exploit or oppress people who use other variants (Ratwatte, 2015, p. 117). The other variants, which are used by people who are peasants or lower-middle or working class, according to Ratwatte, have been "derisively referred to as 'not-pot-English', 'non-standard English', 'substandard-English' or 'uneducated' English" (2015, p. 120). Consequently, even those competent in English worry about being judged based on their accent. This means that there is no guarantee, even for an individual with a good grasp of English, that they will be able to pass through the "linguistic gates" (Gunesekera, 2005, p. 113) to the upper echelons of Sri Lankan society.

Thus, the language attitudes of Sri Lankans are heavily influenced by the country's complex relationship with English. According to Jayadeva Uyangoda, a Professor at a Sri Lankan state university, "[t]here is a fear of the language, a cultural and social barrier" (as cited in Lloyd, 1998, p. A49). As Attanayake (2019) highlights, Sri Lankans have a love-hate relationship with English. Despite the nature of this relationship or Sri Lankans' complex attitudes towards English, English continues to enjoy a powerful and prestigious position in society. It is still regarded as a "marker of privilege and advantage" (Liyanage, 2021, p. 99) and a "passport to wealth and opportunity and an essential requirement for almost every profession" in Sri Lanka (Gunawardana & Karunarathma, 2017, p. 3).

1.4 ESL in the Sri Lankan Education System

The education system in Sri Lanka has five levels: Primary (Grades 1-5), junior secondary (grades 6-9), senior secondary (grades 10-11), collegiate (grades 12-13), and tertiary

(university). School students sit for three national exams, including the Grade 5 scholarship examination, the General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level (G.C.E. (O/L)) examination, and the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level (G.C.E. (A/L)) examination. The G.C.E. (O/L) examination, which students take in Grade 11, determines their eligibility for collegiate education, while the G.C.E. (A/L) examination is held for students in Grade 13 to select them for tertiary education. Currently, learning ESL is compulsory for all students from Grade 3 to Grade 13. Despite this, most students still cannot use English to a satisfactory level (Wijesekera, 2011/2012, as cited in Liyanage, 2021).

At present, there are 17 state universities in Sri Lanka that operate under the purview of the University Grants Commission (UGC), which "functions as the apex body of the University System in Sri Lanka" (University Grants Commission, n.d.). Based on their geographical location, these universities are categorised as either Metropolitan or Regional (Attanayake, 2018). Typically, metropolitan universities are well-established, while regional universities are comparatively new. There is a considerable difference between metropolitan and regional universities in terms of physical and human resources, and access to expertise. Metropolitan universities enjoy an advantage over regional universities in all three aspects (Dhanapala, 2021).

All students who enter state universities in Sri Lanka are mandated to follow an ESL course during their first academic year (Navaz, 2012). As it is a compulsory module, successful completion is a prerequisite for the award of a degree (Dissanayake & Harun, 2012).

1.5 Research Problem

Achieving ESL proficiency has been a problem for school and university students in Sri Lanka for decades. English has been taught as a second language (L2) in the school education

system in Sri Lanka for approximately seven decades now. Every student in the public-school education system learns English as a core subject for 11 consecutive years (Attanayake, 2019). Despite this, the Ministry of Education has stated on its website that the students' performance in English is unsatisfactory (Attanayake, 2019). One-quarter of the students who sit the G.C.E. (O/L) examination fail the English subject, and the pass rate for English in the G.C.E (A/L) examination is only marginally higher than the failure rate (see Table 1.1). However, passing or failing the English paper at G.C.E. (A/L) examination does not qualify or disqualify a student from entering university.

Table 1.1

ESL Performance of Candidates in G.C.E. (O/L) and G.C.E. (A/L) Examinations 2021 and 2022

(adapted from Research and Development (School Examinations) Branch et al., 2022, 2023)

Year	G.C.E. (O/L)		G.C.E (A/L)	
	Pass	Fail	Pass	Fail
2021	72.86%	27.14%	55.43%	44.57%
2022	73.50%	26.50%	54.67%	45.33%

The lack of undergraduate students' English competence has been identified as one of the major reasons for graduate unemployment in Sri Lanka (Gunesekera, 2005). Employers, especially in the service sector, constantly complain about graduates' lack of proficiency in English (Wijewardene et al., 2014). English is an essential skill that prospective employees must acquire to secure high-ranking jobs in both private and public sectors in Sri Lanka (Dhanapala, 2021). As Attanayake (2019) highlighted, a satisfactory level of English proficiency is a prerequisite for jobs in the private sector, where it is common to highly

regard an applicant's English proficiency and downplay the absence of other qualifications and skills when recruiting employees.

Several steps have been taken by the government and the UGC in Sri Lanka to address the issues regarding undergraduates' English proficiency. First, the English Language Teaching Units (ELTUs) and English Language Teaching Centres (ELTCs) that were established in universities 30 years ago were recently upgraded to Departments of English Language Teaching (DELTs). By doing so, it was expected to empower the staff of DELTs to actively engage in the decision-making processes of universities regarding English language teaching (ELT) (Dhanapala, 2021).

Second, in 2000, *English for General Academic Purposes* was introduced as a mandatory module to be completed by first-year undergraduates in all degree programmes at state universities (Navaz, 2012). In some state universities, the results of students' performance in this module are considered when calculating the Final Grade Point Average (e.g., University B, 2020).

Third, in 2014, the Ministry of Higher Education, in collaboration with UGC, introduced a national standardised English language test called the *University Test of English Language* to test undergraduates' proficiency in English for academic purposes. The main objective of introducing it was to establish a national standard for proficiency in English. Accordingly, all state universities must align their ESL curricula with the stipulated benchmark levels of this test by revising and developing study materials as necessary.

Furthermore, the Sri Lankan government is continuously working towards improving undergraduates' English skills by utilising funds from the World Bank. Improving Relevance and Quality of Undergraduate Education (IRQUE), Higher Education for the Twenty-First Century (HETC), and Accelerate Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD)

are recent World Bank-funded projects that prioritised improving English teaching and assessment at state universities in Sri Lanka.

Though many parties, including the Sri Lankan government, university authorities and the World Bank, collaboratively attempt to improve local English language teaching and learning, many university ELT programmes seem to be ineffective (Rathnayake, 2013). Even today, the number of undergraduates who gain the maximum benefit from the programmes and various other projects aimed at improving their English is very low (Weerakoon, 2015).

The research literature indicates that LA among ESL learners at state universities is a prominent reason for their impaired performance. A recent study conducted by Attanayake (2019) found that undergraduates in post-colonial South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka, are anxious when speaking English. She further asserts that learners' LA hinders them from demonstrating their true language abilities. Navaz & Banu (2018) have also found that English-speaking anxiety is a common problem at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. They report that over 90 per cent of the students in SEUSL experienced anxiety during English lessons.

As an ESL teacher in a prominent state university in Sri Lanka, the researcher has had the opportunity to engage closely with ESL undergraduates for more than 15 years. During this time, she also had the opportunity to serve as Head of the DELT for three years, which required her to work with other Heads and Coordinators of DELTs and ELTUs across the university system to make informed decisions and recommendations on matters pertaining to ESL teaching for undergraduates at state universities in Sri Lanka. Additionally, the researcher has obtained her undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from two different state universities in Sri Lanka. During these times, she was exposed to the difficulties experienced by ESL learners in university classrooms. As a result, her professional experience of ESL

teaching and personal experience as an ESL learner has provided her with a complementary perspective on the experiences of English teaching and learning in the Sri Lankan state university context. The researcher's experiences, her classroom observations, and informal discussions with ELT staff members from other state universities confirm that ESL learners across state universities in Sri Lanka commonly experience LA while participating in in-class English-speaking.

Witnessing how LA hinders the learning and performance of ESL learners, the researcher postulated that it is a major contributing factor to the low English competence of undergraduates in state universities of Sri Lanka. Addressing LA is therefore deemed to be critical for ameliorating LA among ESL learners in order to facilitate more effective language learning and performance.

Additionally, the literature on LA highlights various factors that contribute to learners' LA. However, a close review of the literature reveals a disproportionate emphasis on learner and classroom-related anxiety-provoking factors while overlooking the factors that occur outside of the ESL classroom. The lesser emphasis given to anxiety-provoking factors external to the classroom can be attributed to their operation beyond the classroom, making it nearly impossible for teachers and learners to manage them. The resultant dearth of research that examines out-of-class anxiety sources is a crucial research gap since they (e.g., language ideologies in society) can be significant in triggering learners' LA while they speak English inside the classroom.

Furthermore, it is important to note that the sources of LA are context-dependent and context-specific. The factors that induce anxiety among learners in one country may not be as significant in another. Similarly, anxiety-management strategies that work effectively in one context might not yield the same results in another context. Therefore, the sociocultural

context of a country should be carefully considered before devising or implementing strategies to manage learners' LA. Scholars in the field have also recognised that investigating LA in different geographical areas is a fruitful trajectory for future research (Gkonou et al., 2017).

In view of this discussion, a comprehensive empirical study on the LA of undergraduates in the Sri Lankan context is considered highly relevant. Hence, this research sought to explore the sources of LA among ESL learners and identify effective anxiety-management strategies for designing a low-anxiety ESL classroom model that would enable ESL learners to speak English without inhibition.

1.6 Research Questions

- **i.** What are the main sources of LA among ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities, particularly when they engage in English-speaking activities in the ESL classroom?
- **ii.** What are the strategies ESL teachers can employ to manage the LA of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka?

1.7 Significance

This study is a significant contribution to the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) in several respects. Some of the study's findings are particularly relevant to the Sri Lankan context, while others have international significance.

National significance of the study

First, compared to the impressive number of studies conducted on LA in Western countries (Gkonou et al., 2017; Gregersen et al., 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991c), research on LA in developing countries, especially in the South Asian region, seems to be under-reported. Sri Lanka, in particular, offers a glaring example of this

gap in research. Despite the prevalence of LA in ESL classrooms and its detrimental impact on language acquisition, only a few empirical studies have been conducted, particularly in tertiary education settings. Hence, this study bridges this gap by thoroughly examining the LA sources that are specific to ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. The study will contribute to the advancement of the literature regarding LA and provide valuable insights to parties responsible for ELT in Sri Lanka.

Second, the low-anxiety classroom model developed in this study has the potential to influence the current sociocultural realities in the Sri Lankan context over time. For example, the study identified university subculture and its harmful practices towards speaking English as anxiety-provoking. Specifically, the study found that harmful practices such as *ragging*, are primarily conducted by senior students in state universities. In such a scenario, if the model is implemented for ESL learners from their first year onwards, they will start perceiving English in a positive light. When they enjoy ESL classes, experience positive emotions (PEs), and feel motivated and confident, their attitudes towards English may also become more positive. Consequently, when they become senior students in the university, their perceptions and attitudes will be more favourable towards English than the current senior students' negative and unfavourable attitudes. Such positively oriented students are less likely to advocate banning English from the university premises but rather encourage peers and junior students to learn and speak English more. This change will lead to less anxiety among students to speak English within university premises.

Third, as Lo Bianco (2013) posits, teachers are language planners. "The very acts of classroom management, communication and teaching are a zone of semi-autonomous language planning in the hands of teachers" (p. 146). Teachers' views of what language problems exist in the classroom, which problems are critical, and how they will be solved are all related to language planning. These views and choices influence curriculum planning,

resource allocation, and research interests, impacting the country's language planning. Therefore, this study encourages university ESL teachers to acknowledge LA as a critical problem in the Sri Lankan university context and take it into serious consideration when making decisions about ELT in Sri Lanka.

Finally, although there are low-anxiety classroom models based on other contexts and cultures, such as Young's (1999) practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere, their potential efficacy in the Sri Lankan context is questionable due to the distinctive socio-political and cultural context of Sri Lanka. Contrarily, the model generated in this study considered the unique needs and challenges of ESL learners in the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, it is hoped that the insights gained from this study will help policymakers, curriculum planners and educators to create a more effective and inclusive learning environment for ESL learners in Sri Lanka and thereby improve English language learning and teaching in tertiary education. In other words, this study will help shape ESL learners who graduate from state universities into competent and confident English speakers. This will enhance their employability and contribute to reducing the high rate of graduate unemployment in Sri Lanka.

International significance of the study

The study also has potential international significance. First, the study highlighted the complexity and multifaceted nature of LA by identifying seventeen sources of LA that originate from learners, ESL classrooms and the sociocultural milieu of the country. Most importantly, it found that these sources are interconnected, and therefore, addressing them independently would not be an effective strategy to manage LA. Instead, a holistic approach is necessary to address all these sources of LA in a coordinated and integrated manner. This

approach challenges the prevailing literature that advocates developing targeted intervention strategies for each source (Tran et al., 2013).

Second, the literature related to LA highlights that learner-related and classroom sources contribute to LA, while ignoring the potential influence exerted by sources outside of the classroom. However, it is acknowledged that in-depth investigations of the anxiety-causing factors that exist outside the classroom are rare within the field. By conducting a thorough investigation of out-of-class factors in triggering LA among ESL learners in state universities in Sri Lanka, this study advances the field of research on sources of LA, specifically in countries with complex sociocultural landscapes.

Third, the SLA literature provides multiple strategies to alleviate LA that originates from learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources. Most of these anxiety-reducing measures are based on Traditional Psychology (TP). Approaches informed by TP focus on anxiety directly and try to alleviate the symptoms by employing different strategies. In other words, these approaches are underpinned by a deficit model which looks at what is lacking in foreign/second language learners and teachers and finds remedies for those inadequacies (MacIntyre et al., 2016). Given the lack of control that teachers and learners have over anxiety-inducing factors that exist outside the classroom but which nonetheless impact ESL learners in class, the application of approaches informed by TP appears to be ineffective. To this end, this study incorporated approaches informed by Positive Psychology (PP) to manage learners' LA. The integration of these two approaches is significant.

Fourth, the low-anxiety classroom model, which was developed by integrating both TP and PP approaches, can successfully address all three source types of LA: Learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources. It is hoped that this model will have far-

reaching implications for ESL teachers, scholars, and researchers worldwide and be unique in the field of SLA.

Finally, it is hoped that the reconceptualisation of LA offered in this study which recognises the complex interactions of multiple potential sources of LA, and the fluctuating nature of LA over time, will lead theorists and researchers in the field of SLA to view LA from a different perspective, which could usher in a new line of empirical research on ESL/EFL learners.

1.8 Thesis Organisation

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. The first chapter, the Introduction, provides the research context, explains the research problem, and introduces the research questions. It also outlines the significance of the research. The second chapter, the Literature Review, examines previous research related to LA, including phases of LA research and the sources, effects, and manifestations of LA. The study specifically focuses on LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. It also reviews TP-informed and PP-informed approaches to managing LA. The latter part of the chapter highlights the key findings and insights gathered from the literature review, presents the conceptual framework, and a new definition for LA. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology used for this study. It covers the research design, data collection instruments for the first and second phases of the study, as well as the data analysis procedure. Authenticity and credibility measures are also discussed. The fourth and fifth chapters present the key findings of the study. The fourth chapter reports on the sources of LA among ESL learners, while the fifth chapter examines strategies to successfully manage their LA. The sixth chapter discusses the key findings of the study. It also presents the low-anxiety classroom model, which was developed by integrating approaches informed by TP and PP. Chapter seven, the concluding chapter, presents the main

findings of the study in relation to the research questions and discusses their significance and implications. The chapter also discusses the study's limitations and provides suggestions for future research.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the context of the current study. It revealed that LA is a crucial issue that hinders the language learning process and academic performance of the majority of undergraduates in Sri Lankan state universities. To alleviate the debilitating effects of LA, it is vital to be cognizant of the presence and the sources of LA in a language classroom. Hence, this chapter offers the reader a comprehensive understanding of the concept of LA, specifically focusing on different phases of LA research and its sources, effects, and manifestations. It also discusses the strategies informed by TP and PP proposed to manage LA and their inadequacy to successfully manage all sources of LA. In addition, a separate section focuses on the LA of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework for the current study.

2.2 Language Anxiety

As the most widely studied research topic in the field of SLA, LA has enjoyed continuous popularity over four decades due to its pervasiveness in the language learning domain and its intensity as an emotion (Daubney et al., 2017; Gregersen et al., 2014; MacIntyre, 2017). Currently, the predominance of the LA concept in the SLA field is such that one can hardly locate publications on affective factors or individual difference characteristics that do not refer to it (Daubney et al., 2017).

Despite the bulk of literature on the subject, many scholars admit that LA is one of the most elusive psychological phenomena in SLA (Şimşek & Dörnyei, 2017). Scholars view LA from several different theoretical dimensions and approaches. Horwitz and Young (1991) identify two approaches to discerning LA: (i) LA is an expression of another general anxiety

(e.g., test anxiety, communication apprehension), or (ii) LA is an exclusive experience of the language learning process. Of note, these two approaches largely determine the conceptualisation and measurement of LA, although they propose different dimensions of perceiving what LA is and are not opposite ends of the same continuum (MacIntyre, 1999). The first approach to viewing LA as a transfer of more general types of anxiety is discussed in Section 2.3.1 under the Confounded phase, whereas the second approach to identifying LA as a unique construct specific to the language learning process is examined in Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3 under Specialised and Dynamic phases of LA research.

2.3 Phases of Language Anxiety Research

Language anxiety has attracted much attention from researchers and educators in the SLA field from the landmark work of Scovel (1978) on reviewing LA literature (Daubney et al., 2017). The analysis of LA research history since then until the present day indicates three major trends:

(i) Anxiety related to language learning was studied and measured based on propositions in general psychology and was considered as a mere transfer of other forms of anxiety,

(ii) LA was identified, defined, studied, and measured as a construct specifically related to the language learning process and distinct from other types of anxiety

(iii) LA is not considered as a fixed or independent construct; rather it is studied and measured as a dynamic factor in constant interaction with multitudes of factors related to language learning and development.

MacIntyre (2017) labels these three phases of LA research as (i) the Confounded phase, (ii) the Specialised phase, and (iii) the Dynamic phase, respectively. The following section

details the conceptualisation and measurement of LA and the direction of the research focus in each phase (see Figure 2.1 for Summary of the LA Research Phases).

2.3.1 Confounded phase

As mentioned in Section 2.2, there are two approaches to describing LA (Horwitz & Young, 1991). Adopting the first approach (which assumes anxiety in language learning is a transferred form of other forms of anxiety), researchers in the confounded phase applied the knowledge gained from research on other types of anxiety (e.g., test anxiety and communication apprehension) to LA. For instance, Kleinmann was interested in investigating the influence of forms of test anxiety on the use of syntactic structures in the L2 (1977, as cited in Scovel, 1978), while Daly (1991) examined the operation of L1 communication apprehension in L2 contexts. These early studies, which utilised the anxiety transfer approach, produced mixed and confounded results because of (i) the complex and intricate hierarchy of learner variables that may intervene in the language acquisition process and (ii) issues related to the conceptualisation and measurement of LA and their relationship to these learner variables (Horwitz, 2010; MacIntyre, 2017; Scovel, 1978). Scovel (1978), in his classic review of LA literature, explains the state of the art of LA research as follows:

> The research into the relationship of anxiety to foreign language learning has provided mixed and confusing results, immediately suggesting that anxiety itself is neither a simple nor well-understood psychological construct and that it is perhaps premature to attempt to relate it to the global and comprehensive task of language acquisition. (p. 132)

The confusing nature of results is specifically spotlighted in the study conducted by Chastain (1975), where he reported inconsistent directions in correlations between anxiety and L2 learning in three languages: French, German and Spanish. Using test anxiety and trait

anxiety scales, Chastain found positive, negative and zero correlations between anxiety and L2 learning. The inconsistencies in the results were identified as a consequence of using inappropriate anxiety measures, which are not necessarily or consistently related to language (MacIntyre, 2017; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). The use of anxiety measures that were drawn from Psychology (e.g., indicators of arousal, anxious behaviours, and self-report via structured questionnaires) has been one of the major problems in the confounded phase, for those measures actually "had little to do with language itself" (MacIntyre, 2017, p. 12).

Scovel (1978), in his review of LA literature, postulated that the inconsistency of research results on anxiety could be resolved if a distinction was drawn between facilitating and debilitating anxiety. He explains facilitating anxiety as the motivational 'gear' that prepares the learner for the new learning task, whereas debilitating anxiety stimulates the learner to 'flee' from or avoid the task. This distinction was initially presented in a paper by Alpert and Haber (1960, as cited in MacIntyre, 2017), and it was applied to the L2 context by Kleinmann using two separate scales to measure facilitating and debilitating anxiety (1977, as cited in Scovel, 1978). He investigated how the difference in students' native language and L2 compelled them to avoid specific complex syntactic structures in the L2 that are different from their native syntactic structures. Though this difference compelled some students to avoid using them, Kleinmann found that students with facilitating anxiety were emotionally ready to use those difficult structures, indicating a positive correlation between facilitating anxiety and the use of complex syntactic structures. However, recent literature argues against the distinction between facilitating and debilitating anxiety and acknowledges it as a dangerous line of thought that has not been useful for SLA research (Horwitz, 2017; MacIntyre, 2017).

Scovel (1978) notes another useful distinction between trait and state anxiety, which was originally presented by Spielberger (1966). Spielberger views trait anxiety as a

personality attribute which is relatively stable over time and across situations. He further asserts that those who have a generally anxious personality are more susceptible to LA and react with higher emotional intensity in anxiety-provoking situations (Spielberger, 1983). In contrast, state anxiety is viewed as "the moment-to-moment experience of anxiety; it is the transient emotional state of feeling nervous that can fluctuate over time and vary in intensity" (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 28). For example, a person may experience state anxiety in response to a specific circumstance, such as public speaking or visiting the dentist (Gregersen, 2020). This distinction between trait and state anxiety has been acknowledged as conceptually solid in the field of SLA (MacIntyre, 2017).

A survey of LA research history manifests three key themes of research interest in the confounded phase:

(i) LA in relation to other forms of anxiety (e.g., Gardner, 1985; Scovel, 1978)

(ii) Relationship between LA and language performance (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Chastain, 1975; Guiora et al., 1972; Kleinmann, 1977, as cited in Horwitz, 2010; Scovel, 1978)

(iii) Sources of anxiety under varied instructional methods and sociocultural conditions (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Chastain, 1975; Guiora et al., 1972).

As mentioned above, a substantial amount of literature in the confounded phase comprised "scattered and inconclusive" results (Young, 1991, p. 426). The main reason for this is that "the ideas about anxiety and their effects on language learning were adopted from a mixture of various sources without detailed consideration of the meaning of the anxiety concept for language learners" (MacIntyre, 2017, p. 11). Gardner (1985, p. 34) marked an end to the confounded phase by emphasising that anxiety that is "specific to the language

acquisition context is related to L2 achievement". Pointing to a new direction of LA research, his hypothesis laid the foundation for the next phase of LA research, the Specialised phase.

2.3.2 Specialised phase

Inspired by Gardner's work (1985), Horwitz et al. (1986) marked a breakthrough in the field of SLA research by reconceptualising LA as a domain-specific construct distinct from other types of anxiety. They defined LA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 128). Accordingly, LA was identified as quite distinct from the anxiety episodes one might experience in daily life and, therefore, not a global construct (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b). Horwitz et al. (1986) also developed and validated an instrument called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to measure LA that is specifically related to classroom language learning. In order to demonstrate the distinctive nature of LA, they also described three performance-related anxieties, including communication apprehension (fear of communicating with others that stems from a type of shyness), test anxiety (fear of performance that stems from fear of failure), and fear of negative evaluation (fear of being negatively evaluated by others in the classroom). However, it is important to be cautious in presenting these three anxieties, for Horwitz et al. (1986) did not claim that these anxieties are components of LA, or that in combination they equate to LA (Horwitz, 2017).

Horwitz et al. (1986) are also credited for introducing LA as a situation-specific anxiety, which many scholars regarded as a turning point in SLA research (Dewaele, 2002). A situation-specific anxiety is experienced in a specific context or situation such as during a language class. However, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989, 1991c) argue that language learners do not experience anxiety specific to language learning situations (e.g., classroom) during

the early stages of the language learning process. Rather they argue that it is only after repeatedly encountering anxiety-provoking, negative experiences in the language classroom that learners, at some point, begin to associate anxiety with the language class. It is the unique circumstances in the language classroom that trigger students' anxiety. This means students who experience anxiety in the language class may feel secure and confident in other contexts, for example, in Math or Science classes. Therefore, anxiety specific to a particular situation (such as anxiety experienced in the language classroom) may vary across different situations, though it remains stable over time (Horwitz et al., 1986; Luo, 2013; MacIntyre, 1999).

The recognition of LA as situation-specific facilitated the rapid growth in LA research. The major themes explored in the research during the Specialised phase include:

(i) Sources of LA (e.g., Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; Price, 1991; Young, 1990, 1991, 1999)

(ii) Effects of LA (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a, 1991b)

(iii) Skill-based LA: Listening anxiety (e.g., Elkhafaifi, 2005; Horwitz, 2010; Lund, 1991), Speaking anxiety (e.g., Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Young, 1990), Reading anxiety (e.g., Matsuda & Gobel, 2001; Sellars, 2000), and Writing anxiety (e.g., Cheng, 2002, 2004, as cited in Mahmoodzadeh & Gkonou, 2015)

(iv) Relationship of LA to other learner variables (e.g., Dewaele, 2002; Horwitz, 1996; Horwitz & Young, 1991; MacIntyre, 1995; Price, 1991; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Young, 1991)

(v) Learner perspectives on LA (e.g., Bailey,1983; Horwitz et al.,1986; Price, 1991)

(vi) Instructional strategies to alleviate LA (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, 2010; MacIntyre, 2017; Price, 1991; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Young, 1991, 1999)

2.3.3 Dynamic phase

The Dynamic phase of LA research has been influenced by Complex Dynamic Systems Theory, which was introduced to the field of SLA by the seminal work of Larsen-Freeman (1997, as cited in Yang, 2021).

Through the lens of Complex Dynamic Systems Theory, LA is seen as a complex, dynamic system. Firstly, LA is *complex* because it is influenced by a myriad of other variables related to language learning and development (Gregersen, 2020; MacIntyre, 2017), including motivation, demotivation, willingness to communicate, agency, self-efficacy, self-concept, and enjoyment. This interactional process among LA and other intervening factors is identified as mutual since these factors simultaneously influence each other (MacIntyre, 1995). Secondly, LA is a *dynamic* variable because it "forms part of an interconnected, constantly-in-flux system that changes unpredictably over multiple time scales" (Gregersen, 2020, p. 67). Gregersen (2020) examines LA in relation to four features that define dynamic systems:

(i) Exist over different timescales: LA exists on multiple timescales, which are conceptualised as trait, state, situation-specific and momentary fluctuations,

(ii) Are part of a system made of interconnected variables that are in constant motion: LA is in mutual interaction with many other individual difference variables, linguistic variables and cognitive variables,

(iii) Contradictory elements co-exist: Positive emotions (e.g., language enjoyment) and negative emotions (e.g., language anxiety) co-exist,

(iv) Perturbations in the system induce development and change: Positive perturbations lead to progress, and negative perturbations lead to setbacks; both feature development and/or change in the system. Further, minor perturbations

create macro change/development, while some macro perturbations pass unnoticed. In the trajectory of LA, learners' internal perturbations (e.g., negative self-comparisons with peers, excessive concern over what others think, clash of learner beliefs with teacher beliefs, and low self-confidence) and external perturbations (e.g., teacher's error correction procedure, and competitive classroom environment) that are predominantly negative, change the system and evoke LA.

The scholars associated with the Dynamic phase view LA as a "state" that exists in a dynamic continuum interacting with a multitude of other factors related to language learning and development (Gregersen et al., 2014; Mahmoodzadeh & Gkonou, 2015). In contrast, previous research conceptualised and measured anxiety by freezing a moment in time and considering anxiety as a fixed construct (MacIntyre, 2017). This approach only allowed researchers to identify the existence and intensity of LA over a period of multiple weeks or months (Mahmoodzadeh & Gkonou, 2015). They also isolated the LA construct and controlled the other variables and conditions to generalise the findings to other contexts. However, "it is unproductive to isolate individual variables as a way of describing a system. Rather, the trajectory of complex systems can be best mapped by the description of emergent patterns of behaviors" (Burns & Knox, 2011, p. 7). Gregersen (2020) highlights two concerns in the non-dynamic research methods used in prior phases: (i) since variables are interrelating and influencing each other, and learners' affect changing over time, any finding can be interpreted as valid only to that very time the variable was measured; and (ii) as samples are selected randomly to make generalisations to larger populations, it is difficult to comment about what happens at the individual level.

Drawing on Complex Dynamic Systems Theory, to measure the dynamism of LA, Gregersen et al. (2014) introduced a new method called the *idiodynamic method*, by which

they collected the self-ratings of the moment-to-moment anxiety levels of six pre-service teachers who were making a classroom presentation in their L2. Using a heart rate monitor on each participant, they captured how some participants who were typically comfortable in their L2 experienced bouts of nervousness or unease irrespective of their history of minimal or no LA experiences (MacIntyre, 2017). According to Mahmoodzadeh and Gkonou (2015), the *idiodynamic method* is the only empirical approach that can uncover the complex and dynamic nature of LA. Therefore, developing appropriate methods that can capture the dynamism and complexity of variables is currently regarded as crucial in the SLA field (Gregersen, 2020).

Major research interests related to LA in the Dynamic phase include:

(i) Relationship of LA to other learner variables (e.g., Almutlaq & Etherington, 2018; Boudreau et al., 2018; Hiver & Papi, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2019; Syed & Kuzborska, 2020),

(ii) Complexity and dynamism of LA and other learner variables (e.g., Gregersen et al., 2014; Piniel & Csizér, 2015),

(iii) LA in different sociocultural contexts (e.g., Dewaele & Al-Saraj, 2013; King & Smith, 2017), and

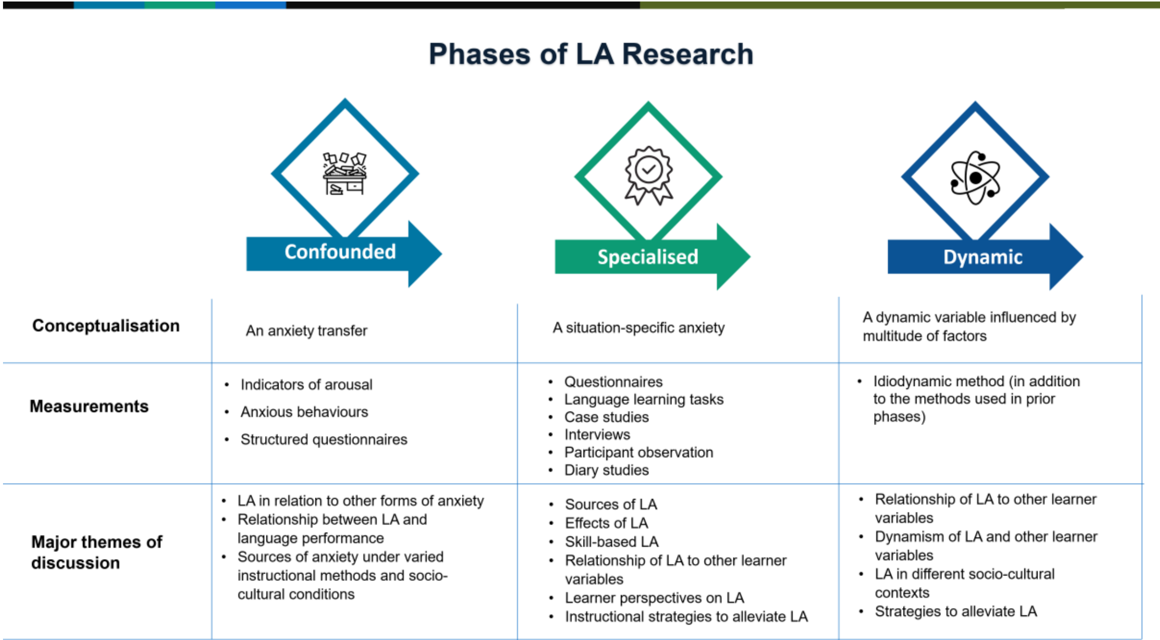
(iv) Strategies to alleviate LA (e.g., Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Oxford, 2017).

The phases of LA research demonstrate clear progress in the conceptualisation and measurement of LA from confounding different types of anxiety and their application to establishing LA as a construct specific to language learning situations. Acknowledging the dynamism and complexity of LA was another major turning point in research that compelled scholars to rethink methods of investigating LA. The current study draws on two main

features of dynamism in LA: (i) Co-existence of contradictory elements and (ii) Perturbations in the system that induce development and change (Gregersen, 2020).

Figure 2.1

Summary of the Language Anxiety Research Phases



	Confounded	Specialised	Dynamic
Conceptualisation	An anxiety transfer	A situation-specific anxiety	A dynamic variable influenced by multitude of factors
Measurements	• Indicators of arousal • Anxious behaviours • Structured questionnaires	• Questionnaires • Language learning tasks • Case studies • Interviews • Participant observation • Diary studies	• Idiodynamic method (in addition to the methods used in prior phases)
Major themes of discussion	• LA in relation to other forms of anxiety • Relationship between LA and language performance • Sources of anxiety under varied instructional methods and socio-cultural conditions	• Sources of LA • Effects of LA • Skill-based LA • Relationship of LA to other learner variables • Learner perspectives on LA • Instructional strategies to alleviate LA	• Relationship of LA to other learner variables • Dynamism of LA and other learner variables • LA in different socio-cultural contexts • Strategies to alleviate LA

The literature reveals the continuing popularity of LA as a research topic in different settings around the globe. To date, a plethora of studies have investigated sources of LA that cause cognitive, physiological, and behavioural reactions and exert a debilitating influence on students' language learning and development process. The following sections review research regarding the sources, manifestations, and effects of LA on the academic, cognitive and social domains of individuals.

2.4 Sources of Language Anxiety

The literature related to LA reports multiple sources of LA. Several scholars have classified the sources of LA in relation to their origin. According to Young (1991), these sources are mainly associated with (i) learners, (ii) teachers, and (iii) instructional practices. According to

her, personal and interpersonal issues, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing generate anxiety in language students. Luo (2012) proposed that LA stems from (i) classroom environments, (ii) learner characteristics, (iii) the target language (TL), and (iv) the foreign language (FL) learning process. MacIntyre (2017) classified the sources of LA into three categories: (i) academic causes, (ii) cognitive causes, and (iii) social causes. While these classifications offer valuable insights, they are not comprehensive enough to account for all the sources of LA. As such, the researcher further divides LA sources into three broad categories: (i) learner-specific, (ii) in-class, and (iii) out-of-class. These categories provide a comprehensive framework that encompasses all the underlying factors that contribute to LA among language learners.

2.4.1 Learner-specific sources of anxiety

Sources of anxiety that stem from learners themselves are categorised as learner-specific anxiety sources. These sources include negative self-concept, low self-esteem and self-confidence, negative self-efficacy and self-perceptions, fear of negative evaluation and derision, negative or incorrect language beliefs, poor language aptitude, and personality attributes such as perfectionism, competitiveness, and introversion. It should be noted that while the literature recognises fear of negative evaluation and derision as a social factor (e.g., MacIntyre, 2017), this study identifies it as a source of anxiety that is unique to learners. This is because fear is a psychological element that differs from one individual to another. The same negative evaluation may elicit varying reactions in different learners. For example, one learner may experience high levels of anxiety as a result of such an evaluation, while another may choose to disregard it and continue on their path.

Learning a language is sometimes considered “a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition” (Guiora, 1983, p. 8). It evokes a myriad of emotions:

> …*guilt* over linguistic and ethnic disloyalties, *insecurity* over the legitimacy of a newly learned language, *anxiety* about the lack of wholesome oneness, *angst* over the inability to bring together one’s incommensurable worlds, and *sadness* and *confusion* caused by seeing oneself as divided, a self-in-between, a self in need of translation. (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 5)

The emotions generated in connection with self-related aspects of individuals are emphasised in the literature due to their robust influence in triggering LA (Tanveer, 2007). Specifically, self-concept, self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy are closely intertwined with LA. The relationship between LA and self is best articulated by Cohen and Norst (1989, p. 61): “[L]anguage and self are so closely bound, if not identical, that an attack on one is an attack on the other.”

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), no other field of study poses a degree of threat to an individual’s self-concept in the same way as does language study. Self-concept is “the totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings with reference to [the] self as an object” (Rosenberg, 1989, p. 34). Horwitz et al. (1986) argued that an individual’s self-concept as a competent communicator is challenged in any situation where L2 performance occurs. Language learners are subject to confusion about presenting their authentic selves using a language in which they are imperfect and limited. This conflict between the individual’s “true” self and the “more limited self” (p.128) generates LA. Horwitz et al. (1986) emphasised that this lack of authentic communication in the FL is the factor that distinguishes foreign language anxiety (FLA) from other academic anxieties, for example, anxieties related to Math or Science.

Learning a language not only embarrasses and frustrates a learner but also challenges the learner's self-esteem and self-identity (MacIntyre, 1999). However, a common conceptual confusion between self-concept and self-esteem is evident in the literature (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017). The different dimensions of a person's life - personal, interpersonal, and physical - form his/her self-concept. The result of never-ending self-evaluations of these dimensions leads to self-esteem. In other words, the result of the evaluation of self-concept is self-esteem (Dörnyei, 2005, as cited in Rubio-Alcalá, 2017). Rubio-Alcalá (2017) asserted that "no other affective factors exert so much influence in the FL classroom as self-esteem and anxiety do" (p. 198). Not only are anxiety and self-esteem closely bound, but they also have a mutually interactive, negative relationship (e.g., Horwitz et al., 1986; Price, 1991; Young, 1990, 1991; Zare & Riasati, 2012). Accordingly, high levels of anxiety are related to low levels of self-esteem and vice versa. This negative correlation between LA and self-esteem is considered to be the "single strongest and most consistent" (Daly, 1991, p. 8). Drawing on the literature, Rubio-Alcalá (2017) convincingly argued that many anxiety sources in FL classrooms are directly related to the five dimensions of self-esteem presented by Reasoner (1983) (security, identity, belonging, purpose, and competence), thereby establishing a strong link between anxiety and self-esteem.

Several quantitative (e.g., Clément et al.,1977; MacIntyre et al., 1997; Pajares & Johnson, 1993; Truitt, 1995) and qualitative (e.g., Cheng, 1998; Cohen & Norst, 1989; Price, 1991) studies identified a relationship between LA and low self-confidence (as cited in Cheng et al., 1999). The study by Matsuda and Gobel (2001) and the factor analysis by Cheng et al. (1999) highlighted the importance of the role played by self-confidence in language learning and LA. Students with low self-confidence underestimate their ability to learn a L2 and entertain negative expectations of performing well, which ultimately makes them anxious while dealing with FL/L2 language tasks (MacIntyre et al., 1997). This process

signifies a vicious circle. Accordingly, the less confident learners fail to successfully manage their anxiety, which leads them to avoid anxiety-provoking activities. The resulting lack of practice, exposure and experience in such activities hinders their language learning process, further damaging their self-confidence (Cheng et al., 1999). A qualitative study by Attanayake (2019) conducted in four post-colonial South Asian countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka), suggested that ESL learners' lack of self-confidence in speaking English evoked LA, which led them to develop negative attitudes toward speaking English. These negative attitudes, in turn, predicted future experiences of LA.

Tremblay and Gardner (1995) identified a negative relationship between LA and self-efficacy. *Self-efficacy* is defined as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p. 391). In this vein, people's self-judgement about their inability and incapacity to perform well in a given task evokes negative feelings, which in turn trigger anxiety (Bandura et al., 1988).

It is well-established from past research that learners' self-perceived low ability levels are highly influential in evoking LA (e.g., MacIntyre, 2017; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). According to Leary (1990, as cited in MacIntyre, 1995), the relationship between anxiety, cognition and behaviour is cyclical. A demand to perform in the L2 can make a learner anxious, limiting their cognition as the attention is split between the task and their reaction to it. While performing in the L2, anxious learners think about the task at hand and are self-conscious about their social self. This overloaded cognition impedes performance and leads to negative self-evaluations and criticisms. The self-deprecating cognition further hinders their performance (King & Smith, 2017; MacIntyre, 1995), generating an ongoing vicious cycle. Gregersen (2003, p. 29) contended that the "self-derogatory bias" of anxious learners toward their proficiency is the main difference between anxious and non-anxious learners.

The primary cause for these problematic cognitions is learners' "excessively high standards for performance accompanied by overly critical self-evaluations" (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002, p. 563). Their fear of failure further stimulates them to maintain their high levels of anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999). Kitano (2001) investigated sources of LA in 212 students learning Japanese at two major universities in the United States of America. The findings revealed that these students felt more anxious when they perceived their ability as low compared to peers and native Japanese speakers. MacIntyre et al. (2003) conducted a cross-sectional investigation of second language communication among L2 learners in a junior high school late immersion program to examine their willingness to communicate, LA, perceived competence, and motivation. The study reported a significant negative correlation between anxiety and perceived competence. The most highly anxious students Price (1991) interviewed also demonstrated a low self-perception of their language ability levels.

According to MacIntyre (1999), the "single most important source of language anxiety seems to be the fear of speaking in front of other people using a language with which one has limited proficiency" (p. 33). In the classroom context, students fear being judged and scrutinised by teachers and peers (Na, 2007; Price, 1991). Therefore, speaking in front of the class is considered to be a significant source of anxiety for language learners (e.g., Koch & Terrell, 1991). Similarly, all anxious Spanish-speaking English learners in Gregersen's (2003) study reported the fear of being laughed at by peers or interlocutors. This situation turns language classrooms into "emotional danger zones" (King & Smith, 2017, p. 100) since they expose learners to potential evaluation, which may cause shame, embarrassment and even rejection from peers. The risk of getting evaluated reminds the learners of their competence in the L2 compared to peers or their own idealised self as a successful language learner (Ehrman, 1996, as cited in Ohata, 2005). Findings of Young's (1990) investigation revealed that it is not simply communication apprehension but also the fact of speaking in the

presence of others, especially “being incorrect in front of their peers and looking or sounding ‘dumb’” that makes learners anxious (Young, 1991, p. 429).

Numerous studies have established a direct correlation between motivation and LA (Liu & Hu, 2009; Liu & Huang, 2011). According to Liu and Huang (2011), learners who are less intrinsically motivated experience more anxiety, especially if their motivation is based on a language requirement. They contended that anxiety is triggered in learners when the practical purposes of learning a language are overemphasised. Similarly, Papi (2010) claimed that learners experience LA when they are motivated through their Ought-to L2 Self, which closely resembles extrinsic motivation.

Researchers have found a complex interaction between learner beliefs and LA (Aslan & Thompson, 2021; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 2017; Young, 1991). L2 learners already have preconceived notions about language and language learning when they enter the language classroom (Cohen, 1983, 1987; Horwitz, 1987; Politzer,1983; Wenden, 1986, as cited in Mori, 1999). These preconceived ideas stem from an array of sources, including learners’ previous language learning experience, cultural background, personality traits and cognitive style (Ellis, 2008). According to Aslan and Thompson (2021), understanding a learner’s beliefs about language learning and their level of anxiety in acquiring a second language can be achieved by considering their cultural values and the societal pressures related to language learning. Since learners’ attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours are closely associated, learners with positive attitudes and realistic, informed, language-related beliefs will exhibit productive behaviours, which are helpful to language learning. In contrast, learners with negative and erroneous beliefs exhibit contrary behaviours that harm the language learning process (Mantle-Bromley, 1995). Similarly, positive learner beliefs facilitate the language learning process, for they “compensate for one’s limited ability” (Mori, 1999, p. 381) and boost learners’ confidence while alleviating their anxiety (Aslan &

Thompson, 2021). On the contrary, negative and erroneous beliefs impede successful language learning (Horwitz, 1987) and trigger learners' LA (MacIntyre, 2017; Young, 1991). For example, certain erroneous beliefs, such as presumptions about the number of years needed to become proficient in a language, the need to acquire native-like pronunciation at the very beginning of a language course, and being perfect in the communication act, make learners frustrated and anxious as these unrealistic beliefs clash with the reality (Young, 1991).

In addition, the literature discusses a few other sources of LA that can be classified under learner-specific LA sources, such as learners' poor language aptitude (Sparks & Ganschow, 1995), perfectionism (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Luo, 2012; Price, 1991; Young, 1991), competitiveness (Bailey, 1983), shyness and introversion (MacIntyre, 1999), excessive self-evaluation and worry over potential failure (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014) and over-sensitivity to others' evaluation (Kitano, 2001).

2.4.2 In-class sources of anxiety

Classroom factors, such as teacher, teaching pedagogy and classroom social climate are also reported as sources that trigger learners' LA (MacIntyre, 2017; Price, 1991; Young, 1991).

Teacher

The teacher's characteristics and their role in the language classroom are crucial in determining the levels of LA in students (Bailey, 1983; Kitano, 2001; Young, 1991). Many researchers acknowledge that teachers' classroom behaviour significantly influences students' LA (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Kitano, 2001; Mak, 2011). In particular, a teacher's attitudes toward errors and their manner of feedback procedure are considered strong sources of LA (MacIntyre, 2017; Young, 1991). According to Gregersen & MacIntyre (2014, p. 5),

students reported that “they feel teachers are on a mission to eradicate errors at all costs…” Harshly correcting errors with sarcasm and embarrassment triggers anxiety in many students (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Young, 1991). Teachers who correct students in the middle of the students’ performance and highlight students’ errors to explain specific teaching points are identified as anxiety-provoking (Mak, 2011). A teacher’s inability to tolerate classroom silence (Tsui, 1996), judgmental teaching attitude (Samimy, 1994, as cited in Tallon, 2009), and harsh manner of teaching (Aida, 1994) can also induce LA in students. Palacios found several associations among anxiety and the following teacher characteristics:

> [A]bsence of instructional support, unsympathetic personality, lack of time for personal attention, favouritism, a sense that the class does not provide students with the tools necessary to match up with the instructors’ expectations, and the sense of being judged by the instructor or wanting to impress the instructor. (1998, as cited in Tallon, 2009, p. 115)

Teacher beliefs about language learning and teaching are also influential in evoking LA in students. According to Young (1991), students’ anxiety is exacerbated by teachers who prefer the role of “drill sergeant[s]” (p. 428) instead of facilitators, teachers who believe they must correct every mistake the students make, teachers who only provide individual tasks to students to keep the class under control, and teachers who believe teacher talking time should exceed learner talking time.

Teaching pedagogy

Under anxiety-provoking teaching pedagogies, one often cited source of LA is classroom activities that demand speaking in the FL (Price, 1991; Young, 1990). Speaking in a FL/L2 in front of others heightens anxiety levels and is viewed as the most anxiety-producing experience by some language learners (Daly, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kitano,

2001; Price, 1991). In a cross-sectional study using 119 American students learning Spanish, Koch and Terrell (1991) found oral skits, oral quizzes, oral presentations, and oral responses in class to be the most anxiety-provoking activities for learners in the foreign language classroom. Young (1990) collated a list of in-class activities perceived by students as anxiety-provoking. In descending order of anxiety provocation, they were as follows: (i) Spontaneous role-playing in front of the class, (ii) speaking in public in class, (iii) oral presentations or sketches in front of the class, (iv) presenting a prepared dialogue to the class, and (v) writing their work on the board.

Certain teacher practices, such as not giving learners sufficient preparation time before speaking (Mak, 2011); not allowing students to use their L1 in the FL/L2 classrooms (Butzkamm, 2003; Copland & Neokleous, 2011; Macaro, 2005); and teacher-centred activities (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017), evoke a great deal of LA in students. Learners who lack opportunities to practise the language face difficulties in developing their communicative abilities. Such learners feel stressed and embarrassed when required to speak within or outside the classroom (Tanveer, 2006).

Tests are another in-class anxiety trigger for language learners (MacIntyre, 2017; Young, 1991). Test items that are ambiguous and do not reflect what learners have learned in the classroom and test formats that are unfamiliar and highly evaluative trigger LA in learners (Young, 1991). Tests that require students to speak in front of others also evoke LA (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

In-class social context

Moreover, in-class contexts that are highly competitive (Bailey, 1983; Tóth, 2011) produce anxiety in students. Comparison of oneself with other learners in the classroom is common in such situations (Bailey, 1983). This results in students feeling worried about

presenting themselves as less competent than others. Their discomfort and frustration in the presence of those ‘better’ students might evoke LA in the former (Tóth, 2011). However, one participant in Ewald’s (2007) study of students enrolled in tertiary Spanish courses, presented a contrasting view regarding peers in classrooms. He mentioned that students do not always see their peers as competitors but sometimes as “sympathetic company in the language learning process” (Ewald, 2007, p. 129), which means peers do not always provoke LA among students.

2.4.3 Out-of-class sources of anxiety

Several studies suggest that there exist some unique sources of anxiety stemming from sociocultural factors in a given society. These sources impede learners’ communication both within and outside the classroom.

It was found that power dynamics related to English trigger LA among learners in some countries. In most Asian ESL contexts, English is considered a symbol of power and prestige. For instance, nations such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and India consider English a status symbol (Attanayaka, 2019; Gunesekera, 2005; Khan, 2015). Interestingly, even those who do not speak English consider English to be superior to their native languages and treat English speakers with respect (Attanayake, 2019). Those who are fluent in English and use native-like pronunciation are considered “wealthy and talented” (Khan, 2015, p. 52) with ‘awesome personalities’ (Attanayaka, 2019, p. 95), which results in people who are less proficient in English experiencing an inferiority complex that triggers LA (Attanayake, 2019; Khan, 2015). This perception of English as a status symbol rather than a tool of communication makes learners anxious when speaking in English, since it is not only their English incompetence that they expose to others but also their social status, their education,

family background, and so much more. In other words, "[English] is considered the premiere indicator and representation of class, education, intellect, etc." (Attanayaka, 2019, p. 25).

There is also a tendency to label and ridicule those who speak English as *show-offs*. According to Attanayake (2019), mockery in this situation arises from a group of people in society who neither speak English nor belong to the English teaching-learning domain. She reported that this is more common in South Asian post-colonial countries. Similar findings were reported by Wong (1984), who found that Hong Kong secondary school students refrain from speaking English in front of their peers and do not answer the teacher voluntarily in English because they consider speaking in English equal to *showing off*.

In discussing English language anxiety, Horwitz (2016) stated that the importance given to English achievement in some societies could contribute to the nature of LA. For instance, as English is the passport to better career prospects in both local and international job markets (Gunesekera, 2005), most people in ESL (e.g., Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan) and EFL (e.g., China, Japan, Thailand) contexts learn English to be eligible for better opportunities that have potential benefits in almost every domain of their lives including economic, financial, and educational. Learners' awareness of the importance of learning English and its achievement can develop a pressure in them to be competent in English. This pressure may trigger ESL learners' LA (Cheng, 2008; Liu, 2006; Mak, 2011).

Cultural factors have been identified as another major source of LA. For instance, it was found that Confucian influence is a key reason for learner reticence in Asian countries. Woodrow (2006) found clear evidence for variation in anxiety levels between Japanese, Korean and Chinese participants on the one hand, and European participants, on the other. She noted high anxiety levels in the learners who belonged to the Confucian Heritage Cultures (CHC) compared to lower anxiety levels in the latter. Through interviews conducted

with five Japanese learners in a US college, Ohata (2005) revealed fear of 'losing face' in front of others as their strongest anxiety-provoking factor. Due to the cultural belief that there is "an ever-present, ever-watching *other* within Japanese society that constantly monitors and inhibits people's behaviour with its disapproving gaze" (King & Smith, 2017, p. 100), Japanese students prefer to stay silent as it protects not only their face and dignity but also saves them from committing a social penalty (Franks, 2000).

A similar situation was observed by Attanayake (2019) in her study of participants from India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan. The students in these countries fear ever-present "watchdogs" who create and maintain societal language attitudes (p. 54). Those who cannot speak English and are less fluent worry that they will be mocked by the watchdogs for their language errors. In contrast, others fluent in English worry over their accent and eligibility to join the circle of those who speak the "posh" variety of English. Learners internalise these attitudes and bring them to language classrooms. As a result, they lose confidence in speaking English with their peers because they fear being evaluated by those who are more proficient in the language. The resulting lack of interaction in the language ultimately inhibits their language performance (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

The concept of *uncertainty avoidance* is a related concept that characterises some cultures (Hofstede, 1986). Such cultures discourage individuals from actively participating in situations that are uncertain or unpredictable, especially in public settings. This is reflected in classrooms where students avoid speaking up in front of their peers and risk negative evaluation or disclosure of their low English competence.

In addition, some features of the academic culture in a particular country could provoke LA among students. Marambe et al. (2012) pointed out that in some Asian cultures, such as Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia, teachers are highly respected and listened to.

Education systems in such cultures are teacher-centred and authoritarian. They do not expect students to argue or question the teacher's thinking process. "This has led to authoritarian behaviour of teachers and veneration of teachers by the students" (Marambe et al., 2012, p. 303). This less friendly relationship between students and teachers can evoke LA among some students.

As Scollon et al. (2012) pointed out, there is a strong sense of hierarchy in some Asian cultures. The resultant differences in the social status of the interlocutors have a significant influence on the LA of some students (Tanveer, 2007). This was best articulated by Chick:

> The effects of status in terms of percieved power over another can also effectively silence a person in conversation; for example, where there are large power differentials, as in White-Black relations in South Africa, the potential threat of loss of face may cause the person of lower of status to do nothing in the conversation even when instructions are not fully understood. (1985, as cited in Tanveer, 2007, p. 26)

This is reflected in the classroom as a considerable gap that exists between teachers and students in the classroom (Attanayake, 2019). The unequal relationship status between these two parties hinders "successful second language comprehension, production, and ultimately acquisition" (Pica, 1987, p. 4).

Local and international politics, along with the nuances of sociocultural practices, could also be a source of students' LA. For example, in Effiong's (2016) study, Japanese students' resentment towards Chinese students, which was primarily a result of international politics, negatively influenced the intragroup interactions of the former.

It is apparent that LA can be induced by a myriad of sources related to the learners, language classrooms and sociocultural factors of a country. However, the studies conducted thus far on LA have mainly been based in Western countries (e.g., Gkonou et al., 2017; Gregersen et al., 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986). The context of the Western part of the world, in terms of historical, social, political, cultural, and educational patterns, is significantly different from that of the Asian context. Even within the Asian continent, there are considerable differences in people's attitudes, beliefs, and language learning practices and policies. For example, English does not hold any historical or institutional value in some Asian countries (e.g., China, Taiwan). However, it is widely used in those countries due to its value as the world's lingua franca. In some other countries, such as post-colonial South Asian countries, English is institutionalised and often used as an L2 (e.g., Sri Lanka, India). This institutional variation and colonial mindsets in the latter countries led them to create language learning and teaching processes different from the former. Accordingly, sources that influence the affective factors of language learners in one part of the world can be significantly different from those of learners in another.

The above discussion indicates that out-of-class anxiety sources are highly significant in shaping learners' and teachers' attitudes and beliefs about language learning and teaching, teachers' choices about classroom practices and methodologies, and policymakers' decisions about language policies and practices in a country, all of which ultimately influence learners' LA. Further, it is possible that some practices perceived by one group of learners as comfortable may prove stressful for learners from a different cultural group (Young, 1991) and vice versa. Considering all the above, the current study identifies the need to explore the LA sources specific to ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka. Hence, the study aims to investigate the anxiety sources that stem from learners themselves, university ESL classrooms and sociocultural factors related to English in Sri Lanka.

2.5 Effects of Language Anxiety

The adverse effects of LA are not confined to learners' classroom communication efforts but extend beyond the classroom itself. Accordingly, the influence of LA on learners' academic, cognitive, and social experience is enormous (MacIntyre, 2017).

LA has been identified as the most potent affective factor that hinders the learning process (Arnold & Brown, 1999; Scovel, 1978). Course grades and learners' performance in language tests are negatively influenced by LA (MacIntyre, 1999). Substantiating this, many published studies have reported a consistent moderate negative relationship between LA and achievement (Horwitz, 2001). For instance, Horwitz et al. (1986) found a significant moderate negative correlation between FLA and the expected and actual final grades received by highly anxious learners. Similarly, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) found a significant negative correlation between French class anxiety and performance on a vocabulary learning task. Aida (1994) also observed a significant negative correlation between FLCAS scores and final grades among second-year Japanese learners in the USA. These findings were replicated in studies conducted by Saito & Samimy (1996) with Japanese learners, Kim (1998) with Korean college students, and Coulombe (2000) with eleven French-as-a-second language learners at the university level. Hence, it is evident that this negative relationship between LA and language achievement exists irrespective of the TL and the level of TL competency (Horwitz, 2001).

In the Sri Lankan context, Rasakumaran and Indra Devi (2017) discovered a negative correlation between oral communication apprehension and oral performance among learners in the Medical Faculty of the University of Jaffna, a state university in Sri Lanka. Senaratne and Pereira (2018) also observed a significant negative correlation between FLCAS scores

and learner achievement among ESL learners at the University of Sri Jayawardhenapura, another state university in Sri Lanka.

In addition to its negative influence on language performance, LA creates a tendency in learners to overstudy (e.g., Horwitz et al., 1986; Luo, 2013; MacIntyre, 1999). Learners who are excessively concerned about performing well get very anxious (Bailey et al., 2003) when they make mistakes in the TL. To avoid such situations in future, these learners tend to overstudy (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 1999). Similarly, Price (1991) reported the need felt by anxious learners to increase their efforts in learning in order to make up for the adverse effects of anxiety arousal. However, overstudying usually results in frustration, as the actual achievement is less than expected, considering the time and effort invested (MacIntyre, 1999).

Student dropout is another negative consequence of LA (Luo, 2013). Learners who drop out of language courses tend to have significant levels of anxiety and significantly lower self-evaluations of their language learning (Gardner et al., 1987). Studies have also found that highly anxious learners risk dropping out of language courses more than less anxious learners (e.g., Bailey, 1983).

A plethora of literature supports the premise that LA influences cognitive processing in a pervasive manner (Eysenck, 1979; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Schwarzer, 1986; Tobias, 1979, 1980, 1986). When anxiety is aroused, self-related cognition and task-irrelevant information, such as worry, consume the cognitive space so that highly anxious learners cannot pay full attention to the given task (Eysenck, 1979). This explains why anxious learners take more time to comprehend information and achieve the same results as their counterparts who do not experience such anxiety (MacIntyre, 2017). This process essentially hinders the quality of the learners’ performance (MacIntyre, 1995). Further,

anxious learners engage in negative self-talk and excessively contemplate poor performance, which again limits their cognitive processing abilities (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b), impeding their efficacy in effectively responding to their own language errors (Gregersen, 2003; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

Learners' social relationships are also affected by LA. Several studies suggest that anxious learners communicate less frequently than less anxious learners (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b, 1991c). The reason is that once the association between LA and impaired performance is established, the prospect of L2 communication itself is anxiety-arousing. Hence, highly anxious learners' willingness to communicate is lower compared to the level of willingness to communicate of their less anxious counterparts (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996). Second, the limited communication of anxious learners may mislead teachers and peers into identifying them as reserved characters. This may negatively influence their relationships in the classroom context (Luo, 2013) and create a hostile environment that is not conducive to learning.

The above discussion indicates that debilitating LA, if untreated, may cause destructive and stigmatising effects on language learners and their language learning. The current study identifies the adverse effects of LA on language learners and acknowledges the need to investigate strategies to create a less stressful classroom environment that can minimise learners' LA and enhance language learning.

2.6 Manifestations of Language Anxiety

LA might not have attracted so much attention from researchers, language learners, and teachers if its manifestations were not so influential and prominent. As Horwitz et al. (1986) claim, the psychological and physiological processes of the anxious language learner are analogous to the psychological and behavioural patterns of any other person who is

experiencing a different type of anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). However, the degree of strength of the manifestations of LA may vary depending on each anxious individual. The subjects in Cohen and Norst's (1989, p. 68) study described their LA as follows:

> My heart starts pumping really fast, and the adrenaline running. Then I feel myself start to go red…and by the end of the ordeal-for it is-I am totally red, my hands shake, and my heart pounds…It's a pure trauma for me…if I am ever asked to, I'll probably have a coronary.

One learner in Price's (1991) study expressed his preference to be in a prison camp rather than speaking a FL. Horwitz et al. (1986) pointed out the possibility of a learner completely going blank and freezing up during oral activities. In contrast, it is also possible for an anxious learner to manifest their anxiety only by playing with a pen or another object at hand.

According to Burgoon and Koper, "bodily tension, self-touching, postural rigidity, protective behaviours such as closed body positions, leaning away, gaze aversion and indirect head orientation, less facial pleasantness, nodding and animation" are signals of LA (1984, as cited in Gregersen et al., 2017, p. 113). Further, anxious learners may "squirm in their seats, fidget, play with their hair, clothes, or other manipulable objects, stutter and stammer as they talk, and generally appear jittery and nervous" (Leary, 1982, as cited in Young, 1991, p. 429). Gregersen (2005) conducted an observation study that indicated differences in the nonverbal behaviour of anxious and non-anxious students in highly anxiety-provoking situations. She observed that anxious students frequently used their hands more than non-anxious students for purposes unrelated to communication. For example, anxious students tended to fidget and play with different manipulable objects, including their own hair (Gregersen et al., 2017; Leary, 1982, as cited in Young, 1991). When communicating, anxious students tied up their

hands, exhibiting a rigid and close posture. In contrast, non-anxious students used hand gestures to enhance communication (Gregersen et al., 2017). Furthermore, anxious language learners "have difficulty concentrating, become forgetful, start sweating, and have palpitations. They exhibit avoidance behaviour such as missing class and postponing homework" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 126) and prefer sitting at the back of the class "seeking refuge in the last row" (p. 130).

In addition, anxious learners avoid voluntarily participating in the activities, and compared to non-anxious participants, the frequency of participation of anxious students in classroom activities is very low (Horwitz et al., 1986). If untreated, over time, anxiety may lead to low language proficiency and course grades or, at worst, ultimately dropping out of language learning (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Therefore, it is essential to identify cues to learners' anxiety in order to alleviate it.

2.7 Language Anxiety in ESL Learners of Sri Lankan State Universities

Even though LA is the most extensively studied emotion in the field of SLA across different contexts and cultures (MacIntyre, 2017), it has been largely ignored in the Sri Lankan context. It is only very recently that some Sri Lankan studies on LA have come into the limelight, exploring sources of LA and strategies to cope with it.

The most recent study on LA was conducted by Attanayake (2019) using undergraduate participants from four countries in post-colonial South Asia, namely Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and Sri Lanka. She argued that the most desired skill of English language learners in Sri Lanka is competence in speaking in English. The primacy that speaking English has attained in Sri Lanka over other language skills is common among English language learners of all ages. As such, undergraduates of state universities in Sri Lanka also regard speaking English as the supreme skill one can possess. Unfortunately, it is

the same skill that the undergraduates seem to be most anxious to use; therefore, they perform poorly when asked to speak in English (Attanayake, 2019; Navaz & Banu, 2018).

Attanayake (2019) postulated that learners' anxiety originates from the language attitudes of society. The society represents two clusters: (i) "inner society in the classroom" and (ii) "outer society outside the classroom" (p. 53). She contended that the negative attitudes of both these societies trigger anxiety. Attanayake (2019) explained this process as follows:

> [N]egative language attitudes create an anxiety that is not limited to FLA as identified by the researchers. Further, such language attitudes, which not only are present in the classroom situations, but also exist outside in the larger society, are also detrimental to speaking English inside and outside the classroom in the daily life of the learners. (p. 61)

She revealed some specific language attitudes in Sri Lankan society that trigger learners' LA. On one hand, some language learners who do not experience anxiety when speaking English with foreigners experience the opposite when they are in the middle of other Sri Lankans who are fluent in English. On the other hand, there are instances where learners feel anxious to speak in English in the presence of people who do not know English. This is because they are afraid of getting condemned and ridiculed by the latter for *showing off*. Both situations trigger learners' fear of negative evaluation and make them anxious to speak in English. Similarly, English is considered a symbol of power and prestige in Sri Lankan society, and the use of the word *Kaduva* (sword) to refer to it indicates its power in society (Gunesekera, 2005). According to Attanayake (2019), these power dynamics involving English contribute to LA.

In addition, the education culture of Sri Lanka seems to evoke learners' LA. In Sri Lanka, "the traditional power structure in the classroom" (Attanayake, 2019, p. 76) maintains a considerable gap between the teacher and the learners. The learners are expected to respect, listen to and obey the teacher. Even if learners disagree with the teacher, they are not expected to argue with the teacher. Hence, classrooms are characterised by an absence of arguments and limited amounts of discussion and questions (Attanayake, 2019), creating an educational culture that inevitably reinforces learners' LA.

Navaz and Banu's (2018, 2019) studies identified LA as a common problem at state universities in Sri Lanka. Specifically focusing on undergraduates at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL), their pilot study conducted in 2018 found that more than 90 per cent of the students experienced anxiety during English lessons. The study revealed a number of sources of LA amongst SEUSL undergraduates: fear of speaking English in classes, fear of being negatively evaluated by the instructor, test anxiety, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes in front of instructors and peers and resentment towards English classes. Another study conducted by Navaz and Banu at the same university in 2019 found communication apprehension, fear of ESL lectures, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluations, environmental factors and fear of instructors as anxiety-provoking for the students. However, one common drawback with these studies is the composition of the samples. Even though Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic country with Sinhalese (74.9%) representing the majority of the population, and the minority including Tamils (15.3%), Moors (9.3%) and others (0.5%) (Department of Census & Statistics, 2012), these researchers chose only Tamil students as participants for their studies. Ostensibly, since colonisation, there has been an attitudinal variation toward English between the majority and minority of the country (e.g., Canagarajah, 2005a; Herath, 2015; Lim, 2013). Navaz and Banu (2018, 2019) also ignored the language

teachers' perspectives on LA, limiting the scope of the study's findings and recommendations.

Although Attanayake (2019) ascribed the failure in teaching and learning English in Sri Lanka to teachers' total negligence of students' anxiety, she did not examine language teachers' perspectives on learners' LA. However, the teacher is a critical factor in any classroom situation. Therefore, it is essential to consider teachers' opinions when making decisions about classroom language learning and teaching. Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) identified the teacher, learner, and the social milieu as 'players' in the foreign language classroom and explained:

> [A]ny of these constituents, individually or in combination, could be provocateurs or the remediators of language anxiety. Just as we may hold one or more of these 'players' responsible for the presence of anxiety, so too may we find in them the catalyst for solutions. (p. 10)

While the studies mentioned above confirm the presence of LA in language classrooms of state universities in Sri Lanka, several key gaps in understanding LA are evident. Some of these studies have neglected to address LA from the teachers' perspectives. Others have not sufficiently acknowledged the unique sociocultural dynamics in Sri Lanka, such as the multi-ethnic and multicultural forces at play in society. Studies that offer suggestions without conducting an in-depth investigation in such areas can be less rigorous. To address this gap, it is necessary to investigate the sources of LA specific to the Sri Lankan context and strategies for managing it effectively, considering both teachers' and learners' perspectives.

2.8 Different Perspectives on Strategies for Managing Language Anxiety

Strategies for managing LA are informed by two approaches: (i) approaches informed by TP and (ii) approaches suggested by PP. TP-informed and PP-informed approaches view LA through different lenses and devise strategies and interventions to manage it in distinct ways.

TP-informed approaches focus on investigating negative emotions and fixing problematic issues in life (Wang et al., 2021). TP focuses more on what goes wrong in life (Peterson, 2006). In contrast, PP-informed approaches focus on the positive side of life (Lopez & Snyder, 2009) and developing positive qualities in people (Wang et al., 2021). It is "the scientific study of what goes right in life" (Peterson, 2006, p. 4).

Accordingly, in the field of SLA, TP exclusively aims to identify and solve negative concerns such as anxiety, burnout, demotivation, and aptitude problems in various applied linguistic milieus (Gregersen et al., 2016a). Contrastingly, PP aims at positive aspects of life and attempts to complement negative aspects with positive topics such as resilience, happiness, optimism, flow, well-being, flourishing, strengths, courage, wisdom, and laughter. (Dewaele, Chen, et al., 2019; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014; Wang et al., 2021). Of note, PP does not aim to exclude negativity but rather to confront problems positively by building upon the strengths and assets of learners and teachers (Gregersen et al., 2016a).

Being a deficit-based approach, TP devises strategies based on the inadequacies and deficiencies of language learners and teachers. In contrast, being an anti-deficit-based approach, PP develops interventions based on the strengths of learners and teachers (MacIntyre, 2016; MacIntyre et al., 2019) notwithstanding the problems that may exist (Dewaele, Chen, et al., 2019).

Specifically, in dealing with anxiety, TP-informed approaches choose to directly ameliorate the intensity and symptoms of anxiety (MacIntyre et al., 2015) by reducing negative arousal, distracting thoughts, and confronting negative beliefs (MacIntyre, 2016). PP-informed approaches, however, encourage learners to capitalise on opportunities and benefit from what is available. Further, PP suggests that teachers focus more on developing activities that students might enjoy rather than focusing on ways to reduce their anxiety (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017). In other words, by increasing the moments of positivity, PP-informed approaches aim to reduce the weight of the negative thoughts, beliefs and emotions learners sometimes feel in the classroom. For instance, one central proposition of PP in SLA is to provide learners with opportunities to develop positive attitudes toward L2 learning and enhance their resilience so that they can bounce back from negative experiences quickly and efficiently (Fresacher, 2016).

The following sections explain the strategies employed by TP and PP to manage the LA of language learners.

2.8.1 Strategies informed by traditional psychology

TP considers anxiety as a clinical disorder or condition that needs to be treated (Oxford, 2017). It views individuals who suffer from anxiety (e.g., social anxiety, generalised anxiety) as emotionally ill. According to Oxford (2017), LA could stem from an individual's experiences of social anxiety or generalised anxiety. Hence, she postulates that the interventions used to reduce social anxiety and generalised anxiety could also be used effectively to manage LA.

Social anxiety makes an individual apprehensive and extremely scared of engaging in any social or performance situations that are open to public evaluation and probable embarrassment (Oxford, 2017). This is often considered the "primary root of language

anxiety" (p. 178). Generalised anxiety refers to the persistent feelings of worry and tension in response to almost anything. This includes performing in the TL as well. Previous research has identified maladaptive assumptions as the leading cause of social and generalised anxiety (Oxford, 2017). Drawing on literature, Oxford (2017, pp. 179-180) proposes the following interventions to increase the calmness of language learners who experience LA that stems from social anxiety or generalised anxiety:

(i) **Modelling:** The teacher models appropriate behaviours (e.g., deep breathing) for anxious students to imitate.

(ii) **Exposure therapy:** The teacher encourages anxious learners to get exposed to anxiety-provoking situations gradually and consistently until they feel comfortable. The teacher discourages learners from avoiding anxiety-provoking language performance situations and may assist with cognitive and affective techniques to manage learners' anxieties in those situations.

(iii) **Rational-emotive therapy:** The teacher may start a discussion with students about beliefs, especially their irrationality in most scenarios and their effect on human lives. Following the discussion, learners are asked to list their fears of using the TL. After choosing two or three beliefs that learners think cause their anxiety and, therefore, desperately need to expel, they will think through a set of questions specifically designed to prove the irrationality of these beliefs. If the worksheets are shared among peers, the learners will immensely benefit from witnessing the ubiquitous nature of these beliefs, setting more realistic standards for their own performance and being less critical of themselves.

(iv) **Combinations of biological approaches (e.g., relaxation training and biofeedback) with cognitive therapies:** Relaxation training requires no equipment. This can be done, for example, by practising deep breathing and progressive

relaxation. Biofeedback, however, requires equipment and would be challenging to practise in language-learning contexts. Some cognitive therapies, for example, guide learners to identify the triggers of their anxiety and related physical arousal. These therapies might convince learners to expel their misconceptions about anxieties.

(v) **Social skills training:** As socially anxious individuals often have low social skills and negative beliefs, it is recommended to train them in necessary and appropriate social skills to improve their social anxiety and confidence.

As discussed in 2.4.1, one major learner-specific source of anxiety is learners' erroneous beliefs about language learning. There is a seeming consensus among researchers that LA could be alleviated by making learners realise the irrationality of their beliefs. For instance, Young (1999) suggests that teachers design group work and activities that help learners spot erroneous and irrational beliefs they have been holding onto. Rational Emotive Therapy offered by Foss and Reitzel (1991) is another strategy devised to make learners identify their inaccurate and illogical beliefs and confront them with new information.

Another key aspect of LA is that it is not a constant or a fixed variable but a dynamic phenomenon that varies throughout a communication act. Learners who have not realised this fact tend to view the whole speaking component of the language negatively. In contrast, when they are convinced that speaking is not a fixed process that is consistently difficult but there are aspects of their communication act that they can enjoy, they will perceive the situation and the dynamic nature of their anxiety more realistically. To this end, Foss and Reitzel (1991) introduce the Anxiety Graph to make students realise the transitory nature of LA within a single communicative activity and therefore, the need to use a more realistic approach to manage the situation.

Learning that feelings of anxiety are normal and that one should value competence over perfection helps reduce learners' anxiety. To this end, Cope Powell (1991) and Young (1999) propose supplemental instruction, support groups, informal talks and language clubs as potential strategies that create opportunities for learners to correct their beliefs and eliminate LA. Şimşek and Dörnyei (2017) recommend a technique with a similar focus called Learner Constructive Narratives to help dispute learners' erroneous beliefs: "Self-narratives are not just stories about what happened in a specific time and spot; they also provide both an assessment of past occasions in relation to the self and a feeling of transient progression" (pp. 56-57). They postulate that by helping learners to re-narrate their stories in a way that can change the negative trajectories into positive ones, learners can reassess their negative experiences of anxiety in a more positive light, which might reduce the debilitating effects of LA.

Many language learners believe that they must be thoroughly competent in the language before they speak (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Young, 1991). They also believe they must be approved by every person they engage with (Foss & Reitzel, 1991). Such erroneous beliefs are anxiety-provoking. To expel such beliefs, Horwitz (1988) suggests that teachers discuss the value of language ability with learners, even if it is not fluent or perfect. She further mentions the importance of negotiating learners' reasonable commitments to successful language learning.

Helping learners set realistic communication goals is crucial, for only then will they be able to experience successful progress in their language learning journey over time, which will result in increased confidence and less anxiety. To this end, journal writing would also be highly effective, for it helps learners think through and write through their anxieties (Foss & Reitzel, 1991; Horwitz 1986).

The literature indicates two approaches to minimising the in-class anxiety of language learners (Crookall & Oxford, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; Rubio-Alcalá, 2017): (i) a direct approach by dealing with learner anxiety explicitly; and (ii) an indirect approach by creating an anxiety-free classroom climate.

Teachers can choose to confront learner anxiety directly by overtly teaching relaxation techniques, and breathing exercises, and advising learners about the language learning process (Horwitz, 1997a, as cited in Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014; Kim, 2009). Crookall and Oxford (1991) propose implementing strategies such as Agony column, Ghost avengers, Mistakes panel, Anxious photos, Reversed accents, Keeping a diary of feelings about language learning, Emotional checklist and Positive self-talk to reduce learners' LA. However, the direct approach has its drawbacks as it is less practical, for language teachers do not have the required specialised training to implement most of the activities informed by the direct approach.

In comparison, the indirect approach seems more practical and feasible since language teachers have power and control over the teaching practices and methodologies they implement in their classrooms. Therefore, they can decide on the classroom climate they want to create. Horwitz et al. (1986) also support this claim, stating that making the classroom context less stressful is more efficient "since language teachers cannot change the nature of language learning or of language learners" (Horwitz, 2017, p. 44).

Acknowledging the importance of creating a low-anxiety classroom climate, Crookall and Oxford (1991) propose two methods of promoting a less stressful classroom. They advocate changing the communication pattern and the classroom structure by (i) implementing pair work, small group work, games, simulations, and structured exercises and (ii) promoting student-to-student communication, emphasising the importance of conveying

meaning over achieving grammatical accuracy. Similarly, Young (1991) and Nagahashi (2007) point out that changing the communication pattern is an effective strategy for reducing language learners' affective filters.

According to Rubio-Alcalá (2017), creating a low-anxiety classroom climate could be achieved in three ways: making positive changes in the (i) rapport between teacher and learners, (ii) methodology, and (iii) type of activities. To improve the rapport between teacher and learners, it is necessary for the teacher to choose the role of a facilitator instead of that of a drill sergeant (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017; Young, 1991, 1999). The facilitating role involves explicit discussions with learners about the language learning process, their emotions and feelings of anxiety. Rubio-Alcalá (2017) believes such a facilitating role with genuine communication between teachers and learners ensures and enhances learners' emotional security and helps them alleviate their LA. It is also crucial that teachers are friendly, relaxed, positive, patient and have a good sense of humour (Young, 1999). Teachers can develop their intra- and interpersonal skills by participating in language teaching workshops, conferences, training sessions, and seminars in the field. They can improve their interactions with learners by being more careful about their error correction approach and entertaining a positive attitude toward mistakes (Rubio-Alcalá, 2017; Young, 1990,1991,1999).

As teacher-centred methodologies fuel anxiety in the classroom, Rubio-Alcalá (2017) suggests employing a learner-centred methodology, since this encourages learners to experiment with the language without getting inhibited by the fear of negative evaluation of their teachers and peers. Language methodologies such as Desuggestopedia and The Natural Approach are specially designed to improve the negative effects of debilitating LA (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

Phillips (1999) suggests that by helping students develop a classroom community before authentic communication takes place, teachers can create a favourable atmosphere that is less anxiety-provoking. In a community, learners "support each other and act collaboratively to construct meaningful utterances" (Little & Sanders, 1989, as cited in Phillips, 1999, p. 129). In such a context, learners feel less threatened to perform as all the learners feel listened to and cared for by the other classmates. Phillips (1999) presents a list of classroom activities based on this approach aimed at reducing learners' LA. Some examples are conversation gambits, recognition activities, information gap activities, cartoon stories and role play, and interviews and surveys. Galante's (2018) classroom intervention of a four-month drama program that facilitated managing English language anxiety in 13 Brazilian adolescents exemplifies the validity of such activities. The importance of collaborative activities has been highlighted in the work of Rubio-Alcalá (2017) as well in emphasising their influence in reducing unhealthy competition in the classroom.

Oral tests and quizzes have been identified as a key source of anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). Young (1991, 1999) and Rubio-Alcalá (2017) explain the importance of administering pre-tests and mock tests before the actual tests and explaining the marking rubric to the learners. While Young (1991) stresses the importance of testing items that reflect instruction, Rubio-Alcalá (2017) highlights the significance of the transparency of the evaluation, for it affects the sense of security and, therefore, the learners' anxiety. Also, marks must be allocated not only for grammar but also for conveying meaning. Smiling just before starting the test, starting tests with interactive activities, and using *positive re-evaluation technique* (i.e., asking simple, closed questions when starting the exam) have also proven effective in reducing learners' LA (Rubio-Alcalá, 2002).

A closer look at the literature reveals that approaches informed by TP have mainly considered learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources when devising strategies to mitigate

LA. The existing literature does not provide sufficient information about strategies that have the potential to mitigate LA triggered by out-of-class sources. This has been identified by the researcher as a research gap in the existing literature that needs to be addressed.

2.8.2 Strategies informed by positive psychology

MacIntyre (2016) notes four key areas in PP that can be directly applied to L2 learning: (i) PEs, (ii) character strengths, (iii) the EMPATHICS model, and (iv) the 'flow' concept. Interestingly, all four key areas provide insights to devise strategies to enhance language learning while reducing the debilitating effects of negative emotions such as LA.

(i) Emphasis on positive emotions

One of the most significant theories in the field of PP is Fredrickson's Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions (BBTPE) (2001, 2003, 2006). Fredrickson emphasises that there is a functional importance to PEs, which, until then, was regarded as having little value beyond indicating that everything is all right (Magyar-Moe, 2015). In essence, BBTPE posits that PEs, such as love, interest, joy, and contentment, broaden learners' thought-action repertoires, which help them build long-term personal resources such as resilience and coping skills (Gregersen et al., 2016a). This theory is discussed in detail in Section 2.8.2.1.

To date, several studies have used Fredrickson's BBTPE as a foundation to investigate PP strategies that can effectively manage learners' LA. For example, advocating that happy learners learn and score better (Oishi et al., 2007; Achor, 2010, as cited in Helgesen, 2016), Helgesen (2016) suggests that teachers should provide more opportunities for learners to experience PEs while remembering and savouring past happy events.

Similarly, an experimental study by Jin et al. (2021) found that reminiscing about FL proficiency development significantly diminished the LA of Chinese university students. The

study was conducted by qualitatively analysing learners' self-reports to discover what they had reminisced about and their emotional experiences. The results revealed that participants reminisced over multiple areas related to English proficiency; some aspects were linguistic, while some were non-linguistic (Jin et al., 2020). The learners also reported experiencing an array of PEs compared to the smaller number of negative emotions (3:1 in frequency) they experienced during the reminiscing process. Jin et al. (2021) claim that reminiscence that leads to savouring positive experiences can lower the LA of learners.

(ii) Application of character strengths

PP reminds us that everybody possesses their own resources and strengths (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Application of these strengths in the learning process will essentially boost the positivity of the learners. In the language classroom, teachers should tap into the resources and strengths of learners and provide opportunities to build on those strengths. For example, MacIntyre et al. (2015) suggest a strength-based approach centred around courage to cope with LA. They believe enhancing character strengths (e.g., courage) encourages learners to move forward in their language learning journey despite the negative emotional barriers (e.g., anxiety) they sometimes experience. MacIntyre et al. (2015) further mention that courage is a shield that protects the language learner psychology from anxiety waves. They offer four activities that can improve the courage of language learners: Putting on my brave face, Drawing on community to persevere, Imagining integrity and Zestful zeal.

According to the Values in Action (VIA) Classification System developed by Peterson and Seligman in 2004, there are 24 character strengths that fall under six virtue categories (see Table 2.1). These strengths are seen as "stable and general but also shaped by the individual's setting and thus capable of change" (Peterson, & Seligman, 2004, as cited in Gregersen et al., 2021, p. 14).

Table 2.1

VIA Classification of Virtues and Strengths (adapted from MacIntyre, 2016, p. 7)

Virtue	Character strength
Wisdom	Creativity, Curiosity, Love of learning, Judgement, Perspective
Courage	Bravery, Perseverance, Honesty, Zest
Humanity	Love, Kindness, Social Intelligence
Temperance	Forgiveness, Humility, Prudence, Self-Regulation
Justice	Fairness, Leadership, Teamwork
Transcendence	Appreciation of beauty and excellence, Gratitude, Humour, Spirituality, Hope

Gregersen et al. (2021) examined the efficacy of using character strengths to reduce second language writing anxiety in Arabic university students. The students were first asked to identify their signature strengths using the VIA online survey and explore the efficacy of using those strengths to alleviate their LA. The results showed a reduction of LA at individual levels. For instance, a female participant, Noor, reported a 30% decrease in her anxiety levels after applying her signature strengths to writing. The researchers further pointed out that PP interventions would be effective if they were personalised to the needs of individual learners.

(iii) The EMPATHICS model

To enable its application to the language learning and teaching domain, Oxford (2016) expanded Seligman's multifaceted PERMA model of well-being (Positive emotions; Engagement; Relationships, Meaning in life, and Accomplishment) and renamed the new paradigm EMPATHICS. The nine components of the EMPATHICS (Emotion and empathy,

Meaning and motivation, Perseverance, including resilience, hope and optimism, Agency and autonomy, Time, Hardiness and habits of mind, Intelligences, Character strengths, and Self factors (self-efficacy, self-concept, self-esteem, self-verification) model emphasise the psychological well-being of language learners (Jin et al., 2020) and provide insights into the unique characteristics of successful language learners compared to the less successful others who struggle to achieve success (Gregersen et al., 2016a). Oxford (2017) states that LA is specifically associated with low emotional intelligence and a lack of flow, agency, hope and optimism. Hence, she believes strategies that boost the above factors will reduce the LA of language learners.

Some researchers have used EMPATHICS as a base to devise PP interventions to ameliorate the LA of language learners. For instance, Jin et al. (2020) used an exploratory approach by modifying learner behaviour to alleviate LA. They believed learners' LA could be reduced by creating a formal contract to speak in the FL class. The researchers found that contracting speaking not only significantly reduced LA in their participants, but also "increased learners' engagement, self-efficacy, self-reflection, reduced fear, and cultivated both character strengths and positive emotions" (p. 5). The researchers claim that the contract triggered many components of Oxford's (2016) EMPATHICS, including perseverance, courage, hope and self-related dimensions. This is discussed in detail in Section 6.4.3.2.

(iv) Application of the 'flow' concept

'Flow' is an optimal psychological state that arises from complete immersion in an intrinsically motivating activity. Flow is also characterised by intense focus, engagement, and a balance between challenge and skill, which establishes clear goals and a sense of control, leading to a loss of self-consciousness and effortlessness so that the individual loses track of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Czimmermann & Piniel, 2017). Oxford (2017) stresses that

anxious language learners usually lack intrinsic motivation and seldom experience flow in the language learning process. "Worry muddies their thinking, reduces their creativity, wreaks havoc with their strategies and lowers their effectiveness" (p. 184). Hence, Oxford (2017) believes activities that increase language learners' flow and intrinsic motivation, such as positive self-talk and savouring, can reduce their anxiety.

Additionally, the literature reveals some strategies that have been highlighted by both traditional and PP approaches to lower the anxiety of language learners. For instance, there is a consensus among positive psychologists that people are happy when they build community, social networks and intimate relationships (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). They note that close relationships among peers and teacher/s in language classrooms might result in low anxiety in language learners (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). A short-term intervention study conducted by Nagahashi (2007) also demonstrated the potential of cooperative learning activities to help reduce learners' LA, since such activities foster a sense of community among learners and provide mutual emotional support. The same has been stressed by Young (1990, p. 550; 1991, p. 428) in her articles discussing how "club membership", "group membership" and "target language group identification" help reduce learners' affective filter. Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) propose that friendly, caring and supportive environments that do not promote competitiveness and self-comparisons among learners have the potential to grow into supportive communities. They recommend that teachers implement small groups in the classroom, which helps build rapport among learners, engage in teamwork, experience positive group dynamics and provide opportunities to support each other linguistically, socially and emotionally. In their seminal work on 'Capitalizing on Language Learners' Individuality', they offer teachers and learners a myriad of activities that orient learners to pay attention to their positive experiences, and promote community building, and facilitate positive interaction. Their prime intention was to manage LA by creating a "classroom

comfort zone" where teachers and learners as individuals and as a community mutually support and encourage each other throughout the process (Gregersen et al., 2017, p. 112).

Singing has also been identified by both traditional and PP approaches as a strategy that can alleviate LA (Dewaele, Chen, et al., 2019; Dolean, 2016). While music creates a pleasant classroom atmosphere, melodies and rhythm can evoke learners' positive emotions (Fonseca-Mora & Machancoses, 2016).

In summary, the strategies discussed under PP concentrate more on what makes learners develop, flourish, and thrive in the language learning journey. It does not limit its influence only to the language classroom but extends it to the learners' lives outside the classroom by helping their personal development through nurturing positive characteristics.

2.8.2.1 Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (BBTPE)

One key theory underpinning PP is Fredrickson's BBTPE (2001, 2003, 2006). Through this theory, Fredrickson explores the nature and function of PEs (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014) and emphasises the functional difference between positive and negative emotions. Fredrickson (2001, 2003) explains that while PEs broaden the individual's attention and build resources for the future, negative emotions narrow the attention, restrict behaviour options and predispose an individual to specific action tendencies (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014). However, she also stresses that positive and negative emotions are not opposing ends of a continuum but only different dimensions of experience (MacIntyre, 2021). According to Fredrickson (2001), PEs may affect an individual in several ways:

(i) PEs such as joy, satisfaction, love, pride and interest broaden "momentary thought-action repertoires, widening the array of the thoughts and actions that come to mind" (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 220).

(ii) Over time, these broadened thoughts and actions build “enduring personal resources” (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 220). These resources can be cognitive, psychological, social, or physical. For example, friendships developed through interactions and smiles are social resources, while the ability to be mindful of the present moment is a cognitive resource. These resources act as reserves and can be used when facing a challenging or threatening situation in the future. In other words, PEs broaden individual perspectives in such ways that these widened outlooks completely reshape the individuals (Fredrickson et al., 2008).

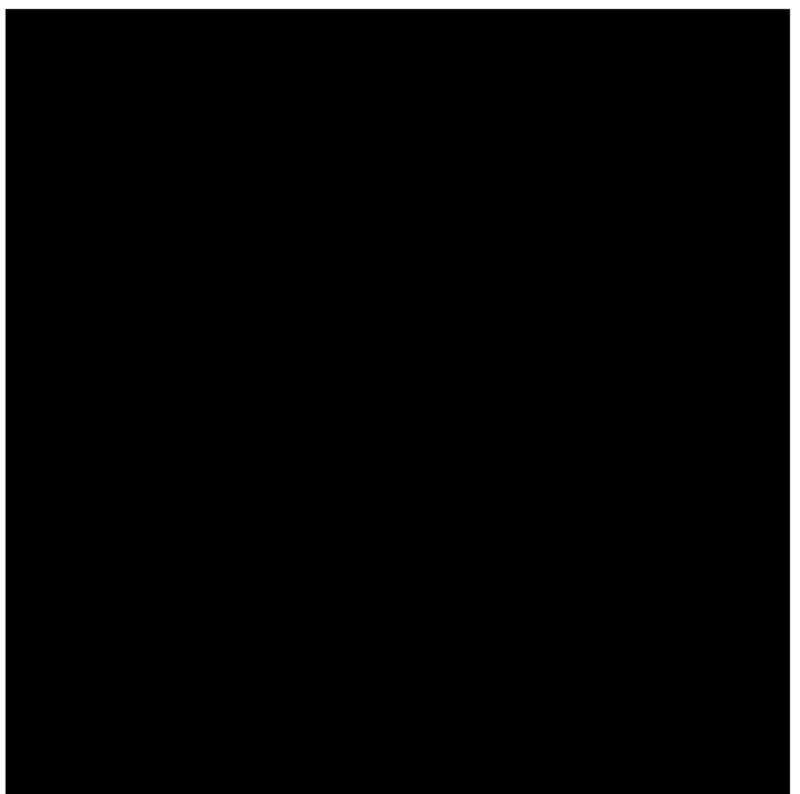
(iii) PEs will “undo lingering negative emotions” (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 221). In other words, if one experiences PEs in the context of negative emotions, the broadening power of PEs has the potential to undo the effects of negative emotions.

(iv) PEs stimulate and build resilience and “trigger upward spirals toward enhanced emotional well-being” (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 224). In other words, people who experience PEs frequently become more resilient and build and enhance their coping skills.

Figure 2.2 illustrates the cyclical journey of PEs and how it leads to the psychological resilience and emotional well-being of the individuals. Accordingly, individuals who experience more PEs than others broaden their scope of attention and thinking over time, which make them more resilient with increased coping skills in the face of adversity. These increased coping skills in turn predict future experiences of PE (Fredrickson, 2001).

Figure 2.2

Cycle of Positive Emotions Based on Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions



Fredrickson's (2001) BBTPE was introduced to the field of applied linguistics by the seminal work of MacIntyre and Gregersen in 2012. In their discussion of the power of PEs, MacIntyre and Gregersen emphasise the need to focus on creating and continuing positive moods and emotions in learners. As positive and negative emotions operate in qualitatively different ways, one should focus on increasing the quantity of PEs instead of trying to avoid experiencing all negative emotions. Experiencing PEs does not indicate the absence of negative emotions. They do not have a seesaw relationship (MacIntyre, 2021), and the functional difference with positive emotional experiences is that they build resources that have the potential to help individuals when dealing with future adversity (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Fredrickson (2001) lists tendencies that may result from PEs and their

broadening power. Table 2.2 describes how positive emotions create various thought-action tendencies that go beyond the usual patterns of thinking and acting.

Table 2.2

Positive Emotions and the Resultant Action Tendencies (adapted from Fredrickson, 2001, p. 220)

Positive emotion	Action tendencies
Joy	Urge to play, expand limits, be creative
Interest	Urge to explore, absorb new information and experiences, development of the self
Contentment	Urge to savour present events, integrate them to perceive self and the world in new ways.
Pride	Urge to share achievements with others and imagine future achievements.
Love	Amalgamation of PEs (e.g., joy, interest, contentment) experienced within safe and close relationships that predict future PEs.

MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) argue that teachers should try to inspire PEs to enhance language learning. As joy encourages play, interest encourages exploration, contentment encourages savouring and integration, and love ensures the continuation of experiencing these PEs, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) question: “What could be healthier for language growth than learners who want to play, explore, integrate and establish relationships?” (p. 209).

One significant benefit of PEs is their capacity to fuel and build psychological resilience in individuals. Resilience could shape learners into explorers who continuously search for new strategies to improve their language proficiency rather than worrying about their deficiencies and inadequacies (Fresacher, 2016). Most importantly, “resilient individuals

are said to bounce back from stressful experiences quickly and efficiently, just as resilient metals bend but do not break" (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 222). A study by Fredrickson and Joiner substantiates this argument by showing how individuals who experienced more PEs had more resilience to adversity over time and how improved resilience and coping skills, in turn, projected more PEs over time (2000, as cited in Fredrickson, 2001). The literature reveals several ways of enhancing learners' resilience by eliciting their PEs:

(i) Resilient individuals use coping mechanisms such as humour, creative exploration, relaxation, and optimism to reduce the intensity of stressful experiences and to recover fast from such experiences (MacIntyre and Gregersen, 2012). Therefore, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) suggest that teachers should model these strengths in the classroom, encourage learners to develop these strengths and choose language activities that facilitate the development of learner resilience. In other words, activities that learners "enjoy, find interesting and love doing" (p. 210) elicit PEs and frequent experiences of PEs facilitate the development of learners' resilience.

(ii) Another way of building resilience is by creating a supportive social context in the language classroom (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). There is a cyclical relationship between PEs, resilience and positive classroom climate. Hence, teachers should focus more on eliciting learners' PEs, constant experiences of which can make learners resilient (Fredrickson, 2001). Resilient individuals, in turn, elicit PEs in themselves and others (Fredrickson, 2004). This relationship contributes to creating a positive and supportive classroom climate.

(iii) As discussed earlier, safe and close relationships play a significant role in producing PEs in learners. Therefore, teachers can develop close interpersonal relationships with learners where learners can repeatedly experience PEs. According to MacIntyre &

Gregersen (2012), teachers can reduce their physical and psychological distance from learners by providing teacher immediacy in linguistic and non-linguistic ways.

(iv) Teachers can also focus on team building and facilitating positive emotional experiences within those teams.

In addition, Fredrickson (2004) reports that her students experienced PEs due to an activity that required them to find the positive meaning and long-term benefits of all sorts of daily experiences they encountered.

In sum, PEs broaden learners' attention and thinking and can counter and help overcome the debilitating effects of negative emotions. PEs can undo the lingering effects of negative emotions, and they also maximise the absorption of language input. Further, they build learners' personal resources so that they can utilise them to attain fast recovery from future adversity. Additionally, PEs boost learners' resilience so that they are confident to explore and are not afraid of negative evaluation while taking linguistic risks (Dewaele, 2022). Therefore, this approach seems to be effective in managing LA that specifically originates from out-of-class sources.

The previous sections of the chapter has repeatedly highlighted the unique and predominantly negative nature of sociocultural dynamics related to English in Sri Lanka. As ESL teachers lack the power to control these negative dynamics outside the classroom, total exclusion of the negative emotions triggered by these sources is not the sought-after goal. On the other hand, even if teachers manage to exclude learners' negative emotions within the walls of the classroom, they will still be affected by the negativities in society the moment they step outside the classroom. Hence, an approach that can reduce the intensity and importance of negative emotions is needed for this context. To achieve this, learners should be exposed to more experiences of PEs than experiences associated with negative emotions.

It is also vital to make learners resilient so they can successfully deal with future negative situations. To this end, instead of focusing on eliminating the learners' negative emotions, the best practice would be to increase the opportunities for learners to experience PEs frequently in the language classroom. Such an approach will eventually help learners develop positive learner characteristics and acquire other necessary mechanisms, including the resilience needed to face negativity outside the classroom now and in future. Therefore, it will be effective to use PP approaches, especially Fredrickson's (2001, 2003, 2006) BBTPE, when devising strategies to manage LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

The above discussion highlights the importance of integrating both TP-informed and PP-informed strategies to successfully manage LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. Such integration can effectively address all source types of LA, including learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class.

2.9 Directions from the Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Although the LA of ESL/EFL learners has been examined and various strategies and interventions to reduce it have been studied around the world, the current review of the literature has not found any in-depth investigation of sources of LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan universities. There is also a paucity of studies on developing LA-management strategies specific to ESL learners in the Sri Lankan context.

Several key directions in the literature are discussed below to build the conceptual framework of the study:

(i) A need for an in-depth study to investigate sources of LA specific to the Sri Lankan context.

Even though there is a considerable amount of evidence for the omnipresence of LA in ESL classrooms at Sri Lankan universities, there is a lack of research that explores LA sources specific to ESL learners in Sri Lanka. As highlighted in the literature review, due to the unique and complex nature of the sociocultural dynamics related to English in Sri Lanka, it is not appropriate to generalise findings regarding LA sources from other contexts to the Sri Lankan context. Therefore, there is a need for research to explore sources of LA specific to the Sri Lankan context.

(ii) A need to devise context-specific strategies to manage LA.

As a post-colonial South Asian country, Sri Lanka has a complicated relationship with English. Further, some features of Sri Lankan education culture differ significantly from those of other countries (e.g., Western countries). Therefore, strategies, interventions, and practices recommended to reduce LA based on other contexts might not be productive when applied to Sri Lankan classrooms. Therefore, it is vital to carefully consider the sociocultural factors of Sri Lanka before designing strategies and interventions to manage LA.

(iii) A need to consider the perspectives of both learners and teachers, especially in research conducted on classroom emotions.

Learners, teachers and classroom context are all intertwined variables that influence learners' LA. The literature suggests that these three factors can be effectively utilised to manage LA successfully. Therefore, research investigating strategies to manage learners' LA should consider the perspectives of both teachers and learners in the language classroom.

(iv) A need to treat learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class sources as interrelated.

The literature in the field indicates a strong emphasis on learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources. However, it should be noted that when teachers and learners come to the

language classroom, they bring with them a complex mix of their own and societal attitudes toward the language, language speakers and language learning and teaching. Hence, in-class language performance is hindered not only by learner-specific and in-class sources but also, to a greater extent, by out-of-class anxiety sources as well. However, the existing body of literature extensively examines the intricate relationship between LA and its individual sources (Jiang & Dewaele, 2020). In contrast, it is when learner-specific, in-class, and out-of-class anxiety sources are viewed as interrelated and interdependent that a comprehensive understanding of the sources of LA can be achieved.

(v) A need to integrate approaches informed by TP and PP.

It is apparent from the existing literature on LA that neither the strategies proposed by TP nor the strategies suggested by PP alone would be able to manage LA successfully in the Sri Lankan context. This is because strategies informed by TP focus principally on ameliorating LA that stems from learner-specific and in-class sources with insufficient focus on investigating strategies for managing LA that stems from out-of-class sources. To redress this gap, it would be effective to integrate PP-informed approaches to develop strategies to help learners manage LA. This is because PP does not focus on eliminating LA but aims at maximising the PEs and positive experiences of language learners in the classroom. The goal is to diminish the intensity and importance given to negative emotions by eliciting more PEs. Also, PEs have additional benefits. For instance, they improve learners' coping skills, and frequent experiences of PEs develop learners' resilience, which is a critical need for ESL learners in Sri Lanka to combat their own colonial mindsets and other negative sociocultural dynamics surrounding English in Sri Lanka.

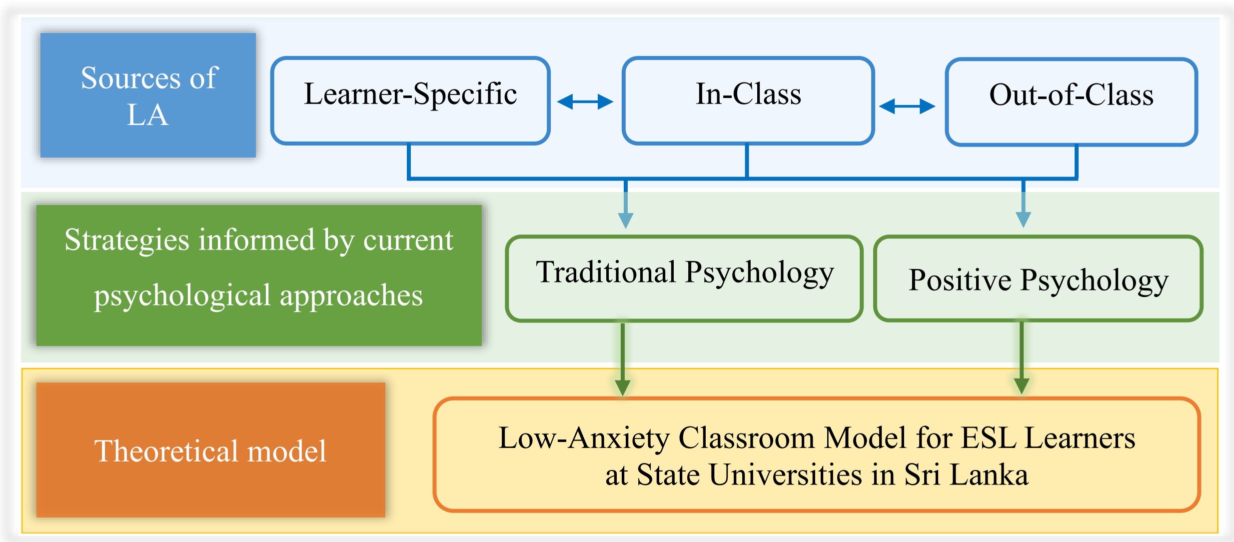
(vi) Need for a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners in state universities of Sri Lanka.

As repeatedly noted in the literature review, the most productive way to manage learners' LA is to create a less stressful classroom where students are happy, relaxed, and safe from negative evaluations and ridicule. By investigating context-specific sources of LA and anxiety-management strategies and integrating TP-informed and PP-informed approaches, this study attempts to devise a tailor-made model of a low-anxiety classroom that is effective in managing LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

The conceptual mapping of the current study is shown in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3

Conceptual Framework of the Study



As depicted in Figure 2.3, a low-anxiety classroom model is informed by integrating strategies drawing on both TP and PP. The most significant feature of this model is that it can address all three sources of LA: Learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class. This integration of TP and PP approaches and the resulting classroom model can expect to provide useful information about LA and its management, not only for Sri Lanka and other post-colonial South-Asian countries, but also for the rest of the world. It is worth noting that, to date,

research at a global level has not produced a low-anxiety ESL classroom model integrating approaches informed by both TP and PP.

(vii) A need for a definition of LA that captures its complexity and multifaceted nature.

Horwitz et al. (1986) define FLA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process" (p. 128). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) define LA as "the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient" (p. 5). Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) define it as "the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning and using a second language and is especially relevant in a classroom where self-expression takes place" (Daubney et al., 2017, p. 1). Drawing on the directions of the literature review and extending the current definitions of LA, the researcher defines LA as follows: Language anxiety is a transitory emotion that ESL/EFL learners experience when they respond to the situational demands of second/foreign language engagement amid the complex interactions of learner-specific, in-class, and out-of-class factors.

2.10 Summary

This chapter reviewed the sources of LA under three broad categories: (i) learner-specific, (ii) in-class, and (iii) out-of-class. The chapter specifically highlighted the importance of exploring sociocultural factors related to English and its speakers in a specific society. This is because the attitudes and behaviours of teachers and learners are not formed in a vacuum but are inevitably shaped by the attitudes of society, which they then bring into the language classroom. It is, therefore, imperative to ascertain LA sources specific to ESL learners in Sri Lanka. Similarly, this discussion emphasised the need to devise context-specific strategies to

manage LA. The inadequacy of TP-informed or PP-informed strategies to manage all three types of LA sources was also highlighted. In this regard, the chapter examined the potential of approaches informed by both TP and PP. By investigating LA sources and anxiety-management strategies specific to the Sri Lankan context and integrating TP-informed and PP-informed strategies, this study offers to develop a model for a low-LA classroom that is specifically tailored to the needs of ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities.

Research methods for investigating sources of LA and anxiety-management strategies will be presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter details the methodology employed to collect and analyse data in the current study. Following a discussion of research objectives and questions, the chapter outlines the research design and the context of the study. The research methods, implementation, ethical considerations, and methodological limitations for each research phase are thoroughly examined in subsequent sections. After discussing the study's approach to data analysis, the final section describes the authenticity and trustworthiness of the study.

3.2 Research Objectives and Questions

The study aimed to create a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners in state universities of Sri Lanka. The specific objectives of the study were to (i) investigate the primary sources of LA among ESL learners in state universities of Sri Lanka, especially when they engage in in-class speaking activities, and (ii) explore strategies for managing their LA. Since research questions are derived from the aims, purposes and objectives of the research (Cohen et al., 2017), the following research questions were generated:

(i) What are the main sources of LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities, particularly when they engage in English-speaking activities in the ESL classroom?

(ii) What are the strategies ESL teachers can employ to manage the LA of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka?

3.3 Research Design

Research design is mapped according to its "fitness for purpose", which indicates that the purposes of the research determine the research design (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 173).

The purposes of the current study that informed the relevance of a qualitative design are as follows:

(i) The study requires an in-depth understanding of LA;

> This can be achieved by implementing a qualitative design, which provides a "complex, detailed understanding of the issue" (Creswell, 2013, p. 48).

(ii) LA is a complex emotion that significantly depends on the individuality of learners;

> Individuality is a serious concern in qualitative research. Qualitative research "begins with individuals and [then] sets out to understand and interpret their experiences of a particular phenomenon" (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 23).

(iii) LA is a context-specific and context-dependent construct that interacts with a myriad of factors related to the learner, teacher and social milieu. Hence, understanding the contexts or settings where the participants experience the problem or issue is critical (Creswell, 2013).

> Qualitative research has satisfactorily addressed this [i.e., the need to understand the setting], for it is conducted in the natural settings of the participants, allowing the researcher to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' authentic experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The purposes of the current study and the characteristics of the qualitative research paradigm indicate the appropriateness of using a qualitative research design to investigate the sources that evoke LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka and explore strategies for effectively managing it.

3.4 Research Context

Currently, seventeen state universities in Sri Lanka function under the purview of the UGC, the apex body with the authority to select and allocate students to state universities in Sri Lanka (University Grants Commission, 2023c). However, during the data collection period for this study, there were only fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka. It was only after the completion of the data collection that two new state universities were added to the list.

All state universities offer ESL programmes to undergraduates as a mandatory module in the first year to improve their language competence (Navaz, 2012). Some universities also continue offering ESL programmes for students in their second year. Although the universities do not share one standard syllabus for ESL courses, ESL syllabuses in all state universities are required to be aligned with the standards prescribed in the University Tests of English Language (Dhanapala, 2021). Consequently, there are no significant differences in the content, aims, objectives and learning outcomes of ESL syllabuses at different Sri Lankan universities.

One of the most significant variations that leads to quantitative and qualitative differences in teaching and learning across state universities in Sri Lanka is their geographic location, based on which the universities are categorised as regional or metropolitan (Dhanapala, 2021). The geographic location of a university, directly and indirectly, influences the university culture, availability of physical resources, number of students admitted, and number of academic staff members available (Attanayake, 2018; University Grants Commission, 2023c). For instance, most universities in metropolitan areas have a long history and enjoy a high reputation (e.g., the University of Colombo and the University of Peradeniya). Therefore, students who score high marks in their G.C.E. (A/L) examination prefer to enter established universities in metropolitan cities. This creates a huge disparity in

the academic calibre of the students across universities. Qualified academics exacerbate this diversity by applying to and securing positions in metropolitan universities due to their reputation and easy access to facilities and privileges in urban areas. As a result, the number of students and academic staff members in metropolitan universities is higher than the number found in regional universities (Attanayake, 2018).

Further, the availability of various culturally and intellectually rich activities for students beyond the university largely depends upon the university's geographic location (Attanayake, 2018), which, therefore, determines the language exposure students receive outside the classroom. Thus, the location of the university plays a significant role in the nature of teaching and learning in tertiary education in Sri Lanka.

The current study implemented one data collection instrument (an online open-ended questionnaire) across the whole university system (comprising fifteen universities at the time) to capture the impact of such variations on ESL teaching and learning. Due to time constraints and the scope of the study, the other three data collection instruments (in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and observation sessions) were administered in only three universities (see Table 3.1). The participating universities are identified by capital letters hereafter.

Table 3.1

Characteristics of Participating Universities

University characteristics	Selected university
Metropolitan	University A
Regional (educationally disadvantaged)	University B
Regional	University C

It is worth noting that 16 out of 25 districts in Sri Lanka are identified and classified as ‘educationally disadvantaged districts’ (University Grants Commission, 2023c). The students in universities located in educationally disadvantaged districts do not receive rich exposure to English outside the university. To incorporate a greater range of university types, University B was selected from an educationally disadvantaged district.

3.5 First Research Phase of the Study

The study comprised two research phases: (i) the first phase involved collecting data from ESL teachers, and (ii) the second phase involved gathering data from ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. There are three main reasons for collecting data from teachers first: (i) It was more convenient to contact teachers since their contact information was available on official websites. In contrast, learners had to be contacted through the teachers; (ii) selecting learners from the classes of the teachers who had agreed to participate in the study was necessary, since only then could the researcher obtain an accurate picture of the ESL classrooms by comparing and contrasting the responses given by teachers and learners; (iii) the responses of teachers who participated in the questionnaire and interviews informed the focus group (FG) interview guide. Therefore, it was more practical, beneficial and convenient to collect data from the teachers first.

In the first phase, the following research methods were utilised to gather data from ESL teachers: (i) online open-ended questionnaires, and (ii) semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The subsequent sections explain the research instruments, selection of participants, human ethics procedures, and implementation and limitations of the research instruments in the study’s first phase.

3.5.1 Online open-ended questionnaire for teachers

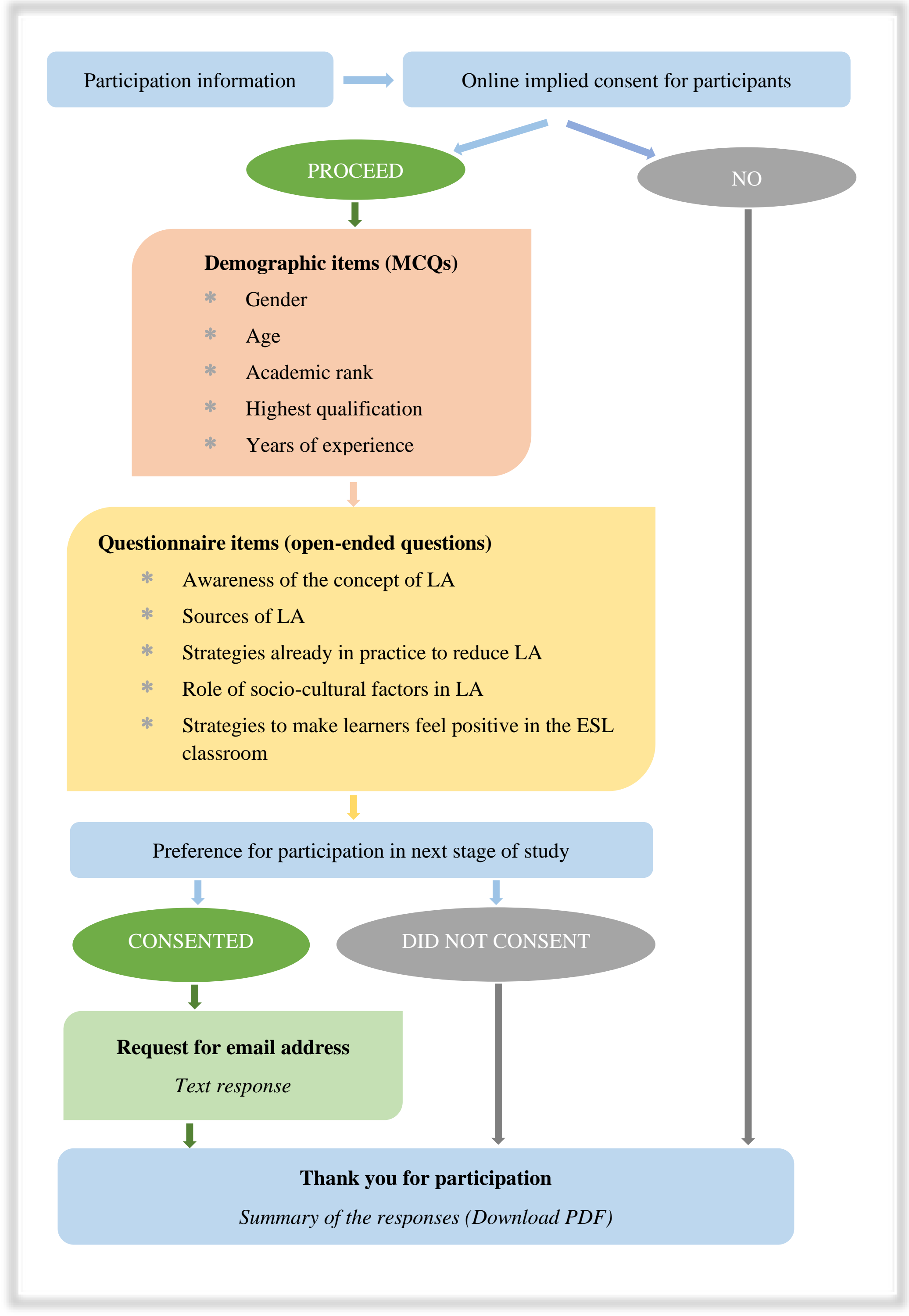
Questionnaires are among the most effective methods of eliciting standardised and free responses to a broad range of questions from a large sample or population (Cohen et al., 2017). This study designed a questionnaire to gather data from all ESL teachers in the state university system of Sri Lanka. The questionnaire was informed by the teacher interview questions of Tanveer's (2007) study, existing literature on LA, and the researcher's knowledge and experience gathered from working as an ESL teacher for more than 15 years in a state university in Sri Lanka. The questions were woven around LA to elicit teachers' views concerning sources of learners' LA and strategies to mitigate it.

3.5.1.1 Structure of the questionnaire

The structure of the questionnaire is depicted in Figure 3.1. The first page of the questionnaire provided essential information on the research, researcher, data management processes and the rights of participants. After obtaining the respondent's consent to participate in the questionnaire survey, the third page required them to respond to five demographic items: Gender, age, academic rank, highest qualification, and years of experience as an ESL teacher in the higher education sector of Sri Lanka. The purpose of including these demographic items was to ascertain whether teachers' demographic characteristics affected learners' LA.

Figure 3.1

Structure of the Online Open-Ended Questionnaire (adapted from Bartley-Heterick, 2021)



Questions were open-ended since such questions "can catch the authenticity, richness, depth of response, honesty and candour which…are hallmarks of valid qualitative data" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 475). Open-ended questions are more suitable for investigating complex issues, and the response received for them can include "gems" of information (p. 475). Five open-ended items were included in the questionnaire, with no restrictions on the maximum number of words respondents could write in response to each question. The questions sought answers on how teachers perceive LA, sources of LA, context-specific sociocultural factors that evoke learners' LA, strategies they use to reduce it and techniques that they utilise in the classroom to create and maintain learners' positive mental state.

Since the questionnaire was anonymous, the respondents were asked to provide their email addresses at the end of the questionnaire if they were willing to participate in the next phase of the research. They were further informed that the next phase would include a 90-minute interview conducted through the ZOOM platform at a time decided by themselves (Appendix A).

The questionnaire was designed using the Qualtrics web-based online survey platform. There are two reasons for choosing Qualtrics for designing the questionnaire: (i) Qualtrics is an easy-to-use platform that can create, distribute, and analyse questionnaires efficiently; and (ii) UNE holds a site license for Qualtrics survey software, which is free to UNE staff and higher degree students. The following measures were taken to encourage participants to complete the questionnaire:

(i) The questionnaire was designed in a simple manner to save download time. In addition to the size of the file, download speed depends on many other factors, including browser, power, location and time of the day (Cohen et al., 2017). Therefore, it is important not to create a large file with many fancy graphics just to

entice participants. However, interactive features were considered desirable to make the questionnaire attractive to the participants. Hence, as illustrated in Figure 3.2, black and white were used for font colour and interface respectively, while green was used for buttons and highlighting selected answers.

Figure 3.2

Presentation of the Online Open-Ended Questionnaire

Years of experience as an ESL teacher in higher education sector of Sri Lanka

Less than a year

1 to 5 years

6 to 10 years

11 to 15 years

16 to 20 years

21 to 25 years

Other (Please specify)

PREVIOUS NEXT

(ii) The researcher ensured that respondents needed only minimum computer literacy to complete the questionnaire. Only two types of questions were included: Multiple-choice (MCQ) and open-ended questions.

(iii) The response progress was indicated next to each question throughout the questionnaire (Appendix A). This indicated how much of the questionnaire had been completed. This feature is useful especially when the internet connection or the browser is slow. In such a situation, participants tend to abandon the questionnaire,

thinking that they have more left to answer than they have. Even though the questionnaire in this study was short, it was believed that the progress indicator would have motivated the participants to complete the questionnaire.

(iv) Two types of reminders were given for demographic items and open-ended questions:

- If participants skipped a demographic item and attempted to move to the next page, a reminder "Please answer this question" would appear in Red above the missed question. The question itself would also be highlighted. The participants were able to move to the next page only when they had completed the questions on the current page;
- If participants skipped an open-ended question and attempted to move to the next page, a reminder "Your response must be at least five characters" would appear in Red above the missed question. The question itself would also be highlighted. Once the skipped item was completed, participants could move to the next page.

3.5.1.2 Ethical considerations

Ethics approval was sought from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England through an *Expedited Review* prior to the commencement of the data collection process. The approval for the data collection from the teachers (using online open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured, in-depth interviews) was granted on 26 May 2021, with approval number HE21-067 (Appendix B). There are no in-country ethical or other approval processes conducted by individual universities or the Ministry of Higher Education and Highways in Sri Lanka regarding anonymous questionnaires.

However, researchers must consider several ethical issues when administering questionnaires online, including "informed consent, anonymity, privacy and confidentiality, non-traceability, protection from harm, the precautionary principle and data security" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 367). A page on *Participation Information* was included to address these

requirements at the front of the online questionnaire, explaining the project's aims, confidentiality, right to withdraw, and data management (Appendix A). The second page of the questionnaire included an *Online Implied Consent for Participants* with information on the nature of participation, contribution, withdrawal procedure, data usage, anonymity, and confidentiality. As no name or signature was required, the consent was regarded as 'implied' and given when the *PROCEED* button at the bottom of the second page of the questionnaire was activated.

3.5.1.3 Selection of ESL teacher-participants

A non-probability, volunteer sampling technique was used to select teacher-participants for the online open-ended questionnaire. All ESL teachers at the fifteen state universities in Sri Lanka (whose official email addresses were available on the university website) were selected to participate in the online open-ended questionnaire. The researcher aimed to obtain the maximum participation of ESL teachers in the Sri Lankan university system for several reasons:

(i) Subtle differences in the subculture that are unique to each university

In addition to some common features, subcultures of Sri Lankan universities have features unique to their respective universities. *Ragging* is one such element. According to UGC, *ragging* refers to any intentional act by an individual or group of students that causes physical or psychological harm, resulting in humiliation, harassment, or intimidation of another person (2017, as cited in Wickramasinghe et al., 2023) (see Section 6.4.1 for additional information about *ragging*). Even though many universities have this element on their shared list of subcultural practices, the researcher's observations and experiences and informal discussions with ELT staff in various universities indicate that there are subtle variations in how each university views and practises *ragging*. In addition, a few universities

do not have *ragging* in their subculture. The intensity of *ragging*, the duration of the *ragging* period, rules imposed, types of behaviours encouraged/discouraged, and the kind of harassment and punishments given determine and shape the classroom behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, motivation, anxiety and a myriad of other affective factors associated with the learners who finally come to the language classroom. Therefore, it is inevitable that ESL teachers in each university have unique experiences of ESL learners in their classrooms.

(ii) Significant variations in student composition of universities

There is a variation in student composition across universities in Sri Lanka. The universities situated in areas where the dominant population is the minority of the country tend to attract students from the same minority group. For example, the University of Jaffna has a majority of Tamil students, while South Eastern University has a majority of Muslim students. Meanwhile, universities such as the University of Kelaniya, the University of Peradeniya, the University of Colombo, and the University of Ruhuna, which are located in areas where the majority is Sinhalese, have more Sinhalese students (University Grants Commission, 2023a). It is worth noting that the majority and the minority population in Sri Lanka have had varying attitudes towards English since colonisation (Canagarajah, 2005a; Herath, 2015; Lim, 2013). As a result, students of different ethnicities hold different views on English, its speakers and learning English. These views and attitudes significantly influence their classroom behaviour and other affective factors.

Furthermore, students who live in cities usually choose universities close to their home as their first preference in the university entrance application. Consequently, students who have had good exposure to English and facilities for learning English mostly enter metropolitan universities. Their attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and English competence can be very different, or mostly at a higher level than those students who come from rural or

educationally disadvantaged areas. Thus, there can be differences in students in different universities in relation to their English competence and related aspects. Consequently, ESL teachers in different universities may have different experiences and insights into language learners in their classrooms.

(iii) The quality of the academic staff in relation to their academic qualifications and experience

The statistics of universities clearly show that well-established, metropolitan universities have more PhD holders on their academic staff compared to regional universities (University Grants Commission, 2023b). Well-experienced and senior academics are often attracted to metropolitan universities mainly due to their reputation and location. In contrast, regional universities often employ fresh graduates to help eliminate academic staff shortages. The qualifications and experiences of the academic staff shape their classroom practices and behaviours. For instance, even though it is rewarding to be taught by an experienced senior academic, some students may find senior staff members more rigid and less amiable than younger staff members to whom learners can easily relate. However, the opposite can also be true: the limited knowledge and experience of young staff members may negatively influence learners, language teaching and learning processes and classroom climate. Since teacher, learner and classroom climate continuously influence each other, these subtle differences in teachers can create significant variations in learners' classroom behaviours and affective factors. Therefore, the researcher found it essential to investigate the attitudes, beliefs and classroom practices of ESL teachers in all age groups in relation to LA of ESL learners.

(iv) Physical resources available for English-related activities

There is considerable inequality in the physical resources (e.g., student-centred, spacious classrooms, space and equipment for self-learning centres and language labs)

available for English-related activities among universities in Sri Lanka. This may be because local and international funding organisations tend to favour metropolitan universities due to their large numbers of students and reputations. In addition, proposals developed by experienced, qualified, and senior staff at metropolitan universities are often better placed to win competitive grants awarded by the government in collaboration with international banks and institutions. Since the availability of physical resources significantly impacts the quality of language teaching and learning, there can be differences in attitudes and experiences between learners exposed to such environments and learners who are not as well-resourced. Consequently, ESL teachers may also have different attitudes towards and experiences of their learners' classroom behaviour, emotions, strengths and weaknesses. The researcher wanted to capture all these variations to obtain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' awareness, attitudes, and beliefs toward teaching anxious language learners in university classrooms.

(v) Opportunities to engage in professional development (PD) activities

There are limited opportunities for ESL teachers in regional universities in Sri Lanka to participate in PD activities. Due to the distance from main cities, they seldom attend seminars, training courses, workshops, or conferences that help develop their professional knowledge and skills. The lack of opportunities to learn about new developments in the field may have a negative impact on their classroom language teaching. Learners in such classrooms may also receive more negative experiences, such as LA, than positive outcomes. Therefore, the researcher realised the importance of collecting data from all ESL teachers in the whole university system in Sri Lanka.

(vi) Volunteer sampling decreases the generalisability of the findings

As Cohen et al. (2017) stated, non-probability and volunteer sampling may reduce the generalizability of the research findings. One reason for this is the personality of the volunteers compared to the non-volunteers. To solve this problem, Cohen et al. (2017) proposed (i) choosing large samples and (ii) contacting the participants by email to ensure the participation of non-volunteers. As explained earlier, this study adhered to both these guidelines by choosing all ESL teachers in the state university system as potential participants and contacting them through personalised emails. Further, as Solomon (2000) suggested, the researcher improved the response rate by sending two follow-up reminders to the participants.

The teacher-participants who participated in the survey are given pseudonyms hereafter, as below:

ST29

S for *surveyed*, **T** for *teacher*, **29** is the *participant's number*

Together (ST29) signifies, *Surveyed teacher 29*

3.5.1.4 Distributing questionnaires

The questionnaire link and the invitation to participate were sent to 185 potential participants in the 15 Sri Lankan state universities available at the time of data collection. Two reminders were sent: one after the second week and another at the beginning of the fourth week. The questionnaire survey was open for one month, from 31st May to 30th June 2021.

The questionnaire was administered online for 2 reasons: (i) The COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions required the researcher to shift the data collection methods from face-to-face methods to online mode, and (ii) universities in Sri Lanka are located in

different districts, requiring the researcher to travel long distances to implement the questionnaire in person. This was impractical due to the time constraints. Furthermore, there are many advantages in administering questionnaires online. To mention a few, they are cost-effective, less time-consuming, convenient, flexible, attractive, and environmentally friendly (Cohen et al., 2017). As a result, online data collection methods, especially internet surveys, have become very common in education research (Cohen et al., 2017; Denscombe, 2010). Most importantly, as Denscombe (2009) stated, online open-ended questions receive fewer item non-responses than paper-based surveys.

3.5.1.5 Limitations

Several limitations may be noted regarding the process of distributing online questionnaires among ESL teachers in 15 Sri Lankan state universities. First, some ESL teachers had not made their email addresses available on their university's official website. Second, it was found that some email addresses published on the university's website were incorrect; for instance, some had missing letters or numbers. Third, some ESL teachers had changed their email addresses but had forgotten to update them on the university's website. Fourth, some teachers rarely use the email address published on the university's website. Instead, they used their personal email address, which was unavailable on the university's official website. Fifth, most universities do not make available the email addresses of temporary lecturers or instructors on their official website. Hence, identifying and contacting teachers was a challenging process.

To address these limitations, the researcher took several steps to obtain the maximum participation of university ESL teachers in completing the questionnaire. In addition to the personalised emails sent to potential participants, the researcher sent a notice with the link to the questionnaire to the Heads of the DELTs to display on the notice board of the DELT in each university. These staff were further requested to circulate the questionnaire link through

an email among all the ESL teachers attached to the DELT. Furthermore, the Heads of DELTs were requested to verbally encourage ESL staff members to participate in the questionnaire survey. To secure the participation of ESL teachers and minimise the chances of dropping out or abandoning the questionnaire, the researcher sent two reminders to the email address of each potential participant explaining the importance of their participation in the survey.

Ninety-five responses were received out of a sample of 185 ESL teacher-participants from the 15 state universities of Sri Lanka. After the data were cleaned by removing two duplicate and 18 incomplete responses, 75 responses were considered valid to be included in the data analysis stage. The response rate for the online survey as a percentage of the total sample (185) was 40%. According to Cooksey (2007), this is an acceptable response rate.

3.5.2 Semi-structured, in-depth interviews

Qualitative interviews were used in the study since they can capture what surveys cannot, for instance, an in-depth understanding of an issue (Hochschild, 2009). In addition, qualitative interviews can provide further insights into data gathered from a survey (Cohen et al., 2017). According to Charmaz (2006), "qualitative interviewing provides an open-ended, in-depth exploration of an aspect of life about which the interviewee has substantial experience, often combined with considerable insight" (p. 29). Further, multiple sensory channels can be utilised to gather data when interviewing a person. This includes but is not limited to gathering data through verbal, non-verbal, and visual channels. Therefore, interviewing is considered a powerful and flexible research tool (Cohen et al., 2017).

As in-depth interviews may provide deep and detailed insights into a phenomenon under investigation (Guest et al., 2013), the interviews in this study were designed as one-on-one, in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews are usually semi-structured, one of the most

common data collection methods in qualitative research (McArdle et al., 2012). They are driven by the participant's responses (Cohen et al., 2017), which, in this case, allowed the researcher to fully understand the answers through probing, follow-up questions and analysing paralinguistic features (Harrell & Bradley, 2009; Ridenour & Newman, 2008). The researcher had an interview protocol, informed by Tanveer's (2007) interview questions and responses to this study's questionnaire. The protocol consisted of 19 questions (Appendix C), but the sequence of the questions was subject to the dynamics of specific interviews. Further, prompts and probes were used throughout the interviews when required.

3.5.2.1 Interview design

The first 11 questions in the interview protocol were general questions about the teacher's role in the ESL classroom and classroom practices. Teacher-participants could easily answer them by using their experience. The questions aimed to investigate the in-class sources that evoke learners' LA. The following seven questions were mostly 'how' and 'why' questions for which participants needed to think before answering. They mainly focused on the out-of-class factors that may contribute to learners' LA. As all questions were open-ended, the researcher could be flexible and build a good rapport with the participants. Further, this approach allowed the researcher to elicit answers in more depth. Deliberate attempts were made to form questions briefly and straightforwardly, avoiding embarrassing and awkward questions (Cohen et al., 2017; Kvale, 1996). Interestingly, open-ended questions sometimes led the interviews in unanticipated directions, revealing facts and relationships hitherto unknown.

3.5.2.2 Ethical considerations

As explained in Section 3.5.1.2, ethics approval was granted on 26 May 2021, with approval number HE21-067 (Appendix B), to collect data from the ESL teachers in state universities of Sri Lanka using semi-structured, in-depth interviews.

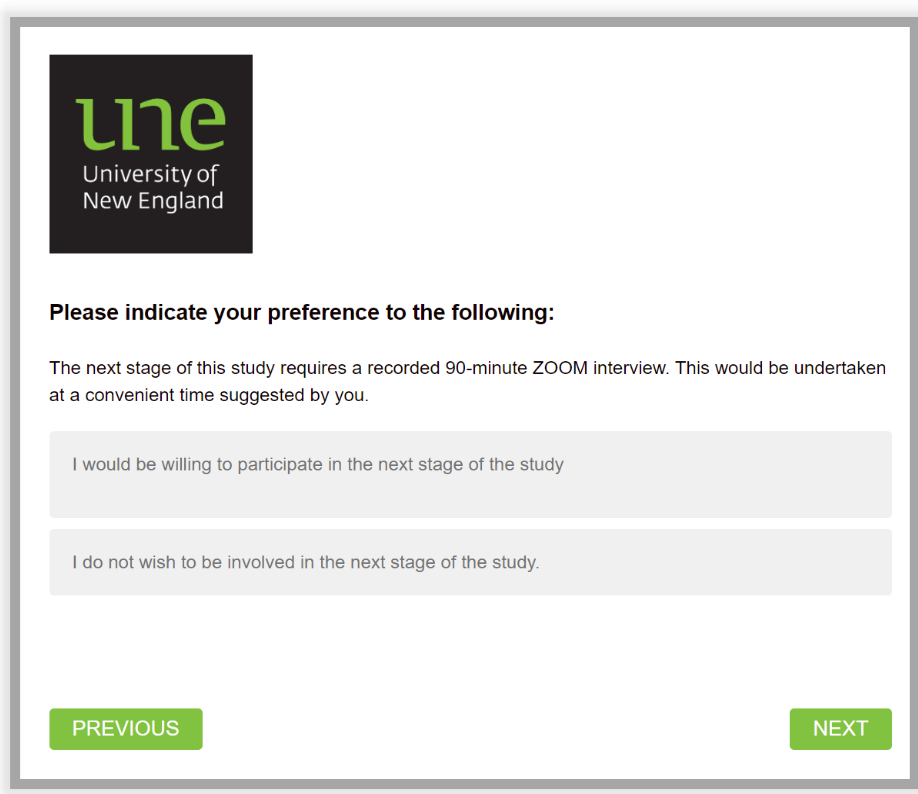
Before collecting data through interviews, approval was sought from the Heads/Deans of the Departments/Faculties of the three selected universities (Approval letters are not attached due to confidential reasons). After obtaining their approval, the potential ESL teacher-participants were directly contacted by the researcher using the email addresses they provided at the end of the online questionnaire. With a brief introduction to the aims and objectives of the study, an *Information Sheet for Interview Participants* (Appendix D) and a *Consent Form for Interview Participants* (Appendix E) were sent to each of the prospective participants via email. The teachers who returned the *Consent Form for Interview Participants* with their signatures were selected as participants for this phase of the study. Additional safety precautions were put in place for the participants: (i) Participants were informed that they were free to communicate their concerns if they felt uncomfortable during the interview; (ii) participants were encouraged to have a mobile phone with them and their safety was monitored; (iii) participants were provided with local contact numbers for any complaints; (iv) interviews took place where participants felt comfortable in a private space (at their homes or personal office) with minimal background noise and distraction; and (v) each teacher-participant was provided with a private Zoom meeting link and password to participate in the interview.

3.5.2.3 Selection of ESL teacher-participants

As shown in Figure 3.3, the last section of the questionnaire survey required participants to indicate their preference for participating in the next stage of the study, i.e. the semi-structured, in-depth interview.

Figure 3.3

Indication of Preference to Participate in the Next Stage of the Study

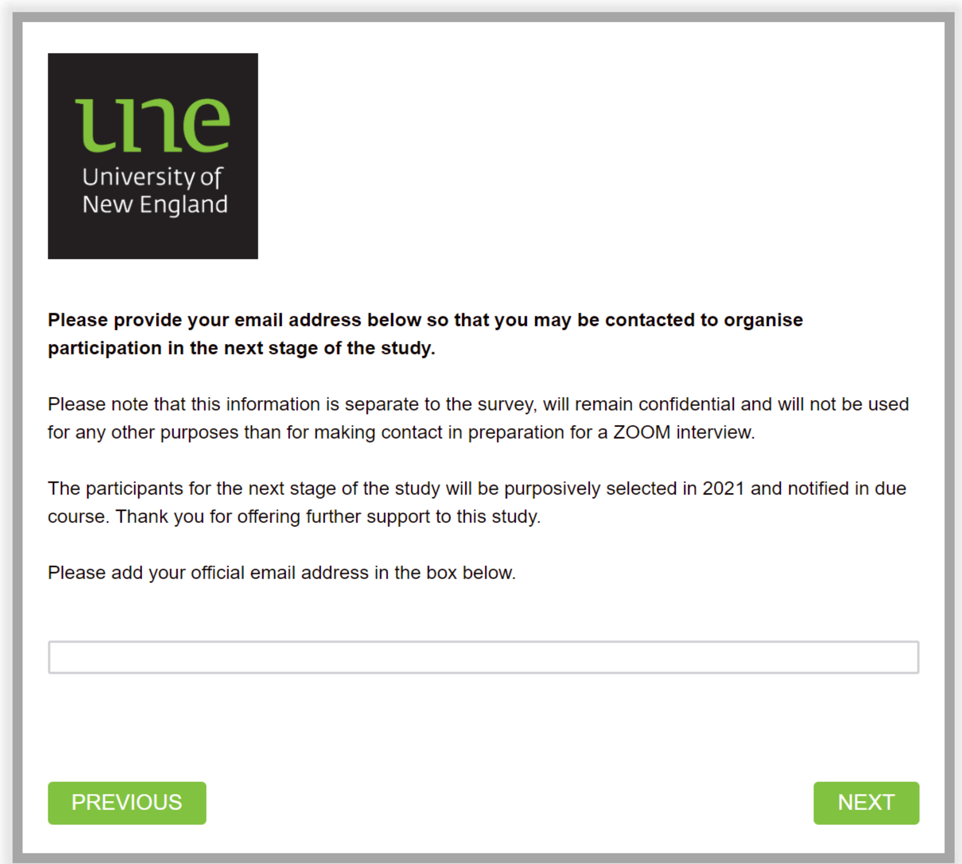


Those who consented to participating were advised to enter their official email address, as in Figure 3.4.

In total, 41 of the 95 online questionnaire respondents provided their email addresses indicating their willingness to participate in the interview. However, ESL teacher-participants were chosen only from the three state universities described earlier (see Table 3.1), which were identifiable by the domain name of email addresses.

Figure 3.4

Request for Official Email Addresses of the Participants



ESL teachers who taught second-year students in each university were purposely selected to participate in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews. The second-year students were selected for the study as all the selected universities offer ESL courses to them, and they are not subjected to *ragging* (see Section 3.6.1.3 for detail). Further attempts were made to utilise the maximum variation strategy while selecting ESL teachers. Maximum variation strategy involves finding key variations that influence a phenomenon and then finding cases that represent their variations (Patton, 2002). This study's key variations involved gender, age, highest qualification, academic rank and years of experience. In total, 9 participants were selected to participate in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews (see Table 3.2). They are identified by pseudonyms as illustrated below:

ITA, Patrick:

I for *interviewed,* **T** for *teacher*, **A** is the *University name,* and **Patrick** is the *participant's pseudonym*.

Together **(ITA, Patrick)** signifies, *interviewed teacher from University A, Patrick.*

Table 3.2

Information on the ESL Teachers Selected for Semi-Structured Interviews

Participant	University name	Gender	Age range	Qualification	Academic rank	Years of experience (range)
Patrick	A (Metropolitan)	M	40-49	MPhil	Senior Lecturer	11-15
Olivia	A (Metropolitan)	F	30-39	MA	Probationary Lecturer	6-10
Sunny	B (Regional)	M	50+	MA	Senior Instructor	21-25
Amanda	B (Regional)	F	20-29	BA	Probationary Lecturer	1-5
Ivy	B (Regional)	F	20-29	BA	Instructor	<1
Ryan	C (Regional)	M	40-49	MPhil	Senior Lecturer	11-15
Sandy	C (Regional)	F	20-29	BA	Probationary Lecturer	1-5
Tilly	C (Regional)	F	30-39	MA	Probationary Lecturer	6-10
Helen	C (Regional)	F	20-29	BA	Probationary Lecturer	1-5

Note. Bachelor of Arts (BA), Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil).

Although 15 teachers with PhDs responded to the questionnaire, none of the PhD holders from the three selected universities consented to participating in the in-depth interviews.

Efforts were made to select ESL teachers from different faculties in the selected universities to further maximise the variations of participants. Table 3.3 shows the universities and the faculties of the selected ESL teachers. Special attention was paid to select teachers from the Humanities and Social Sciences faculties and faculties related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. This is because students in the former tend to lack a specific career focus in contrast to the students in STEM-related faculties. This variation in students' career focus can impact their classroom behaviour, which ultimately influences teachers' attitudes towards their students.

Table 3.3

Faculties of Teacher-Participants

University	Faculty
A	* Engineering * Architecture
B	* Social Sciences and Languages * Technology * Geomatics
C	* Science * Humanities and Social Sciences

3.5.2.4 Conducting interviews

Although the initial plan was to conduct interviews in person, travel restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic prohibited the researcher from travelling to the research site in Sri Lanka. Consequently, the nine planned interviews with the ESL teachers were conducted

online using the ZOOM platform. All the interviews were conducted in English. One advantage of online interviews is their great flexibility (Cohen et al., 2017). As there was no issue with the location of the interview, both the researcher and the teacher-participant chose a place they found convenient in terms of accessibility, privacy, comfort, and security. The date and time of the interviews were decided at the participant's discretion.

In line with Patton (1980), the researcher initiated the interview with general questions to make the participants feel comfortable. However, the sequence and sometimes the wording of the questions were tailored to each participant. Prompts were used when the interviewee asked for clarification. "*Spontaneous"* (i.e. unscripted probes initiated by the researcher) and "*[e]mergent"* probes (i.e. unscripted probes emerged in response to participant's answers, most often indicating a potential problem) were specifically used to elicit rich and comprehensive answers from the participants (Beatty & Willis, 2007, p. 300).

Since the researcher is the instrument, great care was taken from the outset to communicate and interact carefully and gently with the participants (Kvale, 1996; Mills, 2001). The researcher exhibited a non-threatening, friendly, polite, and respectful attitude to establish a good rapport with the participants. Further, she explained the ethical dimension of the interview to make participants aware of the confidentiality and privacy of their identity and the data. Addressing the "interpersonal, interactional, communicative and emotional aspects of the interview" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 518), the researcher paid much attention to her non-verbal behaviour so as not to send any incorrect message to the participants through her facial or bodily expressions. Additionally, the researcher actively listened to the participants from the start of the interview. This ensured the interviews were conducted "sensitively, professionally and ethically" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 518).

3.5.2.5 Limitations

The initial plan for the study was to collect data in person from ESL teachers in Sri Lankan state universities. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions banning international travel, the researcher had to adjust this data collection method to an online format. This resulted in an additional layer of complexity to the data collection process and ethics applications.

To briefly explain, Sri Lanka is a developing country with a unique education system and limited facilities for online engagement in the university sector. Hence, compared to in-person data collection methods in Sri Lanka, collecting data online was complex. Specifically, recruiting teacher-participants throughout the data collection phase of this study was difficult and time-consuming. This involved repeated cancellations and postponements of the in-depth interviews and observation sessions. Furthermore, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sri Lankan university teachers were working from home. Some of the issues they faced included limited internet access, overloaded work schedules, additional work to make adaptions from in-person to online teaching modes, and staff shortages due to COVID-19 infections. As a result, teachers' schedules became tighter, and therefore, many participants postponed in-depth interviews and observations, which adversely affected the timeline of this study.

3.6 Second Research Phase of the Study

The study's second phase involved collecting data from ESL learners in state universities of Sri Lanka using focus group interviews and ESL classroom observations. The following sections of the chapter explain the research instruments, selection of participants, ethics, and implementation and limitations of the research instruments in this study phase.

3.6.1 Focus group interviews

Focus groups (FGs) involve a group of people brought together in a supportive environment to discuss their views, ideas, and perspectives on a specific topic (Denscombe, 2010; Ennis & Chen, 2012). They can produce either a collective opinion or contrasting viewpoints on a topic. In either case, FG interviews allow the researcher to understand the views and opinions of participants on a given topic and the underlying reasons for those perspectives (Denscombe, 2010). Therefore, FGs are a productive research tool to investigate social views on a given topic (Blackstone, 2012).

The decision to use FG interviews as a data collection method in this study was influenced by several factors: (i) The realisation through personal experience that ESL learners opt to talk more while they work in groups; (ii) the opportunity to explore and understand group momentum and how learners react to each other while they work in groups; and (iii) the possibility of obtaining a detailed description of the phenomenon being studied, since some learner responses served as prompts for others to add more data.

3.6.1.1 Focus group interview design

The FG interview guide comprised 17 questions (Appendix F). It was informed by the teachers' questionnaire responses and in-depth interviews. All the questions were open-ended and general, which learners could answer using their knowledge and experiences. The questions were formed to elicit learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources and the strategies learners employ to manage their LA. Rather than using the same language that learners are anxious about using (English), it was decided to conduct FG interviews using their L1 (i.e., Sinhala), which is also the researcher's L1. This allowed the participants to speak freely and comfortably in their language. Hence, the interview guide was translated into Sinhala, and a qualified Sinhala language expert checked the accuracy of the translation.

3.6.1.2 Ethical considerations

Ethics approval was sought from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England through an *Expedited Review* before the commencement of the second phase of the data collection process. The approval for the data collection from the students (using FG interviews and ESL classroom observation sessions) was granted on 31 August 2021, with approval number HE21-193 (Appendix G). Before collecting data from the students, approval was also sought from the Heads/Deans of the Departments/Faculties of the three selected universities.

Information sheets and consent forms were translated into Sinhala, and a language expert verified the accuracy of the translations. Next, the DELT of each of the three selected universities was advised to upload both Sinhala and English versions of the *Information Sheet for Student-participants in Focus-Group Interview* (Appendix H), *Consent Form for Student-participants in Focus-Group Interview* (Appendix I), *Information Sheet for Student-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix J), *Consent Form for Student-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix K) and the flyer (Figure 3.5) to the Moodle inviting interested students to take part in the study by directly contacting the researcher via email. The participants were advised to return the completed Consent Forms, clearly marking whether they were willing to participate in FG interviews and observations.

The researcher hosted each interview and shared a separate Zoom link among the members of each FG to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the participants and the data.

3.6.1.3 Selection of participants

All second-year students attached to the DELTs of the three selected universities were identified as potential student-participants for the study's second phase. The reasons for selecting second-year students to participate in the study were as follows:

(i) ESL courses are offered to second-year students in all the selected universities.

(ii) The researcher specifically excluded first-year students from the study as they are subjected to *ragging* in the first year of their university life (see Section 6.4.1 for detail about *ragging*). There is no specific duration for the ragging period; it entirely depends on the discretion of the senior students and the university subculture. Due to rigid rules imposed by senior students on using English within the university premises, first-year students can experience a temporary spike in LA in ESL classrooms. Consequently, most first-year students do not actively participate in classroom activities and remain silent and passive instead. It is, therefore, difficult to observe the natural behaviour of first-year students in university ESL classrooms. The researcher has first-hand experience of the way in which first-year students exhibit uneasy, uncomfortable, anxious, and stressed behaviour during the *ragging* period. As the temporary, altered behaviour of first-year students was likely to distort the study's findings, it was decided to include only second-year students in the current study.

(iii) The researcher purposely excluded third- and fourth-year students as they were not offered ESL course units in some universities (e.g., University B and C). Also, previous research has found that LA and the academic year of undergraduates have a negative correlation (e.g., Attanayake, 2019). When students enter their final years in a degree program, their anxiety diminishes compared to those in their initial years of study. This may be because many students give up learning English when they reach their final years of study in the university (Attanayake, 2019) and pay more attention

to their major and minor subjects rather than to English, which is an optional or the "least prioritized" (p. 34) subject in the degree programme.

Considering all the factors mentioned above, only the second-year ESL students of the three selected universities were considered potential participants in the study.

As shown in Figure 3.5, DELT in each of the three selected universities uploaded a flyer to Moodle inviting interested students to participate in the study by emailing the completed Consent Form(s) to the researcher. Only students willing to attend both FGs and observation sessions were selected to participate in the study.

Figure 3.5

Flyer Uploaded to Moodle Inviting Interested Students to Participate in the Study

As six to eight participants are considered optimal for FG interviews (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003), 32 students (4 FGs with eight students in each) who consented to participating in both the FG interviews and the observation sessions were selected to participate in the FG sessions (see Table 3.4). The participants were purposely selected from the classes of the nine previously-interviewed teachers, ensuring that different faculties were represented, including the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Technology, Science, and Engineering and different ethnicities were covered.

The student-participants in the FG interviews are identified by pseudonyms hereafter, as follows:

FGS, B2

FG for *focus group*, **S** for *student*, **B** is the *University name*, **2** is the *participant's number.*

Together (FGS, B2) signifies*, Focus group of students in University B, student no. 2*

3.6.1.4 Conducting focus group interviews

FG interviews were conducted entirely online due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The students selected for the FGs were invited to suggest convenient time slots and dates for the online interview. The four FG interviews were scheduled and held on four different days. The researcher served as the moderator and facilitated the interview instead of leading it (Denscombe, 2010) to ensure the environment was non-threatening and friendly. Continuous encouragement had to be given to some participants to make them speak. As mentioned earlier, the interviews were conducted in Sinhala. Although the L1 of eight student-participants was Tamil, their listening and speaking skills in Sinhala were good. Therefore, it did not interrupt the smooth flow of the interviews to ask them to participate in Sinhala.

However, to avoid any misunderstandings, the researcher translated all interview questions in Sinhala into simple English. This was because the researcher lacks knowledge of the Tamil language. Before proceeding, she ensured that all the students had understood what she had said at each stage by obtaining their confirmation.

3.6.1.5 Limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic heavily impacted the study's data collection process. The primary difficulty concerned recruiting student-participants from Sri Lankan state universities. Due to constant lockdowns and work-from-home orders, student-participants were in their homes. Consequently, interviews were affected by sporadic internet access, particularly in remote areas. Further, it was difficult to arouse the interest of the students to participate in the study during the pandemic due to the following reasons: (i) The students themselves were adversely affected personally; and (ii) constant cancellations of lectures had resulted in an increased load for students to catch up with lessons in the time frame allocated for the data collection. Due to these reasons, organising timeslots for FG interviews was difficult and time-consuming.

While conducting FG interviews, some participants were reluctant to switch their cameras on. One reason was their slow internet connection; another was that some participants did not want to expose their family and economic background to their peers. This situation made it difficult for the researcher to read their non-verbal behaviour.

3.6.2 ESL classroom observations

Observation is one of the few methods that provide researchers with first-hand information about the phenomenon under investigation (Bryman, 2004; Cohen et al., 2017; Denscombe, 2003). Observation does not rely on what people say they do but enables researchers to witness what actually happens in authentic settings (Denscombe, 2010; Cohen et al., 2017).

Therefore, data collected from observations are considered high in validity and rich in contextuality (Cohen et al., 2017). Further, observation allows researchers to gather data in verbal, non-verbal and physical forms (Clark et al., 2009).

Since ESL teachers and learners may not actually do what they say they do, observation provided a "reality check" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 542) on the data gathered from the self-report measures of this study (online open-ended questionnaire, in-depth interviews and FG interviews).

3.6.2.1 Observation design

The observation schedule (Appendix L) permitted the researcher to document data systematically and thoroughly, making data analysis easier and more efficient. However, contrary to conventional observation schedules, the schedule in the current study did not have a list of pre-defined items to observe. The researcher was open to recording any indicators in relation to (i) managing LA, and (ii) evoking students' PEs. The reasons for not having a pre-defined criteria are as follows:

(i) Observation allows researchers to look at everyday events in a novel way, rather than taking them "for granted, expected or go unnoticed" (Cooper & Schindler, 2001, p. 374). A pre-defined list limits the researcher's ability to notice such everyday events that are unconsciously missed;

(ii) The events that occur in a natural setting are less predictable (Cohen et al., 2017). On one hand, it is impractical to predict and list less predictable items. On the other hand, having a pre-defined list may limit the researcher's ability to see events freely;

(iii) In addition to using observation to confirm the data gathered from other methods, it was employed as a principal method of data collection to tap the potential of gathering

"more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with mediated or inferential methods" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 542).

Another document, including observation points (Appendix M), was prepared to identify the classroom behaviours of students and teachers and to obtain an understanding of the classroom climate. It consisted of three sections: S*tudents, teacher,* and *classroom climate*. The focus of the *student* section was to identify their manifestations of LA, while the focus of the *teacher* section was to record teacher characteristics, behaviours, teaching and feedback style. The final section aimed to note the classroom climate, including relationships and interactions among students and between teachers and students.

3.6.2.2 Ethical considerations

As explained in Section 3.6.1.2, ethics approval was granted on 31 August 2021, with approval number HE21-193 (Appendix G), to collect data from the ESL teachers and students in state universities of Sri Lanka using ESL classroom observations. The approval for the data collection process of the second phase was also obtained from the Heads/Deans of respective departments/faculties of the three selected state universities of Sri Lanka.

Only the students and teachers who expressed their consent to participate in the observation session by returning the completed *Consent Form for Student-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix K) and *Consent Form for Teacher-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix N) were selected to participate in the observation sessions of the study. The researcher hosted each ZOOM classroom session for observation and shared a separate ZOOM link and a password among participants of each ESL class.

3.6.2.3 Selection of participants

The participants for the observation comprised both ESL teachers and students. The same nine teachers who participated in the in-depth interviews were selected for the observation

sessions, allowing the researcher to compare what they had reported and actually did. Using the email addresses they provided at the earlier stage of the study, the *Information Sheet for Teacher-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix O) and *Consent Form for Teacher-participants in Classroom Observation* (Appendix N) were sent to them inviting them to return the completed Consent Form if they were willing to participate in the observations. All nine teachers who participated in the in-depth interviews also consented to participating in the observation sessions.

The students who contacted the researcher with their consent to participate in observation sessions were selected as potential study participants. Of these students, only the students of the previously-interviewed teachers were invited to join the observation sessions. This included all the students who had participated in the FG interviews. In addition, students who had not participated in FG interviews but belonged to the classes of those previously-interviewed teachers were also selected to participate in the observation sessions, if they returned the Consent Form (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.4

Student-Participants in Focus Group Interviews and Observation Sessions

University	Faculty	No. of participants for FG	No. of participants for observation
A	Engineering	8	8
B	Social Sciences and Languages	8	8
	Technology	8	10
C	Science	8	8 7
	Humanities and Social Sciences	-	12
Total number of student-participants		32	53
	Total number of sessions	**4**	**6**

3.6.2.4 Conducting observations

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related restrictions, the observation sessions were conducted online using the ZOOM platform. Six separate one-hour ESL classroom sessions were organised with the student-participants and teacher-participants at the three universities. The participants were given the freedom to decide the date and the time of each observation session. The researcher was the only observer in the live observation sessions. She played a non-intrusive role by switching off her mike and the camera.

3.6.2.5 Limitations

Conducting online observation sessions instead of in-person field visits presented considerable limitations as follows:

(i) Extreme difficulty in scheduling observation sessions where both students and teacher could participate at the same time;

(ii) Poor internet connections, especially in rural areas of the country, interrupted the smooth flow of the interview;

(iii) Reluctance of students to switch their cameras on, since some of them were uncomfortable exposing their family background and economic status;

(iv) Inability to observe students' non-verbal behaviour. Only the upper part of the body could be observed. Consequently, physical manifestations of LA were difficult to observe;

(v) Inability to observe the physical classroom structure to investigate any in-class triggers that evoke students' LA;

(vi) Inability to get a proper understanding of the classroom climate, since students in online classrooms seemed very distant and isolated compared to the students in an actual classroom;

(vii) Even though breakout rooms available on ZOOM were used for group work, the researcher found it difficult to see the momentum of individual groups and the actual classroom behaviour of those groups through an online platform.

Therefore, the interpretation of the observation data was carried out cautiously, carefully considering all the limitations.

3.7 Summary of the Data Collection Process

The data collection of the study was conducted under two main phases (see Table 3.5).

Table 3.5

Summary of the Data Collection Process

First Phase		Second Phase	
15 universities	3 universities	3 universities	3 universities
Questionnaires for teachers	In-depth interviews with teachers	FG interviews with students	Observations of ESL classrooms
75	**9**	**4**	**6**

Two data collection methods were employed in the first phase to gather data from ESL teachers at the state universities of Sri Lanka. First, a questionnaire was administered online to all the ESL teachers in the university system of the time. Second, nine teachers from three selected universities were recruited for semi-structured, in-depth interviews. In the second phase, four FG interviews were conducted with second-year students in the ESL classes of the previously-interviewed teachers. Next, six separate ESL classroom sessions with the same teachers were observed to gather new data and check the reliability of the self-reporting data.

3.8 Data Analysis

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), clarity in the analysis process and the application of the method are crucial in any research. Hence, researchers must explicitly state their epistemological assumptions (Holloway & Todres, 2003) and explain in detail *what, why* and *how* they carried out the analysis in their research reports (Attride-Stirling, 2001). To this end, the following paragraphs describe the data analysis procedures adopted in the current study.

This study used qualitative data analysis because it "focuses on in-depth, context-specific, rich, subjective data and meanings by the participants in the situation, with the researcher herself/himself as a principal research instrument" (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 643). It is not a straightforward process, for there are many correct ways to analyse and present qualitative data. According to Cohen et al. (2017), *fitness for purpose* is the best method to govern the qualitative data analysis process. Braun and Clarke (2006) stated that there are two main methods of qualitative analysis: (i) Methods applicable only to a specific theoretical or epistemological stand, and (ii) methods that are independent and not tied essentially to any theory or epistemology, for instance, Thematic Analysis.

The qualitative data analysis method employed in the study was thematic analysis. The next section provides the rationale for using thematic analysis in the study.

3.8.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is the fundamental method of analysing qualitative data. It can be applied irrespective of any theoretical or epistemological position (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Also, thematic analysis does not give any prescription for methodological choices. This flexibility has been recognised as its greatest strength, allowing researchers to generate a rich, thick, but sophisticated description of data (Braun et al., 2016).

Thematic analysis involves searching across a qualitative data set to identify and interpret patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Specifically, it is most appropriate if the research questions focus on identifying and analysing factors, processes, or experiences that influence a particular issue or recognising patterns of behaviours, opinions and perspectives of people related to it (Braun et al., 2016).

Considering all of the above issues and the qualitative research questions of the study, thematic analysis was used throughout the study to identify, analyse, and interpret learners' and teachers' behaviours and perspectives regarding sources and strategies for managing LA.

3.8.2 Thematic analysis in the study

Since thematic analysis is not tied to any specific epistemological or ontological assumptions, the researcher should make active choices about the nature of her engagement with the data (Braun et al., 2016). Braun et al. (2016) proposed three ways to engage with data: (i) What themes are to be identified (semantic or latent); (ii) how themes are to be identified (inductive or deductive); and (iii) what can be said about the nature of data and how meaning is theorised (realism/(post)positivism/essentialism or contextualist/critical realist approaches or critical/constructionist orientations).

(i) Semantic or latent (what themes are to be identified)

The analysis has a semantic focus if it is based on the exact meanings of what participants explicitly stated. It has a latent focus if the analysis is based on the implicit meanings of participants' expressions. This study used thematic analysis with a semantic approach considering the explicit meanings of the participants' words.

(ii) Inductive or deductive (how themes are identified)

If the data guide the analysis, it is recognised as a data-driven, inductive, or bottom-up approach. If the analysis is guided by the researcher's theoretical or analytical preconceptions, it is recognised as an analyst-driven, top-up or deductive approach. This study utilised an inductive approach by coding data without trying to fit them into a pre-existing coding structure.

(iii) Realism/essentialism or constructionist orientations (what can be said about the nature of data and how meaning is theorised)

> The principles of essentialism and realism theories facilitate a straightforward analysis of participants' reality, experiences, and meanings. These paradigms assume a unidirectional relationship between meaning, experience, and language. In other words, language is used to reflect and explain meaning and experience. In contrast, constructionist orientations view realities, meanings and experiences as constructed by human interactions that occur in a society. As the analysis of this study focuses more on semantic themes, the thematic analysis process of the study is related to realism/essentialism.

In summary, an inductive and semantic approach was used for thematic analysis in this study. The research used NVivo 12 Plus software to analyse the dataset.

3.8.3 Thematic analysis steps

The study followed the 6-phase guide to doing thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 87) as seen in Table 3.6. The next section describes how Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6-step guide was implemented in the study.

Table 3.6

Phases of Thematic Analysis (adapted from Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

Phase	Description of the process
1. Becoming familiar with the data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes	Checking the themes in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic "map" of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating the analysis back to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Phase 1: Becoming familiar with the data

The first phase of thematic analysis involves immersing the researcher in the dataset. If data is collected through interviews, discussions, and speeches, this data must be transcribed before coding. Transcribing is one of the most efficient ways to become familiar with data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Riessman, 1993). It enables the researcher to develop a

thorough understanding of the data, identify meanings and patterns and facilitate his/her interpretive skills (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). Hence, the researcher herself transcribed the in-depth interviews conducted with the ESL teachers and the FG interviews conducted with the ESL students. Even though the task was time-consuming, it allowed the researcher to comprehensively understand the data gathered and recognise specific patterns across the dataset. Immersing can also be done by reading and re-reading the data. Noting down initial ideas while reading is also essential at this stage. The researcher re-read the questionnaire data, transcripts of the interviews, and observation records. Further, she documented ideas and initial coding schemes while reading across the dataset.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes

Once the researcher is familiar with the dataset and has generated the initial ideas/coding schemes, Phase 2 can commence. A code is "the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). Coding is a part of the analysis process (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and is informed by the decisions made by the researcher earlier about the data engagement (see Section 3.8.2). The researcher used NVivo 12 Plus to code the data. Undivided attention was paid to each data item while coding (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7

Examples of Data Extracts with Initial Coding

Data extract	Coded for
Some students had never had the chance to learn English at their secondary schools, due to the dearth of teachers. So, their level of proficiency is very low or yeah so, they don't want to communicate at all. And some students, as I had said to you earlier, they have bad experiences related to speaking in English. So, they don't like to talk in English. (ITC, Helen)	Previous learning experience
Subculture seems to demotivate students specially in speaking because as per their ideology English is the language of the colonizers, speaking in English is just nothing but showing off the western accent. This destroys the taste, and motive for language learning, which will finally resulted in creating language anxiety. Even if the students fail to use language, as per Subculture it is alright and no harm because this is a common issue, they have their comfort zones there. (ST20)	University subculture

Phase 3: Searching for themes

Once the initial codes were generated, the codes and the data extracts were collated under different theme nodes according to their patterns and meanings. Some extracts were coded more than once and were collated under different theme nodes. Thinking over relationships that may exist between codes and between themes is important to determining

the overarching themes and sub-themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) propose using visual representations such as tables and mind maps to help with the process. Figure 3.6 illustrates the initial thematic map derived from the data analysis of the current study.

Figure 3.6

Initial Thematic Map for Research Question 1

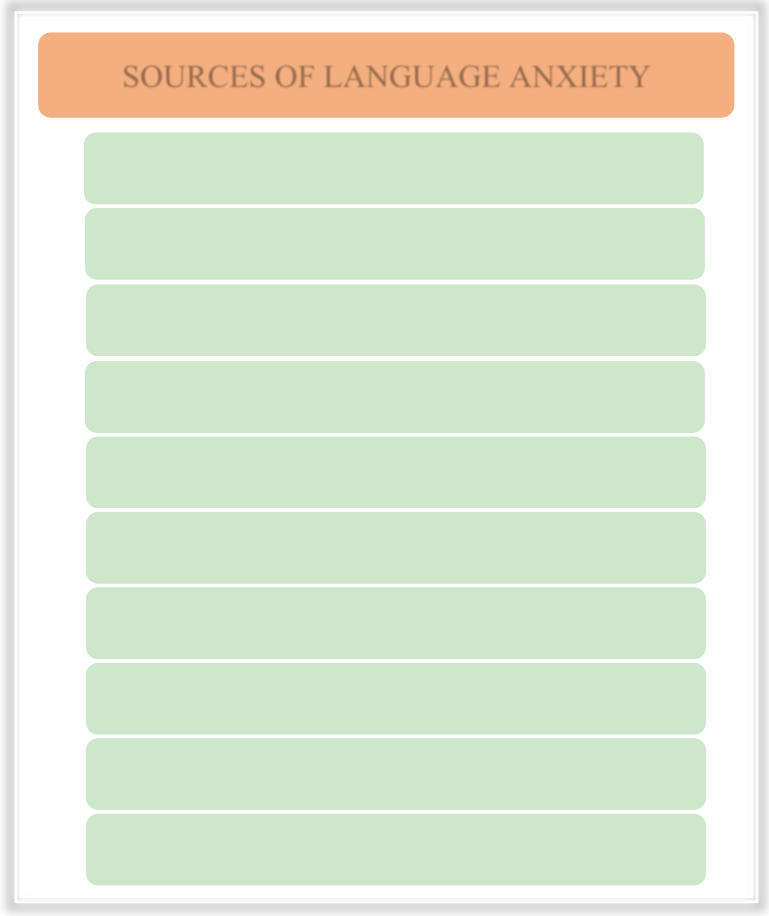
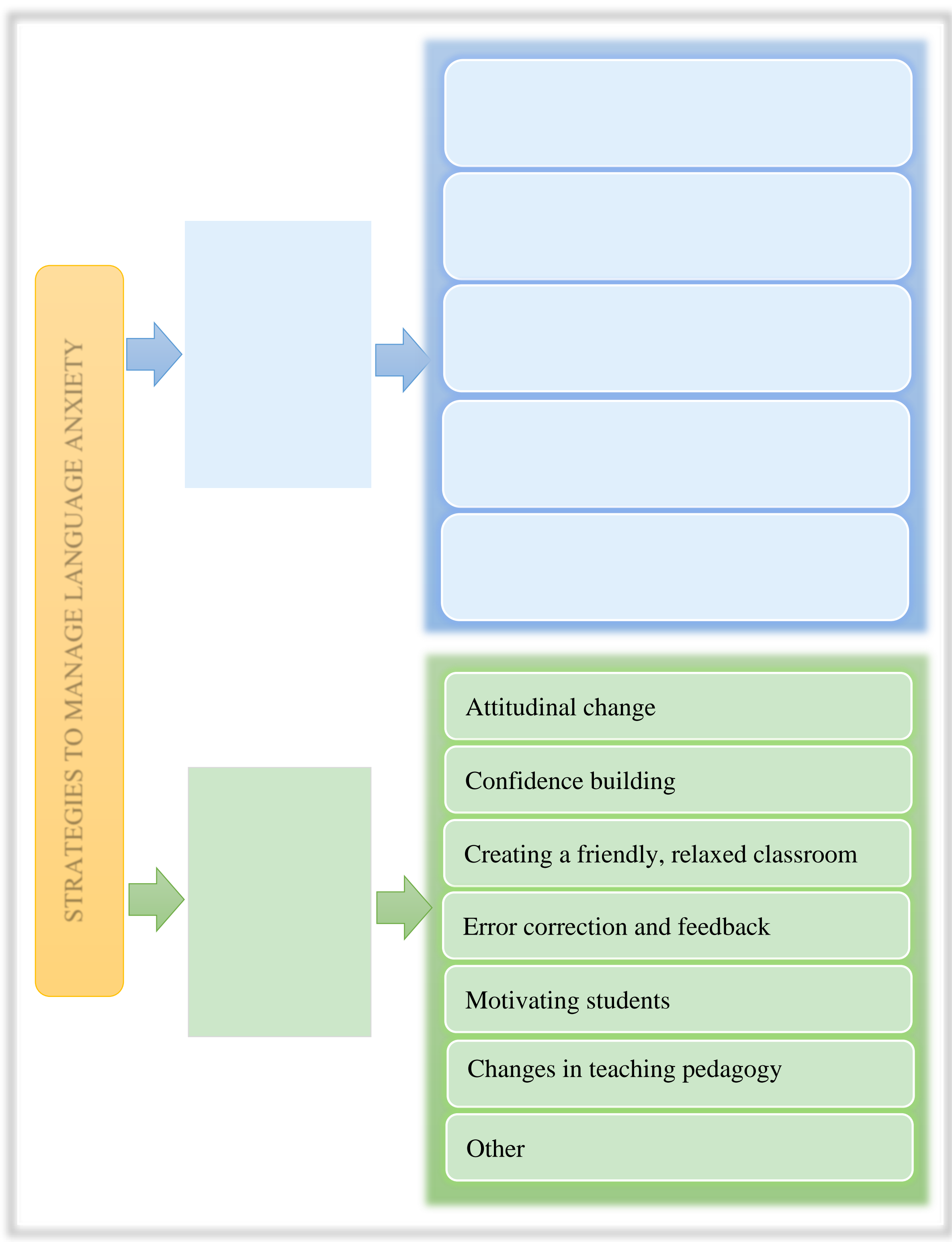


Figure 3.7

Initial Thematic Map for Research Question 2



Phase 4: Reviewing themes

This phase involved further refinement of candidate themes. The researcher re-read all the extracts for two reasons: Firstly, to see whether the themes formed a logical pattern and whether the patterns and meanings were properly represented by the candidate themes. In other words, candidate themes should “adequately capture the contours of the coded data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 26). Secondly, the researcher reviewed whether any data had been missed in the initial coding process. This process identified some additional data which needed to be coded, some candidate themes that could be consolidated into a single theme, candidate themes that needed additional sub-themes and a few sub-themes that needed to be collapsed into one candidate theme. For instance, the researcher identified a new sub-theme concerning colonial mindsets of people as a source that triggers learners’ LA. She combined this with the initially identified theme (i.e. attitudes and beliefs of society) and formed a new candidate theme of “Language ideologies” (see Figure 3.8).

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Phase 5 commences when an appropriate thematic map of the data is developed (Braun & Clarke, 2006), capturing the core of each theme and identifying the parts of the data represented by each theme. The researcher pondered over the essence captured in each theme, their relationship to other themes, and how each theme was connected to the process of answering the study’s research questions. Figures 3.8 and 3.9 illustrate the final thematic maps developed to answer Research Questions 1 and 2.

Figure 3.8

Final Thematic Map for Research Question 1

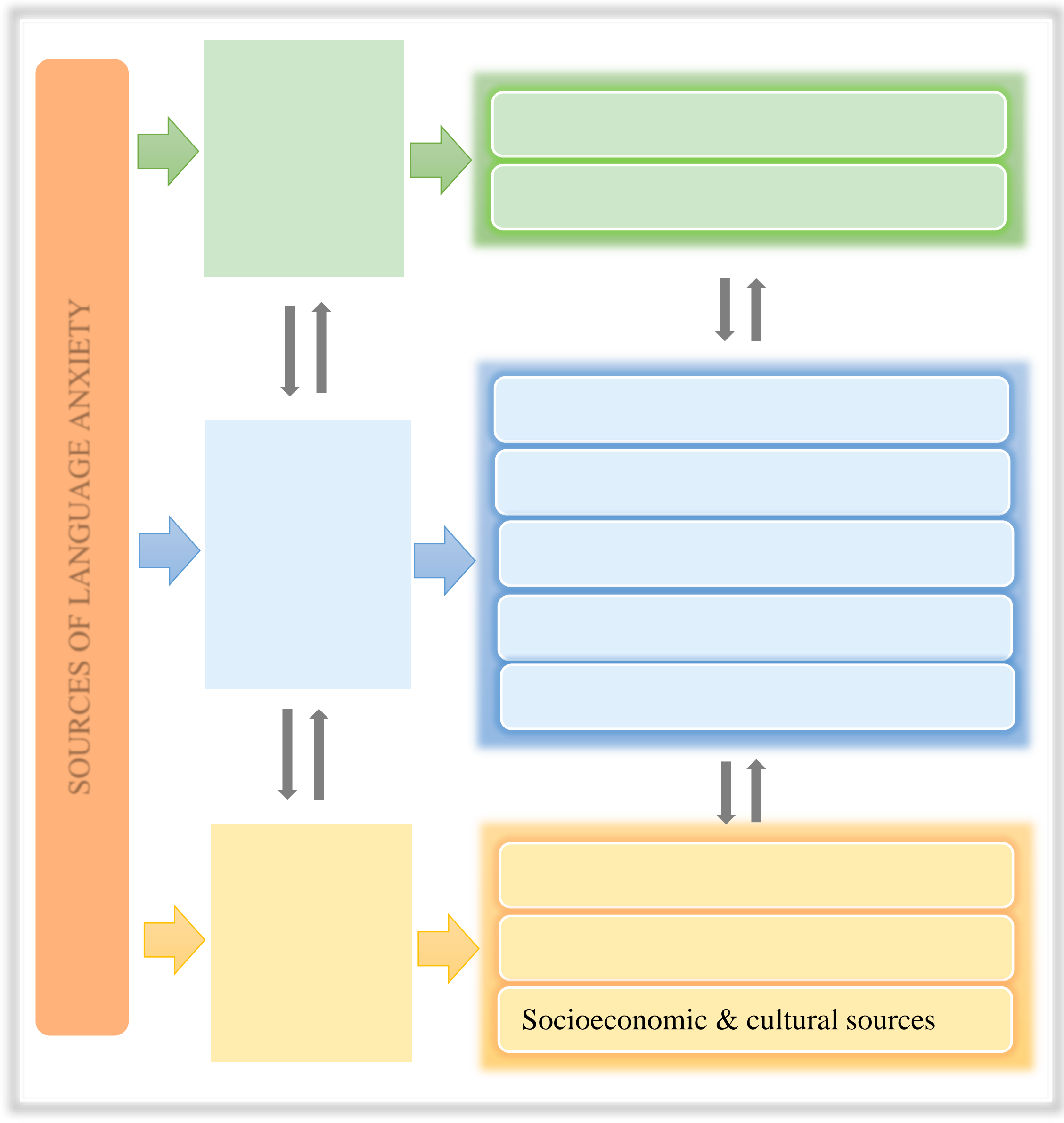
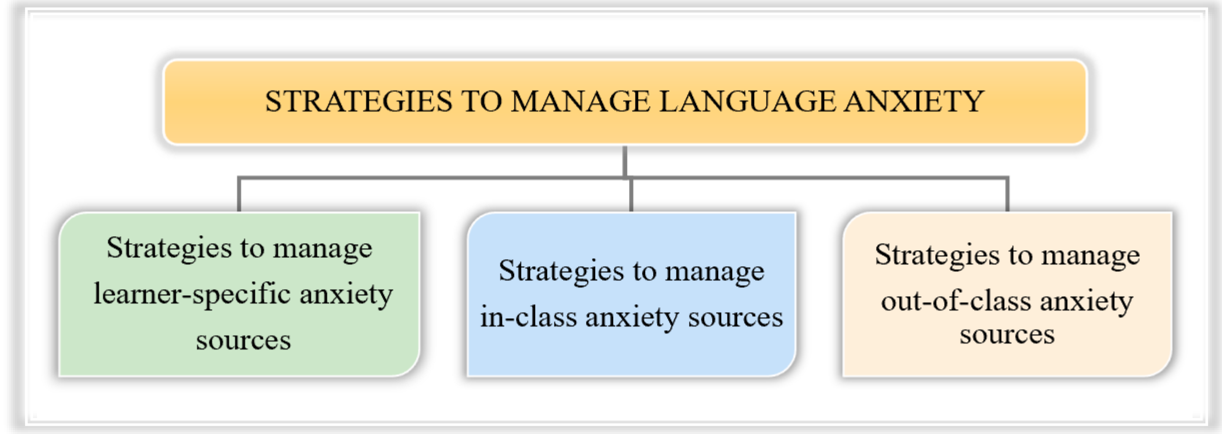


Figure 3.9

Final Thematic Map for Research Question 2



Phase 6: Producing the report

This phase involved writing the final report. The report should offer a "concise, coherent, logical, nonrepetitive, and interesting account of the story the data tell – within and across themes" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93). The researcher included extracts to support the argument made in relation to the research questions.

3.9 Establishing Authenticity and the Credibility of the Study

Validity and reliability have received different interpretations from various scholars depending on their research paradigm: Quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research (Cohen et al., 2017). Different scholars have proposed different methods to ensure the validity and reliability of qualitative research (e.g., Ary et al., 2002; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maxwell, 1992; Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006).

Guba and Lincoln (1989) believe that 'authenticity' is a better term than 'validity' in qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) contended that the terms 'credibility', 'trustworthiness' and 'dependability' should replace 'reliability' in qualitative research. This

study used the terms *authenticity* and *credibility* to refer to validity and reliability, respectively.

Drawing on the practices suggested by Creswell and Miller (2000) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), the following strategies were employed to ensure the authenticity and credibility of the study.

(i) Triangulation

Triangulation involves converging information from different sources to generate themes (Creswell & Miller, 2000). According to Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999), there are four types of triangulation: Data source, theoretical, methodological and investigator.

This study employed data source triangulation to establish the study's authenticity and credibility. Data source triangulation involves "comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times and by different means within qualitative methods" (Patton, 1999, p. 1195). It was employed in two ways: (i) by gathering data from two main groups representing state universities in Sri Lanka: ESL students and ESL teachers, and (ii) by gathering data using four methods, including open-ended questionnaire, in-depth interviews, FG interviews, and ESL classroom observations. This procedure enhanced the study's authenticity and credibility since the different data collection methods elicited substantially similar findings. For instance, teacher-participants (41% in the survey and 67% in interviews) and student-participants in FGs (90%) reported learners' limited linguistic ability as a vital source of LA amongst ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This was also observed as a factor contributing to learners' LA during observation sessions.

(ii) Member checking

This is "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 314). This involves taking data back to the participants so that they can view the data and confirm the accuracy or credibility. The researcher sent the interview and FG transcripts to the relevant participants and advised them to check the transcripts for accuracy. They were encouraged to contact the researcher in writing if there were any discrepancies. As no participant contacted the researcher within the given period, transcripts were assumed to be accurate.

(iii) Thick, rich description

This involves giving a rich or detailed description of the setting, participants, and themes of a study. Credibility is established if readers feel the experience described is of their own (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Deep and detailed descriptions help readers identify the relevance of the findings to similar contexts (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The researcher provided detailed descriptions of the research context, participants, research instruments, data collection and candidate themes to generate a thick, rich description and thereby establish the credibility of the current study.

(iv) Peer debriefing

In peer debriefing, researchers seek to obtain review comments about the research from someone familiar with that specific research area. "A peer reviewer provides support, plays devil's advocate, challenges the researchers' assumptions, pushes the researchers to the next step methodologically, and asks hard questions about methods and interpretations" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 129). The researcher established the study's credibility by seeking the assistance of two peer debriefers who were very familiar with the phenomenon

being explored. Both peer debriefers were PhD candidates close to submission of their thesis. One was a Sri Lankan university ESL lecturer with nearly 15 years of experience. She was familiar with the context and the issue being explored. The other peer debriefer was highly competent in using the NVivo 12 Plus software to analyse and interpret data. Her assistance was utilised to verify the accuracy of the generated themes, which she confirmed.

In addition, the researcher maintained detailed records of the data collection procedure and analysis to enhance the authenticity and credibility of the study.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has presented a detailed description of the methodology. The first four sections explained the research questions, objectives, research design, and context of the study. Next, the two major phases of the data collection procedure were explained, along with the different data collection methods employed in each phase. The development and the design of the data collection instruments, ethical considerations, selection of participants, implementation of the data collection instrument, and limitations were discussed under each research method adopted in the study. The data analysis procedure was then thoroughly explained, specifically focusing on the implementation of the 6-step guide to thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The chapter concluded with a section on the authenticity and credibility of the study.

The next chapter will report the findings relevant to the study’s first Research Question: Sources of LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities.

Chapter Four: Sources of Language Anxiety

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reported the methods of data collection and data analysis. This chapter presents findings relevant to the first research question of the study:

(i) *What are the main sources of LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities, particularly when they engage in English-speaking activities in the ESL classroom?*

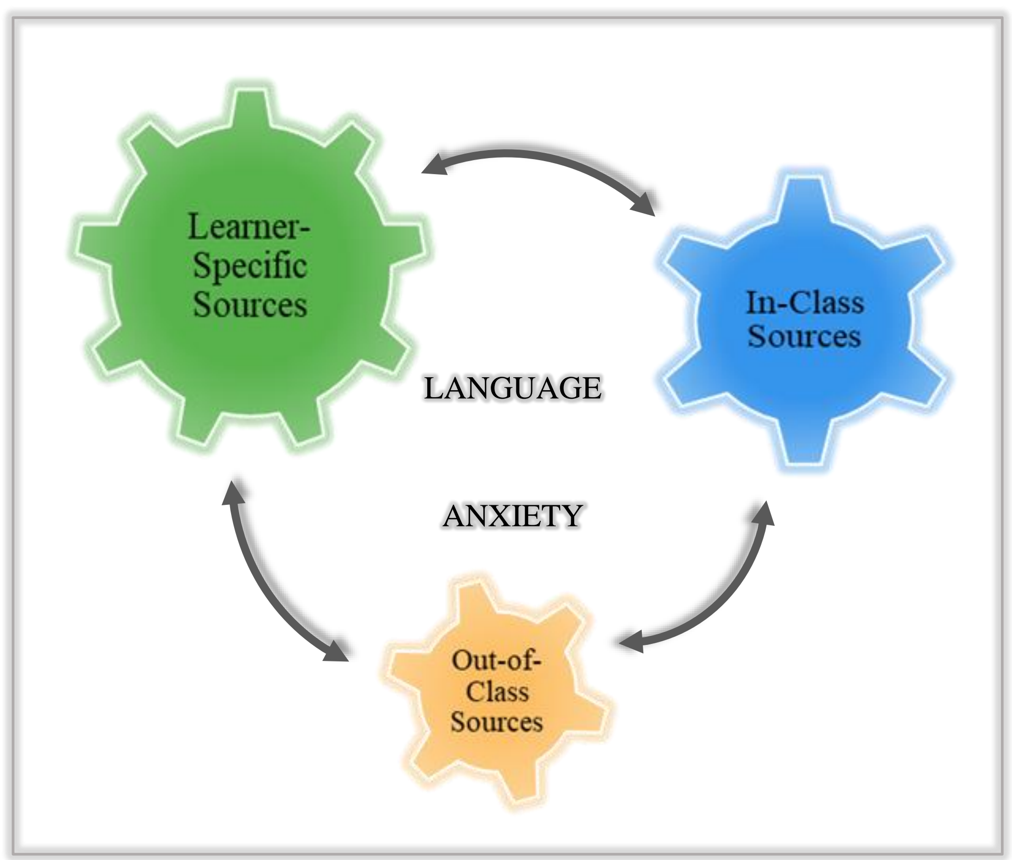
The study found three primary types of LA sources among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. These sources do not operate in isolation. Instead, they interact with each other, mostly operating concurrently to evoke learners' LA. The following sections of this chapter report them in detail. Both teacher-participants and student-participants are cited to illustrate and support the relevant sources. Further, attempts are made to provide evidence from data gathered through all four research methods (online questionnaire, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and observations) whenever possible. The source of the data is always provided at the end of the excerpt, including the research method used and the participant.

4.2 Sources of Language Anxiety

There are three major types of LA sources related to ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka: (i) Those that originate in the learners themselves (learner-specific), (ii) those that are related to the classroom (in-class), and (iii) those that arise from socioeconomic and cultural factors beyond the scope of the ESL classroom (out-of-class) (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1

Sources of Language Anxiety



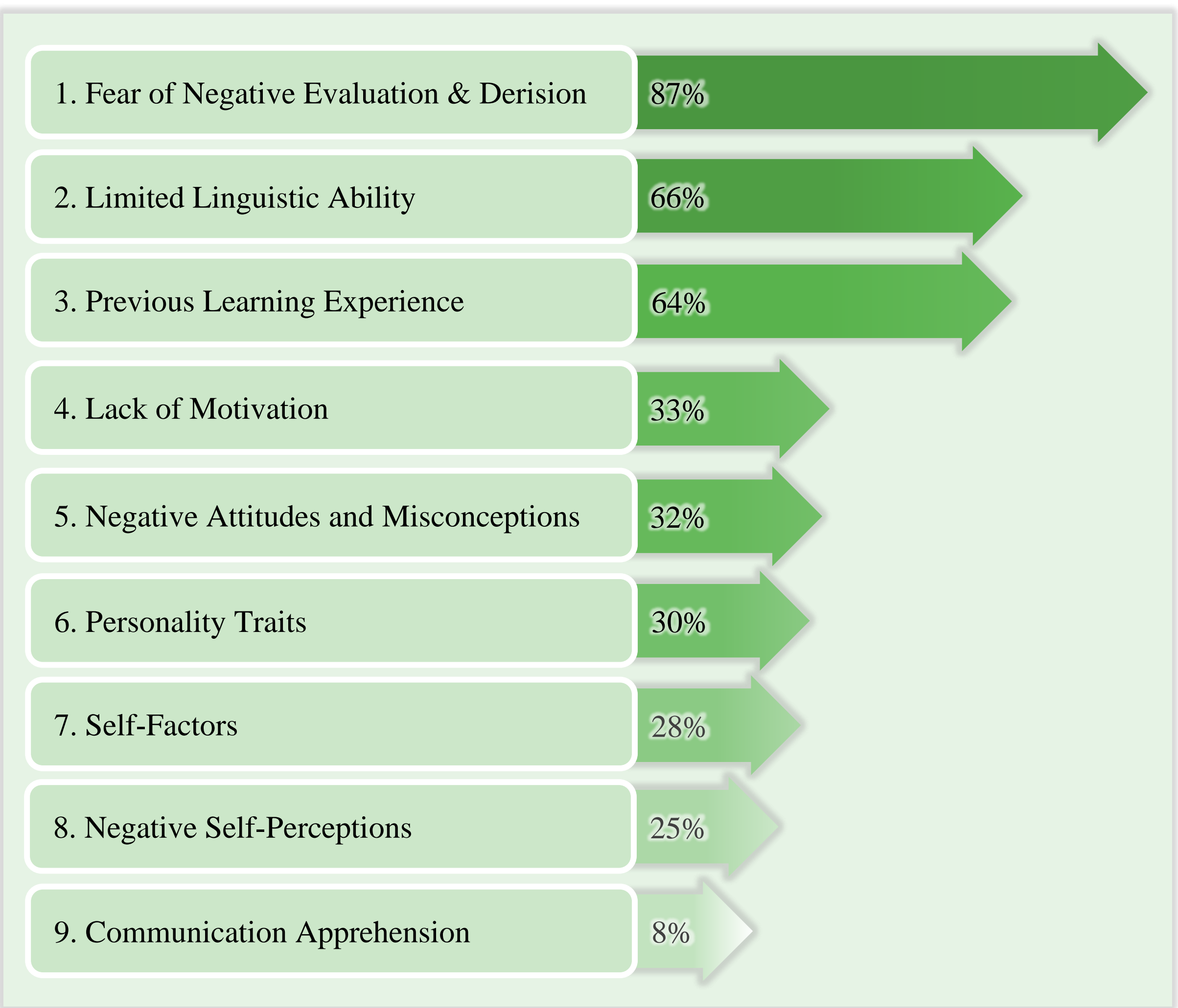
4.2.1 Learner-specific anxiety sources

Data analysis of online questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group (FG) interviews revealed learner-specific factors as the primary type of anxiety source among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. In other words, ESL teacher-participants and student-participants concurred that factors associated with learners themselves are predominant in generating LA in ESL learners.

Nine specific sources of LA were reported. They are presented in descending order of anxiety provocation, based on the total frequency of references received from student-participants and teacher-participants (see Figure 4.2). Each of these sources is explained extensively in the following sub-sections (see Sections 4.2.1.1- 4.2.1.9).

Figure 4.2

Learner-Specific Sources of Anxiety



4.2.1.1 Fear of negative evaluation and derision

Fear of negative evaluation and derision was identified as the predominant source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka by all teacher-participants in interviews (100%), all student-participants in the FGs (100%) and more than half of the teacher-participants in the survey (61%).

> Most students do not tend to speak inside classrooms because they fear that others will laugh at them. The negative evaluation is the main problem that they encounter. The fear of negative evaluation. (ITC, Helen)

> I have asked the very question, why they do not speak, and they have said “shy” or “afraid”. Actual words they used. I have asked them then if it is because they think that if they speak up, their mistakes will be noticed by the others and those “others” will laugh at them/judge them? The answer has always been “yes”. (ST70) (see Appendix P for the questionnaire)

> I was always thinking about the audience. I was thinking about the students, my teacher and the Sir who came to see the class. I was thinking, what will they say? Will they laugh? (FGS, C2)

A few teacher-participants said that these fears were not real but only learners’ predictions, beliefs, or thoughts. However, the discussions with student-participants in FGs revealed a few instances where they were actually subjected to negative evaluation from *others* inside and outside the ESL classroom. Three distinct groups of *others* inside and outside the ESL classroom tend to ridicule ESL learners:

(i) High-proficient English speakers: They often mock low-proficient speakers for their poor grammar, pronunciation, accent, and vocabulary choices. They also tend to look down on people who do not know English. As pointed out by the student-participants, this is more prevalent in society outside than in the ESL classroom.

> Still, English is the language of power in Sri Lanka directly or indirectly, a person is evaluated by how he speaks English…looking down on the people who cannot interact in English also affects the students and their attempts to develop English. Specifically, criticising one's mistakes made in English and humiliating them is common in Sri Lanka. (ST60)

(ii) Low-proficient English speakers: They view and criticise high-proficient English-speakers as arrogant individuals who use English to *show off* and to discriminate against others who are less proficient or cannot speak it. According to teacher-participants and student-participants, this is common within the university subculture.

> If you speak in English, it is kind of showing off. In classes, sometimes the students really want to speak and give their views and ideas, but they were blocked by this subculture. Because it says, "do not speak in English, do not show your class or your status." (ITC, Sandy)

> English is generally termed 'kadda' [sword] among the Sinhalese population, which says a lot about the privileged, elite perspective given to the language. Hence, students are reluctant to speak English, especially in front of groups who are [highly] proficient in the language. (ST36)

(iii) Those who do not know English: They criticise both high-proficiency and low-proficiency English-speakers for trying to *show off their class and social status.* This is common in remote parts of the country.

> I noticed that there is a belief that those who speak English show their power and prestige, which brings a kind of hatred among the majority [who do not speak English]. (ST66)

> I have a WhatsApp group with my school friends. When I message them, I always do that in Sinhala. If I do it in English, they ask "Why do you send messages in English? Is it because you entered the university? Are you *showing off*?" These comments really discourage me. On one hand, if we speak English and make mistakes, society looks down upon us. On the other

> hand, if we speak in English, society still looks down on us, saying that we are *showing off*. In rural villages, if you speak at least one word in English, they look down on you. (FGS, C1)

Interestingly, all interviewed teacher-participants, and 21% of surveyed teacher-participants mentioned that learners do not experience fear of negative evaluation and derision when communicating with foreigners. All the student-participants in FGs (100%) confirmed that they are less anxious or scared to speak with foreigners than with people of their own nationality. The main reason for this is that learners do not feel judged when communicating with foreigners. Also, in such settings, both parties are focused on communicating and understanding the meaning conveyed rather than on the person speaking. Furthermore, unlike Sri Lankans who look for language errors, foreigners tend to appreciate the fact that someone is speaking their language. They find it amazing to listen to their language spoken by people from other parts of the world. Their appreciation and encouragement diminish learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision.

> When we play online games, we meet people from other countries. They never laugh at us when we make mistakes in the language. But if we make a mistake in English when speaking with another Sri Lankan, they start to ridicule us. So, the person who spoke in English decides not to speak English with those people again. When you talk with a foreigner, they always try to understand what you say. But Sri Lankan people look in a very different manner. One single mistake is enough to spoil the whole conversation. For example, if you make a pronunciation mistake, that is enough. Then they start correcting you and laughing at you. (FGS, B3)

> When it comes to foreigners, they are very open-minded and are very welcoming. They would appreciate the fact that you are speaking another language, so that is the

> most important thing for them, not the mistakes that you made. So, I guess that is why people tend to speak in front of foreigners in English … Sri Lankans are not very constructive, and the criticisms are very harsh. They would harshly criticise people, they would laugh at people, and they would, you know, break the confidence of the person, they break the backbone of the person (ITC, Helen)

The responses of the teacher-participants (e.g., Amanda) substantiate the argument that Sri Lankans evaluate English speakers from other countries more positively than Sri Lankan English speakers, whom they tend to judge more negatively.

> The funny thing is if it is a foreigner or if it is a Chinese or Japanese or Korean or whoever speaks English and makes errors and has to pause and use phrases from their own language, we would not really judge them, as opposed to a Sri Lankan speaking in what we call broken English. And that would be judged a lot more harshly than a foreigner. (ITB, Amanda)

A similar situation could be witnessed when communicating with speakers of different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka. When a person communicates with someone of a different ethnicity, both parties are compelled to communicate in English as they do not have another option. As one interviewed teacher-participant put it:

> They have a dire need to get the message across, like they do not really focus on the language, nothing embellishing about it. They somehow want the message to be converted without miscommunication, so I think their focus is on the message. (ITA, Olivia)

In contrast, people of the same ethnicity with the same L1 speak English mostly for a purpose beyond fulfilling a simple communicative need. Consequently, people tend to feel anxious when speaking English with others who belong to the same ethnic group.

> I feel more anxious when I talk with people of the same ethnicity [Sinhalese]. With Tamils, it is just a tool of communication. Tamils are not our own. They are the 'other'. That feeling also helps us to reduce anxiety. (FGS, C5)

> I think it gets worse if it is the same ethnicity because it is just something I feel. Because I feel like we always compete with people that we call our own. We would not really matter or want to compete that harshly with somebody that we would consider the "other". I think that is the reason for that. (ITB, Amanda)

It is important to note that fear of negative evaluation and derision is not an independent source but interacts with other learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources. For instance, learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions, which are another learner-specific anxiety source, can trigger learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision. For example, one common misconception of ESL learners is that they consider making mistakes in English embarrassing.

> They look at it as an embarrassment if they make a mistake. (ITB, Amanda)

> This fear [fear of negative evaluation], I think, basically comes from their fear of making mistakes. They are afraid of making mistakes first. They fear that others will make fun of their mistakes and laugh at them for their mistakes. (ITC, Ryan)

This misconception is a result of language ideologies in society (which is an out-of-class anxiety source; see 4.2.3.2 for detail). For instance, in Sri Lanka, a person's family background, status, and education level are judged by their competency in English.

> When you showcase that your English is not good, they sort of reveal a lot about yourself, not just the fact that you cannot speak a language…English is not just a language in Sri Lanka. It is a social status marker, and it tells you how intelligent you are, what sort of an upbringing you have had, and how privileged you have been. (ITB, Amanda)

Consequently, ESL learners are afraid of speaking English because they assume they will be judged negatively if they make mistakes.

In addition, learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision also interact with in-class anxiety sources. For example, some characteristics of ESL teachers could trigger learners' fear of negative evaluation. Teachers who are strict, harsh, unfriendly, and constantly correct errors make learners very nervous and uncomfortable in the classroom. The student-participants found it difficult to speak English in such classrooms because they feared being judged and commented on negatively. As such, learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision is not an independent anxiety source but interacts with various other learner-specific and out-of-class anxiety sources.

4.2.1.2 Limited linguistic ability

Limited linguistic ability was reported as a key source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. About 41% of the teacher-participants in the survey, 67% in interviews and 90% of the student-participants in FGs agreed that limited vocabulary and poor grammatical knowledge contribute significantly to learners' anxiety. For instance, one student-participant (FGS, B4) explained how he could not answer his teacher's questions, even if he knew the correct answers in his mind. He revealed that he could not translate them into English due to his limited vocabulary. Another student-participant (FGS, B2) experienced fear and nervousness when his limited vocabulary and poor grammatical

knowledge interrupted and delayed his flow of speech. Having to keep the teacher waiting until he got ready to answer triggered guilt in one student-participant (FGS, B13). Some student-participants mentioned that they get anxious when the time taken to process the language causes them to forget their original idea and makes them get stuck in the middle of speaking without being able to continue. Furthermore, pronunciation difficulties, L1 interference, and comprehension difficulties were also reported as anxiety-provoking. During observation sessions, the researcher also witnessed how learners' limited vocabulary and grammar knowledge impeded their communication.

One interviewed teacher-participant (ITA, Patrick) referred to Krashen's Monitor Hypothesis and argued that monitoring hinders ESL learners' flow of speech and induces their LA by forcing them to be more conscious of the accuracy of the language.

4.2.1.3 Previous learning experience

A dominant source of LA among ESL learners is their previous negative learning experiences. The student-participants (100%) and teacher-participants (15% from the survey and 78% from interviews) agreed that seeds of LA had been planted in ESL learners during their previous English learning at primary and secondary schools. Even though all the student-participants and most teacher-participants in the interviews argued that previous ESL learning experience was one of the most influential factors that evoked learners' LA, surveyed teacher-participants thought issues related to previous ESL learning were only secondary.

ESL learners' previous learning experience could contribute to their LA in four ways:

(i) Previous ESL teacher characteristics, classroom behaviour and teaching style

Both teacher-participants and student-participants suggested that the nature of previous ESL teachers and their classroom behaviour influenced learners' LA later in similar classroom situations. For instance, learners' previous experience with strict teachers, harsh comments, destructive feedback, ridicule, and punishments were reported as contributing significantly to learners' LA in current ESL classrooms. One interviewed teacher (ITC, Tilly) mentioned that she had met a few ESL learners who hated English due to their previous learning experiences. She further reported that those previous incidents had discouraged the learners and made them extremely worried and anxious about the possibility of receiving negative judgments and harsh remarks from others in future English-speaking situations. As a result, they were unwilling even to try to speak English in front of other people.

> I have encountered a few students who are allergic to English because of their bad experiences in the past. For example, one of my students shared his experience at his secondary school, where his English teacher had told him that even if a cow learned to read road signs, it would be impossible for him to learn English. (ITC, Tilly)

Commenting on the nature of previous English teachers, one student-participant (FGS, C1) mentioned that he had always had strict English teachers since Grade 5, which made him hate the English subject and skip English classes during his secondary education. Some other student-participants (10%) agreed with this view, stating that English was their "most hated" and "weakest" subject. Another student-participant (FGS, B1) reported that his ESL teacher at school was extremely strict and punished weak learners for making language mistakes. Lessons were taught only to ESL learners who were already good in their English.

> They used to scream at us, even for a small mistake. So, we also did not like English. (FGS, B1)

Another student-participant (FGS, B2) reported that ESL teachers at junior secondary classes purposely exhibited strict classroom behaviour. He highlighted that even though such strict behaviours helped teachers manage classrooms easily, they were detrimental and reduced learners' interest and motivation to stay in the classroom during the English period, let alone interfere with learning the subject.

The student-participants reported two different types of behaviours ESL learners might exhibit after a negative learning experience: (i) The previous negative experience can hinder the future learning and performance of a learner, ultimately evoking LA and hampering their willingness to communicate, or (ii) the previous experience can be a factor that motivates the learner to learn better and perform better at later events.

Further, the student-participants heavily criticised the teaching style of primary and secondary ESL teachers at schools. According to some student-participants, their primary education consisted of only dictation and handwriting exercises, while their secondary school activities lacked practicality or creativity. They reported that they were fed up with the ineffective teaching pattern at their schools.

> Actually, it is the same pattern everywhere. It is a very boring pattern. That is why we skip lessons. This pattern is not going to work. Wherever we go, even to a school, a tuition class, or somewhere else, they follow the same pattern. It is the same framework. Everybody teaches us how to write an essay or, you know, grammar and writing. But they never allow us to be creative and do something by thinking in English. Those things are not encouraged. They just gave us a structure, and we should write something accordingly. But when we have our own ideas, new ideas, we cannot translate them into English. We cannot do anything new in the language. We are not allowed or encouraged to experiment with the language. (FGS, B3)

The student-participants further mentioned that they were never encouraged to communicate in English. In schools, they learned English only to pass examinations.

(ii) Ignoring learners' English-speaking skills

In Sri Lanka, English is taught as an L2 in both primary/secondary school curricula (Attanayake, 2019). From Grade 3 onwards, English is taught, focusing on the examinations students should sit. Therefore, English teaching has always been aligned with Sri Lankan national examinations such as the Grade 5 Scholarship exam, G.C.E. (O/L), and G.C.E. (A/L). Unfortunately, these national-level examinations only assess the students' language ability by evaluating their writing and reading skills. Speaking and listening skills are largely overlooked in those assessments, which results in ignoring the teaching of those skills in classroom teaching (Attanayake, 2019). A few teacher-participants in the survey expressed concern over this matter. They claimed that ESL learners had no opportunity or motivation to improve their English speaking and listening skills in schools. One surveyed teacher-participant stressed that learners could not build confidence in speaking English due to the scarcity of opportunities to practise speaking at schools. Some interviewed teacher-participants also raised the same concern.

> Sometimes, students have never been given adequate opportunities to speak the language previously. So, they are reticent to step out of their comfort zone and gain exposure. (ITC, Tilly)
>
> They [The students] said that in schools, teachers come and focus on the main aspects that come for the paper, let us say, notice writing, letter writing and writing dialogues. So, they focus on the dialogue from a writing point of view, not from a speaking point of view. (ITA, Olivia)

Echoing teacher-participants' perspectives, student-participants who participated in FGs frequently mentioned the neglect of speaking skills in their schools. Most of them agreed that English grammar was the only thing they learned in school.

> Until A/Ls, the only thing we did was learn grammar. So, we learned our grammar well. However, we, still, cannot speak English. (FGS, C3)

> We have been learning English since preschool. After coming out of preschool, we have never learned English as a language. But it is just another subject that we have to sit for in the examination. We always focus on the exam paper. The teachers always talk about the grammar and start with the Tenses. That is all they do. They never showed us how to make a sentence and speak it. So, no matter how much we learn the tenses, we cannot make a sentence and speak whenever we need to. There are some questions we always focus on, such as sentence structures, summary writing, and essays. We never get a chance to learn English as a language that we can use to communicate. (FGS, B4)

> For me, I always wanted to learn how to speak English. But I never found a proper place to learn English because everywhere, it was exam-focused. So, I never learned how to use English practically. (FGS, B5)

Furthermore, some student-participants said that their English teachers never spoke English in the classroom but explained English grammar and language activities in vernacular languages (Sinhala or Tamil). For instance, grammatical explanations were given in Sinhala, and reading passages were explained in Sinhala. A few teacher-participants also confirmed this point.

> In schools, some people told me that English was also taught in Sinhala, not really in English. (ITA, Olivia)

This lack of exposure and practice triggered learners' LA when they were required to speak in English.

(iii) Least prioritised subject during G.C.E. (A/L) Examination

With the introduction of English as a subject in primary schools through the general education reforms of 1997, students from grades 1 to 13 had the opportunity to learn it as a subject in the Sri Lankan school curriculum (Little et al., 2019). Accordingly, students who sit the G.C.E. (A/L) examination/university entrance examination should sit a General English paper in addition to the papers of the three subjects in their chosen stream. Nevertheless, unlike in G.C.E. (O/L), passing the General English paper is not compulsory in G.C.E. (A/L). Therefore, passing or failing the General English paper in the G.C.E. (A/L) examination does not qualify or disqualify a learner from entering the university (Farook & Mohamed, 2020).

Realising the low significance of English in the G.C.E. (A/L) examination, students pay less attention to English and use the English period for studying other subjects or having some fun outside the classroom. Validating this argument, most student-participants agreed that they did not pay much attention to English during their G.C.E. (A/L) examination. As one student-participant (FGS, C4) mentioned, they thought they could learn English once they entered the university. On the other hand, a few student-participants revealed that ESL teachers at school also advised them to pay more attention and study their mainstream subjects, for even if they fail the General English paper, they can still enter the university. One-third of interviewed teacher-participants confirmed the prevalence of this practice in schools.

Furthermore, as one interviewed teacher-participant (ITA, Olivia) stated, most extra-curricular activities in school are scheduled during the English period. Further, some student-participants mentioned that they did not have an English teacher in the G.C.E. (A/L) classes (Years 12 and 13). Some student-participants gave up learning English after sitting the G.C.E. (O/L) examination in Year 11 because English was not tested in the subsequent examinations. This lack of ongoing learning and practice and the resultant poor English knowledge produce LA in learners whenever they face an English-speaking situation in their university.

(iv) Lack of sufficient human and physical resources at schools

Several surveyed teacher-participants mentioned that the country's unequal resource distribution created a massive imbalance in human and physical resources among schools in rural and metropolitan areas. One interviewed teacher-participant (ITA, Olivia) pointed out that schools in metropolitan areas receive abundant learning resources. In contrast, students in rural schools sometimes do not have a teacher to teach the ESL subject. Seven student-participants also confirmed this view by highlighting that they did not have English teachers for several years of their school life. According to the observations of one interviewed teacher-participant (ITB, Amanda), the lack of ESL teachers and other resources in schools negatively impacts some ESL learners' confidence levels.

> Most of the time, those who come from traditionally considered good schools have their English, and even if the English are not perfect or their grammar is not that good, they still have the confidence to speak. The confidence has been built in them through the school years, maybe not related to English, but maybe it's by doing other extracurricular activities or whatever. However, their confidence is a little bit higher. (ITB, Amanda)

During FG interviews, the researcher also noticed that only two student-participants were positive about their previous learning experiences, and interestingly, both had attended schools in metropolitan areas. Resonating with what Amanda said, these student-participants claimed they had excellent English teachers and additional English programmes at school that helped them improve their English. The other 30 student-participants who attended rural schools had negative experiences due to the lack of exposure, resources, and practice. Hence, less privileged students from rural schools may experience more LA episodes than privileged students from metropolitan schools.

> In one school, I remember, in Grade 11, there was a programme where seven international students came to our school. Their mother tongue was also not English. So, they really helped us to improve our English, and that programme helped us make new friends. The name of the programme was "Speaking Star". Our class teacher was also an English teacher. So, she always helped us. When there was a student who was poor in English, she tried to teach them everything from the beginning…So, I really did not have any problem with English in school. (FGS, B6)

> There was a very good place for English in our school. It was a Christian School... We had an excellent rapport with the teacher and talked with her in English. The school was located in a town, and we also had many English programmes. (FGS, B7)

In sum, some ESL learners' previous negative learning experiences at school significantly impact and interact with their linguistic ability, motivation, and self-confidence in relation to learning and speaking English, which ultimately contributes to their LA.

4.2.1.4 Lack of motivation

Another reported source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka is their lack of motivation. About 11% of the surveyed teacher-participants and 56% of those who

were interviewed argued that learners lack sufficient motivation to attend ESL classes, actively participate in speaking activities, use English for daily communicative purposes or learn from their mistakes. Validating the above argument, a number of student-participants (31%) explicitly reported that they lacked the motivation to learn and speak English.

Five important reasons were reported by teacher-participants and student-participants for learners' lack of motivation. Over half of the teacher-participants in interviews cited the exam-oriented tertiary education system in Sri Lanka as partly responsible for learners' lack of motivation to practise their English speaking skills. They highlighted the fact that learners do not see a need to pay much attention to speaking English because it is not assessed in the final examinations. However, the responses of the student-participants revealed a different view. They repeatedly mentioned their need to improve their English-speaking skills and their disappointment over the lack of opportunities in ESL classrooms at the university.

> No motivation. The language we learn inside the classroom is not used practically outside. Even though we have English medium instruction within the classrooms, we talk in Sinhala. Teaching English in the classroom also does not align with the reality. It is just a subject only to pass the examination. For example, many teachers start their lectures by saying, "Let's do present tense today". No practical applications to real-life scenarios. (FGS, C5)

> We do not speak. We do not stay in the classroom because we do not see any improvement within ourselves. Every day, they teach us to write essays, nothing else. So, it is not interesting at all, and we are not improving anything, especially speaking skills. (FGS, B8)

This shows a disparity between teacher-participants' and student-participants' understandings of learners' needs.

Second, as Sunny (University B) and Helen (University C) pointed out, learners are familiar with the format of the examination paper, and senior students at the university hold support classes called *Kuppi* to help weaker learners pass ESL papers at the examination. Within a few hours, these *Kuppi*s cover all the essential areas in a syllabus that might appear in an examination paper. Consequently, learners can pass the English paper at university even without attending formal ESL classes conducted by teachers.

> Because their [students'] purpose is to pass the examination…that need is fulfilled by their own seniors-Kuppi classes. (ITB, Sunny)

Third, all the interviewed teacher-participants emphasised that the difference in motivation is largely caused by the learners' career focus. They reported that the ESL learners in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) streams have a definite career focus. In contrast, the ESL learners in the Arts-related subject streams lack any such focus. They believed this lack of career focus significantly influences learners' motivation to learn and speak English.

> Talking about the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, motivating students is kind of an arduous task…when I go for my students at the Faculty of Science, I am so proud that they are motivated to do activities and presentations because they have that harmony, energy, team spirit, and teamwork, so they are really forward. I mean, they are inspired, and when I take the Faculty of Science or science-based faculties separately, there are weaker students as well, but then somehow or the other, the weaker students also have something to say in their groups; they have something to present. (ITC, Sandy)

This argument was further substantiated by Patrick from University A, who teaches ESL learners in the university's Engineering Faculty. Since these students have a definite idea

about their prospective career (e.g., engineer), as their teacher, he purposely exploits it to boost their motivation.

Fourth, some student-participants agreed that the time allocated for English in their timetable was partly responsible for their low motivation. This was especially mentioned by the student-participants at University C. As they mentioned, they attend lectures from 8 am onwards and, therefore, feel exhausted by the time they have the ESL class (from 4 pm to 6 pm). Hence, the student-participants accepted that they were not motivated to actively participate in ESL activities.

Finally, the teaching methods used in ESL classrooms were also criticised by the student-participants. For instance, one student-participant (FGS, C7) mentioned that ESL lectures at his university are principally based on handouts printed on low-quality paper, which makes them look less attractive to the learners. As a result, they lose the motivation to take care of them, which results in many students losing their handouts before the subsequent ESL lecture. As handouts are prepared to serve for 3-4 weeks, students who misplace their handouts get bored in the classroom and fail to follow the lesson properly. One teacher-participant in the survey pointed out that ESL teachers have adhered to a fixed form of language teaching, which lacks creativity. All these circumstances result in demotivating ESL learners.

In addition to these issues, the study findings revealed that ESL teacher-related characteristics (e.g., appropriate feedback process and participation in PD training programmes), teaching methods (e.g., use of technology in the class), in-class speaking activities (e.g., using authentic, relevant and meaningful materials) in-class social context (e.g., familiarity created in small classes) and university subculture (e.g., *ragging* for speaking English) have a profound influence on learners' motivation. This means that

learners' lack of motivation is not an independent source that causes LA but a factor that interacts with other learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources.

4.2.1.5 Negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers

ESL learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions regarding English and its speakers were identified as a source of LA by 40% of teacher-participants in the survey and 56% of those who were interviewed. Specifically, ESL learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions about making mistakes were highlighted by many teacher-participants (29% from the survey and 89% from interviews) as a source of LA.

> The fear of making mistakes is the biggest fear students have, especially in the Sri Lankan context, as English is placed in a skewed position in society. (ST24)

These negative attitudes and misconceptions include ESL learners believing that mistakes in English are embarrassing and could ruin their image and status, less English competence signals less intelligence, and teachers and peers seek perfection. Hence, learners think they must be perfect in the language before speaking it. On the other hand, as one surveyed teacher-participant mentioned, sometimes ESL teachers are also responsible for learners' misconceptions regarding mistakes:

> Some ESL practitioners often emphasise accuracy and …consider making an error a serious offence. This may lead learners to frustration and embarrassment as they become aware of their deficiencies, further developing learner anxiety. (ST75)

One interviewed teacher-participant (ITA, Olivia) explained how some learners believe they would effortlessly become proficient in English over the years. She reported the intention of some ESL learners to manage future English-speaking situations with their

existing English knowledge without investing more time and effort to improve their English proficiency.

> From the students' point of view, they think they can manage with the English that they know, or they can pick it up over the years…they don't really focus on investing in it now. In the first-year, when we offer these courses with so much effort, they tend to kind of overlook it… They think that they will pick it up over the years, probably by the time they graduate everything will magically fall into place. (ITA, Olivia)

Such negative attitudes and misconceptions hinder their English language use resulting in a lack of practice and reduced confidence.

As Olivia highlighted, some ESL learners perceive English as a language of public speaking. As a result, some learners do not see English as a tool of everyday communication but consider it a language that should be used to address an audience. Thus, they lose the motivation to speak English to fulfil their daily communication purposes, resulting in less practice. Lack of practice, in turn, negatively affects learners' self-confidence. For example, one Tamil student-participant (FGS, B9) shared how she gained confidence in speaking Sinhala through practice, while less practice resulted in less confidence in speaking English. Less confidence was reported as a primary reason for LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka (see 4.2.1.7 for detail).

> I have a place to use Sinhala, for example, on buses, and in shops. Even now, I don't know much Sinhala grammar. But still, I can speak confidently. But for English, there is no practical usage. That is the problem. Before I came to the university, I learned English during my A/levels. But there is no practical usage. So, I couldn't develop my confidence. (FGS, B9)

Accordingly, ESL learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, lack of motivation, lack of sufficient practice, and reduced self-confidence are all interrelated and often operate together in provoking learners' LA.

4.2.1.6 Personality traits

Learners' personality traits, such as perfectionism, have been highlighted as an anxiety trigger for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This trait was reported by 67% of interviewed teacher-participants and 23% of surveyed teacher-participants. They reported that those who have perfectionist traits feel ashamed and anxious to make mistakes. According to Olivia (University A), ESL learners look for perfection regarding grammar and vocabulary choices. Sunny pointed out that learners want to be perfect in English from the beginning of their language-learning journey, which leads to LA when progress is not immediate. One surveyed ESL teacher-participant (ST47) pointed out that learners are unfamiliar with learning through "trial-and-error". In addition, Sri Lankan society exacerbates learners' LA by harshly judging them for any errors they might make. Consequently, these learners postpone speaking English until they are perfect in English.

Moreover, about 20% of the surveyed teacher-participants who commented on personality traits mentioned a number of other learner traits that can evoke LA. These include being introverted, shy, and competitive; being unable to face criticism; and having an inferiority complex.

4.2.1.7 Self-factors

Learners' self-confidence was reported as a contributing factor to LA by 29% of the surveyed and 56% of the interviewed teacher-participants. They believed that learners' lack of practice in speaking skills is a primary reason for their low confidence. As explained earlier, lack of practice could have resulted from the exam-oriented education system in Sri Lanka, the type

of school attended (metropolitan or rural) or learners' lack of motivation. In addition, 33% of the surveyed teacher-participants commented on learners' self-esteem and ego as factors that might trigger their LA. They said learners' inability to use the language competently impacted their self-esteem negatively, which evoked their LA.

4.2.1.8 Negative self-perception

Learners' negative self-perception was considered a source of LA by 3% of the teacher-participants from the survey, 56% from the in-depth interviews and 17% of the student-participants from the FGs. According to teacher-participants, learners' unfavourable comparisons of themselves with others in the classroom and society trigger their fear of being evaluated and evoke LA. In the classroom, they evaluate their English proficiency level negatively and decide to remain silent rather than speak and reveal their incompetence.

> In some cases, some students compare themselves with others and create certain misconceptions that he or she is not as fluent in speaking as their friends, thus there's no need to speak in English and show their inability to the other students. Why should they damage their image? (ST20)

As the surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants pointed out, when learners are outside of the classroom, they tend to negatively compare themselves with other English speakers in society and become anxious, thinking that they would be negatively judged and ridiculed, especially by proficient English speakers in society.

This view resonated with about 34% of the student-participants, who repeatedly mentioned being more afraid of speaking with highly proficient English speakers than with less proficient speakers or speakers of the same level as them. They reported being very concerned, worried and nervous when talking with proficient speakers. The same state of mind translated into the ESL classroom as learners' fear and nervousness in front of more

proficient peers. Hence, ESL learners' negative self-perceptions largely contributed to their LA.

4.2.1.9 Communication apprehension

Concerns about learners' communication apprehension were expressed by 22% of interviewed teacher-participants and 3% of surveyed teacher-participants. Amanda (University B) mentioned in her survey that speaking in Sri Lankan ESL classrooms is practised and assessed "using very 'public' activities such as making a presentation, a debate, or delivering a speech in front of a group of at least 50" (ST4). She raised this matter again in her interview, stating that some learners perform well in one-on-one assignments but do poorly and sometimes do not even utter a word when they perform in front of a whole class.

Substantiating this point, four student-participants said they were anxious to speak in front of others they did not know, while others said they were anxious to speak in front of anybody.

> But when there is a presentation, and an audience I cannot speak, I tremble, and I stammer. Even if I know the audience and they are my friends or when I do not know the audience, I cannot speak, or rather I am reluctant to speak. (FGS, SC2)

Three student-participants mentioned that their fear is not about their language but about speaking in front of others.

> My problem is that whether it is English or Sinhala, I cannot speak in front of others. (FGS, B4)

All the student-participants who commented on this reported that their fear depended on the nature and the level of proficiency of the peers in the classroom. They went on to explain that they did not experience anxiety if their peers were very supportive and they knew

each other well. However, they were unanimous in the view that they experienced high anxiety if the English proficiency of most of their peers was superior to theirs.

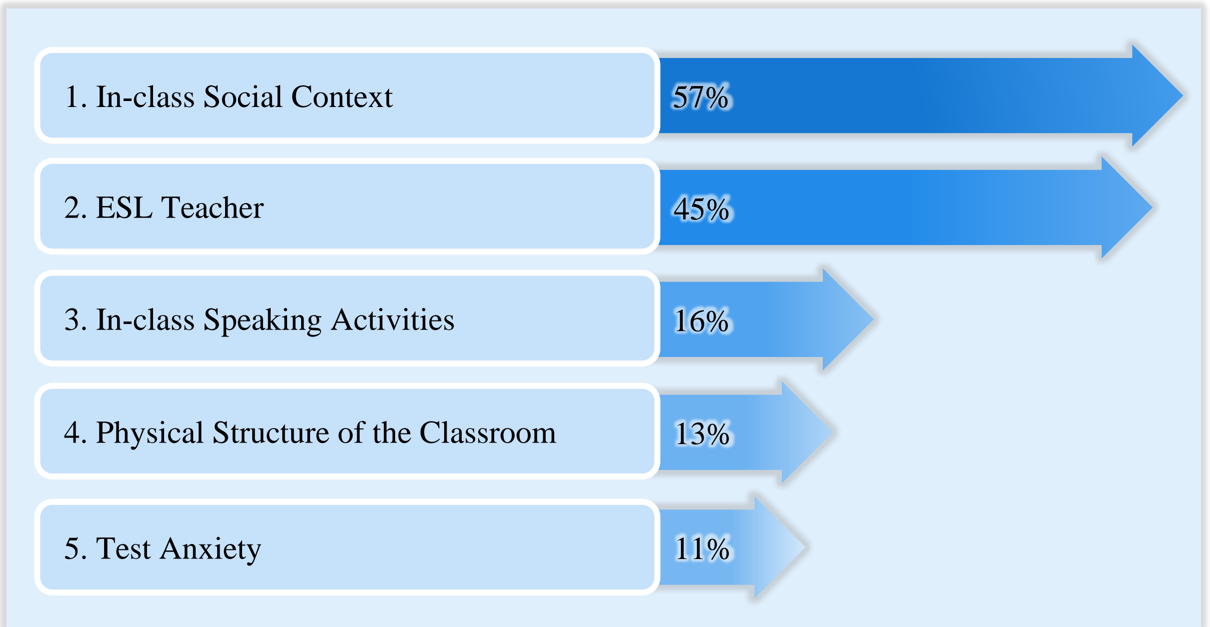
In sum, learner-specific anxiety sources, including learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision, limited linguistic ability, previous learning experience in English, lack of motivation, negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, personality traits, self-factors, negative self-perceptions and communication apprehension, were found to evoke LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka.

4.2.2 In-class anxiety sources

Another primary source of LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka is in-class sources. These sources are categorised below under five sub-themes according to the frequency of references received from the student-participants and teacher-participants (see Figure 4.3). The following sections elaborate on the sub-themes.

Figure 4.3

In-Class Sources of Anxiety



4.2.2.1 In-class social context

The in-class social context of ESL classrooms was reported as an anxiety source by both students (75%) and teacher-participants (7% from the survey and 90% from interviews) in the study. The in-class social context is influenced by both the ESL teachers and the learners. This section reports the study findings regarding the influence of ESL learners on the in-class social context. The impact of ESL teachers on the in-class social climate is reported in Section 4.2.2.2.

About 78% of the teacher-participants and 34% of the student-participants mentioned that proficient speakers in the classroom evoke anxiety in low-proficient speakers.

> I can speak with people who are not so proficient in English. But when I talk with people who are good at English, I always fear what they think about me. (FGS, C6)

> It intimidates them a lot, especially when we have a student who follows English or Translation as his/her major subject. It is obvious to everybody that their language is very good, and their speaking speed is very good. Because of that, other students might feel that those kids are judgmental about them and not tend to be motivated to speak because of their presence. That can be a problem. It is rare to find a kid who really does not care about what other people think. (ITB, Amanda)

> We have heterogeneous groups. They are mixed-ability groups with diverse competency levels. And what I feel is being in a mixed ability group when they see the students who are very fluent in English, that very fact makes them anxious. (ITC, Helen)

> When there are students who use language mostly in a nativised way, they are making a threat to the rest of the students. (ITA, Patrick)

> If a student dominates the conversation, the students who are not competent are reluctant to talk. Then they feel that they are not good enough. (ITC, Tilly)

One surveyed teacher-participant (ST36) attributed learners' reluctance to speak English in front of proficient English-speakers to the fact that they represent the elite class. The general perception of society towards the English-speaking elite class is negative due to the tendency of the elite class to ridicule and negatively judge the pronunciation and vocabulary of other speakers and other varieties of English. The same attitude is reflected in ESL classrooms; hence, less proficient learners are reluctant to speak English, for they believe they would be ridiculed and looked down upon by their more proficient peers.

Therefore, most teacher-participants preferred same-ability groups in their ESL classrooms. For instance, Ryan (University C) found same-ability groups effective. Amanda (University A) also thought it would have been better if she had same-ability groups, although she was teaching mixed-ability groups.

> I have mixed feelings about this because if it was an ideal classroom where the other kids help each other and engage in activities very willingly, in such a situation, having a mixed-ability classroom would be ideal. But we are teaching to almost like not young adults but not full adults, somewhere in between. They have a lot of ego clashes as well, and sometimes it can be difficult to get them to work together, in which case I feel like if we had [same-] ability groups, then we could sort of play a bigger role in that two-hour three-hour period that we have. (ITB, Amanda)

In contrast, Sunny from University B and Patrick from University A preferred mixed-ability groups in their ESL classes. Sunny believed that the advantages of mixed-ability groups outweighed the disadvantages, while Patrick from University A, who had same-ability

learners in his ESL classes, thought that same-ability groups had more disadvantages than mixed-ability groups.

> The error begins when we actually place them in three different proficiency levels…you know, divide them into different groups; what happens is the most proficient group usually gets together, and they turn up in leading roles of most of the societies and clubs, and they create a particular circle in which they find their comfort zone. The other proportions of students, let me say the intermediate and the lower proficient groups, find it as a sort of threat to interact in those societies…so they do not like to engage in these programmes, and that hinders them from developing their speaking skills because that is an opportunity for them to engage. (ITA, Patrick)

When asked for their opinions, approximately half of the student-participants believed that being in same-ability groups made them feel comfortable and confident. On the other hand, the remaining half thought that it was not the proficiency level of their peers that mattered, but the extent to which their peers were supportive and empathetic. As one student-participant mentioned:

> That means our fear depends on the type of students we have in the classroom. Suppose there are ten students in the classroom. Six of them are very good in English and four of them are weak. If those six students who are very good in English are supportive, then we are not that afraid, we are confident to speak. (FGS, B8)

Concerns were also expressed about the number of ESL learners in a classroom. University B and C have large ESL groups of 40-60 learners each, while University A has relatively smaller classes with 25-30 learners. When asked about their preference, the student-participants unanimously agreed that they felt less anxious in smaller classes and, therefore, preferred them over larger ones. When prompted to provide reasons for their less

anxiety, the student-participants cited the following reasons: (i) Larger classrooms are noisier than smaller ones, so learners get easily distracted in larger classrooms and cannot follow lessons properly; (ii) smaller classes lead to better attention and listening during speaking activities, motivating speakers to do better because of the interest shown by everyone; (iii) learners' self-confidence is higher in smaller classes because everyone knows each other well; (iv) learners get many opportunities to speak in smaller classes; and (v) teachers can pay individual attention to learners as there are only a few learners in a classroom.

Another characteristic that was reported as anxiety-provoking related to the ethnicity of the learners. According to the student-participants, they felt more anxious when speaking to peers of the same ethnicity compared to those from different ethnic backgrounds (see Section 4.2.1.1 for detail).

When asked about whether the gender of their peers had any effect on their LA, student-participants in different universities expressed different views. The student-participants from University A and B denied any such effect, while a few student-participants from University C acknowledged increased anxiety when speaking with the opposite gender.

One student-participant from University C reported feeling nervous when speaking with an interlocutor of the opposite gender who is from a "good school" and more proficient in English.

> With girls of our level, it is easy to speak. We do not have a problem. But then we know some students come from so-called good schools. So, if they are of a higher level, then we feel nervous. (FGS, B2)

> If the person from the opposite sex is better than me in English, then I feel pressure. But if both of us are on the same level, then I do not feel that pressure. This does not

> happen with the same sex. Even if the other person has a good knowledge of English and he is better than me, I still do not feel that pressure. (FGS, B12)

Based on the evidence available, the number of learners in the classroom, their English proficiency level, their classroom behaviour (e.g., supportive or competitive) and their demographic characteristics (e.g., gender and ethnicity) evoke LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

4.2.2.2 ESL teacher

The ESL teacher's age, accent, dress code, classroom behaviour, error correction procedure and teacher training were all found to influence learners' LA.

About 22% of the student-participants in FGs commented on the potential effects of the teacher's age on learners' LA. Of them, 13% agreed that the teacher's age impacted their LA. They preferred to have young teachers because they believed they were friendly and understood learners better. The student-participants stressed that young teachers followed effective teaching methods so that learners were more motivated and interested in learning English. They also mentioned that older teachers failed to comprehend learners' target and learning needs and maintained strict, distant relationships with their learners.

Commenting on ESL teachers' age, 67% of the teacher-participants in interviews held the view that it was not their age but the teacher's personality that significantly impacted learners' LA. Elaborating on this, they said that irrespective of age, teachers who were friendly, energetic, active, and, most importantly, humorous succeeded in making their lessons enjoyable, built a good rapport with the learners and elicited learners' active participation in classroom activities. However, a minority of the teacher-participants (33%) thought that the teacher's age contributed to learners' LA. Interestingly, all the teacher-participants in University C strongly agreed that the age of the teacher triggered learners' LA.

Close scrutiny of this difference of opinion revealed that University C employed many retired schoolteachers (above 65 years) to deliver ESL lectures at the university. The interviewed teacher-participants repeatedly mentioned that these former schoolteachers used very old and ineffective teaching methods to teach ESL and were less friendly with the learners. Patrick (University A) also supported this claim about former schoolteachers' outdated classroom practices and their distant relationships with university ESL learners.

> Most of the old-age teachers do not respect what we call the identities of students. They behave like they are from school, and students should behave like in school. They are retired, and there is no hope for them to dynamically adapt to the new learner circumstances. So, for that reason, students find it challenging to deal with those teachers. (ITA, Patrick)

However, there was consensus among the teacher-participants that the teacher's personality significantly influenced learners' LA more than their age. Some teacher-participants reported examples of some older ESL teachers pointing out how they were famous and loved by the learners in their respective universities due to their personality (e.g., humorous, energetic, kind, and friendly nature) despite their old age.

The observation sessions with ESL teacher-participants validated the finding that a teacher's personality is more critical than age for learners' anxiety levels in the ESL classroom. The six observed teacher-participants were from three age groups: 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49 (two in each age group). The teacher-participants from the age group 40-49 created very relaxed ESL classrooms, while the teacher-participants in the other two age groups created anxiety-provoking classrooms. The student-participants' behaviour and facial expressions indicated how stressed and worried they felt in these two classrooms.

When asked about the effect of a teacher's accent on learners' LA, all the interviewed teacher-participants except one concurred that learners feel anxious when the teacher has a British or American accent. Patrick, from University A, thought that a teacher with a "Western" accent (i.e., British or American English accent) might project a sense of perfection in the language in learners' eyes. This sense of perfection might negatively affect learners' psychology and trigger their inferiority complex and tendency to evaluate themselves negatively. On the other hand, Sandy, from University C, mentioned that learners from very remote areas of the country might never have heard people talking in English with a "Western" accent. Such learners may feel anxious hearing their teacher talk with a "Western" accent in their classroom. Further, according to the teacher-participants, this situation might create a considerable gap between learners and teachers. One student-participant mentioned that he did not like his ESL teacher in the school since he had a "Western" English accent.

When asked whether a teacher's dress code affected learners' LA, 78% of the teacher-participants mentioned that they had not experienced significant fluctuations in learners' LA because of their attire. They again pointed out that it is not the dress code but the teacher's personality, confidence and teaching methods that can impact learners' LA. The rest of the teacher-participants (22%) argued that formal clothing might create a gap between learners and teachers and distract learners' attention from the ESL lesson.

Concerns were expressed about whether a teacher's classroom behaviour could trigger learners' LA. As one surveyed teacher-participant pointed out, given the status of English in Sri Lanka, some English teachers behave like hierarchical regimental figures in their classrooms. For example, Amanda, an interviewed teacher-participant from University B, commented that teachers who maintain an unfriendly and formal relationship with learners may cause the latter to feel uneasy and uncomfortable in the classroom. She added that such a

relationship might hamper learners' interest in the subject and reduce their chances of experiencing enjoyable moments in their English language learning journey. During observation sessions, the researcher noticed that the student-participants were more at ease and appeared to enjoy classes more where the teacher-participants engaged well with them from the start of the class. This was often achieved by initiating small talk about interesting topics at the start of the class. In contrast, in classes where teacher-participants failed to begin the class with a friendly, casual encounter, the student-participants demonstrated passive behaviours and appeared nervous and bored (e.g., Sandy's class at University C).

Helen (University C) mentioned that learners inevitably experience LA if the teacher is harsh and constantly emphasises learners' errors. However, all the student-participants who responded on this matter confirmed that the ESL teachers they met at the university had been very supportive and gentle in the error correction procedure. The observation sessions validated this finding. The researcher noticed how the teacher-participants seemed to accept and appreciate all the answers given by the student-participants before gently commenting on them. Further, all the teacher-participants used delayed correction. However, the researcher also observed a few instances where teacher-participants' error correction could have made some student-participants anxious. For example, Amanda (University B) appeared to purposely balance positive and negative comments she gave to each student-participant who delivered a presentation. It was evident that no matter how the learners tried their personal best, they would still receive negative comments from her. Further, when explaining a grammar point after the conclusion of all the presentations, she singled out the student-participants who had that particular mistake.

Sunny (University B) revealed that he used forced participation in his ESL classrooms to make learners speak. He said he learned this practice from a senior academic in his university who was highly respected and appreciated by the nation for his contribution to

developing ESL in Sri Lanka. However, learners' behaviour has made it evident that forced participation creates an anxiety-provoking and stressful classroom atmosphere.

> I can remember I happened to use one of the techniques used by Professor XXX. If he asks a weak child a question, until and unless the child answers, he does not move. One day, everyone waited for nearly 10 minutes, and then, seeing the child in a very embarrassing situation, other children started answering. "No, I am still with her", he said. Likewise, I treated a child like this, and he started crying. Other children might, perhaps, you know, be critical about my attitude, yeah, but I mean, we try to make use of all the techniques that we have, all the strategies that we have at our disposal in order to make the children speak. Yes, I mean, it may be correct, it may be wrong, but it cannot be helped. (ITB, Sunny)

Unfortunately, the same practice Sunny implemented in the classroom to make learners speak had the effect of making them more anxious about speaking.

Opinions were expressed regarding initial teacher training and teachers' engagement with continuous PD training. Helen (University C) pointed out that some ESL teachers in her university needed more in-depth knowledge of teaching methodologies. Teachers' lack of updated knowledge on teaching methodologies, feedback procedures, student-teacher interactions and appropriate behaviour can lead to detrimental classroom practices that trigger LA among ESL learners.

Overall, the findings indicate that an ESL teacher's age, accent, dress code, classroom behaviour, error correction procedure, and teacher training could trigger LA in some ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

4.2.2.3 In-class speaking activities

The type of speaking activities implemented in the classroom was reported as an anxiety trigger by 17% of the teacher-participants in the survey. For example, they pointed out that some learners inevitably experience anxiety when required to practise their speaking skills in front of a large audience. Irrespective of learners' language ability, speaking in front of an audience can make them anxious, triggering their communication apprehension. Amanda (University B) observed how learners who were good at English became nervous when required to present in front of the whole class. She stressed that public speaking required additional skills and was very different from everyday speaking situations outside the classroom. Hence, she emphasised that practising and assessing learners' English-speaking skills using *public* activities in the classroom was highly inappropriate.

However, the other teacher-participants in interviews did not comment negatively on the teaching practices and speaking activities they implemented in their ESL classrooms. Instead, they seemed very confident about the speaking activities they practised in classrooms. Further, they appeared to be unconcerned about learners' communication apprehension. On the other hand, as Amanda commented, even if they know learners experience communication apprehension when practising speaking skills in front of the whole class, they cannot change the circumstances that force them to implement such practices in university classrooms (see Appendix Q for Amanda's interview transcript). For example, arranging one-on-one sessions with learners to practise speaking skills is impractical due to the large number of ESL learners in each class. Given the busy timetables of both learners and teachers and limited physical resources in state universities, arranging small-group practice sessions is also very difficult. Amanda also indicated that the recommended student-teacher ratio was not maintained in her university. This was confirmed by Tilly (University C) regarding her university as well. Although the study found that the

ratio of teachers to learners in ESL classrooms was one teacher for 40-60 learners, Tilly mentioned that the class size could sometimes be as high as 130. Hence, apart from Amanda, the other teachers appeared to ignore learners' communication apprehension, which is very unfortunate, given that it is one of the primary sources of their LA.

Some student-participants in FGs reported that impromptu speech triggered anxiety for them. They explained that their anxiety was heightened when they were asked to speak in front of the whole class. Further, the student-participants (31%) highlighted that teaching practices which required them to give speeches, presentations, and do role plays without prior preparation and practice made them very anxious.

The comments of some other student-participants demonstrated that they did not strive to do their best even if they were given time to prepare and practise the language task before the performance. One student-participant (FGS, B16) reported that their preparation was limited to browsing the internet and memorising a chunk of a text related to a given topic. He admitted that such practices helped them save their image and earn good marks for ESL assessments but made them helpless and anxious when they had to process the language naturally.

During observations of the ESL classrooms, the researcher witnessed teacher-participants carefully choosing topics for student-participants' speaking activities. All six teacher-participants chose topics that aroused student-participants' interest and curiosity (e.g., Fortune telling and Are you a bad liar?). Even in impromptu speeches, the teacher-participants gave the student-participants exciting topics and many options to choose from. However, as mentioned earlier, the researcher noticed that some student-participants were not speaking but just reading a text they had found on the internet related to the given topic. The

eye movement of some of the speakers indicated that they were reading something that was displayed on their computer screens.

4.2.2.4 Physical structure of the classroom

The physical structure of ESL classrooms can be anxiety-provoking for some ESL learners. About 10% of the interviewed teacher-participants and 28% of the student-participants reported that classroom features such as a teacher-centred layout and large windows and doors that could not be closed evoked LA.

Both the teacher-participants and student-participants mentioned that they did not enjoy teacher-centred layout of the classrooms at their university, where the teacher was at the front, and the learners sat in rows facing the teacher. They further complained that there was a lot of furniture, most of which was fixed, in each class compared to the available space. Hence, teachers struggled to walk around and facilitate ESL learners' participation when necessary. The whole physical layout of the classroom, they said, was uncomfortable and anxiety-producing for the learners.

Another concern was how open the ESL classrooms were to the people outside. Due to the tropical weather of Sri Lanka, buildings are often designed with large windows, doors, and open spaces to help the ventilation process. Most university buildings follow this concept and have large windows and doors. Some windows and doors are designed in such a way that they need not be covered. About 31% of the student-participants reported that they feel easily distracted in such open classrooms.

Most importantly, classrooms with uncovered windows and doors were seen as a source of anxiety by some student-participants in the FGs. As they mentioned, when other students and teachers outside the classroom saw them performing in English inside the ESL classroom, they felt inhibited and uncomfortable. One student-participant in the second-year

specifically reported that he was very anxious speaking English in open classrooms when he was in the first year, since he was afraid that senior students might see him speaking English. Sunny, an interviewed teacher-participant from University B, also pointed out that first-year students are scared to speak English in classrooms with uncovered windows and doors, mainly because of the fear of getting punished by senior students. On the other hand, Amanda (University B) observed how second-year students are reluctant to speak English in open classrooms. She explained that second-year students are cautious about their image, mainly because they want their juniors to look up to them. Hence, they are reluctant to participate in English-speaking activities in open classrooms and demonstrate incompetence to others outside the classroom. In this way, their need to protect their self-image could trigger their LA.

4.2.2.5 Test anxiety

Learners' anxiety over language tests can also trigger their LA. About 3% of the surveyed teacher-participants, 11% of the interviewed teacher-participants, and 19% of the student-participants agreed with this point. They agreed that the pressure is higher when speaking activities are assessed. The possibility of losing marks makes them nervous. However, one student-participant mentioned that whether the speaking activity is assessed or not, he gets nervous when he speaks in English.

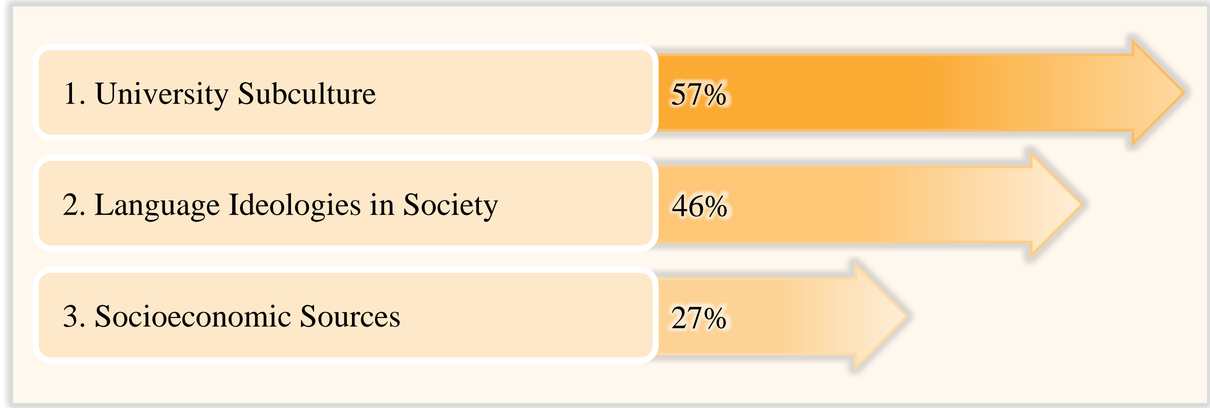
In sum, the findings indicate five sources of LA that stem from the ESL classroom. These include sources related to ESL teachers, in-class social context, speaking activities, classroom structure, and test anxiety.

4.2.3 Out-of-class anxiety sources

The third primary type of LA source is related to out-of-class factors, including university subculture, language ideologies in society, and socioeconomic sources (Figure 4.4). The following sections present the findings related to these factors in detail.

Figure 4.4

Out-of-Class Sources of Anxiety



4.2.3.1 University subculture

University subculture has been identified as one of the most significant sources of LA among ESL learners, creating a long-term negative impact on ESL learners' learning and speaking skills. This was substantiated by both ESL teacher-participants (41% from the survey and 88% from interviews) and student-participants (41%) in the study.

University subculture is a combination of learned and shared beliefs, values and practices specific to undergraduates in state universities of Sri Lanka. As one surveyed teacher-participant mentioned, even though some of the elements and features of the subculture among universities are slightly different, overall, they all believe in maintaining equality within the university. One of the most popular strategies for establishing equality is making everyone speak one common language within the university premises. According to

one student-participant in an FG, the language of communication within university premises is typically based on the language spoken by the majority of the university community. For instance, universities located in areas where Sinhalese is the predominant language use Sinhala as the language of communication. On the other hand, universities located in areas where Tamil is the dominant language use Tamil as the language of communication on the university premises. In the former setting, Tamils are also encouraged to use Sinhala rather than English to communicate while on the university premises. As one Tamil student put it:

> In the university, we speak Sinhala more than English. Now my Sinhala is better than my English. (FGS, C6)

In addition, as the interviewed teacher-participants emphasised, the university subculture imposes complex rules about using English on its premises. The senior university students who volunteer to protect and maintain the subculture spread negative attitudes about the English language, its speakers, and learning English at universities. As some surveyed teacher-participants (11%) mentioned, senior students consider English as the language of the colonisers, the enemy or the enemy class.

> English [is labelled] as a class marker, a symbol of power and a yardstick that divides students. (ST60)

According to the teacher-participants, senior university students (in the second, third and fourth years) believe English destroys equality within the university, so they impose a rule on junior students (in the first year) not to use any English words outside the ESL classroom. These senior students regularly hold meetings and informal discussions to cultivate negative attitudes about English use within the university. Even within the classroom, ESL learners are asked not to be active or volunteer in answering questions. According to the teacher-participants in interviews and the survey, such practices in the

subculture influence ESL learners in two main ways: (i) they discourage and demotivate less proficient ESL learners from learning and speaking English, and (ii) they discourage proficient learners from speaking English on the university premises. This view was shared by the student-participants in the FGs as well. Similarly, two interviewed teacher-participants with a state university education reported that they had had this experience as students when they were banned from using English on the university premises.

The student-participants and teacher-participants in interviews and the survey reported several strategies that senior university students used to discourage junior students from learning English at the university. One strategy was reducing junior students' confidence in the ESL programme conducted by the university.

> In the orientation programme…we had an excellent [English] programme where students were allocated into groups. The programme was focused on improving the students' English skills. However, the very first attitude we got from our seniors was negative. They said we could not improve our English via that programme. They asked us to do another English course from somewhere outside the university. (FGS, C5)

It was expected that when the junior students lost their confidence in the ESL programme, they would be demotivated, start skipping classes and finally give up learning English at the university.

Another common strategy senior students use to discourage the use of English in the university is *ragging*, i.e., abusing or punishing students who go against the rules of the subculture, such as speaking English within the university premise.

> Outside the classroom, if we talk at least one word in English, then there is a big problem. If a senior hears us speaking one word in English, then we will be ostracised, and there will be many other consequences. Yeah, *ragging* had a very big negative influence on my English learning. For example, one day, during the *ragging* period, I talked with one of my friends outside the classroom about a computer game. This was heard by one of the seniors, and the next night, I was asked to come alone, and they all got together and started abusing me verbally. There are many cases like that. (FGS, B12)

> During the *ragging* period, we could not use English. It just brought us to a place where we could not remember the words we knew earlier. The words I checked in the dictionary now are those I used earlier. It is like we forcefully forgot the English we knew. (FGS, B10)

> During the *ragging* period, English usage was restricted to such an extent that we were not even allowed to say the names of our schools in English. For me, more than the changes in attitudes, the biggest change happened in English usage. (FGS, B15)

As Sunny (University B) reported, there is evidence that senior students spend time around the ESL classes of junior students to pick on students who go against their rules and advice. If they find English-fluent students who actively participate in English language activities in the classroom, they will threaten and punish them. In university subculture, abuse, harassment, and punishments are identified as "special treatment" (ST60). As Olivia noticed, students who use English as a communication tool within university premises get strangely noticed and are at risk of receiving "special treatment" from senior students. Therefore, according to Olivia's (University A) observation, proficient English speakers

prefer to remain silent rather than speak English, fearing negative attention and potential problems.

The teacher-participants in interviews and the survey thought ostracising English-speaking students and considering them outsiders to the university student community is another strategy senior students use to control the junior students and their English language use. They highlighted that this practice significantly impacts students who value group membership.

> Sometimes, due to this subculture, students who earlier had a keen interest in using English and who performed well become discouraged and deteriorate their English skills for the sake of being a subculture member. (ST60)

However, it was surprising that the student-participants from University A (a metropolitan university) did not mention anything about subculture or *ragging* during the FG interviews. When asked about this matter, they unanimously agreed that they had not experienced anything similar at their university. The teacher-participants from University A also confirmed that they did not have any substantial evidence of senior university students engaging in such activities. This is a possible explanation for the high motivation levels and low anxiety levels among ESL learners at University A to speak English, noted during observation sessions and FG interviews. For instance, when asked about their opinion about speaking English in a public situation, one student-participant at University A said:

> I would have definitely avoided the chance earlier because I hated English. But now I understand it is important to learn English, so my only focus is to grab all the opportunities that come my way without avoiding them. (FGS, A1)

Unfortunately, all the circumstances mentioned above (except in University A) evoked LA in both proficient and less-proficient learners at the other two universities (B and C). Further, harmful subcultural practices such as *ragging* make learners lose motivation to learn and speak English, reduce their confidence in their language ability, and lead them to forget the language gradually due to lack of use. This shows that university subculture, learners' lack of self-confidence and motivation and fear of negative evaluation and derision are interrelated in triggering their LA.

4.2.3.2 Language ideologies in society

While ESL student-participants implied that language ideologies impacted their LA, the teacher-participants (49% from the survey and 89% from interviews) explicitly emphasised the fact that language ideologies in Sri Lankan society negatively influence ESL learners and evoke LA. They identified the colonial mindsets of Sri Lankan people as the most significant factor shaping English language ideologies in Sri Lanka. For instance, Helen (University C) elaborated on the master-slave relationship in which Sri Lankans feel inferior to their master (Britain) and the master's language (English). She further explained that making a mistake in the master's language was viewed as an embarrassment in Sri Lankan society. Some interviewed teacher-participants argued that the perfection sought in English language use was reflected in the ESL classroom as learners' reluctance to actively participate in speaking activities. This occurs because learners do not want others to see their imperfections in the language. As one surveyed teacher-participant mentioned, this situation evokes learners' LA and encourages ESL learners to delay speaking English until they can form a perfect sentence in English.

About 50% of the teacher-participants in the survey pointed out that English has been used as a tool of discrimination in Sri Lankan society. It has been considered a 'weapon' or a 'Kaduva' (meaning sword in English) used by society's elite to prevent commoners from

accessing opportunities and privileges. Hence, commoners view English as the "language of the elite" (ST43), the "language of the prestige" (ST21), and the "language of the power" (ST60). As Olivia (University A) mentioned, the commoners do not view English as a language that is accessible to all which, therefore, belongs to anyone and everyone who utilises it. According to one surveyed teacher-participant:

> Even though language is a tool to facilitate communicative purposes, it is used here [by the elite] to showcase one's class and to demean the individuals who cannot accurately manipulate the language in terms of speaking. (ST56)

Such views make ESL learners anxious to speak English and antagonistic toward their peers who speak English fluently. Further, the teacher-participants in both the survey and the interviews agreed that in Sri Lankan society, a person's low proficiency in English reveals a lot about him/her, not just that he/she is incapable of using a language. They reported that proficiency in English in Sri Lankan society is perceived as synonymous with a person's wit and brain. While high proficiency in English signals a person is high-class, educated, wealthy and talented, low proficiency is associated with a lack of intelligence and low social status.

> In Sri Lanka, knowing English very well is an advantage, but knowing it a little is more disadvantageous than not knowing it at all. (ITB, Amanda)

Only one teacher-participant in the survey and another in the interviews believed that the *power* English enjoys in society has a minor impact on current ESL learners. All the other teacher-participants acknowledged that the *power* of English adds stress to the minds of ESL learners and evokes their LA.

4.2.3.3 Socioeconomic sources

The lack of practice, exposure and resources resulting from the unequal distribution of educational resources contributes to ESL learners' LA. Accordingly, about 37% of the teacher-participants in the survey and 44% of those interviewed expressed concern over socioeconomic factors and their impact on ESL learners' LA. They argued that educational resources are not equally distributed across Sri Lanka. They specifically pointed out the imbalance in educational resources between schools in rural and metropolitan areas. Hence, the resulting difference in exposure to English for learners from rural and metropolitan areas is inevitable. Around 24% of the surveyed teacher-participants indicated that learners from non-privileged backgrounds lacked adequate exposure to English. Some teacher-participants reported that less proficient learners from rural backgrounds feel anxious, threatened, and scared when they observe that their proficient peers come from a much higher socioeconomic background. However, a different perspective was presented by the surveyed teacher-participant 62, who critically stated:

> [T]he students from these non-privileged backgrounds…actively refrain from seeking access to English, and the excuse is that they did not have an English teacher at school. Yet, in this day and age, the avenues to improve English are numerous, but those who can afford access to English would rather invest in smartphones, phone bills and beauty products…Very few attempts to learn English by going to a class to pass the English exam in the university. Accessing freely available resources in the DELTs is unheard of… (ST62).

This teacher further commented that instead of learning English using the resources they already have access to, learners from non-privileged backgrounds use different strategies to conceal their LA and low competence in English. While some learners blame the government and demand social justice by organising nationwide protests and campaigns,

others try to cover up their insecurities by attacking the English language and antagonising its speakers. As one surveyed teacher-participant (ST22) pointed out, some learners believe that it is unnecessary to learn English, since the medium of instruction of their degrees is not English, and they want to be government teachers upon graduation. As she pointed out, in Sri Lanka, English is not a *must* to work in most government jobs.

One surveyed teacher-participant identified another group of learners in ESL classes at state universities in Sri Lanka:

> [These students] are determined to improve their language at the university regardless of their socioeconomic background. They are courageous and brave enough in their attempts to speak in English and sometimes do code-switching while others laugh when they do not have the English word. (ST60)

As Olivia (University A) observed, most of the parents who belonged to the middle class of society are keen on their children passing English examinations. These parents constantly encourage their children to learn English but, ironically, not to speak it. This situation completely aligns with the education system in Sri Lanka.

> [T]their parents and family members, especially their mothers, have pushed them to learn English, but not push to use English. This is always to learn and get some certification to get the qualification, pass exams with good marks, all that and even in schools it is like that. (ITA, Olivia)

This shows a lack of understanding among parents about the reasons for learning English and also the importance of speaking English.

Furthermore, the Sri Lankan education system is exam-oriented; classroom teaching and learning are also exam-oriented. Only the language aspects assessed in exams are taught.

Other language points that are not assessed but contribute to day-to-day life are not taught or practised in ESL classrooms at state universities (e.g., speaking in English).

Thus, three external sources outside of the classroom affect ESL learners' LA: University subculture, language ideologies in society, and the socioeconomic factors of the country.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has reported the sources of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka from the perspectives of student and teacher-participants. It identified three main source types of anxiety in ESL learners: learner-specific, in-class, and out-of-class. Learner-specific anxiety sources encompassed fear of negative evaluation and derision, limited linguistic ability, previous learning experience, lack of motivation, negative attitudes and misconceptions, personality traits, self-factors, negative self-perceptions, and communication apprehension. In-class anxiety sources comprised in-class social context, the ESL teacher, in-class speaking activities, the physical structure of the classroom and test anxiety. Out-of-class anxiety sources included the university subculture, language ideologies in society, and socioeconomic factors. The study further revealed that these sources of anxiety were interrelated.

Chapter 5 will focus on the strategies implemented or proposed by teacher-participants and student-participants for managing ESL learners' LA.

Chapter Five: Classroom Strategies for Managing ESL Learners' Language Anxiety

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reported findings regarding the sources of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This chapter presents findings relevant to the second research question of the study:

> *What are the strategies ESL teachers can employ to manage the LA of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka?*

The chapter explores the strategies implemented or proposed by teacher-participants and student-participants for managing ESL learners' LA, which arises from learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources, specifically during speaking activities in the ESL classroom. Both teacher-participants and student-participants are cited to illustrate and support the relevant strategies. Further, attempts are made to provide evidence from data gathered through all four research methods (online questionnaire, in-depth interviews, focus group interviews and observations) whenever possible. The source of the data is always provided at the end of the excerpt, including the research method used and the participant.

5.2 Strategies for Managing Learner-Specific Anxiety Sources

As discussed in Chapter 4, nine learner-specific sources of LA were identified among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities. These included fear of negative evaluation and derision, limited linguistic ability, previous learning experience, lack of motivation, negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, personality traits, self-factors, negative self-perceptions, and communication apprehension. However, the strategies

suggested by teacher-participants and student-participants seem to focus mainly on managing learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision, lack of motivation, negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, and self-confidence (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1

Strategies for Managing Sources of Language Anxiety

Strategies for managing learner-specific sources of LA	Strategies for managing in-class sources of LA	Strategies for managing out-of-class sources of LA
Managing fear of negative evaluation and derision * Creating opportunities to speak with people of other nationalities and ethnicities; creating a non-judgmental, safe zone in the ESL classroom for speaking English; employing appropriate feedback procedures; initiating in-class discussions regarding learners' English-speaking apprehensions; and arranging separate extra sessions for low-proficiency learners. ***Managing a lack of motivation*** * Addressing learners by their preferred names; initiating in-class discussions regarding the importance of learning and speaking English; sharing personal anecdotes of themselves and other successful English speakers; giving equal importance to and showing a genuine interest in learners' answers; convincing learners that acquiring English proficiency is a feasible goal; and prompting learners to reflect on the purpose of learning English. ***Managing negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers*** * Emphasising meaning over accuracy during error correction; and initiating in-class discussions regarding ownership of English, role and the importance of language mistakes in the language learning process. ***Managing learners' lack of self-confidence to speak English*** * Providing increased opportunities to practise speaking skills; allowing adequate time for preparation and practice; promoting social inclusion in the classroom; fostering a sense of community in the classroom; and listening to fluent but less accurate speakers.	***Managing in-class social context*** * Creating a safe, friendly, relaxed, and conducive environment for language learning (e.g., effective initial engagement with learners at the start of the class, using humour in the ESL classroom, judicious use of L1in the ESL classroom, translanguaging, and ensuring familiarity among learners). ***Managing sources related to ESL teacher*** * Employing appropriate feedback procedures (e.g., focusing only on major errors, focusing on fluency instead of accuracy, using delayed correction, refraining from singling out learners, obtaining peer-feedback, showing appreciation and giving positive reinforcement); and improving ESL teacher's classroom behaviour (e.g., friendly, supportive, approachable, caring and relaxed). ***Managing anxiety-provoking in-class speaking activities*** * Implementing pair/group activities that has a clear purpose; conducting speaking activities that are familiar, relevant, fun, creative, interesting, level-appropriate, authentic, allow free thinking and arouse curiosity; giving more opportunities for learners to engage in speaking activities; using prompting questions generously when learners struggle to speak; and encouraging learners to volunteer.	* Initiating in-class discussions to inculcate positive attitudes and dispel learners' misconceptions about English and its speakers; and fostering a positive mindset by creating a positive classroom climate.

Note. Anxiety-management strategies are ranked by frequency of references.

5.2.1 Strategies for managing fear of negative evaluation and derision

As reported in Section 4.2.1.1, fear of negative evaluation and derision is the most significant source of LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka. This fear is more pronounced among low-proficiency learners, who believe that they would be adversely judged and laughed at for their language incompetence by peers and teachers in the ESL classroom.

To manage fear of negative evaluation and derision, the teacher-participants (36% from the survey and 89% from interviews) emphasised that they attempt to create a non-judgmental, safe zone in the ESL classroom. They explicitly tell their learners that mistakes are accepted and tolerated in their classrooms and ensure that no one laughs at others for making mistakes in English. In such classrooms, learners can speak English and make mistakes without worrying about being judged or ridiculed.

> Create a 'safe zone' where students feel free to use the English they know, without being ridiculed by the inside society (classroom - peers and teachers). (ST25)

> I always create a friendly environment in the class to make them speak without worrying about the mistakes they make. I encourage them to make mistakes and learn from mistakes, emphasising the fact that making mistakes is not a crime. (ST56)

> Convince them that it is a safe environment free of judgment (ST57)

> Create a friendly, non-threatening environment in the class where the students are constantly encouraged to learn from mistakes. (ST56)

> Making the language classroom an enjoyable and relaxed place for students to use the language freely. (ST60)

Initiating in-class discussions regarding learners' English-speaking apprehensions is another key strategy used by both surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants to manage learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision. Two teacher-participants mentioned that they discuss learners' fears at the start of the course. Such discussions help create a safe zone for learners to speak without worrying about mistakes.

> I encourage students to share their reservations about speaking in English at the beginning of proficiency courses. Once this is done, they often realise that others feel the same apprehension, too, and this allows for some degree of safety in attempting speaking activities. (ST44)

> On the very first day, I have a set of things that I let my students know; no matter their age, I always try to explain to them that English is just another language… I let them know that accent does not matter, the choice of words does not really matter as long as, at least, using gestures and two or three words they can communicate to another person, and I had the same attitude about grammar as well. (ITA, Olivia)

Tilly (University C) mentioned that she employs the following strategy in her ESL classrooms. She discusses learners' fears and tries to convince them that it is common to feel nervous before a speaking activity. Olivia (University A) also highlighted that those discussions should continue throughout the ESL course.

> This is a language that is there everywhere in the world. Everyone can speak it; everyone can learn it. As long as your message gets across, that is what matters. This should not be a social tool where people judge you for your intelligence or your social status or anything; this is just there for communication. So, if you cannot really communicate something, it is okay to switch. I think those things must be taught, practised, and trained throughout. (ITA, Olivia)

As illustrated in Section 4.2.1.1, 21% of the surveyed teacher-participants, 100% of the interviewed teacher-participants and 100% of the student-participants reported that learners do not experience fear of negative evaluation and derision when they speak English with people of other nationalities. Hence, the teacher-participants encouraged their learners to speak with foreigners or consider their peers foreigners when speaking English.

> I told this to my kids [learners] as well, to those who are very weak but stay motivated to learn. So, they would ask me what I should do, and I would ask them to talk to, write to a pen pal or talk to somebody outside of the country. Because that can actually help them and they come to experience different varieties of English, so that is good. (ITB, Amanda)

> I told my students to consider themselves foreigners and consider their friends foreigners. You are standing in front of a foreigner who does not know your mother tongue. Then you have to talk in English, so I have given all sorts of, you know, strategies…being intimidated by the fault-finding factor, the fault-finding attitude of Sri Lankans is there. (ITB, Sunny)

Similarly, student-participants mentioned that they feel less anxious when speaking with people of other ethnicities. Hence, they seem to actively seek opportunities to communicate with peers from different ethnicities in the university and foreigners on online platforms.

> Chatting with friends, especially with Tamil friends. (FGS, A3)

> I have a Muslim friend. We talk in English. She never laughs at me. This allows me to use English. Because I do not have any other way to communicate with her. (FGS, C2)

> There is an app called HELLO. We were introduced to other people from foreign countries to speak and practise English there. It is easy to speak with them because they do not know us, so it is OK even to make mistakes. (FGS, B13)

> I met some foreign friends online. And we call each other. What they say is do not think about the grammar; just say whatever there is in your mind. I will somehow understand. (FGS, B3)

As explained in Section 4.2.1.1, low-proficiency learners in regular ESL classes can feel intimidated by high-proficiency learners. This is because low-proficiency learners are afraid that they would be laughed at for their language incompetence. To address this fear, one student-participant in an FG suggested offering additional support classes to low-proficiency learners. This would provide a space to practise speaking English without fear of judgment or mockery from high-proficiency learners.

> If we can identify the students who want to speak, who are willing to speak but afraid of speaking because of the judgments of other people, if we can identify such students, group them, and, at least, give them one or half an hour every day in addition to the formal ESL class to practise speaking, then that would be really good. So basically, what we should do is create a classroom which is non-threatening for those students. A safe place where they can confidently speak without any fear that others would ridicule them. (FGS, B12)

This view resonates with some of the classroom practices of Patrick, an interviewed teacher-participant at University A. He identifies low-proficiency learners in his classrooms and helps them improve their English by offering extra sessions. He believes that when placed in a separate class, low-proficiency learners feel comfortable speaking English and making mistakes because everyone in that class is at the same level.

> We actually identify such students, and quite recently, we take such students…from the rest of the groups to online platforms where we meet them and support them and, of course, give them makeup sessions, extra sessions and tailor-made sessions to develop their skills. (ITA, Patrick)

In line with that, one student-participant (FGS, B11) pointed out the significance of forming ESL classes comprising learners with similar abilities during the initial semesters of a degree program. He highlighted that learners in such classrooms feel comfortable as they are all at the same proficiency level.

In addition, ESL teacher-participants reported that they employ careful feedback procedures in ESL classrooms to prevent learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision. They focus only on major errors and provide feedback personally or to the entire class without singling out individual learners who made errors. They maintain consistency in providing feedback, use delayed correction, and encourage peer feedback. They praise learners, highlight the strengths of learners before commenting on their mistakes, and provide positive reinforcement. These strategies are discussed in detail in Section 5.3.2.

In summary, to help ESL learners manage their fear of negative evaluation and derision, the teacher-participants and student-participants suggested the following strategies: creating a non-judgmental, safe zone in the ESL classroom to speak English; initiating in-class discussions regarding learners' English-speaking apprehensions; creating opportunities to speak with people of other nationalities and ethnicities; arranging separate extra sessions for low-proficiency learners; and employing an appropriate feedback procedure.

5.2.2 Strategies for managing lack of motivation

Lack of motivation was mentioned by 31% of the student-participants, 11% of the surveyed and 56% of interviewed teacher-participants as a source of LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka (see Section 4.2.1.4). The teacher-participants reported several strategies in their ESL classrooms to motivate their learners.

Making learners aware of the importance of learning English and improving their speaking skills was identified as a key motivating strategy by 20% of the surveyed and 44% of the interviewed teacher-participants. The responses of student-participants in FGs revealed that some of them remained unaware of the importance of English until they entered the university. These learners lacked the motivation to learn or speak English until they understood its importance.

> As members of this global society, we have to convince them of the importance of being bi-lingual, tri-lingual or multi-lingual and thereby develop marketable skills to fit into this global economy. (ST23)

> If there is a student who excelled in mathematics and came to University A but grew up and was brought up in a very rural deprived background, he actually did not have a tradition where English is considered something special. So, he does not know until he comes to the university that this language has this much of an effect. (ITA, Patrick)

> It was after coming to the university that I restarted learning English. It was then that I felt the need to learn English. It was then that I realised how weak I am in English. I got terrible results in the first semester because of my poor English. I was so mentally down because I could not understand lectures in English. Later, gradually, I got used

to the sounds, words, and tones of my English teachers. I also do self-study now. (FGS, C2)

> Nobody taught us the importance of learning English. During A/L, I did not have a teacher for General English subject. The General English book is still brand new. I never used it. When I came to the university, I had the motivation and the need to learn English because I could not understand some questions on exam papers and lecture notes. So, I started self-studying. (FGS, C1)

The same student-participant (FGS, C1) expanded on his situation later in the FG interview as follows:

> When I felt the need, I started to learn English. I started self-studying, knowing that if I did not do this, I would have to repeat all my subjects. So, within four months, there was a huge improvement in my English, and my results in the second semester also got better…If only that motivation had been created in Grade one in school, then things would have been really different for me. During that time, everybody, including society, said there was no need to learn English, and they said it was not that important. They advised me to pass the other subject first. They said English could be learned at any time. I had this mentality until I entered the university. Only when I came to the university did I realise that things cannot be done that way. (FGS, C1)

All the above excerpts from the FG interviews indicate how student-participants were self-motivated to learn English upon realising its importance for survival in the university.

Several teacher-participants pointed out that Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) helps learners realise the importance of learning English.

> We inform them how English is relevant to their field of study, and when explaining a lesson, most of the time, we try to incorporate materials related to their subjects. (ST46)

> Now we are going into this content and language-integrated learning where English is integrated into other subjects, which is, I think, better because they understand the purpose of learning English that way. That is related to their degree program, so they feel motivated to do it. (ITB, Amanda)

Five of the surveyed teacher-participants and two who were interviewed (Amanda and Tilly) mentioned that they convince their learners that acquiring English proficiency is a feasible goal. According to them, this approach undoubtedly serves to motivate learners towards putting in more effort.

> I also try to create a positive image about speaking in English, saying that it is achievable if you put in effort. (ST53)

> I always tell them that learning English is not a daunting task; it is a matter of practice. (ST56)

This strategy is significant because some student-participants in FGs mentioned that they thought learning English was too difficult and unattainable, leading to a lack of motivation to learn it.

> Since my childhood, it has been gone into my mind that English is very difficult. (FGS, C8)

Eight surveyed and four interviewed teacher-participants mentioned that they share personal anecdotes of themselves and other successful speakers who either still make mistakes in English or had difficult previous learning experiences. Despite these challenges,

they became fluent speakers of English later in their lives. According to teacher-participants, such stories not only inspire learners but convince them of the feasibility of their language goal. Another surveyed teacher-participant stated that she brings in examples of successful graduates from the same institution to show the current ESL learners the importance of English. These graduates are successful in their respective fields, not only because of their subject expertise but also because of their English proficiency. The teacher-participants believe that such role-models to whom the learners can relate motivate them to learn and speak English.

> The everyday stories and anecdotes that I take to the class revealing my learner-self make them comfortable to consider me as someone of their category. (ITA, Patrick)

> I tell my students this [personal anecdote], and I tell them it is okay to make mistakes. What matters is using the language in whatever way you like, whatever your ability and that is how I did it. Then they feel that our lives and the way we learned English are also not very different from theirs. Then, they can relate. (ITA, Olivia)

> I usually take anecdotal examples of speech difficulties encountered by iconic people to the class as eye-openers and fillers for brainstorming sessions before speech tasks. (ST7)

> I try to show them that English is not as difficult as they assume by sharing examples from my life and others that I know. (ST15)

According to the interviewed teacher-participants, their anecdotes motivated learners to put more effort into learning English. The realisation that their teachers also faced similar challenges but still managed to succeed instilled hope and confidence in learners that they, too, could achieve their language goals.

Patrick, an interviewed teacher-participant from University A, prompts learners to reflect on their purpose in learning English as a key strategy to motivate them. Patrick said that he links learners' English proficiency with the requirements of their prospective careers to boost their motivation. Further, he explains to his learners the negative consequences that may arise if they fail to learn how to speak English. During the observation session, Patrick instantly established a link between his lesson (writing a resume) and the learners' future, making the whole learning session meaningful and valuable to the student-participants. The reason behind the higher motivation among student-participants at University A may be that they feel that their purpose of learning English is being fulfilled in the ESL classroom. Sunny from University B agreed with Patrick and emphasised that learners must feel that their needs are being met in the classroom in order to be motivated. According to Patrick, his particular strategy also boosted learners' class attendance. In contrast, teaching ESL at University B was textbook-based, and at University C, it was handout-based. The researcher did not notice any instances where these teacher-participants connected their teaching to student-participants' futures or their prospective careers. This might be another reason for student participants' limited motivation and poor attendance at ESL classes in universities B and C.

For several teacher-participants, providing equal importance and showing an interest in learners' responses are critical strategies for motivating learners to speak in the classroom.

> Especially if a rather silent student speaks up at all, give deserving attention to what he/she says and use their answer often in the class just to show them that their opinion matters… (ST70) (see Appendix P for the questionnaire)

> Provide opportunity and support to be heard in the classroom. (ST57)

Ryan and Helen (University C) utilised this strategy to motivate learners in their real teaching. During observation sessions, they demonstrated a keen interest in learners' answers.

They prompted the learners when they struggled with words, repeated learners' answers sometimes with more vocabulary, and laughed out loud together at humorous remarks. Further, they demonstrated that they were actively listening to learners' answers through facial expressions and gestures. The researcher observed that this behaviour encouraged not only the individual learner who provided the answer but also the entire class, thus encouraging them to actively engage in the assigned activity.

Building rapport between teachers and learners is essential to motivate learners. A common strategy utilised by the interviewed and surveyed teacher-participants is to address learners by their preferred names. Even though the register or the attendance sheets list learners' surnames with initials, the teacher-participants make it a point to ask each learner for their preferred name, note it down, and memorise it. About 78% of the interviewed teacher-participants confirmed that they employ this strategy in their ESL classrooms. They believed it gave learners a psychological boost, improved their self-esteem, and triggered their motivation.

> Kids [ESL learners] love it if you remember their names, especially in the first sitting. It is the same for every student. At the university, there are only their surnames on all of my attendance sheets. So, I have written down their first name and only talk to them in their first name. I tend to ask them which name they like…I ask them and write it down. (ITB, Amanda)

> I always know the names of my students… I do not like the names in the register; they have these initials and the last names. Yeah, that does not work for me, so I asked them how they would like me to call them…they told me that, "you are the only one who remembers our names". We always try to maintain that close relationship. (ITA, Olivia)

> Actually, I tend to remember my students' names because I feel that if I remember them, they will work hard because they know that the teacher knows them. (ITC, Tilly)

In summary, to manage learners' lack of motivation, the teacher-participants suggested several strategies. These included initiating in-class discussions regarding the importance of learning and speaking English, convincing learners that acquiring English proficiency is a feasible goal, sharing personal anecdotes of their experience and that of other successful English speakers, prompting learners to reflect on the purpose of learning English, giving equal importance to and showing a genuine interest in learners' answers, and addressing learners by their preferred names.

5.2.3 Strategies for managing negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers

ESL learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions about making mistakes were identified as a significant source of LA by 29% of the surveyed and 89% of interviewed teacher-participants (see Section 4.2.1.5). ESL learners consider making mistakes in English embarrassing and reflective of one's general incompetence. As a result, they fear making mistakes, especially when speaking English. To address this issue, the teacher-participants (53% from the survey and 56% from interviews) employ various strategies to make learners perceive mistakes in a positive light and inculcate positive attitudes towards making mistakes.

All the surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants who responded regarding learners' fear of making mistakes mentioned that making mistakes, especially in an L2, is natural and inevitable, and they always emphasise this to their learners.

Convincing them that the English language is a tool, the primary focus of speaking is meaning rather than accuracy, and that they should not worry about mistakes. (ST18)

Elaborating English is not their mother tongue, and making mistakes in a foreign language is inevitable. Continuously pursue the students with this focus so that they may eradicate anxiety, and the audience also gets practised accepting the lapses and errors their peers make. (ST66)

I make them understand that English is our second language and that we must not feel ashamed or afraid to speak it even though it may be less fluent and with mistakes. (ST14)

I always advise my students to think of English as a language and that mistakes are a part of learning. I also tell them that they should not be scared of using English and that even native speakers of English make mistakes. (ST48)

It is also required to instill the attitude that errors are not always errors, and they can sometimes be developmental errors. (ST76)

One surveyed teacher-participant (ST4) mentioned that she briefly explains Krashen's theory of L2 acquisition to her learners. In interviews, two teacher-participants from University C, Tilly and Helen, reported discussing Selinker's Interlanguage theory and Braj Kachru's three circles of English, respectively, with their ESL learners to help them understand the reasons for their mistakes. These teacher-participants believed that having some knowledge of such theories helps learners realise that making mistakes is natural and an inevitable part of their English language learning journey.

Also, the teacher-participants employ careful error correction procedures in the ESL classroom to reassure learners that they are allowed to make mistakes in English and that

teachers do not solely focus on learners' mistakes in the classroom. They further highlighted that they emphasise the importance of meaning over accuracy, which helps learners view speaking English positively and boosts their self-confidence.

> The students are aware of their mistakes or rather know they have mistakes. What I do is, when they attempt to talk, I make them realize I only hear their opinion and not their mistakes. But I also give the correct input in a subtle way. (ST70) (see Appendix P for the questionnaire)

> I'm not there to look at their mistakes...as long as the communication is clear and they can succinctly answer to the point and speak clearly, I am happy. That is what I tell them. (ITA, Olivia)

Based on the feedback from the teacher-participants, a key strategy to alter learners' negative attitudes towards English is to convince them that it is a universal language that can be owned by anyone who is able to communicate. This is because Sri Lankans often assume that English belongs exclusively to individuals from Western countries. Olivia (University A) described an activity that she conducts in her ESL classrooms to help learners dispel this incorrect belief. Her learners are shown four pictures of people from Africa, Asia, Sri Lanka and a Western country and are asked to identify the English speaker. When learners unanimously choose the Western-looking person, Olivia reveals that all four are English speakers. Her intention behind this activity is to help learners understand that English does not belong to a particular group of people, but to everyone who uses it. A surveyed teacher-participant also suggested that explaining the ownership of English to learners can help manage their negative attitudes towards it.

> Discussions to assist in changing their negative attitudes towards English and making them understand English is a language owned by all. (ST60)

According to the surveyed teacher-participants, exposing learners to other exciting aspects of English is an effective way to foster positive attitudes towards it. For instance, three surveyed teacher-participants suggested introducing English as a medium of entertainment to learners from a young age. They believe that it would make them view English not only as a communication tool or a subject in the school/university curriculum but also as a source of entertainment. For them, such an approach might help learners develop positive attitudes toward English.

> Show movies and songs and get them to read literature, making it a relevant language to experience certain forms of entertainment and experiencing different cultures in the world. Let them experience the power of the story in the class. (ST62)

> Teach language that they can use in daily life, make it interactive, and show that they can sing a song, read a story, or do a drama in English. (ST71)

In summary, to address learners' negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, teacher-participants suggested implementing the following strategies: initiating in-class discussions regarding the ownership of English and the role and importance of language mistakes in the language learning process; emphasising meaning over accuracy during error correction; and introducing learners to exciting aspects of English.

5.2.4 Strategies for managing learners' lack of self-confidence to speak English

ESL learners' lack of self-confidence was identified as contributing to LA by 29% of the surveyed and 56% of the interviewed teacher-participants (see Section 4.2.1.7). The teacher-participants utilise many strategies in ESL classrooms to boost learners' self-confidence to speak English, as explained below.

Both teacher-participants and student-participants attributed learners' lack of self-confidence to their lack of practice. The student-participants reported having limited opportunities to practise speaking skills in the ESL classroom. Therefore, they create opportunities to speak English outside of the classroom, for example, conversing with their friends and siblings in English or doing self-talk. One student-participant (FGS, C5) reported that he and his friends record themselves speaking in English at hostels and listen to the recording later. Having the opportunity to engage in casual conversations in English increases their confidence and minimises their LA. They stress that English should not be considered merely a classroom subject but should be seen as a language that they can use to communicate with other people.

> It has to be user-friendly. It is not a classroom school subject. We should be able to have casual conversations. Teachers and students. If we focus on improving the speaking side, the grammar will also follow. It is like learning to swim. Otherwise, no matter how much you learn, you cannot speak. (FGS, B3)

> The practice and practical application should be developed without always targeting exams. (FGS, B2)

The teacher-participants in the survey and interviews agreed with the student-participants' view. They proposed to provide learners with increased opportunities to practise speaking skills and emphasised that in-class speaking activities should consist of practical and authentic situations to enhance learners' self-confidence.

> When the students are given increased opportunities to engage in speaking activities, they get accustomed to it because of the consistent exposure. So, they are likely to perform better…. (ITC, Tilly)

> I think using a lot of activities helps a lot, and we need to use situations that are authentic as much as possible…we need to find situations that the students can actually relate to and that they would actually use outside of the classroom as well, so I think that can help a lot. (ITB, Amanda)

Furthermore, both surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants agreed on the view that learners should be given adequate preparation time and practice before any speaking activity to reduce LA.

> Give the activity to students at least before two-three weeks, ask them to practise them in advance…(ST45)

> Speech production activities that allow “preparation” time of sounding it out with their/ friend peer before they produce in front of a whole class (ST17)

As Olivia (University A) stressed, it is crucial that teachers give enough time and “space” to learners when they struggle in the middle of a speaking act, especially due to lack of adequate vocabulary.

> I remember one example, where in an assignment, this was a speech…one student (when they come and stand in front of the class, they sometimes tend to forget, scared…) and then I was minding my own business, I was not pushing that student to start, I acted in a way that I was not paying him attention, but I was paying attention. I was just giving him that space to gather that confidence. Yes, so he had written that in his feedback form saying that one day he lost his words, and I was behaving in a way that that gave him confidence to speak, like I was not looking at him like this and waiting for him to speak, I was minding my own business very casually, so he said it helped. (ITA, Olivia)

However, during classroom observation sessions at University C, the researcher noticed that the teachers, Helen and Sandy, frequently interrupted student-participants when they spoke. These interruptions occurred even when the student-participants slowed their speech to search for the right words or to form a sentence. The teacher-participants interrupted and phrased, rephrased or paraphrased the student-participants' ideas. Despite the intention to encourage learners, the researcher found this practice sometimes limiting, as the student-participants stopped talking after being interrupted.

Helen, a teacher-participant from University C, highlighted the importance of promoting social inclusion in ESL classrooms as a means of building learners' self-confidence. She pointed out that if the classroom reflects the wider society in that the students are differentiated by their English proficiency, status, and family background, LA tends to surface in most of the learners. Her suggestion for addressing this issue was to encourage learners to view themselves as belonging to a single group whose aim is to learn English. She argued that identifying in this way could positively impact learners' confidence to speak English and make mistakes without worrying about the fear of negative evaluation or derision.

> So, inclusion is really important, I guess. Because if the students are excluded, and if they just have different categories and form different groups according to their notions and ideologies, then it is very difficult. So, if all the students are equally included in the classroom and they just identify themselves as one language group that is going to achieve a specific target, of course, then it would be easy for us to boost their confidence level. (ITC, Helen)

Similarly, Olivia (University A) suggested fostering a sense of community in ESL classrooms to promote social inclusion. The community comprises several small groups

where English is the primary mode of communication. Olivia believes that when learners are part of a community, they will view and use English as a communication tool, and speaking will become normal within that community. In addition, she pointed out that learners' self-confidence will develop, and fear of negative evaluation and derision will be significantly reduced as they all view each other as part of the same community.

> Building a community that is constructed in and through English. A major problem would be that students have their own communities already formed, and they are formed in Sinhala. So, if you and I are part of a Sinhala-speaking community, we might feel awkward speaking English in a different location because we are still part of the same Sinhala-speaking community. So, my recommendation, or something like that, would be to form a community where the general norm is to use English, a community formed through English as the language… (ITA, Olivia)

Olivia's ESL learners found the community-building approach very effective. They reported to her that they speak English both inside and outside the classroom and feel very comfortable working and speaking with one another.

Furthermore, listening to other English speakers who are fluent and confident but may not be entirely accurate also helps ESL learners boost their self-confidence.

> I have seen people who have really bad grammar but can still communicate quite well in English, so it does not really matter. And I give examples of these very famous people. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Kapila Rasnayaka. He is a social media sort of activist, an environment activist. His grammar is really bad, but he works with a lot of foreigners and does a lot of promotion activities and whatnot. So, I showed his videos to the kids [ESL learners] and let them know that his grammar was really bad,

> but it does not really matter, your confidence should not depend on how good your grammar is. (ITB, Amanda)

Amanda further mentioned how learners who follow English medium instruction (EMI) become confident English speakers despite their mistakes when they transfer to their second year.

> [T]he confidence that they get by listening to other English speakers and other English speakers making mistakes, I guess their lecturers are making mistakes and still talking in English, I think that has a lot to do with the English medium students improving a little bit faster than the Sinhala medium students. (ITB, Amanda)

In summary, to help learners manage their lack of self-confidence in speaking English, teacher-participants and student-participants recommended implementing the following strategies: providing more opportunities to practise their speaking skills; allowing adequate time for preparation and practice; promoting social inclusion in the classroom; fostering a sense of community in the classroom; and listening to fluent but less accurate speakers.

5.3 Strategies for Managing In-Class Anxiety Sources

As presented in Chapter 4.2.2, there are five in-class anxiety sources among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities. These include in-class social context, ESL teacher, in-class speaking activities, physical structure of the classroom and test anxiety. However, the strategies suggested by the teacher-participants and student-participants specifically focus on the in-class social context, the ESL teacher and in-class speaking activities (see Table 5.1).

5.3.1 Strategies for managing in-class social context

The in-class social context was identified as a strong contributing factor for learners' LA by both student-participants (75%) and teacher-participants (7% from the survey and 90% from interviews) of the study (see Section 4.2.2.1). Consequently, teacher-participants reported a set of strategies to make the in-class social context safe, friendly, relaxed, non-threatening and less anxiety-provoking for learners.

All of the interviewed teacher-participants concurred that engaging in small talk with their learners before beginning the lesson is an effective strategy for fostering a friendly and relaxed classroom environment. The small talk can range from discussing points covered in the previous lesson to any topic that interests learners. The teacher-participants believe that small talk helps create a friendly and stress-free environment in the classroom and puts learners at ease and in a positive mood.

> Definitely small talk…So we tend to chat a lot at the beginning, especially talking about what was studied the previous day. So, I think small talk. (ITB, Amanda)

> We would start it with a quote or a quotation, put something on the board, and get the students' comments. We would ask them what they think or what their opinion is regarding the quote, and sometimes, of course, we start our lessons using songs and videos, so we use many approaches when initiating a lesson. (ITC, Helen)

> Normally, I kind of engage in a small chit-chat at the beginning, like how the week was, and if it was after the weekend, whether they had a good time, yeah exactly, but if only a very few people respond, then I end up talking about my week. That can go on for like three to five minutes, maybe. After that, I try to link today's session with

what we did previously. I start with that link; that is how I start the class. (ITA, Olivia)

It differs, you know, it depends on the circumstances in the classroom, and it depends on the day…But if it is something that I start in the morning, I usually start with an online language game first; we undertake live games until their peers, you know, all the students appear in class …In certain sessions, yeah, if it is a very low proficiency group, I tend to go on simply bringing a sort of story, something related to my personal life, how I was as a learner of English in my young days, and so as giving them reasons to stimulate their motivative thought and that is how I usually begin, to say they are the two most prominent ways that I start my sessions with. (ITA, Patrick)

During observation sessions, the researcher noticed that Patrick, Helen and Ryan started their lessons with productive and interesting small talk with their student-participants. Ryan piqued his student-participants' interest through small talk, while Patrick turned his small talk into a short motivational speech. In contrast, despite Sandy's comments during the interview on the importance of having a small talk at the start of the class, she neither aroused the interest and curiosity of her student-participants nor connected the lesson to the previous lessons. This may be one reason her student-participants demonstrated passive behaviour (e.g., faces looking dull, refusing to speak, pretending to be busy with note-taking and avoiding eye contact) during the observation session of Sandy's class, despite the interesting topic she chose (i.e., Zombies) and her many questions.

Two surveyed teacher-participants suggested using humour in ESL classrooms to create a relaxed and positive learning environment.

Creating a positive and happy classroom culture by adding fun, humour… (ST60)

Amanda and Sunny from University B were also keen on using humour in the classroom to relax the learners. Amanda mentioned that she tries to stay up to date with what her learners find funny and often draws examples from these sources to teach grammar points. However, of the six observation sessions conducted in ESL classes, four sessions, including one of Amanda's, lacked humour and were anxiety-provoking, which was evident in the student-participants' non-verbal behaviour.

The importance of using learners' L1 in the classroom to create a friendly, relaxed, and non-threatening environment was acknowledged by both surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants. About 13% of the surveyed and 89% of the interviewed teacher-participants reported utilising learners' L1 in the ESL classroom. However, they also noted the importance of using a moderate amount of L1 in the classroom, as excessive use can produce counterproductive results.

> With low-proficient learners, we may have to use the L1, too. Familiarity with the L1 could improve the relationship between the students and the instructors. However, I promote judicious use of the L1 as extensive use of the L1 could impede the development of English language skills. (ST48)

> I also use the L1 in minimal instances to help the students to remain engaged with the class. (ST32)

> I would like to use L1 to some extent to make students feel comfortable with me as well as the learning experience… (ST4)

Almost 20% of the student-participants who took part in the FGs agreed with the teacher-participants that using the L1 helped students feel more comfortable in the ESL classroom and understand the teacher's instructions better.

> The students whose English is poor, need L1 explanation. Otherwise, they cannot follow up on the lesson. (FGS, C6)

> If simple English is used, then it is good. Some teachers talk very fast, and some use very difficult words. However, when L1 is used now and then, the students feel relaxed. (FGS, C8)

During the observation sessions, the researcher noticed that three teacher-participants, namely Patrick (University A), Ivy (University B), and Ryan (University C), were using L1 (Sinhala) in their classrooms. The student-participants in both Patrick's and Ryan's classrooms exhibited relaxed behaviours and less anxiety, with students asking questions in Patrick's class and demonstrating willingness to speak in Ryan's class.

A contrasting perspective was presented by Sunny, who was completely against the idea of using the L1 in ESL classrooms. For him, using L1 in ESL classrooms is counterproductive in any circumstance and therefore an English-only environment should be maintained.

> I would never ever switch over to my L1 in order to make the child feel, you know, comfortable with me… I always consider L1 to be a disease…when it comes to language teaching, English language teaching, for me, L1 is a disease. L1 should not be used at all. There are many disadvantages: the moment the teacher does some kind of translation, for example, take your book, *potha ganna*, the child is given a kind of signal that this teacher would translate. Yeah, he would be waiting for the teacher to translate all the time, especially school children, even university students. Then your talking in English would not go into his ear at all, never…your opportunity to give rich exposure to the children was also lost, plus the students have to think in two languages now when you translate. So, in which language are you going to allow

> them to think? … So, the use of the L1 really disturbs the thinking process in English. If you are to allow the child, at least towards the end, to think in English, definitely, you should avoid the mother tongue… The child must be fully immersed in the language; once you drop even a single word, I would say it is a kind of drop of poison into a pot of milk. It will spoil the whole thing for me. (ITB, Sunny)

Similar views were expressed by some student-participants in FGs.

> It relaxes us. But if the teacher only uses English in the classroom, probably we will get used to it somehow. (FGS, C2)

> If we want to go for higher education one day, we should never use at least one word in Sinhala [L1 of this student-participant] because there is no use. So, I always follow things in English, such as English news and movies. (FGS, C1)

Another concern with using L1 is equity and practicality. If a teacher exclusively uses the L1 of one group of learners, it may create a sense of discrimination and disadvantage among those who belong to a different ethnic group.

> You need to resort to your L1 at the beginning of the course, at least until the students are familiar with you and know your teaching style and what sort of a person you are. That helps them relax, and you know it motivates them to come to the class… but the problem is if I'm to use the L1, I need to know the L1s of all the students. (ITB, Amanda)

Several teachers shared their opinions on translanguaging as a strategy. They believe that it is helpful for learners to understand the benefits of translanguaging in the classroom. By informing learners that translanguaging is widely accepted and advantageous for language

development, teachers encourage learners to use it during their lessons, which makes them feel more comfortable and relaxed while learning.

> It is okay to switch between languages (translanguaging) to communicate their message. (ST64)

> Effective translanguaging strategies when necessary; here, the students can use their languages as a linguistic repertoire without always limiting themselves to English-only. (ST60)

> We know that the first language plays a role in the language teaching. We have recognised it and are accommodating the opportunity to use L1 to help them understand things better. (ITA, Patrick)

> But if there is a communication barrier or miscommunication happens or if they cannot express it, then, even if I do that, I switch to Sinhala. I might not even think about what the other person might think. So, I tell the students that that is the whole trend in the world even, like we translanguaging, and all that. People are not really trying to uphold these monolingual English-only policies. But the problem is our students do not really know these things. They think there is only one English, Sudda's [white man's] English. And they have to also learn that and be able to speak that. (ITA, Olivia)

There is a recognition among teacher-participants and student-participants that familiarity among learners can help reduce their LA. One surveyed teacher-participant (ST51) even intentionally takes action to familiarise learners with each other because she believes it reduces learners' anxiety. This echoes the views of FG student-participants at University B, who reported that they spoke English well in the special class organised for the

observation session of this study. They attributed their success to their familiarity with one another.

> Everybody talked in the lecture you observed, and all ten students spoke. We have never talked like that. So, there we knew each other. We knew the level, so we were confident to speak. But in the regular class, when there were about 30-40 students, we did not know all of them. So, we were afraid of what others would think about us. (FGS, B3)

> Suppose that we have only five students in our class. When we get to know each other and the levels of each other, then we come to a situation where we do not fear each other. When that fear is eliminated, then we have the confidence to speak. Then we understand that it is not only us, but everybody is like us. (FGS, B2)

Familiarity among learners can, therefore, help manage their fear of negative evaluation and derision, too. In addition, it is reasonable to assume that when learners are familiar with each other, they are in a more comfortable position to give and receive peer support/reflection/feedback in a positive light. These practices contribute to creating a friendly and relaxed classroom environment.

In summary, to manage learners' LA arising from in-class social climate, the teacher-participants and student-participants recommended creating a safe, friendly, relaxed environment conducive to language learning. The strategies suggested to achieve this included initiating effective engagement with learners at the start of the class (e.g., small talk); using humour appropriately; using the L1 judiciously; translanguaging; and ensuring familiarity among learners.

5.3.2 Strategies for managing ESL teacher-related factors

Section 4.2.2.2 highlighted various factors related to ESL teachers that could contribute to learners' LA, including ESL teachers' age, accent, dress code, classroom behaviour, and feedback procedure. However, most teacher-participants believed that their classroom behaviour, which reflects their personality, has the most significant impact on learners' LA. The interviews with the ESL teacher-participants revealed that teachers' friendly, helpful, and approachable classroom behaviour makes learners feel relaxed and comfortable. For instance, Helen (University C) views herself as a facilitator who always tries to be friendly with her learners. She prefers to be recognised as a dedicated companion to her learners who is always available to help them.

> I would explain myself as a facilitator and because inside the classroom I would always help the students. I will be there as their helper, but not as a teacher. I don't like to play this authoritative role as a teacher who always guides students and gives instructions. I would like to call myself as a companion for the students. I would always be their friend and I always like to maintain a very friendly nature inside the classroom. So that students are very open, they are open minded… (ITC, Helen)

Similarly, Tilly (University C) believes that creating a safe classroom environment where learners feel comfortable speaking English is achievable if the teacher acts as a facilitator. Olivia (University A) strives to be a non-threatening, supportive, caring, and friendly teacher. She believes that learners should feel comfortable approaching her without hesitation. Similarly, Ryan (University C) mentioned that he is a friendly and approachable teacher. On the other hand, Amanda (University B), mentioned that she tries to be fun and relaxed in the classroom while making her learners feel at ease and stress-free. She firmly believes strict rules about learners' classroom behaviour are counter-productive. Meanwhile,

Patrick (University A) stated that he believes in social constructivism and, therefore, encourages interactions among all members of the classroom and positions himself as a peer rather than an authority figure in relation to his learners. Helen and Amanda further emphasise that ESL teachers should be flexible and accommodate exceptions when necessary. They unanimously believed that such behaviours help manage learners' LA.

During observation sessions, all the teacher-participants displayed friendly and pleasant dispositions with smiles. However, Sandy (University C) and Ivy (University B), who had less experience in the field (1-5 and less than 1 year of experience, respectively), appeared very anxious and impatient while eliciting answers from their student-participants. Their awareness of being observed by the researcher might have triggered their anxiety. In addition, the researcher observed that teacher-participants were very clear and systematic when giving instructions. However, Amanda's talking pace was faster than the others, making it difficult for some low-proficiency learners to follow her instructions.

Another key strategy for managing learners' LA which originates from ESL teachers is to employ an appropriate feedback procedure in ESL classrooms. This was emphasised by approximately 49% of the surveyed and 100% of the interviewed teacher-participants. Both groups of teacher-participants suggested various methods for correcting learners' errors, such as focusing only on major errors, focusing on fluency instead of accuracy, using delayed correction, refraining from singling out learners, obtaining peer feedback and showing appreciation and giving positive reinforcement.

About 67% of the interviewed teacher-participants do not correct minor mistakes but only major language errors that learners make. They believed that constant emphasis on errors would make learners more anxious.

> If it is a very weak student, if that student at least does a speech, whether it has like hundred errors, I really do not like to disturb them. I just let them do their speech and, in the end, discuss major errors that they might have made without picking on every error that they would have made because that can demotivate them a lot. (ITB, Amanda)

> If we go and correct every mistake or if we pinpoint everything that they do that might be limiting, I guess. I do not really correct their language mistakes as such… if they made a pronunciation error that was a bit visible or global, yeah, then I would say this is how it is pronounced, but I would not really say which student pronounced it that way. And I would say the same goes for grammar points. (ITA, Olivia)

Nevertheless, Amanda presented a different view about correcting minor mistakes. She said that although she does not correct every mistake their learners make, she sometimes prefers to do so.

> I also had this idea that we need to change this concept that by spotting an error in somebody, a student, or whoever, we subject them to feel shy or embarrassed. I sometimes tend to feel uncomfortable if I have a lot of things that I need to point out to a student. There are a lot of errors that they are making, and I feel uncomfortable because I feel like they might become uncomfortable. But we need to change that attitude because we come into the classroom to learn something. The number of mistakes that you make in one class in one subject should not reflect on who you are as a person entirely. I also pay attention to not commenting too much about a certain student's language. But I would prefer if that is changed, and all students look at it in a very positive light. (ITB, Amanda)

The teacher-participants also pointed out the importance of implementing a feedback procedure mainly based on improving learners' fluency instead of accuracy, especially at the outset of their language-learning journey.

> …target fluency more and the accomplishment of a task rather than the accomplishment of a grammatical rule. (ST17)

> …encourage them to understand fluency first and accuracy next. (ST41)

> I will give feedback, mostly on general things like how coherent their answer was, how clear their response was, and how well they made the point. (ITA, Olivia)

Later in the interview, Olivia mentioned that teachers should focus on building learners' confidence first to speak at least a few words in English, rather than just accuracy and fluency.

> We do not focus on accuracy or fluency…at the beginning, accuracy and fluency have to be forgotten about, like kept aside, focus more on like confidence building and that can come from our [teacher's] reinforcement and also the kind of class environment that we create for, as teachers, yeah that is. (ITA, Olivia)

A feedback procedure that is accepted by several teacher-participants is delayed feedback.

> I will not correct them on the spot when they speak (instead, I would use delayed correction). (ST9)

About 78% of the interviewed teacher-participants agreed with this opinion and preferred to use delayed correction instead of providing on-the-spot correction. For instance, discussing common mistakes with the whole class at the end of the session.

> I think constant emphasis on errors would make them more anxious. When they are speaking or doing a presentation, if we stop them and correct them in the middle, it will hurt their self-esteem, and they will not feel confident next time to come to the front and speak… (ITC, Helen)

> If it is a kind of silly mistake, I just leave it, but if I think this mistake will lead to further mistakes, I just take it up towards the end of the session. I save 10 minutes at least to take up matters, but without mentioning the names of people [learners]. (ITB, Sunny)

However, Sandy (University C) and Sunny (University B) had different views on delayed correction.

> I tell them [learners], "Okay, you are adults, on-the-spot correction is okay, come on, let us just be realistic." But I also defer the correction towards the end. But if the students are really interested in the correction and incorporate all the corrections we make into their language, then we can definitely be sure of their improvement. (ITB, Sunny)

The teacher-participants stated that they give feedback either personally to a single learner or the whole class as general feedback without pointing out who actually made the mistake.

> I do not actually go on correcting grammatical pronunciation and whatever error, but if there is an error that looks fossilised with someone, I actually keep a record of it and not on the same day, maybe on a later day or as soon after the class at a personal level, I would tackle the student's fossilised error and speak with him and provide him with the suggestions to overcome it. (ITA, Patrick)

> I would take those mistakes and, of course, explain the whole thing to the whole class. So, I do not like pointing at one student, and I believe that it makes our students anxious, and I do not want my students to be anxious inside the classroom… (ITC, Helen)

According to Amanda, consistency in providing feedback is essential.

> If I comment after one student, I comment after all of the students. Or if I comment after maybe two or three students or at the end of all the presentations, sometimes I do that as well. But consistency is very important. If you treat one student in one way, you need to treat all the students in the same way. That is one thing that I think adult learners especially pick on a lot. (ITB, Amanda)

A number of interviewed teacher-participants (22%) and surveyed teacher-participants (13%) reported using peer reflection/review/feedback/support in their classrooms as an anxiety management strategy.

> Mix them up with the students who have high proficiency levels in English and ask them to help the weaker students…They like to learn from their peers. We should encourage them to do so. Encourage them to speak regardless of their mistakes; fellow students should encourage them without laughing at them. Then, it creates self-confidence in them to speak. (ST29)

> I also encourage peer feedback - this serves to further the rapport among students while making them more open to other opinions. My feedback almost always builds on the feedback that other students have already offered. This avoids the impression that I am singling students out for feedback or critique. (ST44)

During the observation, the researcher noticed that Amanda attempted to seek student feedback regarding their peers' presentations. However, as she mentioned in her questionnaire and interview, this approach did not yield positive results in the classroom. The student-participants were hesitant to publicly discuss the weaknesses of their peers' responses.

The significance of appreciation and positive reinforcement in managing learners' LA was highlighted by 13% of the surveyed and 44% of the interviewed teacher-participants. They also pointed out the importance of starting the feedback process by highlighting the strengths of learners' performance.

> I also give a lot of positive feedback like "wow" and "you did a very good job". Those help…I see the difference. Yeah, the students' confidence improves when we do not focus on those minor things but on the good things that they did… (ITA, Olivia)

> When you, as a teacher, appreciate your students, I think, even chemically, our students' brains are motivated and encouraged to learn the language… I know that their language is not perfect, but even at such a time, what I do is I appreciate them using words such as "very good" and "excellent". It is because appreciation can do a lot to encourage the students to do something towards learning this language and minimising their anxiety. (ITC, Ryan)

> I promote an achievement culture. Every little achievement is praised. (ST9)

> Every student likes to be praised, evaluated positively and assisted to do better. I always encourage students, even for the smallest achievement, to boost their morale to make them work harder to achieve the next level…it is the positive feedback the

students need to work towards their goals. That will make any ESL classroom a pleasant place to come to and work together with others to learn the language. (ST24)

During observation sessions, the researcher noticed that all the teacher-participants accepted and appreciated the answers given by the student-participants. However, the teacher-participants who explained why they thought the responses were good and highlighted the aspects of student-participants' answers that were particularly interesting were able to boost their motivation and self-confidence to speak English. This was evident in the student-participants' facial expressions, which were more pleasant, and their willingness to speak and volunteer later on.

In summary, to manage learners' LA stemming from the ESL teacher, the teacher-participants reported having implemented or recommended implementing the following strategies: improving ESL teachers' classroom behaviour (e.g., being friendly, supportive, approachable, caring and relaxed); and employing appropriate feedback procedures (e.g., focusing only on major errors, focusing on fluency instead of accuracy, using delayed correction, refraining from singling out learners, obtaining peer-feedback, showing appreciation and giving positive reinforcement).

5.3.3 Strategies for managing in-class speaking activities

As discussed in Section 4.2.2.3, in-class speaking activities were identified as a source of learners' LA by Amanda, an interviewed teacher-participant at University B and 17% of the surveyed teacher-participants. To manage LA arising from in-class speaking activities, both teacher-participants and student-participants suggested a range of strategies, which primarily focused on the type of speaking activity and its implementation in the classroom.

About 13% of the surveyed and 33% of the interviewed teacher-participants revealed that learners should be given speaking tasks based on familiar and relevant situations. These tasks should be level-appropriate and relate to topics that learners can speak about from their experiences, thoughts, feelings and emotions.

> Introduce activities that are fun and also consist of familiar situations. Also, introduce activities that bring out their feelings and emotions. (ST43)

> I generally start with less demanding speech tasks, where the student need not worry about the content of what is going to be spoken (i.e. topics about their own likes/dislikes, ambitions, etc.). Thereafter, it becomes easier to lessen the anxiety of tackling more complex topics. (ST44)

> For my lessons, I care to choose topics that they love to learn and talk about, topics that are relevant to them rather than the topics given to me in the materials. (ST9)

The teacher-participants stressed that topics that are fun, creative, interesting, promote free thinking and arouse learners' curiosity, motivate and compel learners to speak in the classroom.

> Use creative teaching approaches and materials (e.g., maybe something related to literature) which help students express their ideas as they wish… (ST20)

> Employing topics of learners' interest that match their needs and expectations. (ST60)

> I think we should provide the students with what they love most…I should think about their mindsets, perceptions, how they think and their favourites, likes, and dislikes… if we can find such an approach, even the anxious students will speak. I have that experience. (ITC, Sandy)

The most common English-speaking activities implemented in ESL classrooms across universities include debates, presentations, impromptu speeches, prepared speeches, role plays, and language games. Some teacher-participants let learners watch videos in the classroom to trigger their motivation and create opportunities to speak English by discussing the content of such videos.

The six observation sessions conducted in universities A, B, and C also revealed that the teacher-participants chose interesting and engaging topics for the speaking activities. The topics seemed to arouse student-participants' curiosity and create humour in the classroom. Even when the teacher-participants decided to have impromptu speeches, they made it a point to select exciting topics and gave many options for the student-participants to choose from.

The surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants were also keen on providing authentic language tasks that are useful and fulfil the learners' needs. Through authentic tasks, the teacher-participants try to convince learners that they are not simply learning a language but communicating with each other using English as a tool, just as they would communicate with people in society in real-life situations.

> In short, I try my best to make them forget that they are learning a language and help them express their ideas in English without forcing them to learn it. (ST34)

> Make the classroom more authentic by creating real-life situations where the language is used. (ST16)

> …in society, what is going to happen is they are going to be mixed with everybody. Yes, it can be male or female; even on the bus, they will be seated wherever they want. It can be a male or female seated next. Then why cannot we have the same environment in the class? Definitely, yes, we can. Everything can be done in the

classroom, so basically, what should happen is whatever society gives them should be created in the classroom. So even language teaching, language learning and all must be done in that way. (ITB, Sunny)

However, it is worth noting that many student-participants heavily criticised in-class speaking activities for their lack of authenticity and practicality. Approximately 41% of the student-participants believed that watching TV series, movies, cartoons and YouTube videos was more effective in improving their vocabulary, pronunciation, idioms and expressions than formal learning of English in their regular ESL classroom.

> I also improved my vocabulary by watching TV series and movies. We find it easy to learn English usage by watching something practical like that rather than learning all the grammar rules and theories. No matter how much grammar we know, if we cannot apply it practically, then it is useless. (FGS, B3)

> If we observe those TV series and movies carefully, they do not have past tense, present tense, or all the grammar rules we learned in class. But they speak in such a way that the other person can understand them. (FGS, B4)

Although the teacher-participants repeatedly stressed the importance of guiding their learners to perceive English as a tool of communication, the student-participants raised doubts about the efficacy of the in-class speaking activities actually implemented in ESL classrooms to meet these expectations.

Approximately 20% of the surveyed teacher-participants and 100% of interviewed teacher-participants reported that they make use of group/pair work in the ESL classroom as a strategy to manage learners’ LA. They also adopted different methods of forming groups.

> Dividing students according to their proficiency levels has been effective from my experience. This is for the reason that most often in the level system, the quieter students are not drowned out by the more extroverted students. (ST32)

> When grouping students, I let them choose who they are comfortable working with. (ST9)

> When I group them, I try to group them thinking about their learning styles. Like visual learners, auditory learners, kinaesthetic learners, etc., and this time, I tried making the study group also mixed abilities. Like one high proficient, one low proficient within that range…(ITA, Olivia)

The teacher-participants entertained different views about the appropriateness and effectiveness of mixed-ability and same-ability groups in the ESL classroom. While some teacher-participants favoured mixed-ability groups, others believed same-ability groups were better for managing LA.

> The language must be acquired rather than learned. So, for the acquisition to occur, there must be speaking in the classroom. Speaking means some kind of good language should be spoken and the so-called weak ones can come to know, "Okay, this is the kind of language I should speak", so while listening he acquires…when the so-called bright ones make mistakes then he forms an attitude, a positive attitude towards his own language. He may consider himself weak, but when he sees and observes the other children making mistakes, he is given a kind of confidence. So, acquisition takes place, and confidence goes up…all these advantages there when we have a mixed group, plus, when we do group work there must be some kind of initiation definitely, yes, we agree that the bright ones may be dominating. Yeah, but there must be an

initiative. Why can't we consider him an initiator rather than a dominator? (ITB, Sunny)

I think we are of the opinion that mixed-ability groups do not work, like they are not that effective, even though that research has approved otherwise. Still, I am of the opinion that same-ability groups are more effective than mixed-ability groups. Because, sometimes, in mixed ability groups, they tend to cover themselves like they just use someone fluent in English, so they would cover up using that particular person…I think that the students are more anxious in mixed ability classrooms than in same ability groups… (ITC, Helen)

Explaining her views, Amanda highlighted the importance of having a clear purpose behind group or pair work whenever it is implemented in the classroom. Also, the purpose of doing group or pair work should be clearly communicated and understood by learners as well.

I like using group activities but overdoing it can also be a little annoying for the students. So, you need to find a balance; I mean, you cannot do just group work or just pair work which becomes very annoying to the students…Teachers tend to use group work as a way to spend time, which is why the kids [ESL learners] do not have a very favourable attitude towards group work. When we tend to group them, no matter how well we have planned and whether it is really important, they think, or they might think of us as we are just lacking and getting them to do some work. With such thinking, we cannot get the output that we wanted to get. (ITB, Amanda).

About 31% of student-participants in FGs emphasised the need for more opportunities in the ESL class to practise speaking skills. Furthermore, one student-participant from

University A mentioned that it would be very helpful if the teacher provided them with vocabulary related to the speaking task along with the task itself.

> When the teacher gives us a topic, and then if she gives us the words related to that topic and also if she teaches different ways of writing a sentence, that would be really good. Because then we can incorporate those styles into speaking as well. Right now, when we write anything, we use the same style repeatedly. So, if the teachers can introduce us to different ways of writing, that will be really beneficial because then we can use those different styles in our speech as well. (FGS, A2)

Another popular strategy used by all the observed teacher-participants to manage learners' LA was prompting questions. The researcher observed that it is helpful to use prompting questions when a learner struggles in the middle of a speech. However, providing enough time for the learner to attempt to solve their communication problem independently before asking these questions is essential.

Although some teacher-participants mentioned the importance of volunteer participation in managing LA, three of the six observed teacher-participants used forced participation in their classrooms. They directly called on the names of student-participants for answers. However, they did not pressure the student-participants to answer. They moved on to another student when the one previously called on could not answer a question despite all the encouragement and support given.

In summary, to manage the LA that stems from in-class speaking activities, the teacher-participants recommended implementing the following strategies: conducting speaking activities that are familiar, relevant, fun, creative, interesting, level-appropriate and authentic, and that allow free thinking and arouse curiosity; implementing pair/group activities that have a clear purpose; providing more opportunities for learners to engage in

speaking activities; using prompt questions generously when learners struggle to speak; and encouraging learners to volunteer.

5.4 Strategies for Managing Out-of-Class Anxiety Sources

As reported in Chapter 4, out-of-class factors, such as university subculture, language ideologies in society, and socioeconomic sources, are the third primary type of LA sources for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, the teacher-participants in the survey and interviews displayed limited knowledge of handling the LA arising from sources outside the ESL classroom. The teacher-participants reported they have little control over the out-of-class sources, for instance, they cannot successfully control the university subculture, the most significant out-of-class source that evokes LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

> Still, we have not found any solutions to that [the harmful practices of the university subculture]. We cannot control this because this brainwashing is very huge. Still, no solution because whenever we take a solution, it does not work. (ITC, Sandy)

> We cannot stop, that is the reality. We have tried our level best to stop this…I have given them all sorts of ideas, but they do not want to go against their philosophy of these *samanathwaya pawathwagena yaama* [maintaining equality] or *kadda bavitha nokireema* [refraining from using English]. That is a serious problem. (ITB, Sunny)

Although a significant percentage of the teacher-participants reported that socioeconomic factors (e.g., the imbalance of educational resources between rural and metropolitan schools and the resulting difference in learners' exposure to English) contribute to learners' LA, they do not have control over this matter either. However, a few surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants stressed that they ask their learners to use YouTube and

the Internet for self-studying. Further, two interviewed teacher-participants stated that they encourage their learners to find people from foreign countries to communicate with (e.g., pen pals).

In order to manage LA that stems from harmful language ideologies in society concerning English, its speakers, and making mistakes, the teacher-participants suggested initiating in-class discussions to inculcate positive attitudes and dispel learners' misconceptions about the said aspects.

In addition, ten out of 75 surveyed teacher-participants highlighted the significance of learners' positive mental state in addressing their LA. They suggested that teachers should create a positive classroom environment to foster a positive mental state in their learners.

> I think the best way to promote a positive mental state is to create a classroom, which is conducive to language learning. (ST48)

> It is of paramount importance to keep students in a positive mental state to facilitate the process of language acquisition. I always create a friendly environment in the class to make them speak without worrying about the mistakes they make. (ST56)

Two surveyed teacher-participants also considered it important to adopt a balanced approach of fostering a positive mindset while acknowledging that LA can occur.

> I also ensure that I do not dismiss their concerns about speech production, which may happen if teachers overdo encouraging their students to think positively. While a positive mindset is important in language learning, this mindset also needs to acknowledge (rather than deny) the real fears attached to speaking in English. (ST44)

> I stay human. These are adults. If I contrive to make them feel positive about English, they will see through it. If I pretend everything around us is good and we should see

> the good in everything, knowing the painful circumstances in which some of them are while studying, that too will just alienate them. So, I try to be connected to the world and just be as sincere as possible about my humanness. (ST17)

Therefore, compared to the strategies proposed for managing the LA that stems from learner-specific and in-class sources, a smaller number of strategies was suggested for managing out-of-class sources. However, it is worth noting that some teacher-participants adopt an alternative approach, reflecting positive psychology principles, to address these anxiety sources that occur outside the classroom (e.g., fostering a positive mindset while acknowledging the LA).

5.5 Summary

The chapter presents numerous strategies for handling the LA that stems from learner-specific and in-class sources. Even though out-of-class anxiety sources are identified as a major type of LA source, only a few strategies were reported for managing them. These findings provide valuable insights into designing a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka.

The following chapter will provide a comprehensive discussion of the research findings in relation to the existing literature to confirm existing knowledge and identify novel insights into the sources of LA and strategies for managing them, including developing a low-anxiety classroom model that can address all three types of LA sources.

Chapter Six: Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 in response to the two research questions of the study. The first research question focused on the perspectives of ESL teachers and learners at Sri Lankan state universities on sources contributing to LA, particularly when learners speak English in ESL classrooms. The findings revealed that the sources of LA are complex and multifaceted, stemming from three primary categories based on their origin: (i) learner-specific, (ii) in-class, and (iii) out-of-class (see Figure 4.1). The second research question concerned strategies teachers and learners implemented or proposed to manage ESL learners' sources of LA (see Table 5.1 for detail).

Sections from 6.2 to 6.4 discuss sources of LA and various strategies for addressing them in relation to previous research and evaluate their relevance within the Sri Lankan context. In particular, the discussion considers the importance of utilising PP-informed strategies, namely positive emotions (PEs), to assist ESL learners in successfully managing LA, especially LA emanating from out-of-class sources. Next, the chapter explains four essential areas that need to be considered when eliciting learners' PEs in order to create a low-anxiety classroom model. Finally, in light of the findings in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 and the literature, in particular TP and PP, this chapter proposes a low-anxiety classroom model that can foster a safe, friendly, relaxed, and conducive learning environment for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. Of note, throughout the chapter, page numbers (in italic font) referencing relevant findings in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are added to help readers locate the information for specific discussions.

6.2 Learner-Specific Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them

Learner-specific anxiety sources are the key type of LA source among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka. The prominence of anxiety sources specific to learners compared with those originating in-class and out-of-class, therefore, challenges the hypothesis of MacIntyre and Gardner (1989, 1991a), which stated that the primary cause of the problem lies in the teaching rather than in the learners themselves. However, it is consistent with the findings of Tran et al. (2013), who investigated LA in a Vietnamese tertiary setting and Liu's (2006) research on the causes of learners' anxiety during oral English lessons in a Chinese tertiary context.

The rest of this section discusses the five most prevalent learner-specific sources of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. These sources encompass fear of negative evaluation and derision, previous learning experience, limited linguistic ability, lack of motivation and negative attitudes and misconceptions about the English language and its speakers. This discussion of each LA source is followed by an in-depth examination of the strategies for addressing the LA source.

Fear of negative evaluation and derision and strategies for managing it

This study identified fear of negative evaluation and derision as the most significant source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This finding is consistent with previous studies which found fear of negative evaluation to be a predominant reason for learners' LA. For example, MacIntyre (1999) claimed that the primary cause of LA is the fear of speaking in front of other people using a language in which one is not fully proficient. This is because the speaker is afraid of being negatively evaluated by the audience. All the anxious Spanish-speaking English learners in Gregersen's study (2003) reported that they feared being laughed at by their peers or interlocutors when speaking in the FL. Similarly, the

studies conducted by Price (1991), Na (2007) and Mak (2011) reported that learners' fear of being negatively judged by teachers and peers was one of their major fears when speaking in the FL.

Previous studies conducted in Sri Lanka also reported learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision as a key factor contributing to their LA. For instance, Navaz and Banu (2018) reported that the main source of LA among learners at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka is their fear of being negatively evaluated by the instructors and laughed at by their peers. Furthermore, a recent study conducted by Attanayake (2019) highlighted that one major reason for Sri Lankan ESL undergraduates' lack of confidence to speak English is their fear of being ridiculed by others. She found that this is a common scenario not only in Sri Lanka but also in most parts of South Asia (e.g., India, Pakistan and Bangladesh), especially where English occupies a prestigious position in society. Hence, learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision appears to be the predominant factor that makes learners anxious in language classrooms across the world, regardless of their L1 or the context of their language learning experience.

An important point to note here is that the factors that trigger fear of negative evaluation and derision among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka are more complex than mentioned in previous research. According to previous studies, the main reasons for learners' fear of negative evaluation stem from learner-related and in-class factors. For instance, Von Worde (2003) pointed out that fear of negative evaluation is essentially centred around the teacher's error correction. Some error correction practices, such as the teacher correcting learners before they have time to formulate their answers and doing so in front of their peers, trigger learners' fear of negative evaluation (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; Ohata, 2005; Von Worde, 2003). Aydın (2008) highlighted that learners' fear of being laughed at manifests in their fear of making pronunciation errors. Rafek et al.

(2013) believed that fear of negative evaluation is triggered by learners' negative self-perceptions of their performance in the class. What this study adds to the literature is that the fear of negative evaluation and derision among ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities can be largely attributed to the complex sociocultural dynamics of Sri Lankan society, particularly language ideologies in society and university subculture. According to these findings, language ideologies induce fear of negative evaluation and derision in less proficient learners, while the subculture triggers it mostly in high-proficiency learners. Hence, this study broadens the scope of previous research by exploring the role of out-of-class factors in inducing learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision rather than limiting its scope to the learner-specific and in-class context of the language classroom. This finding provides valuable insights into the complex and multifaceted nature of LA and highlights the need for more nuanced approaches to successfully addressing it.

ESL learners are less anxious and more at ease when they feel that they are not adversely judged or ridiculed by others in the classroom. They are willing to speak English despite mistakes when they feel safe, accepted, and important. To this end, teacher-participants and student-participants in this study suggested creating a non-judgmental, safe zone within the ESL classroom for learners to speak English. They highlighted that learners should be free from harsh criticism, overcorrection, forced participation, and any form of ridicule (overt, implied, or covert) and feel safe in the classroom. Learners' responses should be accepted, regardless of their accuracy. They further emphasised that there should be a constant emphasis on intelligible communication, and the teacher should ensure that everyone is heard, regardless of their proficiency level. In addition, the classroom climate should be relaxed and friendly.

This suggestion to create a non-judgmental and non-threatening safe zone within the ESL classroom aligns with Attanayake (2019), who also proposed creating a safe zone for

learners to help boost their self-confidence, which often suffers due to their fear of negative evaluation and derision. Similarly, Hakim (2019) pointed out that less formal classroom settings with a friendlier climate encourage learners to speak and make mistakes without feeling incompetent, which contributes to their feeling positive, comfortable, and successful while speaking the language.

A striking finding of this study is that creating a non-judgmental and non-threatening safe zone in the ESL classroom requires meticulous attention and a multifaceted approach that considers the social context both inside and outside of the ESL classroom. This is because the feelings of insecurity within the ESL classroom can be evoked not only by the inside community in the classroom but also by the community outside of the classroom. For instance, university subculture (greatly influenced by the general culture) and its detrimental practices (e.g., *ragging*) significantly impact learners' feelings of security to speak English comfortably and confidently within the ESL classroom. The teacher-participants and student-participants revealed that senior students often observe ESL classrooms from outside to identify junior students who violate the subculture's rules. For instance, speaking English on university premises violates a rule imposed by the subculture (see Section 4.2.3.1 for detail). To address this issue, teachers can inform the higher authorities about their presence outside the classroom and seek help from the *Zero-tolerance policy* imposed in all state universities to curb ragging (Lekamwasam et al., 2015). Further, teachers and administrators can allocate classrooms where some doors and windows can be closed when needed. While it might be effective for first-year students who are scared of the presence of senior students (as the former might get punished by the latter for speaking English), further investigation is needed to decide whether such enclosed classroom structures effectively improve the speaking skills of senior students in the second year and beyond.

In-class discussions initiated in ESL classrooms to cover topics such as English-speaking apprehension, language learning stages, language errors and the ownership and functions of English may prove beneficial in reducing learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision and helping them to successfully manage their LA. This is because the findings indicate that learners who are aware of their LA, including its triggers, effects, and physiological symptoms, are in a better position to successfully manage it. In other words, acknowledging the existence of LA is the initial step towards its alleviation (Young, 1991). To this effect, in-class discussions regarding learners' English-speaking apprehensions may be helpful as such discussions would not only give learners an awareness of their LA but also help them realise that the fears they harbour about English speaking are not unique but rather are commonly experienced by many of their peers in the classroom. This realisation may improve their sense of belonging to the group, enhance their self-confidence and reduce their fear of negative evaluation and derision. As Gkonou et al. (2017, p. 220) put it:

> . . . introducing explicit discussions of language anxiety during lessons might not only be of help in creating a greater sense of community among students but also in bringing about a heightened awareness on the part of anxious students that they are, in fact, not alone and that other classmates may well experience similar feelings to themselves.

Furthermore, these discussions can be extended to cover topics such as ownership of English, functions of English (tool for communication vs tool for discrimination), language learning stages, and types and importance of language errors. The awareness of the aforementioned areas might help learners gain a deeper understanding of their own language learning journey and become more mindful and empathetic about the journey of their peers. As a result, they may overcome their fear of negative evaluation and derision as well as

refrain from ridiculing others. Furthermore, discussions of this nature have the potential to enhance the overall classroom climate by fostering rapport between learners and teachers.

Implementing an appropriate error correction procedure is essential for managing learners' LA, since the study revealed that overcorrection triggers learners' fear of negative evaluation. This is discussed in detail in Section 6.4. In addition, it is suggested that learners and teachers develop a mutual understanding of the error correction procedure (what, when and how to correct) to implement in the ESL classroom. A teacher can invite learners to share their expectations and negotiate in favour of a better, more effective approach (Harmer, 2007). This suggestion is based on Kumaravadivelu's (2006) post-method pedagogy, which presents facilitating negotiation as one of its ten macrostrategies.

In contrast to previous research that associates speaking with native speakers as a significant out-of-class source of anxiety (Woodrow, 2006), ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities were more willing to speak with native speakers or foreigners rather than with other Sri Lankans. The main reason for this seems to be the ease and confidence learners experience when speaking with foreigners in contrast to the fear of harsh judgements and ridicule they experience when speaking English with Sri Lankans *(pp. 130-131)*. Specifically, the study discovered that ESL learners who share the same L1 were more anxious when speaking with each other in English. The student-participants said they were worried about the purpose of speaking in English with their peers outside of the ESL classroom, as they could easily communicate using their L1 *(p. 132)*. According to Punchihetti (n.d.), the purpose of using English in such cases is often associated with showcasing one's social status. In contrast, as emphasised by the student-participants, when learners from different ethnicities communicate (e.g., a Sinhalese learner with a Tamil learner or a Sinhalese learner with a Muslim learner), the option of communicating conveniently using their vernacular languages is unavailable *(p. 131)*. Consequently, both parties need to use English as a means

of conveying their message to each other. The mere realisation that English is not tied to any sociocultural baggage releases learners from the fear of making mistakes, and fear of negative evaluation and derision. As a result, they feel more comfortable and less anxious to speak English with each other. This finding concurs with Attanayake (2019), who argues that learners' anxiety does not arise from the English language or its teaching-learning method, but from societal pressure and the fear of speaking up in front of certain individuals. Therefore, mixing learners of various ethnic backgrounds when forming groups in an ESL classroom is a viable strategy to manage learners' LA. In addition, universities can seek and establish connections with foreign universities or leverage existing links to develop programmes that create opportunities for ESL learners to interact (online or in-person) with people from other nations worldwide. This is because the study discovered that learners experienced less fear of negative evaluation and derision when interacting with people of other nationalities and ethnicities.

Limited linguistic ability and strategies for managing it

Limited linguistic ability (e.g., limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties) or one's actual English proficiency was identified as the second major source of LA among ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities. This finding provides new evidence for the view that there is less L2 anxiety in individuals with higher L2 proficiency (e.g., Jiang & Dewaele, 2019; Jiang & Dewaele, 2020; Liu, 2006).

A key finding of the study is that learners who have exposure to English only within ESL classrooms tend to spend excessive time formulating their answers, causing them to feel guilty. This guilt seems to stem from their high respect for their teacher, as they feel it is inappropriate to keep their teacher waiting for an extended period *(p. 134)*. They also seem to worry that their teacher and peers will negatively judge their silence as incompetence. These

thoughts of guilt and fear of negative evaluation trigger their LA. Therefore, ESL teachers need to be more understanding and tolerant of learners' silence and assure them that it is acceptable to take their time where possible. This assurance can be given verbally and non-verbally and is crucial for helping learners manage their LA.

Commenting on the excessive time taken by learners to answer questions in the classroom, Ryan (University C) argued that it is a result of the exam-oriented education system in Sri Lanka that fails to provide adequate opportunities for learners to acquire the language. Ryan also emphasised that the Sri Lankan education system promotes learning *about* the language. As a result, teachers tend to use a deductive approach to teaching grammar and implement controlled practice activities in the classroom to teach learners *about* English. Those who learn *about* the language often become "[m]onitor [o]ver-users" (Krashen, 1982, p. 19). They constantly monitor their utterances for accuracy before, during and after speaking. This practice poses two risks: First, too much time is taken by learners to formulate their utterances, which disturbs their fluency and the flow of the speech; second, less attention is paid to the content of what the other interlocutor says, which leads to irrelevant or incorrect responses despite the accurate form of the output (Krashen, 1982). Consequently, these learners experience LA. Therefore, as Krashen (1982, p. 19) highlighted, the aim should be to produce "optimal [m]onitor-users" who know when to use the monitor without disturbing their communication act.

Hence, it is essential that policymakers, curriculum planners, and teachers in Sri Lanka revisit English teaching patterns in the secondary and tertiary sectors of education in Sri Lanka. ESL learners should have opportunities to acquire English. The university community, policymakers, curriculum planners, and government authorities need to collaborate in creating a university environment that offers ESL learners the chance to acquire English both inside and outside the ESL classroom.

Lack of practice and exposure (resulting from previous learning experiences) and strategies for managing it

The study revealed that learners' previous negative learning experiences in schools (third major source of LA) were largely responsible for their lack of practice and exposure to English, which significantly contributed to their LA. This finding corroborates those of earlier studies (Aida, 1994; Dörnyei, 2009; Papi, 2010; Young, 1991).

Insufficient practice with English often leads learners to experience LA whenever they are in an English-speaking situation at the university. In the Sri Lankan education system, activity-based oral English has been practised since Grade 1, and the formal teaching of ESL as a core subject commences in Grade 3 (Little et al., 2019). In schools, the only context for students to receive English input and practise English speaking skills is during English lessons, which vary from three to four hours per week (Farook & Mohamed, 2020; Little et al., 2019). As such, attending the ESL class and actively participating in in-class activities are the only avenues available for learners to get the necessary practice in English. However, despite the importance of acquiring English proficiency, teaching and learning English often seems to be ignored and avoided by Sri Lankan schools. As Attanayake (2019) put it, avoiding teaching and learning English has become a habit in Sri Lankan schools.

Furthermore, the exam-oriented education system in Sri Lanka only measures students' English knowledge through reading and writing (Attanayake, 2019). Consequently, even if some attention is paid to teaching reading and writing to prepare learners for examinations, developing their oral proficiency is neglected during school education (Samaranayake, 2016). This failure to develop learners' oral skills leads to limited practice in English speaking, which, in turn, evokes their LA and reduces their self-confidence, as

highlighted in the findings *(pp. 137-138)*. The lack of self-confidence further contributes to LA (Attanayake, 2019).

Furthermore, despite the fact that students receive exposure to oral English skills only from their ESL teachers in the school, the teaching of English was predominantly conducted in the Sinhala/Tamil medium *(pp. 138-139)*. As Attanayake (2019) argued, teachers believed that this way, students may be able to comprehend the lessons immediately. This practice, however, is particularly limiting since students lose their only exposure to improving their oral English skills, as attested by Karunaratne (2003) and Perera (2001). This lack of exposure to English speaking triggers students' LA when they face speaking situations at the university.

It is imperative for teachers to provide opportunities for ESL learners to practise and become sufficiently exposed to English-speaking situations to help build their confidence and alleviate LA. This is because increased practice and exposure reduce learners' LA making them confident to speak English *(pp. 192-193)*. This was confirmed by the student-participants, who reported feeling less anxious in their second year of university as compared to the first year. Liu (2007) also acknowledged that increased practice and exposure decrease learners' LA. However, the present study emphasises that ESL learners need initially to be provided with exposure and practice within the ESL classroom to avoid further damage to their self-confidence and anxiety (often triggered by social reactions inside and outside the university).

Lack of motivation and strategies for managing it

Lack of motivation is the fourth key source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This finding lends support to the correlation between L2 anxiety and L2 motivation (e.g., Papi, 2010; Papi & Khajavy, 2023; Teimouri, 2017).

One key reason for Sri Lankan ESL learners' low motivation is the significant disparity in ESL teachers' and learners' perceptions of learners' target needs. Therefore, conducting a target situation analysis is indispensable for designing an effective ESL course that meets the needs of both learners and stakeholders. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 54), target needs refer to "what the learner needs to do in the target situation". They consist of *necessities, lacks*, and *wants*. *Necessities* are determined by the demands of the target situation, which include knowledge and skills a learner should acquire to perform optimally in the target situation. *Lacks* refer to the difference between the learners' target proficiency and existing proficiency. *Wants* are the perceived or subjective needs of learners. In other words, *lacks* are the starting point, and *necessities* are the destination. If learners and teachers perceive learners' starting points and destinations differently, the disparity may negatively impact learner motivation (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

According to Sunny, an interviewed teacher-participant from University B, the course designers and university administration in Sri Lanka perceive the *necessities* of Sri Lankan ESL learners as passing English papers in exams. The examinations principally test learners' reading, writing, vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Therefore, the syllabus and classroom teaching are mainly focused on those aspects of the language. However, Sunny repeatedly pointed out ESL teachers' hesitancy about this perception of course designers and university administrators regarding learners' *necessities*. However, teachers are frequently held accountable if learners fail examinations. Consequently, they also prioritise equipping learners with reading and writing skills, ignoring the need for learners to develop their speaking skills.

In contrast, according to the student-participants, their perception of *necessities* differs from those of the above. They unanimously agreed that their primary need is to improve their

speaking skills. They tend to view speaking proficiency as the best indicator of their mastery of English and a sign of status and prestige, which resonates with Samarakkody:

> If someone speaks a language, it is taken as if they know the language, irrespective of whether they know how to read or write it… Being able to speak in English means that one is presenting oneself as educated, belonging to a higher class and as a member of the intellectual community without having to prove it by writing in English (2001, as cited in Attanayake, 2019, pp. 24-25).

Also, learners' perceptions of their *necessities* appear to be shaped by their personal and peers' experiences. For instance, as Olivia, an interviewed teacher-participant from University A revealed, some of her students mentioned being treated differently by prestigious companies when seeking internship opportunities, depending on the language they used during their first phone call. Those who spoke in Sinhala were rejected by the companies and not even given an interview. In contrast, when they spoke in English, they received a positive response. Hence, these students associate their *necessities* with English speaking skills.

Therefore, there is a significant difference between what the university administration, course designers and ESL teachers perceive as the learners' *necessities* and what the learners actually want or feel they need. As a result, the materials and methods used by ESL teachers may not match their students' perceived interests or *wants*, leading to conflict. This may be why many student-participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the methodology employed in teaching grammar and the overdependence on handouts and textbooks for teaching.

The student-participants also had disagreements with their teachers about their *lacks* (i.e., the starting point). Some complained that irrespective of their proficiency level or

educational level (e.g., primary, secondary or tertiary level), ESL teachers in schools, universities and support classes always start ESL courses by teaching verb tenses. The participants reported feeling disinterested and demotivated by this monotonous pattern prevalent throughout Sri Lanka *(pp. 136-138 & p. 142*).

Thus, it is apparent that learners' motivation is significantly influenced by the disparity between the perceptions of teachers and learners about learners' *necessities, lacks* and *wants*. A target situation analysis is imperative to redress the disparity. This includes obtaining data from various sources (e.g., teachers, learners, course designers, university administration, and employers) and striking a satisfactory compromise between these parties before compiling an ESL course for learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

In addition, learning needs or "what the learner needs to do in order to learn" should also be seriously considered when conducting a needs analysis (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 54). According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), learning needs refer to the route that takes learners from the starting point to the destination. Learning needs consist of four components: Input, procedure, setting, and learner's role (Nunan, 2004). The target situation analysis helps determine the destination and provides a general direction, while the route (i.e., learning needs) to reach the destination depends on the learning situation, learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation, learning strategies and various other aspects related to learners and learning (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Therefore, an ESL course designed after a proper needs analysis, which includes analysis of both target and learning needs, can potentially contribute to a boost of language learning motivation in learners. Given the relationship between motivation and LA, increasing learners' motivation can help reduce their LA.

According to the findings, Sri Lankan ESL learners' strong Ought-to L2 Self and teachers' exploitation of learners' Ought-to L2 Self as a motivation tool seem to contribute to learners' LA. Dörnyei's (2009) Ought-to L2 Self refers to the attributes one believes one ought to possess to fulfil expectations and avoid negative outcomes. Sri Lankan ESL learners seem to have a more robust Ought-to L2 Self compared to other cultures due to the influence exerted on them by their families and sociocultural factors of the country. Some teacher-participants and student-participants disclosed that learners' parents, particularly their mothers, always encouraged them to learn English *(p. 172)*. This is because Sri Lanka, as a post-colonial country with complex sociocultural dynamics regarding English, considers English to be a symbol of power and prestige (Gunesekera, 2005). A person's competence in English brings respect for them and their family since it is seen as a sign of high social status, good education, intelligence and character (Attanayake, 2019; Punchihetti, n.d.). English is viewed as the passport to financial success, and the ladder to climb up the employment hierarchy (Liyanage, 2021). Being able to speak English is important not only for personal success but also for the success of the whole family. Consequently, learners are strongly influenced by their parents to learn English, positively reinforcing their Ought-to L2 Self. Similar findings were reported by Taguchi et al. (2009) who asserted that due to the significant influence of family in Asian cultures, English learners in Asia have a strong Ought-to L2 Self.

Although the Ought-to L2 Self acts as a powerful motivator when one wants to live up to the expectations of others (Papi, 2010), utilising this construct in classrooms to motivate ESL learners necessitates extreme caution if the opposite results are to be avoided. The point here is that individuals motivated by the Ought-to L2 Self experience more anxiety than individuals motivated by the Ideal L2 Self, which refers to the imaginary self of the kind of L2 user one wants to be in the future (Papi, 2010). Confirming this, the literature on

personality psychology demonstrates a strong association between L2 anxiety and Ought-to L2 Self (e.g., Carver et al., 1999; Higgins, 1987; Leary, 2007). This is in contrast with the Ideal L2 Self, which is associated with growth and accomplishments and, therefore, can reduce anxiety.

Fear of negative evaluation and derision is the most significant source of LA in Sri Lankan ESL learners. Fear of negative evaluation is the "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). This means learners are anxious about others' negative comments, negative evaluations and negative outcomes. Hence, they are keen to possess the attributes they ought to have in order to meet expectations and avoid negative outcomes. As the Ought-to L2 Self is "sensitive to the presence or absence of negative outcomes" (Papi & Khajavy, 2023, p. 134), Sri Lankan ESL learners, who are extremely worried about others' negative evaluations, are likely to be more motivated by their Ought-to L2 Self rather than their Ideal L2 Self. Unfortunately, the Ought-to L2 Self "naturally provoke[s] anxiety" (Papi & Khajavy, 2023, p. 134).

According to Higgins (1998), there are two types of instrumentality: (i) *promotion* focus, which is related to the Ideal L2 Self, and (ii) *prevention* focus, which is related to the Ought-to L2 Self. The former is concerned with positive outcomes connected to growth, progress and aspirations, while the latter is associated with controlling adverse outcomes related to responsibilities and obligations. An important point worth noting here is the suggestion made by Patrick, an interviewed teacher-participant at University A, that a link be created between learners' career focus and speaking English to boost ESL learners' motivation *(p. 238)*. This appears to be effective as long as Patrick does not put emphasis on the prevention-focused aspects of instrumentality and the Ought-to L2 Self of learners. This is because the prevention-focused Ought-to L2 Self has a strong correlation with L2 anxiety.

A comparative study conducted by Taguchi et al. (2009) using samples from Japan, China and Iran reported that in all three samples, the promotion-focus aspects of instrumentality (e.g., learning English for career progress) correlated more highly with the Ideal L2 Self than with the Ought-to L2 Self. In contrast, the prevention-focused aspects of instrumentality (e.g., learning English to avoid failing an exam) correlated more highly with the Ought-to L2 Self than with the Ideal L2 Self. Contrary to expectations, a high correlation was also found between the Ought-to L2 Self and the promotional aspect of instrumentality in the Chinese and Iranian samples. The correlation was explained with reference to the distinct features of culture in China (e.g., the one-child policy and the resultant obligation children feel towards parents) and Iran (e.g., prestige, reputation and high socio-economic status associated with proficiency in English). This situation in Iran resonates well with the Sri Lankan situation described above. Arguably, the promotional aspect of instrumentality and the Ought-to L2 Self in Sri Lankan ESL learners also could have a high correlation, again confirming the power of the Ought-to L2 Self as a motivator among ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities.

Utilising the promotional aspect of instrumentality and Ought-to L2 Self in ESL learners in Sri Lanka could be effective as long as it is practised with caution so as not to trigger learners' prevention-focused aspects of instrumentality. As MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012, p. 203) highlighted, the teacher should refrain from "tipping the scales too far toward the implied negative dimension":

> Inherent in these types of interventions is the ambivalence of possible selves – there is something important at stake. Imagining pride at graduation implies the possibility that one might not make it that far; imagining a successful international convention implies, in the background at least, potential failure on the same stage.

Patrick’s example about a Quantity Surveyor (who was not fluent in English) and a Chief Engineer (who was fluent in English) is an unfortunate example of a scale that has tipped too far towards the negative consequences:

> I take this popular example of a graduate from a private university, who is a quantity surveyor. He comes to the workplace, and he cannot speak in Sinhala; he can speak only in English. Even with labourers, he goes on speaking English. On the same site, there is an engineer who studied from [University A] with a first class, and he's the chief engineer on the site, but he speaks in Sinhala. Right? So, what happens? If he speaks in Sinhala with subordinates, that’s fine. But if he prefers speaking in Sinhala with colleagues, or rather with the same circle, what happens? When he speaks in Sinhala with the quantity surveyor and the quantity surveyor outsmarts the chief engineer in English, so what happens? I create the scenario in the [ESL] classroom, so the students sense it. (ITA, Patrick)

Although Patrick could have motivated learners by showing the importance of learning English to progress through their career (strengthening learners’ promotional aspect of instrumentality and Ideal L2 Self) and highlighting the status, prestige, and reputation learners will receive as a result of being able to speak English (strengthening learners’ promotional aspect of instrumentality and the Ought-to L2 Self), he seemed to tip the scale too far by emphasising the importance of speaking English to avoid ridicule, shame and disrespect (strengthening learners’ prevention-focused aspects of instrumentality and Ought-to L2 Self). As discussed earlier, the prevention-focused Ought-to L2 Self has a strong association with L2 anxiety, which means that there is a high potential for ESL learners in Patrick’s class to experience LA.

The following responses of surveyed teacher-participants also provide evidence of ways in which ESL teachers at Sri Lankan state universities try to motivate learners by strengthening their prevention-focused aspects of instrumentality and Ought-to L2 Self, which ultimately evokes learners' LA, as stated in the above discussion.

> I also explained to them that they would become a total failure in interviews, workplaces, foreign job opportunities, etc., which demand them to use the language - especially speaking skills. (ST50)

> I would always try to incorporate my own experiences of how neglecting the language can especially affect your career. (ST36)

As learners with a well-defined and developed Ideal L2 Self are strongly motivated to learn the L2 (Kim & Kim, 2014) and enjoy lessons more than other learners (Lamb, 2012), they experience less anxiety (Fathi & Mohammaddokht, 2021). In other words, the more developed a learner's Ideal L2 Self is, the less anxiety they experience (Papi, 2010). Teachers should, therefore, purposefully work on developing ESL learners' Ideal L2 selves to minimise their LA.

One reason for Sri Lankan ESL learners' lack of motivation and LA is their less specific, less detailed and less vivid Ideal L2 selves. There are several reasons for learners' less vivid Ideal L2 selves: First, learners possess negative attitudes towards English speakers inside and outside the university *(p. 145)*. According to Dörnyei (2009), "it is difficult to imagine that we can have a vivid and attractive Ideal L2 Self if the L2 is spoken by a community that we despise" (p. 28). Thus, in a context where people regard English as the language of the colonisers or the elite *(p.165)*, it is highly probable that their Ideal L2 Self will not be vibrant or appealing.

Second, as speaking English is banned, especially during *ragging*, and seen as a crime liable for punishment, learners might not see opportunities to speak English within the university. Takahashi (2013) noted that learners' Ideal L2 selves largely depend on the relevance of English to their lives. If they feel no connection to English and if they think opportunities to speak English are rare in their area, it is challenging to strengthen their Ideal L2 selves. In contrast, if they can imagine situations where they can use English or if they think opportunities are available in their area, then it is easy to enhance their Ideal L2 selves. Due to the university subculture and its harmful practices, such as *ragging*, ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka do not see themselves as "actual L2 users" at present nor as "competent L2 users" in the future (Takahashi, 2013, p. 6). This situation makes it difficult for them to have a vivid and elaborate Ideal L2 Self. This situation negatively impacts learners' motivation.

Third, unclear career prospects can lead to an unclear Ideal L2 Self. As teacher-participants in the present study reported, many ESL learners who follow degree programmes related to Humanities, Social Sciences, and Languages lack any focus on their future career or are unsure about why they need English *(p. 143)*. Attanayake (2019) also noted that "…their [learners in Arts faculties] reasons for learning English are scattered over a variety of areas with vagueness as a core feature, manifesting a lack of focus" (p. 195). This vagueness about their choice of career and related opportunities to speak English results in learners' Ideal L2 selves lacking "specificity and detail" (Dörnyei, 2009, p. 19), which may be a reason for their lack of motivation and LA.

Fourth, as the teacher-participants reported, most learners who undertake Humanities, Social Sciences and Languages-related degree programmes aspire to be government schoolteachers. This is because, in Sri Lanka, the teaching profession is an easy and noble profession (Attanayake, 2019). Further, English proficiency is not a requirement to be a

teacher unless one applies to be a teacher of English (Attanayake, 2019). Hence, these learners do not see any relevance, need or opportunity to speak English in the future, limiting their ability to vividly imagine their Ideal L2 Self. This situation adversely influences their motivation.

Since a developed Ideal L2 Self is associated with low LA, it is imperative to address the above-mentioned issues by developing the Ideal L2 Self of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. To this end, the study suggests utilising Olivia's (University A) proposal of forming a community in the ESL classroom where the norm is to communicate in English *(p. 195)*. Such a community provides learners a place to use English at present and until the end of their university life. It also allows them to view themselves as actual L2 speakers who will eventually become competent L2 speakers. Therefore, building a community in the ESL classroom can potentially increase learners' motivation while also reducing LA.

The teacher-participants mentioned sharing their experiences of the language learning journey with their learners referring to their language learning/speaking struggles, their efforts, and their achievements *(pp. 184-185)*. Takahashi (2013) also highlighted the fact that teachers can help learners develop an elaborate Ideal L2 Self by being role models and sharing their stories about their language learning trajectories. Furthermore, providing opportunities for learners to practise their L2 speaking without exerting excessive pressure on them is also essential. This will enable them to speak L2 in any manner they can, which will facilitate their perception of themselves as actual L2 users who will become competent L2 users in the future (Takahashi, 2013).

Furthermore, teachers can encourage learners to create action plans to achieve their target careers. Prasangani (2023) implemented a motivation programme for 139

undergraduates at a state university in Sri Lanka, concluding that teachers could assist learners to develop their Ideal L2 selves by guiding them on setting achievable goals and creating an action plan to accomplish them.

Needs building in university students is also important to help them develop a clear and specific Ideal L2 Self. According to Attanayake (2019), learners should feel the need to learn and speak English as a requirement in their prospective careers. In addition to being government teachers, learners can be challenged to aim for different careers where English is needed for recruitment and progression.

Furthermore, according to Krashen's (1982) affective filter hypothesis, individuals who are not motivated, unconfident and experience high anxiety levels have a high affective filter that acts as a mental block hindering them from receiving input. Since ESL learners at state universities were found to be anxious, less motivated and less confident, it is possible that most of them have high affective filters. Krashen (1982) contended that teachers' pedagogical goals should include providing comprehensible input and creating environments that ensure low-affective filters in learners. For him, low-anxiety classroom climates engender low-filters in students. Thus, this study suggests that creating low-anxiety classroom situations can help reduce the affective filters of ESL learners in Sri Lankan universities. In turn, this will boost learners' motivation and self-confidence and help them receive more L2 input which they can use in their process of acquiring the language.

Negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, and strategies for managing them

The fifth major source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka is their negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers. The attitudes of ESL learners in Sri Lanka are "predominantly negative and are continually re-stabilized as

negative…" (Attanayake, 2019, p. 57). According to Attanayake (2019), these attitudes originate from the attitudes of Sri Lankan society. In other words, ESL learners are influenced by societal attitudes towards the English language and its speakers. One such attitude that causes anxiety in ESL learners is equating English competence with intelligence and English incompetence with the general incompetence of a person. Interestingly, both the teacher-participants and student-participants believed mistakes tarnish one's social image. As a result, rather than speaking and damaging their image, learners preferred to stay silent in English-speaking situations inside and outside the classroom. This agrees with Young's (1990) findings, which showed that the primary reason for learners' fear of speaking in class is their fear of making mistakes. Young (1990) explained that "…maybe they simply do not want to risk self-esteem by having to publicise their errors in the foreign language" (p. 545). Similar findings were reported by Horwitz et al. (1986).

To ameliorate LA, which is triggered by learners' fear of making mistakes, it is imperative to disassociate English from one's social image. To this end, the teacher-participants and student-participants recommended that teachers help learners realise that everyone makes mistakes, including native speakers, and that it is not a big deal *(p. 189)*. Amanda (University B) mentioned that it would be effective to expose learners in person or via online platforms (e.g., YouTube videos) to successful public figures (e.g., academics, athletes, politicians) who confidently speak English regardless of their mistakes *(pp. 195-196)*. Several other teacher-participants reported that they share anecdotes of previous students in the same university who struggled with English at first but later became good English speakers *(p. 185)*. Such activities may convince learners that English competence is not necessarily tied to their social image and that mistakes are natural and can facilitate learning. In-class discussions about the functions of English (e.g., a tool for communication), types of errors, and their role in second language acquisition will also be instrumental to this

end. Young's (1990) study participants also pointed out that teachers helped them reduce their LA by showing them that mistakes are common and not a major concern.

To help dispel learners' misconceptions about making mistakes, Tilly (University C) specifically mentioned discussing with ESL learners the reasons that learners make mistakes, using Selinker's Interlanguage theory *(p. 189)*. However, this should be done with extreme caution because the Interlanguage theory (Selinker, 1972, 1992) itself implies that there is a world standard English (Standard British English or American English), and all non-native speakers of English must adhere to its norms, regardless of their context or sociolinguistic background (Jenkins, 2006). According to Jenkins, the Interlanguage theory does not acknowledge the difference in learners' language output based on their sociolinguistic reality of English use. As a result, any difference between the L2 speaker's output and the standard variety is often attributed to L1 interference. Thus, emphasis on L1 interference in ESL classrooms in Sri Lanka can fuel learners' fear of negative evaluation and derision and, therefore, LA. It substantiates the idea that only standard British English or the "Queen's English", which the Sri Lankan elite claim to speak (Gunesekera, 2005, p. 39), is the correct form of English, both locally and globally. However, with the emergence of "World Englishes" (Jenkins, 2006, p.159), there is a growing consensus among researchers about abandoning native English as the norm to be taught and used, and abandoning the native speaker as the yardstick for recognising expertise in English (Canagarajah, 2005b; Jenkins, 2006). This is because "[i]n a context of locally developed Englishes, all speakers are native speakers of this pluralised Global English" (Canagarajah, 2005b, p. xxvi).

To help learners overcome negative attitudes about English and its speakers, in agreement with the study participants, teachers can initiate discussions in ESL classrooms about the following topics: First, it is crucial to make learners aware of World Englishes and the way in which native speakers have lost their custody of English (Harmer, 2007). The

significance of raising awareness about World Englishes among learners has also been highlighted by other scholars (e.g., Canagarajah, 2005b; Jenkins, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2004; Widdowson, 1994). According to Jenkins (2006), it would be better if less proficient learners were exposed to a range of World Englishes, while the proficient learners were exposed to discussions regarding more complex topics, including the spread of English and the development of different standards. Either way, with awareness of the purpose of each variety and their contexts of use, learners might build up confidence in their own English variety rather than feeling inferior about it. They will realise that local varieties are equal partners in the World Englishes discourses.

Second, the study participants stressed raising learners' awareness about intelligible communication *(p. 190)*. Intelligibility is an important feature in the discourses related to World Englishes. It is defined "in its general sense to mean understandability, that is, the ability to successfully negotiate meaning with an interlocutor by means of pronunciation, pragmatics, and/or use of nonverbals, including gesture, to make oneself understood" (Lascotte & Tarone, 2022, p. 745). As Jenkins (2006) argued, being able to communicate intelligibly with speakers from diverse L1 backgrounds is more important than being able to speak a monolithic variety of English. Therefore, exposing learners to such discourses may help them see English speaking in a positive light and encourage them to abandon their unsuccessful attempts at speaking like a native speaker, thereby overcoming the resultant sense of inferiority (which, in turn, can trigger LA).

Third, as far as the Sri Lankan context is concerned, Standard Sri Lankan English, spoken mainly by the elite (which they think is the "Queen's English"), enjoys hegemonic status over the other variants (Ratwatte, 2015). Learners should be consistently reminded that no one has custody over English anymore (Harmer, 2007). This awareness that no single variety of English is superior and all varieties are deemed acceptable for its purpose within

the domain of use, might help ESL learners overcome their negative attitudes towards English.

Therefore, informal in-class discussions on topics, such as the functions of English, types and role of language errors, World Englishes, development of different standards for English and intelligible communication, not only help dispel learners' misconceptions and cultivate positive attitudes but also provide a platform for learners to verbalise and share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings with others.

6.3 In-Class Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them

The second major type of LA source among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka arises from in-class sources. This section discusses anxiety-provoking factors related to the in-class social climate (i.e., mixed-ability ESL classrooms, the competitive nature of peers, lack of familiarity among peers, lack of classroom humour, lack of phatic communication, and reluctance to utilise the L1 in the classroom), ESL teacher-related factors (i.e., ESL teacher's strict behaviour, negative prior learning and teaching experiences, Western accent, anxiety-provoking body language, insufficient teacher training, forcing learners to participate, intolerance of silence, and unhealthy feedback procedures), speaking activities (i.e., speaking in front of a large audience, insufficient preparation time, and lack of authenticity in teaching materials related to speaking activities), and the physical structure of the classroom (i.e., the design of ESL classrooms). Strategies for managing each of these sources of LA are then discussed in detail.

Anxiety-provoking in-class social climate and strategies for managing it

The in-class social climate is a source of LA, encompassing factors such as mixed abilities in the classroom, the competitive nature of peers, lack of familiarity among peers, lack of

classroom humour, lack of phatic communication, and reluctance to utilise the learners' L1 in the ESL classroom. These different factors and strategies for addressing them are each discussed in turn.

(i) Mixed-ability ESL classrooms

Unhealthy in-class social context induces LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. The majority of the student-participants and teacher-participants attributed the unhealthy in-class context to the mixed-ability learners in their ESL classrooms. Three critical factors in mixed-ability classes were highlighted as anxiety-provoking. First, high-proficiency learners tend to look down on and mock (overtly, implicitly, or covertly) low-proficiency learners for their low English competence. Second, low-proficiency learners negatively judge and ridicule the high-proficiency learners for trying to show off. Third, high-proficiency learners tend to dominate the class, with low-proficiency learners often being overshadowed as a result.

According to the study's findings, the first two issues can be solved by creating a non-judgmental, safe zone in the ESL classroom to speak English. Additionally, fostering a sense of community in the classroom can be effective in building bonds between the learners. In response to the third issue, Sunny, an interviewed teacher-participant at University B, suggested that viewing high-proficiency learners as initiators and supporters of L2 conversations in ESL classrooms would be beneficial *(pp. 215-216)*. This shift in perspective might help both teachers and low-proficiency learners obtain the support of high-proficiency learners in creating a conducive environment for learning English. Explicitly giving importance and responsibility to high-proficiency learners to support low-proficiency learners may change their adverse attitudes towards the latter. Also, this may encourage high-proficiency learners to support language improvement and help reduce LA among low-

proficiency learners. All these factors will contribute to a friendly, safe and non-threatening environment in the ESL classroom.

Another suggestion by both student-participants and teacher-participants to alleviate LA stemming from mixed-ability classes was to establish ESL classrooms that comprise learners with similar abilities *(p. 152)*. This recommendation is consistent with Attanayake (2019, p. 127), who pointed out that low-proficiency learners feel threatened in the presence of high-proficiency learners and, therefore, suggested including only “homogenous or near-homogenous” groups in her confidence-building classrooms. She further argued that peers with homogenous or near-homogenous language competence can support each other without causing feelings of inferiority or lack of confidence.

However, this study argues that mixed-ability classes are more advantageous than same-ability classes for ESL learners wishing to manage their LA. The above argument can be supported by using Gregersen and MacIntyre’s idea of “role models” (2014, p. 12), Murphey’s concept of “near peer” (2001, p.9), and Dewaele et al.’s (2008) perception of the contagious nature of LA. According to Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014), having role models in the social context in which learners operate is crucial. In the ESL in-class context, apart from the teacher, a highly proficient peer can be an effective role model to another learner. Moreover, they can overtly share their knowledge, experiences, and strategies with other learners. Hence, role models help learners develop confidence, hope and motivation, which are crucial in overcoming LA (see Section 6.2).

Near peers play an important role in alleviating learners’ LA. A near peer is seen as a “person who is near to us in the sense of being physically close but also close in characteristics such as age, ethnicity, gender, interests, and experiences” (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014, p. 12). Having near peers to observe is crucial because near peers give

others hope that achieving language goals is possible and that they do not have to strive to be like native speakers. These realisations relieve the learners of frustrations and allow them to recognise and enjoy their achievements, even small ones (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). If the near peer is a proficient English speaker, they may successfully project self-confidence in speaking and demonstrate effective language use (use of structures, vocabulary use, expressions, and idioms), which cannot be expected from a low proficiency near peer. Considering all of these arguments, it is possible to hypothesise that having a high-proficient near peer as a role model would be ideal not only for alleviating learners' LA but also for L2 acquisition.

Finally, LA is contagious, meaning learners may respond to or mirror the LA experienced by their conversational partner (Dewaele et al., 2008). Since low-proficiency learners are more susceptible to experiencing LA than high-proficiency learners, LA can be a common experience in similar-ability classes with low-proficiency learners. In such a context, it is highly likely that the L2 output of both speakers will be affected not only by their own anxiety but also by the interlocutor's anxiety, as observed by Dörnyei and Kormos, (2000, p. 296):

> Anxiety, for example, may have a completely different effect on the task outcome depending on whether the interlocutor also has it or not: it may well be the case that if both parties have language anxiety, this variable becomes a highly significant determinant of the L2 output…

Conversely, if a highly anxious learner converses with a confident speaker, their anxiety may not have a significant impact on the interaction. This is because the confident speaker is likely to prevent communication breakdowns and may even guide the highly

anxious learner through the interaction, enabling them to complete the communication to the best of their ability:

> …if the interlocutor is sufficiently confident, he/she may 'pull along' the more anxious speaker and therefore the impact of anxiety may not reach statistical significance (Dörnyei & Kormos, 2000, p. 296).

Nevertheless, as Amanda (University B) pointed out, mixed-ability classes can be ideal if learners support each other and are motivated to engage in classroom activities *(p. 152)*. It is critical that high-proficiency learners do not negatively judge or ridicule low-proficiency peers and refrain from dominating the classroom in a detrimental manner. If these conditions are met, mixed-ability classes could provide a conducive environment for managing LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

(ii) Competitive nature of peers

The study found that peers can play a significant role in either mitigating or exacerbating LA. For example, the competitive nature of peers in the classroom was reported as anxiety-provoking for many ESL learners. In other words, the more competitive and stronger the desire to outperform each other, the more anxious the learners feel in the classroom.

Olivia's (University A) suggestion to foster a sense of community among ESL learners *(p. 195)* could be effective in discouraging competition among learners. A community is comprised of learners who "support each other and act collaboratively to construct meaningful utterances" (Little & Sanders, 1989, as cited in Phillips, 1999, p. 129). By perceiving themselves as members of one single community, learners are more likely to collaborate and cooperate. Thus, instead of competing, learners in such a community listen to

and care about each other's responses, which will contribute to creating a non-threatening environment (Phillips, 1999). This idea was supported by Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014) who stated that the more familiar, caring, and supportive the learners are, the less anxiety they experience in the classroom. As such, they suggested creating a friendly and caring environment where learners can develop a sense of community. In such an environment, competition can be eliminated, and support and collaboration can be promoted.

(iii) Lack of familiarity among peers

The level of familiarity among peers seems to be a key determinant of the LA experienced by learners. According to Dewaele et al.'s (2008) study, speakers with a consistent and reliable group of conversational partners experience less anxiety than those who get different partners each time. This is because familiar and well-known peers help each other linguistically, socially and emotionally, which alleviates their LA (Dewaele et al., 2008; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014). Jin and Dewaele (2018) also found that stronger emotional support from peers reduces LA. Moreover, as Chahrazad and Kamel (2022) highlighted, the classroom also becomes non-threatening when the class members are familiar with and have a shared understanding of each other.

Therefore, university teachers and administrators in Sri Lanka should limit the number of learners in ESL classrooms at universities. This is because ensuring familiarity among learners can be challenging in large classrooms with many learners. The student-participants in the study repeatedly mentioned that they never had the opportunity to acquaint themselves with some learners in their regular classrooms *(p. 203)*. When students lack familiarity with their peers, they become more self-conscious, which leads to a higher likelihood of experiencing LA (Von Worde, 2003). In contrast, smaller classes tend to form stronger social connections and help improve the quantity and quality of the interactions,

fostering a positive and friendly learning environment. Furthermore, smaller classes can make learners feel more at ease by providing them with an opportunity to communicate in front of a smaller group of learners instead of a large one (Attanayake, 2019; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

However, if logistical constraints make it extremely difficult to form small ESL classes, an alternative approach could be establishing, what may be called *multiple subcommunities* within the ESL classroom. This could be successful because when learners are part of a community, they become familiar with each other, learn each other's levels, and provide support to each other. This leads them to feel relaxed, and confident while speaking English without fear of negative judgements and derision. Further, such an environment could promote social inclusion as well. These *subcommunities* can be permanent throughout the ESL course or changed as necessary. However, sufficient time must be given to each subcommunity to build bonds and trust. Richards and Renandya (2002) postulated that keeping groups together for a reasonably long period (4 to 8 weeks) is beneficial to allow them to build bonds, feel comfortable, develop a group identity, and learn how to overcome challenges collectively. However, Attanayake (2019) cautioned against implementing permanent groups within a classroom as it may restrict communication to only the members of each group. This issue can be resolved by incorporating inter-community activities into classroom activities. Such activities may facilitate communication and collaboration between students from different *subcommunities*, leading to a friendlier and more inclusive learning environment.

Terrell's concept of "target language group identification" and Krashen's notion of "club membership" are two similar ideas that resonate with community building in the classroom (as cited in Young, 1990, p. 550). In addition, Krashen posited that learners' affective filters are low when they feel like members of a target language group, which means

learners feel less anxious when they feel part of a cohesive unit (as cited in Young,1990). This is significant because the findings of the current study revealed a potential for ESL learners in state universities of Sri Lanka to possess high affective filters.

(iv) Lack of classroom humour

Analysis of the observation sessions during this study revealed that the absence of humour in ESL classrooms at state universities in Sri Lanka *(pp. 198-199)* contributed to learners' LA. This study suggests that as lack of humour contributes to making the in-class social climate anxiety-provoking, ESL teachers consider humour an effective pedagogical tool and utilise it appropriately in their classrooms. As Neff and Dewaele argue:

> [L]anguage learning should not be a dry and humourless enterprise but rather a process characterised by play, laughter, challenge and linguistic experimentation where teachers would joke when things went wrong rather than resort to cold or demotivating comments. (2023, p. 576)

As such, humour is indispensable because it reduces anxiety, facilitates learner retention, builds classroom rapport, promotes class attendance, cultivates positive attitudes towards the subject and the teacher, increases motivation, improves self-esteem, and creates a positive classroom climate (Deiter, 2000; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Neff & Dewaele, 2023).

However, teachers must use caution with humour since it is subjective, receiver-centred (Bakar & Kumar, 2019) and culturally-based. Inappropriate use of humour can offend and hurt learners, leading to counterproductive results.

(v) Lack of phatic communication

Phatic communication is defined as "speech which is used to express or maintain connection with others in the form of shared feelings, goodwill or general sociability, rather

than to impart information exchange” (Miller, 2017, p. 253). During the classroom observation sessions, the researcher noticed that although all interviewed teacher-participants discussed the importance of using phatic communication in ESL classrooms, only a few of them actually implemented it. A clear difference was identified in learner behaviour, learner engagement, and classroom climate between the classrooms where this strategy was utilised and where it was not *(p. 198)*. Establishing a connection between the teacher and the learners at the beginning of a lesson through phatic communication contributed to an enjoyable and conducive learning environment and more active and engaged learner behaviour throughout the ESL class time.

This study suggests that ESL teachers use phatic communication in ESL classroom settings to minimise learners’ LA. This is because it is apparent from the findings that phatic communication plays a significant role in reducing learners’ LA and creating a friendly, stress-free, and welcoming classroom atmosphere. It provides a platform for learners to express themselves freely and comfortably without worrying about their English proficiency. It is also well-established in the literature that phatic communication establishes positive social bonds within the classroom and promotes learners’ sense of rapport, sense of belonging and sense of community (Alek & Nguyen, 2023; Curtis, 2019; Jones, 2016; Stubbs, 2017; Zakareya & Alahmad, 2019). As a result, learners feel comfortable, motivated, and engaged, enhancing their overall learning experience (Alek & Nguyen, 2023; Stubbs, 2017). In addition, phatic communication helps teachers enhance language instruction, facilitating classroom management, eliciting learners’ active participation, and promoting positive learner behaviours (Alek & Nguyen, 2023).

(vi) Reluctance to utilise learners’ L1 in the ESL classroom

The study revealed that the teacher-participants and student-participants had differing views on the use of L1 in the ESL classroom. Most of the teacher-participants in the study were happy to incorporate learners' L1 into their teaching of ESL *(p. 199)*. On the contrary, most of the student-participants were opposed to it *(p. 201)*. This is because, the student-participants were hesitant about the benefits of using their L1 in the classroom and even felt guilty about using it, which made them feel disappointed when their teachers used L1 in the ESL classroom.

To this end, making learners aware of the benefits of using L1 in the ESL classroom is critical to encouraging them to use their L1 linguistic repertoire to improve their L2. For instance, according to Cummins' (2007) Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis (LIH), L1 and L2 are interdependent and share common underlying cognitive/academic proficiency, which is transferred between languages, and therefore, supports L2 performance:

> [S]tudents' L1 is not the enemy in promoting high levels of L2 proficiency; rather, when students' L1 is invoked as a cognitive and linguistic resource through bilingual instructional strategies, it can function as a stepping stone to scaffold more accomplished performance in the L2. (Cummins, 2007, p. 238)

Hence, interactions in L1 can be used to help learners progress and receive the maximum benefits of scaffolding for developing L2.

However, teachers and learners need to be cautious of the amount of L1 they use in the ESL classroom. This is because, as the student-participants argued, it limits their exposure to English. This reluctance to use L1 sounds reasonable when viewed in the light of Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis, which posits that learners acquire the language when exposed to comprehensive input in L2. Therefore, using L1 in the L2 classroom decreases the quantity of L2 input, which can significantly affect the learners' acquisition. Furthermore, as

the teacher is the principal input provider in the ESL classroom, overusing L1 denies learners a practicable source of L2 input.

Another important point to note is that the use of L1 in the ESL classroom should depend on the purpose of the activity implemented in the classroom. If the purpose of the activity is to improve learners' speaking skills, the use of L1 may be counterproductive. Hence, it is paramount "to understand not just how much of each language is used, but what functions the L1 serves" (Levine, 2014, p. 336). In other words, it is crucial for both learners and teachers to have an awareness of why (the purpose) and how much (judicious use) L1 should be used in the L2 classroom. To achieve this, teachers can discuss and come to an agreement with learners at the beginning of the course about the use of L1, including the advantages and disadvantages of using L1, when to use it and how much to use it. In addition, frequently reminding learners about the rules that both parties have collectively agreed upon and publicly praising the learners who follow them will help achieve the optimum results of using learners' L1 linguistic repertoire in the L2 classroom.

It is worth noting that while most of the student-participants and teacher-participants referred to the traditional L1-L2 concept, a few other teacher-participants were interested in using translanguaging in ESL classrooms *(pp. 201-202)*. The main difference between the traditional L1-L2 concept and translanguaging is that traditional SLA theories view "L1 and L2 as two separate systems whereas the translanguaging views language as an inseparable unitary system" (Hasan et al., 2020, p. 102). As both permit the use of L1 in the L2 classrooms (Hasan et al., 2020), the present study does not aim to distinguish between the traditional L1-L2 concept and translanguaging in the discussion.

It is well established in the literature that translanguaging reduces anxiety, builds rapport with learners, supports group dynamics, helps clarify instructions to low-level

learners, validates learner identity, facilitates students' participation in the classroom, and contributes to a relaxed and supportive social climate (Levine, 2014; Rabbidge, 2019; Shuchi & Islam, 2016). It also promotes inclusiveness and equity among learners (Nie et al., 2022). Translanguaging encourages learners to perceive L1 as equally important as L2. Since the low-level L2 learners are typically fully competent in their L1, the whole class can be viewed as competent contributors to the classroom knowledge (García & Kleyn, 2016). Therefore, low-proficiency learners may feel confident, important and enjoy the ESL classroom. This is essential for ESL learners in Sri Lanka as they are used to considering a learner who is incompetent in English as less intelligent and generally incompetent. In addition, translanguaging can help alter inferiority complexes and negative language attitudes associated with the colonial mindsets of ESL learners in Sri Lanka. These factors are critical in managing their LA.

However, it is important to exercise caution while implementing the above-mentioned strategies in ESL classrooms at Sri Lankan state universities. This is because the learners in these classrooms come from diverse ethnic backgrounds and, therefore, have different L1s. In such a setting, it would be helpful if the teacher and learners could come to a mutual agreement about the L1 they will use in the classroom, especially if the teacher is not familiar with the L1 of all learners.

Anxiety-provoking ESL teacher characteristics and strategies for managing them

(i) Teacher's strict classroom behaviour

The findings indicated that ESL teachers' strict, less friendly, and authoritative classroom behaviour evoked learners' LA. This finding is consistent with a bulk of previous research that emphasises teachers as a major source of learners' LA (e.g., Price, 1991; Tallon, 2009; Tanveer, 2007; Worde, 2003; Young, 1991). However, this study's findings concerning

ESL teachers' behaviour need to be interpreted with caution since the student-participants mostly referred to the strict, authoritative and formal behaviour of schoolteachers who had retired from schools and joined universities as casual academics due to the dearth of ESL teaching staff in most universities in Sri Lanka *(p. 156)*.

In schools, a significant social gap is maintained between schoolteachers and students and is reflected in their formal and professional relationships. Teachers are highly respected as "gurus" who know everything, so they are not to be questioned, criticised, or challenged (Marambe et al., 2012). As a result, students are expected to demonstrate unquestionable obedience and exhibit the utmost respect for teachers' authority. Although university students are more independent than school students (Tran et al., 2013), schoolteacher-turned university teachers often find it difficult to break away from their traditional teacher role (Attanayake, 2019). This situation can lead to a conflict between learner and teacher identities in ESL classrooms at universities, as Patrick (University A) stated. In addition to triggering learners' LA, this situation can also contribute to creating an unpleasant and unhealthy classroom environment in ESL classrooms. Unfortunately, as Patrick (University A) and Sandy (University C) mentioned, it is challenging to change the attitudes and behaviours of experienced, elderly teachers. Similar views were expressed by Attanayake (2019), who mentioned that "teachers with years of teaching experience are hard to change ideologically" (p. 160). She stressed that continuous and rigorous training is the only way to change their classroom practices.

The study found that ESL learners experience less anxiety and enjoy classes more when their teachers exhibit friendly, relaxed, and approachable behaviour *(p. 204)*. This is because learners mirror the psychological state of their teacher. This can be substantiated using the student-participants of Matsuda and Gobel's (2004, p. 32) study, who stated that "[t]he teacher was very relaxed, so we too were able to relax and study".

Some surveyed and interviewed teacher-participants mentioned the efficacy of choosing the role of facilitator in their classrooms *(p. 204)*. Underhill also stated that teachers who act as facilitators help learners mitigate their LA (1999, as cited in Rubio-Alcalá, 2017). This may be because teachers who choose the role of facilitator contribute to building classroom rapport by creating a welcoming and supportive climate in the classroom (Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2014).

Furthermore, Young (1990) highlighted that relaxed, patient, friendly teachers with a good sense of humour can reduce learners' anxiety. In addition, Rubio-Alcalá (2017) stated that empathetic teachers who understand their learners' thoughts and feelings contribute to improving rapport between teachers and learners and creating a positive emotional climate in the classroom.

(ii) ESL teacher's prior learning and teaching experiences

Interestingly, in contrast to the student-participants and teacher-participants who reported that elderly teachers evoked learners' LA, the observation sessions conducted in ESL classrooms revealed that young and novice teachers also triggered learners' LA and created stressful classroom situations *(p. 156)*. This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Dewaele et al. (2019) using 210 Spanish EFL learners. However, in the Sri Lankan context, the reasons that made young and novice teachers more anxiety-provoking seem to be distinct. Specifically, they can be attributed to the negative effects of these teachers' previous learning experiences and inadequate teaching experiences.

According to the teacher-participants, it is common practice in Sri Lankan state universities to hire graduates from the same university as lecturers. In some cases, these novice lecturers learned ESL at university from retired schoolteachers. Also, most of them received their primary and secondary education from the teacher-centred, authoritarian

secondary education system of Sri Lanka. Hence, it is highly possible that they were not adequately exposed to different teaching methodologies and approaches during their previous education. Consequently, such limited learning experiences can largely shape novice teachers' teaching practices. Teachers' constant experiences of anxious classrooms during their learning can be internalised and may lead to unintentionally recreating similar environments that induce anxiety among their learners. Borg (2003, 2015) also noted that a teacher's prior learning experiences play a crucial role in establishing their teacher cognitions. These cognitions, in turn, influence their instructional decisions and classroom practices throughout their career. Hence, it seems that ESL teachers and learners in Sri Lankan state universities are victims of a vicious circle that promotes unhealthy and anxiety-provoking classroom situations. The only possible way to break this cycle is to give appropriate teacher training to all university ESL teachers, irrespective of their age and experience.

Further, novice university lecturers lack sufficient teaching experience in real-life classroom settings. As mentioned above, they are often recruited as lecturers or instructors immediately after their graduation. As Wickramasinghe et al. (2023) pointed out, inexperienced teachers are inadequately equipped to teach specific subjects in the university and lack the knowledge to solve classroom conflicts. This lack of teaching experience and knowledge can create anxiety-provoking classroom situations. This situation also highlights the need for appropriate teacher training for these newly recruited teachers before they are given teaching responsibilities at the university.

(iii) ESL teacher's Western accent

The findings revealed that the teacher's "Western accent" evoked LA among some learners. This can be attributed to the unnecessary importance Sri Lankans attach to native

speakers of English and native-like pronunciation. When this undue emphasis on native speakers and their language use is eliminated, learners can overcome their feelings of inadequacy, inferiority and LA.

According to Walkinshaw and Oanh (2014), it is common among English language learners in Asia to view native English speaker teachers as models for correct and authentic pronunciation. Therefore, gaining native-like proficiency and pronunciation is identified "as the ultimate state at which first and second language learners may arrive and as the ultimate goal in language pedagogy" (Van der Geest, 1981, as cited in Rajagopalan, 2004, p. 114). Therefore, a teacher with a Western accent is often perceived as the epitome of perfect pronunciation. However, being able to sound like a native English speaker is an unrealistic expectation and a practically unattainable goal for ESL learners who get exposed to English only within the walls of a classroom. As a result, a teacher with a native-like accent becomes a constant reminder for learners of their failure in reaching their goals. This situation makes them feel frustrated in the ESL classroom and increases negative self-comparisons and inferiority complexes, eventually leading them to experience LA.

In addition, West-worshipping colonial mindsets of people in post-colonial countries, such as Sri Lanka, attach higher social status to persons who can sound like British or American, whose English is recognised as a prestigious variety of English (Attanayake, 2019; Harmer, 2007). Consequently, learners may feel anxious to speak using a variety of English, which they perceive as "not good" or "not up to the standard" in front of a teacher with a Western accent (Attanayake, 2019, p. 74).

To alleviate LA that stems from the teacher's Western accent and related language ideologies, ESL learners must be informed about the misconception of viewing native speakers as superior. As there are different indigenous variants of English available within

the Sri Lankan geographical context (e.g., Standard Sri Lankan English and non-standard English), different variants of English are also available around the globe (e.g., British English, Indian English, Malaysian English, Singaporean English). All these variants come under the umbrella term *World Englishes*, each having unique lexical, grammatical, and phonological features and carrying equal prestige (Harmer, 2007). As a result, the importance and power of native speakers are increasingly diminishing (Harmer, 2007). Therefore, teachers should frequently remind ESL learners that their goal should not be to achieve native-like speaker perfection but to be able to use the language as a tool for fulfilling communicative purposes and achieving intelligibility (Jenkins, 2006).

(iv) ESL teacher's body language

Interestingly, the study discovered that a teacher's body language can significantly impact learners' LA, especially when the learners are facing communication breakdowns. For instance, it was found that refraining from gazing at the learner and pretending not to pay attention to their communication impasse allowed the learner the time and the space needed to solve their communication issue *(p. 193)*. When a teacher gazes at a learner during a communication breakdown, it can give the impression that the teacher is angry or intolerant of their incompetence, which can induce LA.

This finding corroborates the results of Akechi et al. (2013), who found that direct gazing in East-Asian contexts signals negative arousal. They found that East-Asian observers identified anger in images of direct gaze (i.e., eye contact) more than Western observers. The study concluded that East Asian teacher's gaze is more likely to convey hostility to their learners. Thus, gazing is predominantly culture-specific and sends culturally different messages to receivers (Gregersen, 2007; McIntyre et al., 2017). Considering the similarity in cultural features shared among Asian countries, it is possible to assume that gazing in Sri

Lanka is also associated with similar negative cultural connotations. Therefore, this study has implications for ESL teachers in that they need to be cautious about the anxiety-provoking messages they may unintentionally send to their learners through their body language.

(v) Insufficient teacher training

A key finding of the study is that some ESL teachers at universities, regardless of their age and experience, lacked pedagogical competence and appropriate knowledge of teaching methods *(p. 159)*. This situation can be attributed to inadequate opportunities for teacher training or professional development (PD) activities in the Sri Lankan context and teachers' lack of motivation.

Except for the UGC-recognised Certificate of Teaching in Higher Education programme conducted by the state universities for all the permanent lecturers who are in their probationary period, ESL teachers at universities do not receive any other special PD training prior to their recruitment by the university (Abeywickrama, 2019). Specifically, teachers recruited on a temporary or casual basis receive minimal formal PD training. However, some of them serve the university for several years, teaching hundreds of students each year. This situation is reflected in the study findings. By the time in-depth interviews were conducted, only three of the nine interviewed teacher-participants had completed their Certificate of Teaching in Higher Education programme. However, most of them had already taught ESL to university students for several years. This lack of opportunity to participate in PD training can adversely affect teachers' classroom practices and increase the potential of creating unhealthy classroom situations.

Moreover, the findings indicated that most teachers lacked motivation to participate in PD training programmes. They complained about the long distances to the locations of PD training programmes, and the poor input they received from such programmes compared to

their time and expenses for travelling and accommodation. Moreover, the lack of motivation can also stem from teachers' negligence (Attanayake, 2019), and lack of awareness of the benefits of participating in such programmes (Abeywickrama, 2019).

To enhance the professional practice of teachers, it is imperative to motivate and support them to attend PD training continuously. It is essential to raise awareness among all teachers about the significance of engaging in PD training. Also, it would be effective to give recognition to teachers who participate in such programmes (e.g., by publishing their detail in monthly newsletters). In addition to increasing their motivation to participate in future PD programmes, such initiatives may also spread awareness among other teachers about the availability of PD training programmes locally and internationally. As the teacher-participants mentioned, with the rise in the popularity of online platforms after the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers can find many online PD training programmes locally and worldwide. This is an effective solution for those who find distance a barrier to participating in in-person training programmes. It is critical to provide training to all teachers concerning teacher attitudes, behaviours, teaching methods, student-teacher interactions, feedback processes and student-teacher relationships to create positive, non-threatening ESL classroom environments that can alleviate learners' LA.

(vi) Forced participation

During the study, the teacher-participants often claimed that they always encouraged voluntary classroom participation. However, the observation sessions revealed that forced participation was a common practice in ESL classrooms at state universities in Sri Lanka *(p. 217)*. Teacher-participants called on learners when they felt that some learners were inattentive or to double-check their comprehension of the lesson. However, the main reason for forced participation seemed to be the learners' passive classroom behaviour, which was

reflected in their reluctance to volunteer when they were given the opportunity. Consequently, teachers resorted to calling on specific students after asking for volunteers, and it became apparent that they did not wait long enough to allow learners to summon the courage to volunteer. The teachers' impatience may have resulted from their previous failed attempts to get volunteers to speak. However, this practice seemed to trigger ESL learners' LA.

In Krashen's (2018) view, forced participation evokes learners' LA and hinders language acquisition. Not only does forced participation trigger anxiety, but it also creates a stressful classroom climate (Attanayake, 2019). Hence, this study suggests that teachers should encourage and appreciate voluntary participation in the classroom. Moreover, teachers should be more patient with learners who need additional time to volunteer. Also, teachers can provide "predictable participation patterns" (e.g., row-by-row) to reduce the tension, insecurity, and unpredictability that stem from randomness in forced participation (Chahrazad & Kamel, 2022, p. 29). This is because when learners are randomly chosen to participate, it further exacerbates their anxiety levels (Chahrazad & Kamel, 2022).

(vii) ESL teacher's intolerance of silence

The findings also indicated that the teacher's intolerance of silence is a factor that triggers learners' LA *(p. 194)*. In particular, when the learner has the vocabulary and phrases needed to solve their communication problem but needs time, the teacher should not be impatient with their silence and hurry to help or correct them. This is because, by doing so, the teacher closes down one of the learners' best learning opportunities. In the research by Chahrazad and Kamel (2022) and Tsui (1995), teachers' intolerance of silence contributes to learners' LA. Tsui (1995) revealed that teachers often feel uneasy and impatient when students do not speak, as they are worried that longer wait times will interrupt the flow and

the pace of the lesson. However, this study emphasises the importance of giving learners enough time to negotiate their way out of communication problems. This also means that the teacher should not put undue pressure (verbally or non-verbally) on learners to commence or recommence their speaking quickly.

However, it should also be noted that if a teacher spends too much time on one learner waiting for a response, that might make them very anxious. Therefore, teachers should be able to judge how much wait time should be allocated to learners to formulate a response. This might largely depend on the type of learner, their English proficiency, the type and level of the activity, and the in-class social climate.

(viii) ESL teacher's feedback procedure

Teacher feedback (mainly correction) will be helpful and effective for learners only if it is given after considering the following:

- The purpose of the activity (whether fluency or accuracy);
- The type of mistake (whether local or global);
- The preferences of the learners to whom the feedback is given (their expectations regarding how and when to be corrected);
- In-class social climate (competitive, judgmental, cooperative, or supportive).

In other words, teachers should be careful about "how, how often, and when errors are corrected…" (Young, 1990, p. 550). These aspects of error correction are discussed in detail below.

How?

The teacher-participants reported that they often used modelling to correct learners without making them feel hindered or embarrassed. Here, the teacher reformulates or models the correct version of what the learner has said without drawing undue attention to it. As the learner does not feel pressured or embarrassed, this might help them feel that the classroom is a safe place to make mistakes. This "gentle correction" (Harmer, 2007, p.146) can be used if there is a complete communication breakdown during fluency-based work.

Another possible strategy is peer feedback. The teacher-participants in the survey indicated peer feedback was an effective strategy for managing learners' LA. However, this strategy needs to be used with care. Amanda (University B) mentioned that attempts to implement peer feedback in her classrooms had been unsuccessful *(p. 210)*. On the one hand, this may be because the ESL learners were less cooperative. As Harmer (2007) emphasised, the peer feedback process can work only in a cooperative in-class climate. On the other hand, learners' failure to give peer feedback can be attributed to the influence of out-of-class factors in the Sri Lankan context. For instance, the university subculture may have a direct impact on this matter. According to the sub-cultural norms, publicly pointing out someone's English mistakes can be seen as discriminatory or mocking, especially in a context where English is perceived with hostility. This means that when a proficient English speaker corrects a low proficient learner, it may be perceived as someone from an elite group ridiculing someone from the commoners' group, which constitutes the majority of university students. Such a perception can lead to punishment or harassment of the former for trying to perpetuate inequality. This may be why learners were reluctant to openly correct each other's mistakes in ESL classrooms at state universities in Sri Lanka.

Moreover, teachers should be cautious when employing peer feedback as this can cause issues if the learner who is corrected feels undervalued or ashamed for making a mistake. For instance, many student-participants in Young's (1990, p. 545) study agreed with the questionnaire item "I feel uneasy when my fellow students are asked to correct my mistakes in class".

How often?

A few participants reported that they feel anxious when teachers correct every mistake they make. This is because correcting all errors can create a stressful classroom environment where both the teacher and learners become frustrated. This confirms the literature that overcorrection, particularly in fluency-based work, can make learners anxious and demotivated (Attanayake, 2019; Harmer, 2007). This not only impedes the current speaking activity but also negatively affects learners' behaviour in fluency-based activities in the future. To avoid overcorrection, the teacher-participants reported focusing and correcting only the global errors that impede meaningful communication. To this end, it is crucial that teachers judge the type of the error before offering feedback.

When?

The immediacy and the frequency of error correction largely depend on the purpose of the activity (Harmer, 2007). The purpose could be to improve either accuracy or fluency. If the activity is accuracy-focused and expects learners to perform correctly, then it is the teacher's duty to correct students' mistakes, sometimes even in the middle of an activity. Harmer refers to this as "teacher intervention" (2007, p. 143). In contrast, if the activity is fluency-based, teacher intervention can cause anxiety and hinder the acquisition process. Therefore, it is paramount that teachers clearly understand the purpose of any activity before offering to correct learner mistakes.

The teacher-participants in this study reported that they do not opt for on-the-spot correction when the activity is fluency-based but rather wait until learners finish their speech or until the activity concludes to discuss the mistakes *(pp. 207-208)*. Consistent with this, Harmer (2007) also postulated that delayed correction is one of the best possible ways to give feedback on fluency-based work, which means correction is done after the activity or "as late as possible" (Lynch, 1997, p. 324).

However, when making delayed corrections, teachers should be cautious not to single out learners who made the mistake or expose them in the classroom since such practices may trigger learners' fear of making mistakes and, hence, lead to LA. Unfortunately, the observation session at University B revealed that Amanda singled out learners when performing delayed correction. This could be a reason for the anxious behaviour her learners manifested during the session.

In addition, the teacher-participants stressed the importance of appreciating learners' active participation, accepting their answers despite their imperfections, and noticing the strengths of learners' answers prior to gently commenting on them *(p. 210)*. They believed that such positive and constructive feedback would motivate learners, reduce LA, and make the classroom a pleasant place for learning. Harmer (2007) also stated that praise is indispensable for boosting learners' motivation and progress and will enhance their performance if appropriate praise is given along with directions to improve more.

Anxiety-provoking in-class speaking activities and strategies for managing them

(i) Speaking in front of a large student audience

Speaking in front of a large student audience evokes ESL learners' LA. This is because the most significant source of LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri

Lanka is their fear of negative evaluation and derision. This fear is heightened when the learners are asked to speak in front of a whole class. Lack of familiarity among learners in large ESL classrooms further exacerbates this LA.

Many researchers confirmed that speaking in front of the class induces learners' LA. For instance, Young (1990) mentioned that the anxiety of his study participants does not stem only from having to speak in a foreign language but mainly from having to speak in front of others. The study participants in Price's (1991) study reported speaking in the target language in front of peers as their greatest source of anxiety. The most common source of in-class anxiety of the study participants in Woodrow's (2006) study was also speaking English in front of their classmates. Daly (1991) revealed that fear of public speaking surpassed phobias related to snakes, elevators, and heights.

However, given the large number of learners in ESL classrooms in Sri Lankan state universities and there being a single teacher to teach, facilitate, monitor, assess, and evaluate learners' performance, it is practically impossible to create one-on-one opportunities for learners to engage with the teacher in speaking activities. Therefore, this study suggests that ESL teachers and administrators create small ESL classes at state universities in Sri Lanka.

If forming small ESL classes is difficult due to logistical considerations, the findings strongly indicate implementing pair/group work to effectively manage learners' LA. This is because speaking in front of a group of fewer members is less stressful than speaking in front of a whole class of 50 or more learners. Attanayake (2019) also advocated pair/group work in her confidence-building classrooms in South Asian universities as low-proficiency learners and those from rural and semi-rural backgrounds find speaking in front of the whole class very stressful.

Previous research has shown numerous ways that pair/group work helps learners manage their LA (Arta, 2018; Ha et al., 2022; Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004; Sun et al., 2017; Young, 1990). For instance, pair and group work provide ample opportunities for learners to participate in L2 interactions (Achmad & Yusuf, 2014; Harmer, 2007), eliminate competition and promote cooperation (Dörnyei, 2001), develop learners' communicative competence (Fushino, 2010), boost self-confidence (Arta, 2018; Liu, 2007), and provide a safe place in the ESL classroom to speak and make mistakes without worrying about other's judgements and derision (Arta, 2018). Further, as pair/group work orients learners toward one common goal, it also improves the classroom climate (Parra Espinel & Fonseca Canaría, 2010), which is crucial for reducing learners' LA.

The teacher-participants reported different techniques for forming groups, including random selection, self-selection, and instructor-generated groups *(pp. 214-215)*. Instructor-generated, heterogeneous groups may be more effective than randomly or self-selected, same-ability groups in ESL classrooms at state universities in Sri Lanka. This is because, given the in-class context that is highly influenced by Sri Lanka's sociocultural dynamics, groups whose members are randomly selected might not contribute to creating a safe environment for learners to speak English. They might not have the perfect balance of learners in terms of their proficiency levels. For instance, if a group has more high-proficiency learners and only a few low-proficiency learners, the latter may feel intimidated and anxious to speak in front of the former.

Self-selected groups may not be effective as learners tend to choose members whose proficiency level is the same as theirs. This is because such a group setting makes learners feel comfortable and confident to speak, as stated by the student-participants. However, such a group, in particular one that consists of only low-proficiency learners, fails to benefit from their group work in the light of Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) concept of scaffolding or Krashen's

(1982) Input Hypothesis (*i+1*). Ineffective group formation can lead to a lack of motivation among learners to engage in group activities diligently because they do not learn much from such a setting. Therefore, teachers need to be careful and thoughtful about how groups are formed in the ESL classroom.

Forming instructor-generated, heterogeneous groups in ESL classrooms must be done with caution. Initially, the teacher can divide learners into large groups based on their proficiency level: Low, intermediate, or high. Then, they can make smaller groups by mixing learners from those three categories. At this stage, they can also take the following factors into consideration: Gender, ethnicity, classroom behaviour (active vs passive), motivation and learning styles. A similar grouping style was recommended by Richards and Renandya (2002). By grouping in this manner, teachers can reduce learners' anxiety, make them feel more comfortable, and safe within their group and obtain optimal results from the activity. The same strategy can be used to choose members if forming *multiple subcommunities* in the classroom.

As Amanda (University B) highlighted, ESL learners in Sri Lanka have lost confidence in group work, perceiving it as a strategy teachers employ to pass the time when they are not prepared for a lesson. To address this issue, the study suggests that teachers explain to their learners why a certain activity is planned to be carried out in groups (rationale), the advantages of doing it as a group, and the expected learning outcomes of doing it as a group. Raising awareness of those aspects might help learners to build trust in the process and to become more active in their engagement.

(ii) Insufficient preparation time

According to the study findings, learners experienced LA when required to speak without prior preparation *(p. 161)*. This substantiates the observations of Harmer (2007) and Young (1990), who pointed out that unpreparedness evokes learners' LA.

To alleviate LA, the study participants stressed the importance of giving learners adequate time to prepare before speaking *(p. 193)*. This makes good sense as preparedness may enhance learners' self-confidence. Yan and Horwitz (2008) also highlighted the importance of providing sufficient preparation time for learners before speaking.

In addition, it was revealed that learners felt less anxious when provided with activity-related vocabulary prior to performance *(pp. 216-217)*. This aligns with the findings of the study conducted by Chahrazad and Kamel (2022), which stated that providing vocabulary before a speaking activity helps reduce learners' LA.

(iii) Lack of authenticity in teaching materials

Some student-participants expressed dissatisfaction with the teaching materials used in ESL classrooms. The lack of authenticity, relevance, and familiarity in materials was found to be a major reason for reduced motivation and for LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. Meyler (2015) also revealed that the materials used to teach English in Sri Lanka were not authentic and unfamiliar to most learners.

The teacher-participants emphasised the importance of utilising relevant and authentic materials in ESL classrooms to enhance learners' motivation and minimise LA. Such materials can enhance learners' motivation and reduce LA because they align with learners' perceptions of their target needs.

The relationship between authentic and relevant materials, motivation, and LA has been well-established in the literature as well. For instance, Von Worde (2003) highlighted that learners find authentic materials interesting and materials relevant to their lives and interests mitigate anxiety while simultaneously boosting motivation. For Yan and Horwitz (2008), authentic materials are important antidotes to anxiety. They propose using authentic materials such as songs, magazines, and movies to maintain learners' interest and motivation. According to Bacon and Finnemann (1990), authentic materials are important for both cognitive and affective reasons. In cognitive terms, authentic materials provide a relevant context to connect form and meaning in acquiring a language. In affective terms, authentic materials motivate learners and help overcome cultural barriers. Therefore, utilising interesting, relevant, and authentic materials and activities is vital for helping learners alleviate their LA.

Anxiety-provoking design of ESL classrooms and strategies for managing it

An interesting finding of this study is that the design of classrooms can trigger LA among learners at state universities in Sri Lanka *(pp. 162-163)*. The student-participants were reluctant and anxious to speak in classrooms with generous windows and doors that cannot be covered or closed. They were afraid of being observed by others outside the classroom. This was because they felt they may appear incompetent, which could damage their image, causing them to lose face not only in front of their teacher and peers in the classroom but the entire university community. They were especially anxious, thinking junior students (i.e., first-year students) would see their incompetence and would not respect them thereafter. This is because the existence of the university subculture largely depends on the respect and fear junior students have for their seniors (Wickramasinghe et al., 2022a). First-year students are also afraid to speak English in such classrooms because they think that senior students (i.e., students in the second year and beyond) might punish them if the latter see the former

speaking English. This means that the physical design of the ESL classroom becomes an anxiety trigger for learners because it is closely intertwined with the sociocultural milieu outside the ESL classroom.

While it is almost impossible to control the sociocultural dynamics outside the classroom, university administrators can consider the classroom design as an anxiety-provoking factor when they allocate classrooms for ESL at the beginning of each semester. A classroom which has doors and windows that can be closed makes learners feel comfortable, less self-conscious, and less anxious. Where this is not possible due to institutional limitations, allocating a classroom in a location with minimal disturbances will also help. This will contribute not only to lessening learners' LA but also to enhancing their concentration, as indicated in the student-participants' responses.

Although it may be argued that practising English-speaking skills in such a classroom setting can have a negative impact on learners' self-confidence in real-world situations, it should be noted that building self-confidence should begin in the classroom itself. When learners feel confident enough to speak in class, they are more likely to attempt to speak English outside of class. Where the ESL classroom provides a non-judgmental and safe environment for practising speaking skills, learners build confidence and are prepared for venturing into the highly critical society outside.

6.4 Out-of-Class Anxiety Sources and Strategies for Managing Them

6.4.1 Out-of-class anxiety sources

University subculture

The study found that university subculture is a key source of LA among ESL learners at state universities of Sri Lanka. *Ragging* is a part of the university subculture in Sri Lanka and is

identified as “any deliberate act by an individual student or group of students, which causes physical or psychological stress or trauma and results in humiliating, harassing and intimidating the other person” (UGC, 2017, as cited in Wickramasinghe et al., 2023, p. 391).

Ragging is a form of reaction that Sri Lankan university students resort to in response to social inequalities of the larger society (Wickramasinghe et al., 2023; Wickramasinghe et al., 2022a). For example, English has been misused as a weapon by the upper echelons of Sri Lankan society to marginalise, discriminate, and ridicule people from lower social strata, including most state university students. This situation contributes to the perpetuation of social inequality in the country. Therefore, “senior students felt it as a part of their duty to equalize everyone and ‘fix’ the so-called mentality of the more privileged to become more equal with the more marginalized groups” (Wickramasinghe et al., 2022a, p. 11). As a result, to level the ground, senior students impose a ban on speaking English within the university premises, particularly to first-year students during the *ragging* season.

The study revealed students’ *ragging* experiences, especially during their first semester at their university. The student-participants reported being prohibited from speaking a single word in English on the university premises and were punished or ostracised for not following the rules of the subculture *(pp. 167-168)*. This is done through stigmatisation, exclusion from leadership roles and extra-curricular events organised by the students, as well as rejection by the rest of the student community in the university, all of which ultimately lead to depression, drop-out, or even suicide (Wickramasinghe et al., 2023; Wickramasinghe et al., 2022b). Consequently, it is highly unlikely for students to challenge the rules and practices of university subculture and *ragging*, especially during their first year. This means that they rarely or never speak English outside of the ESL classroom. As a result, they have limited opportunities to practise and improve their English-speaking skills, which exacerbates their LA in English-speaking situations.

Unfortunately, this study found that the ESL classroom is also unsafe for learners to speak English. This is because senior students often stay outside ESL classrooms observing and reporting junior students who do not follow the rules of the subculture and speak English or volunteer to answer the teacher's questions in the ESL classroom *(p. 167)*. Such detrimental practices evoke fear of negative judgment and punishment, contribute to LA, and intimidate both high-proficiency and low-proficiency English speakers from speaking up inside and outside the ESL classroom.

Several steps have been taken at institutional and government levels to curb *ragging*. *Ragging* is a serious criminal offence requiring severe punishment (Wickramasinghe et al., 2022b). The UGC in Sri Lanka has established 'Centers for Gender Equity and Equality' in all universities to support victims of *ragging* by expediting the reporting process. Recently, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), media and other social media platforms have also spread awareness of the harmful effects of *ragging* (Wickramasinghe et al., 2023). As the teacher-participants in this study mentioned, university teachers have also taken steps at individual and institutional levels to eradicate this practice from universities.

However, as Wickramasinghe et al. (2023) and the teacher-participants of this study *(p. 218)* pointed out, despite all these attempts, *ragging* is still unconstrained at universities for several reasons. First, the lack of a single unanimous action plan among the academic and administrative staff of the university contributes to the prevalence of this harmful practice. Second, there is a lack of trust in the system's commitment to punishing the perpetrators. Third, victims are often unaware of the fact that *ragging* is a form of harassment and certain members of the university community, including some teachers, are conditioned to think *ragging* is meant to form bonds between students. All the above reasons contribute to the

persistence of *ragging* in universities (Wickramasinghe et al., 2023; Wickramasinghe et al., 2022b).

Thus, it remains a challenge to minimise ESL learners' LA induced by the rules and practices of this aspect of the university subculture. Since completely eradicating these harmful practices from the university context seems infeasible, an alternative is to empower learners to confront these practices without being intimidated by their negative dynamics. To this end, this study proposes utilising strategies informed by Positive Psychology in ESL classrooms to develop a positive attitude and resilient disposition in learners, allowing them to confidently navigate their language learning journey in a complex environment.

Language ideologies

Language ideologies are defined as "conceptions of issues such as the status, function, norm, and ownership of a certain language" (Wei, 2016, p. 101). Language ideologies regarding English in Sri Lankan society play a crucial role in evoking learners' LA. In this study, language ideologies are broken down into four main points: (i) English proficiency and associated extra-linguistic factors, (ii) speaking English to show-off, (iii) the relationship between English, elitism, and power, and (iv) the hypocrisy of ESL teachers.

(i) English proficiency and associated extra-linguistic factors

The study revealed that the English proficiency of an individual is perceived by Sri Lankan society as an indicator of their education, family background, social status, and other associated extra-linguistic factors *(pp. 132-133)*. In other words, society recognises a person who speaks English fluently as educated, sophisticated, refined, disciplined, and belonging to a higher class. On the contrary, a person who cannot speak English or who makes mistakes in English is often associated with lower class, lower intelligence, and lack of refinement. These

attitudes can be attributed to the colonial mindsets of people in post-colonial Sri Lanka. ESL learners are well aware of such ideologies and afraid of being judged by their peers in the classroom for their linguistic imperfections. Consequently, they tend to feel anxious when speaking English.

Interestingly, Attanayake (2019) pointed out that many union leaders in Sri Lankan state universities are senior students who are less proficient in English, but exceptionally talented in various other areas. These talents make them stand out and help them earn high leadership positions in the student community, along with a respectable social image to maintain. As a result, these students feel anxious about speaking English in front of others as their English incompetence can potentially tarnish their social image.

(ii) Speaking English to show-off

The findings reported another unfortunate aspect of speaking English in Sri Lanka: Proficient speakers of English experience negative judgements and derision from less proficient speakers and sometimes from people who lack any English knowledge. Specifically, those who are illiterate in English tend to judge all English speakers (irrespective of the level of proficiency) as being boastful and *show-offs (pp. 129-130)*. However, learners are reluctant to be labelled as *show-offs*, as evident from the findings in this study. As a result, the student-participants mentioned that they not only feel anxious to speak English but also try to avoid speaking English in the presence of others.

This paradoxical phenomenon, which associates speaking English with *showing off*, appears to be prevalent in many Asian cultures. For instance, Attanayake (2019) reported this as common in other post-colonial South Asian countries such as India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. Similarly, Yan and Horwitz (2008) reported that fear of being labelled as

"Liking To Show Off" is the key reason why Chinese students do not volunteer to speak in class (p. 162).

(iii) The relationship between English, elitism, and power

Sri Lankan society refers to English as the 'language of the power', 'language of the prestige', 'language of the elite', and 'language of the other' *(p. 170)*. According to Helen (University C), Sri Lankan society views the elite as the local representatives of the colonial masters and English as a language that belongs to them. As Ratwatte (2015) put it, Sri Lankans still consider English as a symbol of elitism and perceive it as an "elitist parabasa" (or foreign language) instead of a "people-owned swabasa" (one of our own languages) (p. 116).

The student-participants and teacher-participants highlighted the common belief prevailing in society that the elite uses English as a means of discrimination to subjugate the lower social strata *(pp. 169-170)*. This finding aligns with studies conducted previously. For example, Ratwatte (2015) noted that society perceives English as an instrument of social oppression. According to Jayasuriya (1969), the lower social strata of Sri Lankan society view English as a *Kaduva* or a sword that limits their social mobility. Kandiah (1984, p. 139) stressed that an individual receives power or discrimination based on the ownership of *Kaduva*:

> [Kaduva], if grasped firmly in his own hands will endow him with the power to be truly free, to be himself and to live in dignity on terms of equality with other men; in someone else's hands, it remained the instrument of his oppression, the means of his subjugation.

These societal ideologies and perceived negative consequences (e.g., discrimination, inequality, and humiliation) can make learners anxious when speaking English. Also, they may be the primary underlying reason for the extreme restrictions imposed on speaking English on the university premises.

(iv) The hypocrisy of ESL teachers

One unanticipated finding was the discrepancy in teacher-participants' attitudes towards English speakers' mistakes. Interestingly, their views on this matter appeared hypocritical. While they were very tolerant of the English errors made by the learners in their ESL classes, except for one, all the other teacher-participants were intolerant of errors made by English speakers outside the classroom. They unanimously agreed that they would judge speakers who make mistakes in English in society at large as less intelligent and from a lower social background. This may be because Sri Lankans are conditioned to think that those who speak English well are educated, intelligent and represent the higher class. Thus, it is evident that both ESL learners and teachers are strongly influenced by the societal ideologies in Sri Lanka.

Since most of these teacher-participants had a unique understanding of the harmful societal ideologies regarding English and their negative impact on English speaking, it was somewhat disheartening to document the hypocritical attitudes they held towards English speakers who struggle and make mistakes. This situation suggests that the ESL classroom is the only safe place for learners to practise speaking English. Yet, as discussed earlier, ESL classrooms in Sri Lankan state universities also seem to be socially and emotionally dangerous zones that fuel learners' fear of negative evaluation, mockery, and LA.

Surprisingly, neither the teacher nor the student-participants presented a single strategy that could directly manage the societal language ideologies. One possible

explanation for this might be that these ideologies have been normalised in Sri Lankan society to the extent that student-participants and teacher-participants are conditioned to believe these language ideologies and university subculture are normal forces that exist in society. This may be why teachers themselves unknowingly perpetuate such negative societal ideologies, while senior university students promote and maintain the harmful practices of the university subculture. Consequently, they may not have even considered learners' LA as something that stems from language ideologies in the country, in the first place.

Another possible explanation for the participants' lack of suggestions for managing language ideologies is that they operate independently of the ESL classroom and, as such, are not amenable to the manipulation of the parties involved. Hence, even if some may feel the need to control those harmful ideologies, they lack the power to do so.

6.4.2 Strategies for managing language anxiety arising from out-of-class anxiety sources

As discussed in Section 5.4, only a small number of teacher-participants recognised the significance of fostering a positive mental state in ESL learners as a means of managing their LA stemming from out-of-class sources. The literature also indicates a deficiency of research worldwide with respect to strategies aimed at alleviating LA caused by out-of-class anxiety factors. There can be several possible reasons for this situation.

First, out-of-class factors are largely context-specific. Consequently, their impact on individuals can vary across different contexts. For example, in countries where English is inextricably embedded into its sociocultural fabric, out-of-class anxiety sources may pose a significant influence on ESL learners and teachers. In contrast, countries where English is only viewed as a communication tool without any cultural baggage attached to it may not assign out-of-class sources the same degree of importance as learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources. As a result, previous studies conducted mainly in Western contexts

(Woodrow, 2006; Yan & Horwitz, 2008) may have neglected the need to develop strategies to manage out-of-class sources of LA.

Second, even if strategies were developed to curb out-of-class anxiety sources, such strategies may be difficult to generalise and implement in another context due to the complex nature of sociocultural dynamics across contexts. Just as the levels and types of LA vary among different cultural groups, such as between students from East Asia and European countries (e.g., Liao & Liang, 2021; Tsui, 1996), certain practices that flourish in one culture may not yield the same result in another culture (MacIntyre et al., 2019). This could be another reason why the importance of developing strategies to manage out-of-class sources of LA has been under-researched.

Third, out-of-class anxiety sources may be viewed as operating beyond the boundaries of ESL classrooms in any given context and therefore, beyond the control of teachers inside ESL classrooms. Therefore, researchers may have paid less attention to investigating ways in which teachers can manage these anxiety-inducing out-of-class sources while remaining in the classroom.

Understanding that out-of-class anxiety sources are unique, context-specific, complex and operate beyond the walls of the classroom is important to developing ways of addressing them. In contrast to learner-specific and in-class sources, a distinctive approach is imperative for effectively managing learners' LA stemming from out-of-class anxiety sources, which is the focus of the discussion in the next section.

6.4.3 A positive psychological approach

The strategies discussed in Sections 5.2. and 5.3 for effectively managing the LA that originates from learner-specific and in-class sources are based on traditional psychology (TP)

principles, focusing on learners' and teachers' weaknesses or problems and aiming to address them. In other words, those strategies were developed with the aim of fixing deficiencies that make learners anxious in the ESL classroom. For instance, when learners' lack of motivation was found to induce anxiety, strategies were suggested to boost their motivation. When learners' lack of confidence was found to evoke LA, many techniques were recommended to enhance their confidence. When learners' language misconceptions seemed to trigger their LA, it was suggested to initiate in-class discussions with learners to dispel those misconceptions. Hence, the strategies proposed to alleviate LA that originates from learner-specific and in-class sources were largely based on a deficit-based approach. They focus on what is lacking in language teachers and learners and propose strategies to address their weaknesses (MacIntyre, 2016; MacIntyre et al., 2019). Developing strategies in this way with respect to learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources was possible because teachers and learners have the power to manage those sources of LA. In Gregersen's (2020, p. 81) words, "[f]or teachers, understanding learners' triggers and attempting to avoid them is the first place to start, particularly if the perturbation is within the teachers' control".

However, out-of-class anxiety sources are beyond the control of teachers and learners. As a result, even if teachers identify the external anxiety sources, they cannot automatically develop strategies to counteract those sources as they did with the other two source types of LA. Therefore, instead of trying to eliminate or manage out-of-class anxiety sources, the optimal practice would be to manage the LA that arises from out-of-class sources. To this end, the study utilises practices informed by PP, which advocates increasing moments of positivity instead of aiming for the exclusion of negativity (Dewaele & Dewaele, 2017; Gregersen et al., 2016b). Of particular relevance is Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (BBTPE), which explicates how frequent experiences of positive emotions (PEs) help learners develop a positive mental state. Learners' positive

mental state can broaden their attention and thinking and leads them to learn better. It can also erase the lingering effects of negative emotions. Furthermore, a positive mindset can foster learners' resilience. As Dewaele and MacIntyre (2022) stated resilient learners are confident to explore and take linguistic risks without being afraid of negative evaluations.

It is posited in this study that cultivating a positive mental state among ESL learners in the Sri Lankan state university context by way of increasing the number and range of opportunities for learners to experience PEs in the language classroom is a viable strategy for mitigating their LA. When learners increasingly experience PEs in the classroom, "…less importance will be given to the anxiety they might feel at times in the classroom, which in turn will give them more self-confidence. Further, an increase in self-confidence should increase their WTC [willingness to communicate]…" (Fresacher, 2016, p. 348). This can lead to a reduction in the frequency and intensity of their LA. In addition, those who experience PEs can contribute to a positive classroom climate, and learners who view their classroom climate as more positive can enjoy more, feel less anxious and are more willing to communicate (Khajavy et al., 2018).

6.4.3.1 Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (BBTPE)

Fredrickson's (2001, 2003, 2006) BBTPE emphasises that positive and negative emotions are functionally different and have varying action tendencies. While negative emotions, such as LA, narrow learners' thought-action repertoire leading them to act in self-protective ways (fight or flight response), PEs (i) broaden learners' attention and thinking; (ii) counter and help overcome debilitating effects of negative emotions; (iii) build learners' resilience; (iv) promote building personal resources such as social bonds; and (v) trigger upward spirals toward enhanced emotional wellbeing in the future.

Since positive and negative emotions are not in a seesaw relationship (MacIntyre, 2021) and are functionally different from each other (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012), the proposed strategies of this study do not aim to completely exclude negative emotions. Instead, the main objective is to elicit PEs, and extend their duration.

Fredrickson (2001) highlighted five PEs as fundamental to humans. They are joy, interest, contentment, pride, and love (see Table 2.2 for summary). Joy urges learners to play, expand limits and be creative. Interest ignites learners' urge to explore and absorb new information and experiences. Contentment creates an urge to savour positive events and relive them. Pride urges learners to share achievements with others and imagine future achievements. Love ensures the continuation of experiencing PE within close and safe relationships. Research lends support to the profound power of these five PEs. Learners who feel joyful are found to be more focused, hardworking, happier, active, confident, and efficient in language learning (Liu & Hong, 2021). Learners who are interested, notice things better and therefore absorb the language better (Dewaele et al., 2019). Learners who are content, tend to learn and score better (Achor, 2010, as cited in Helgesen, 2016; Oishi et al., 2007). Learners who feel proud of their achievements imagine achieving greater achievements in the future (Fredrickson, 2001). Learners who feel love build relationships and ensure that their experiences of PEs will continue to occur (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Therefore, cultivating and enhancing PEs has great potential to successfully address the out-of-class anxiety sources.

6.4.3.2 Eliciting positive emotions of ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities

Joy and Interest

The findings of this study and previous studies show that joy and interest can be ignited in learners through classroom activities. The student-participants in this study reported that

authenticity and relevance of activities are two factors that determine their interest and motivation to engage *(pp. 212-214)*. Activities that learners find novel, give them choices, allow for autonomy and imagination, and level-appropriate promote their enjoyment (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Gregersen, 2020). According to MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012, p. 210), teachers who use activities that learners “enjoy, find interesting and love doing” create positive emotional states in them.

Interestingly, a study conducted by Jin et al. (2020) showed that introducing speaking contracts to learners in an FL class was successful in eliciting learners’ PEs and helping reduce their LA. The study involved 42 Chinese university students who were learning English as an FL. The participants were divided into two groups: an experimental group and a comparison group. The experimental group was given a written contract consisting of two parts. The first part contained details about the contract, including the terms, parties involved, and duration. The second part was a procedural checklist for adhering to the contract. The participants had to state the number of times they would volunteer to speak English in the classroom for the next seven days. They were not allowed to make any changes to that number afterwards. The contract was signed and fingerprinted by the participant and the researcher to emphasise its importance. In addition, the participants were asked to maintain a daily diary to document the impact of the contracting intervention. Writing the diary and checking the procedural checklist made them stick to the terms and conditions of the contract.

The comparison group received only an informal written form with instructions. They were not provided with a procedural checklist or asked to maintain a diary. This means that their compliance with the instructions was not monitored, and their perception of any changes resulting from participating in this intervention was not recorded. They were only advised to volunteer to speak in English class and not to worry about others’ negative evaluations. No signatures were required on the form.

The findings demonstrated a significant reduction of LA in the experimental group compared to the comparison group. This was due to the increased engagement with the FL both inside and outside the classroom, which resulted in increased PEs among learners. For example, when learners received appreciation from the teacher for successful performance, they felt happy, proud, enthusiastic, interested or joyful. In contrast, negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, fear, worry, and nervousness) were diminished as participants prepared for their classes in advance, searched for opportunities to speak more in class, frequently practised speaking, received recognition from others, and increased feelings of self-efficacy. In addition, keeping a diary helped participants focus on their progress (linguistic and non-linguistic) during the contract period, which strengthened their positive experiences and reduced their LA. As Jin et al. (2020) concluded, the shift in learners' focus from the self to fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of the contract may have contributed to reducing their LA and making them feel more comfortable about volunteering to speak English in the classroom.

Following Jin et al. (2020), formulating contracts with learners in ESL classrooms at state universities in Sri Lanka is likely useful, particularly when creating *subcommunities*. By mutually agreeing to speak only English with each other both inside and outside the classroom, members of each *subcommunity* can enter into a formal contract with their teacher. This strategy can help manage learners' LA in two ways: First, establishing *subcommunities* helps directly address LA sources such as fear of negative evaluation and derision, classroom competition, lack of motivation, and university subculture. Second, contracting speaking English elicit learners' PEs. These two ways of managing LA are discussed in detail below.

Fear of negative evaluation and derision, the most significant source of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka, can be managed when learners work in a

subcommunity. This is because *subcommunities* are diverse groups of learners intentionally created by instructors to support each other academically, socially, and emotionally. By fostering an environment of support rather than competition, *subcommunities* can help eliminate learners' LA. Further, teachers can intentionally include learners from different ethnic backgrounds and other demographic features in each *subcommunity*. This has been found to encourage learners to speak English more freely, as they feel more at ease with speakers of different ethnicities.

Lack of familiarity among learners in large classes can be successfully managed by forming *multiple subcommunities* in the classroom. Doing so would enable learners to connect with one another and develop a sense of familiarity. Most importantly, by belonging to a *subcommunity* that speaks English inside and outside the classroom, learners will be better equipped to handle instances of ragging that may arise.

Furthermore, since these *subcommunities* give learners a place and an opportunity to use English, learners may view themselves as actual L2 users who will become competent L2 users in the future. This, in turn, would strengthen their Ideal L2 Self and improve their motivation to speak, further alleviating LA.

Entering a formal contract to speak English with members of their *subcommunity* has the potential to elicit PEs. If members of each *subcommunity* speak only English with their fellow community members both inside and outside the classroom, learners can increase their engagement with the language, gaining more practice and confidence gradually. As they realise their progress, they are more likely to actively participate and volunteer in the classroom. The increased participation may attract recognition from teachers and peers. Positive feedback from other teachers and peers can be expected to contribute to learners' enjoyment, interest, enthusiasm, and motivation. Further, the ability to share their positive

experiences with people who are important to them (e.g., peers of their *subcommunity*) can ignite their happiness and pride. Finally, continuous experiences of the amalgam of these PEs can generate love towards English and the process of learning it, which can predict their urge to play with, explore and savour their positive experiences with loved ones in the future. Hence, contracting speaking English in communities may evoke all five primary PEs in learners and, therefore, has the potential to successfully manage learners' LA.

Contentment and Pride

Learners' contentment has been found to be awakened when they savour positive events and positive learning experiences (Fredrickson, 2001; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). A study conducted by Jin et al. (2021) found that reminiscing about their language proficiency development helped reduce anxiety levels among a group of Chinese students learning English. In that study, eighty-eight participants were randomly assigned to either an experimental or a control group. The experimental group were asked to engage in reminiscing about their English proficiency progress since joining the university, record their emotions during each session and do it at any convenient time for 30 days. Jin et al. (2021) found that the anxiety levels in the experimental group were significantly lower after the intervention than in the control group whose anxiety levels remained unchanged. The reminiscence process elicited many PEs in the experimental group that exceeded their negative emotions in a ratio of 3:1. The learners experienced PEs such as happiness, confidence, contentment, sense of accomplishment, pride, and enjoyment as a result of reminiscing about their FL proficiency development (Jin et al., 2020).

All the student-participants in the present study agreed that they had progressed and were motivated to learn English from the moment of their entry into the university. However, some of them expressed their dissatisfaction with their progress. This may be because they

were assessing their progress with respect to their long-term goal and, therefore, did not recognise the importance of their small achievements. To this end, it would be beneficial to provide a chance for learners to reminisce about their language learning trajectory and acknowledge the language proficiency development they had achieved compared to their level when they first entered the university.

Although Jin et al. (2021) led their participants to reminisce individually, it may be more productive to do reminiscing as a pair or a group activity where learners talk about their English proficiency development with one another. In their *subcommunities* in the ESL classroom, members of the *subcommunities* can conduct reminiscence at the beginning, middle and near the end of the course. As the members of the *subcommunity* are familiar with each other and know their levels very well, they can help each other recognise small achievements in their trajectory that may have gone unnoticed. In addition to peers, teachers can also help learners notice current positive developments in their language. Apart from the PEs listed above (i.e., happiness, confidence, contentment, sense of accomplishment, pride, and enjoyment), reminiscing together, or sharing their achievements in pairs, groups or *subcommunities,* can help build social bonds too, which may evoke their love.

Love

According to Pavelescu and Petrić (2018), love is the fuel that drives learners to use effective coping mechanisms when they do not enjoy some classes. They found that love towards English led some participants to exert significant effort towards learning and using English inside and outside of the classroom.

Love is the aggregation of PEs, such as joy, interest, and contentment. When learners frequently experience these PEs in the L2 classroom, they eventually start loving the L2, and the learning process. Love will also lead them to establish close relationships with others.

Such relationships, in turn, predict the tendency to experience action tendencies of PEs in future (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

Furthermore, in-class factors, such as teacher, peers and classroom climate can also be exploited to elicit PEs in learners. For instance, this study revealed that learners enjoyed classes where the teacher was friendly, relaxed, and approachable. The teacher's role was highlighted by Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014, p. 264), who reported:

> Teachers who were positive, humorous, happy, well organized, respectful of students, and praised them for good performance were appreciated by their students… Laughter that occurs when things do not go as planned can have a healthy effect on learners, taking the negative emotional tension out of the room.

This means that a teacher's classroom behaviour is critical to learners' classroom enjoyment, and the teacher is a powerful resource for nurturing PEs in ESL learners if it is properly drawn on.

Teacher immediacy is found to evoke learners' PEs. According to MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012), teacher immediacy can take two forms:

> [N]onlinguistic approach behaviours (e.g., reducing physical distance, displaying relaxed postures and movements, using gestures, smiling, using vocal variety, and engaging in eye contact during interactions) as well as language that signals availability for communication (e.g., using personal examples, asking questions, using humor, addressing others by name, praising others, initiating discussion and using inclusive pronouns. (p. 209)

In addition to eliciting PEs in individual learners, immediate teachers also contribute to team-building and evoke positive group emotions (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

Moreover, teachers can evoke learners' PEs by creating opportunities for social bonding, social inclusion, and cooperation. It is well-established in the research literature that small groups facilitate social bonds, a relaxed classroom climate, and increased use of TL (Harmer, 2007; Richards & Renandya, 2002). Since the large classes and the resultant unfamiliarity among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka can lead to negative emotions and an unhealthy classroom climate, it is crucial to form *multiple subcommunities* in classrooms to solve this issue effectively, as discussed earlier.

The use of music in language classrooms is another well-researched practice to enhance learners' PEs (Fonseca-Mora & Machancoses, 2016; Gregersen et al., 2016b). "Melodies and rhythm have the effect of creating PEs, encouraging and reassuring, and, therefore, affect students' predisposition toward learning" (Fonseca-Mora & Machancoses, 2016, p. 369). In support of this approach, Murphey (2014) found that singing and teaching with movements and sharing a musical classroom activity generated PEs in learners. He reported that his participants felt more connected during the activity. This suggests that singing has an effect on social bonding, which elicits PEs, such as love and enjoyment (Fonseca-Mora & Machancoses, 2016). In addition, music creates a favourable and enjoyable classroom climate (Fonseca-Mora & Machancoses, 2016). Consequently, teachers can purposely choose songs and video clips that energise and motivate learners. However, it is important that the songs learners sing or listen to are in English. Such a practice has many other additional benefits. For example, songs in the target language (TL) introduce learners to the TL culture, help them memorise phrases in the TL, and facilitate language acquisition. Their exposure to English as a medium of entertainment may also help cultivate positive attitudes towards the English language.

The above discussion has proposed a number of strategies to elicit PEs in ESL learners. If learners are provided with opportunities to experience PEs frequently in the

classroom, they are more likely to enhance their resilience to the negativity that stems from factors that exist outside of the classroom. This, in turn, can improve learners' ability to bounce back from negativity quickly and efficiently "just as resilient metals bend but do not break" (Fredrickson, 2001, p. 222). A study by Fredrickson and Joiner supported this argument by showing how individuals who experienced more PEs had more resilience to adversity over time and how this resilience and coping skills, in turn, projected more PEs over time (2000, as cited in Fredrickson, 2001). Resilience can shape learners into explorers who continuously search for new strategies to improve their language proficiency rather than worrying about their deficiencies and inadequacies (Fresacher, 2016). Also, it is important to note that "[r]esilient individuals not only cultivate positive emotions in themselves to cope, but they are also skilled at eliciting positive emotions in others, which creates a supportive social context that facilitates coping" (Fredrickson, 2004, p. 1372). Hence, an approach that generates more PEs in the classroom would be ideal for learners to thrive in socioculturally complex contexts such as Sri Lanka.

6.5 A TP-PP Integrated Low-Anxiety Classroom Model

It is clear that LA is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon subject to learner-specific, in-class, and out-of-class sources. The most effective way to manage it is to create a low-anxiety classroom where students are happy, relaxed, and safe from negative evaluations and ridicule. The initial step towards such a classroom involves identifying LA sources and managing them, provided they are within the teacher's and learner's control. Accordingly, to manage LA sources that are within the control (i.e., learner-specific and in-class), strategies informed by TP are highly relevant. Where the sources of LA occur outside of the classroom, which is beyond the control of teachers and learners, strategies informed by PP, in particular those drawing on Fredrickson's BBTPE (Fredrickson, 2001, 2003, 2006) for frequently eliciting

PEs of learners, have the potential to manage the LA specifically stemming from the out-of-class sources.

To address all three types of LA sources in one coherent model, this study proposes integrating TP-informed and PP-informed strategies to effectively manage LA among learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. This integration results in a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka, which involves enhancing four critical features related to learners, teachers, and the ESL classrooms as follows:

(i) Teacher characteristics
(ii) Pedagogical practices
(iii) Classroom rapport
(iv) Classroom design

6.5.1 Improved teacher characteristics

Improved teacher characteristics can manage learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources, and LA stemming from out-of-class sources.

Where teachers behave in a friendly, relaxed, empathetic, and approachable manner and tolerate learners' silence and wait patiently while learners prepare their responses, learners feel relaxed and classes more enjoyable, which means learner-specific and in-class sources of LA are addressed. Similarly, teachers who demonstrate positive, humorous, happy, well-organised and respectful behaviours and praise learners as appropriate elicit learners' PEs and, therefore, address the out-of-class anxiety sources.

6.5.2 Refined pedagogical practices

Refined pedagogical practices, such as providing more opportunities to practise speaking, utilising authentic, novel, relevant, creative, and engaging teaching materials in the

classroom, employing an appropriate feedback style, avoiding forced participation and providing opportunities for learners to engage in cooperative activities, manage learner-specific anxiety sources and in-class anxiety sources. Similarly, implementing activities that are level-appropriate, novel, promote learner choices, autonomy, and imagination and involve creating speaking contracts for using English in *subcommunities* inside and outside the classroom are likely to elicit learners' PEs and manage the LA that stems mainly from out-of-class sources.

6.5.3 Enhanced classroom rapport

An enhanced classroom rapport between learners and teachers and between learners themselves can manage learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources, and LA stemming from out-of-class sources.

By adopting the role of a facilitator, initiating friendly and informal discussions with learners, sharing teacher anecdotes about their language learning journey, using humour and phatic communication, and using L1 judiciously, teachers can manage learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources. Similarly, by using music in ESL classrooms, providing teacher immediacy linguistically and non-linguistically, building *multiple subcommunities* in the classroom, and allowing learners to reminisce about their language proficiency development in their *subcommunity*, teachers can elicit learners' PEs which, in turn, can help them manage the LA that stems from out-of-class sources.

6.5.4 Conducive classroom design

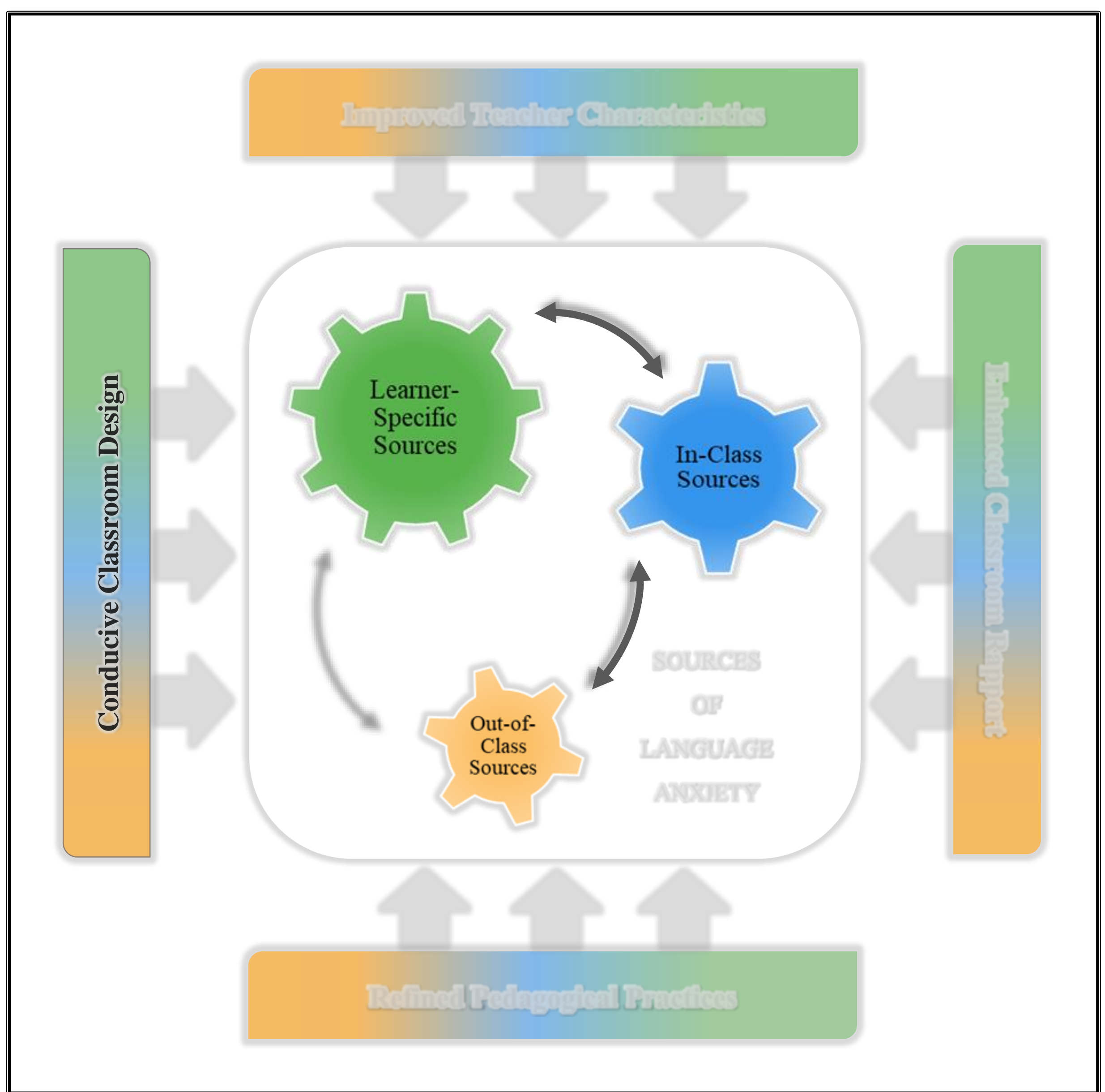
An appropriate classroom design in terms of size, spaciousness, layout, and privacy it affords is critical for managing learner-specific, in-class, and out-of-class sources of anxiety.

Classrooms that are spacious but have a limited number of learners, classrooms that ensure the learners' privacy (e.g., classrooms with doors and windows that can be closed), and classrooms where teachers and learners enjoy equal status can manage all three types of sources of LA.

In light of the above discussion, a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka can be diagrammed as in Figure 6.1. This model is designed by integrating both TP-informed and PP-informed strategies to successfully address all three types of LA sources. It is worth noting that as the three source types of LA are interrelated, a full implementation of the model in the classroom is required to effectively manage LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

Figure 6.1

TP-PP Integrated Low-Anxiety Classroom Model



6.6 Summary

This chapter has discussed three source types of LA among ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. These include learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class sources of LA. Although the sources are distinguished on the basis of their origin, they are inextricably interrelated in affecting ESL learners' LA. More specifically, they are closely intertwined

with the sociocultural landscape in the country where the learners are located. The chapter also discussed strategies for managing these sources of LA. As teachers and learners have the power to manage learner-specific and in-class anxiety sources, strategies based on TP were recommended for managing them. In contrast, out-of-class anxiety sources, such as the university sub-culture and language ideologies are highly context-driven and operate beyond the classroom. Managing these sources is beyond the power of teachers and learners. Hence, instead of trying to eliminate or manage out-of-class anxiety sources, the chapter recommended managing the LA that arises from out-of-class sources by using PP-informed approaches. Consequently, by integrating TP-informed and PP-informed strategies, the chapter developed a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

The low-anxiety classroom model involves four key features: Teacher characteristics, pedagogical practices, classroom rapport and classroom design. By enhancing these features, all source types of LA can be addressed. Therefore, it provides a coherent theoretical framework for systematically managing LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

LA is a major factor that impairs the academic performance of ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is essential to investigate ways of managing it successfully. By drawing on the perspectives of both ESL learners and teachers at state universities in Sri Lanka, this study thoroughly explored the sources of LA among ESL learners and the strategies that are proposed or already implemented in classrooms to manage their LA. The overarching aim of the study was to develop a low-anxiety classroom model suitable for ESL learners who study at state universities in Sri Lanka. This chapter first provides answers to the two research questions and discusses the significance and implications of the study. It is concluded by acknowledging several limitations of the study and suggesting directions for future research.

7.2 Answers to Research Questions

7.2.1 Research question one

The first research question concerned the sources of LA among ESL learners at Sri Lankan state universities, in particular during in-class speaking activities.

The study identified seventeen sources of LA, revealing the complex and multifaceted nature of LA. These were grouped under three primary types: Learner-specific sources, in-class sources, and out-of-class sources (see Chapter Four for detail).

Learner-specific sources were the most common type of LA source among ESL learners. The most significant source of LA was the fear of negative evaluation and derision. This was followed by learners' limited linguistic ability, previous negative learning

experiences, lack of motivation, negative attitudes and misconceptions about English and its speakers, personality traits, self-factors, negative self-perception and communication apprehension. Though originating in the learners themselves, these sources were often triggered by in-class and out-of-class anxiety sources.

With regard to the in-class sources of LA in the study, in-class social climate, ESL teacher-related factors, in-class speaking activities, the physical structure of the classroom and test-anxiety were identified as anxiety-inducing for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka. These factors are interrelated with learner-specific and out-of-class anxiety sources.

A crucial finding of this study is the discovery of the ESL learners' out-of-class LA sources. These include the university subculture, English language ideologies in society and socioeconomic factors. The detrimental practices of the university subculture, such as *ragging*, induced learners' LA by evoking their fear of negative evaluation and derision, intimidating both high-proficiency and low-proficiency English speakers from speaking up inside and outside the ESL classroom. English language ideologies in society, such as English proficiency and its associated extra-linguistic factors, speaking English to *show off*, the relationship between English, elitism, and power, and the hypocrisy of ESL teachers, triggered LA in high and low-proficiency learners in numerous ways.

The intricate and multifaceted nature of LA and the interrelatedness of its sources make LA a complex matter to address in the Sri Lankan context. Consequently, managing LA needs a holistic approach instead of addressing each source individually. These insights offer valuable guidance in developing a low-anxiety classroom model for ESL learners at state universities in Sri Lanka.

7.2.2 Research question two

The second research question concerned the anxiety-management strategies for ESL learners in Sri Lankan state universities. The teacher-participants and student-participants reported a wide range of strategies to manage the learner-specific and in-class sources of LA. According to the study participants, the most effective strategies included creating opportunities to speak with people of other nationalities and ethnicities; creating a non-judgmental, safe zone in the ESL classroom for speaking English; employing appropriate feedback procedures; making judicious use of L1 in the ESL classroom; and implementing pair/group activities that have a clear purpose (see Table 5.1 for Strategies for Managing Sources of LA). These strategies largely reflect TP-informed approaches. However, the findings indicated that they are less effective in managing sources of anxiety that originate outside the classroom. To this end, the study employed strategies informed by PP. Eliciting learners' PEs is the key PP strategy recommended in this study. The integration of strategies informed by TP and PP successfully addresses the learner-specific, in-class and out-of-class LA sources and develops learners' resilience, which is crucial if they wish to thrive as English speakers in a country where the English language occupies a very complicated position.

7.3 Significance and Implications

The study has significance with several practical implications for various stakeholders, including policymakers, curriculum planners, university authorities, ESL teachers, and researchers, both in Sri Lanka and in settings resembling Sri Lanka.

The study demonstrated that LA is a multifaceted phenomenon subject to factors related to learners, ESL classrooms, and society outside the classroom. These sources are inextricably interrelated. Therefore, instead of trying to respond to LA by addressing different sources of anxiety separately, a holistic approach that can address all three different source

types must be employed to successfully manage learners' LA. The developed TP-PP integrated low-anxiety classroom model can effectively address all three source types of LA. Therefore, these findings and the model have significant implications for teachers and researchers in Sri Lanka to mitigate tertiary ESL learners' LA. Beyond Sri Lanka, researchers and teachers may find the approach to integrating TP and PP coherently useful for addressing distinct LA sources in their specific contexts.

Creating smaller ESL classes with mixed-ability learners can help minimise learners' LA. In Sri Lanka, decisions about the number of learners allocated per ESL class and the composition of the learners are often made collaboratively by the Heads of Departments and Deans of Faculties. Therefore, academic leaders and administrators can consider forming smaller classes when planning to create a conducive environment for ESL learners to speak English.

The study also has implications for university authorities who need to consider the classroom layout and design when allocating classroom space for ESL lessons. Most ESL classrooms in state universities in Sri Lanka are anxiety-provoking. Sometimes, due to the large number of learners, university auditoriums are used for ESL lessons, with a lot of fixed furniture. Furthermore, most classrooms are laid out in a teacher-centred manner. This classroom layout establishes the teacher's role as authoritative and discourages interactions between the teacher and learners and among learners. Such classroom features and layouts have been found to be stressful, leading to learners' LA. The study also indicated the importance of providing learners with an enclosed classroom space with covered doors and windows where they can practise their speaking skills without the fear of being negatively evaluated. This is because learners are less anxious when the university community outside of the ESL classroom cannot witness what is happening inside the classroom. Consequently,

learners feel secure and perceive the ESL classroom as a safe, relaxed, and non-threatening environment where they can speak English.

ESL learners' lack of motivation induces their LA. This lack of motivation resulted from the disparity between the perceptions of learners and teachers about the learners' target needs. The key to a successful ESL course lies in striking a satisfactory compromise between different stakeholders; these stakeholders include teachers, learners, course designers, university authorities and potential employers. When learners realise that their needs are being addressed, they are more likely to be motivated, which, in turn, will lead to reduced LA. Therefore, the study has significant implications as it emphasises the importance of undertaking a periodic target situation analysis and revising the ESL syllabus of state universities accordingly.

The study has implications for the relevant university authorities and the government of Sri Lanka to provide in-service teacher training to all newly recruited teachers and ongoing professional development for permanent ESL teachers. Teachers recruited on a temporary or casual basis and appointed as 'instructors' or 'demonstrators' are not eligible to participate in mandatory teacher training courses offered by Sri Lankan universities. Despite their long years of experience in teaching ESL to university students, these teachers do not receive any form of training, which can adversely affect their teaching practices (e.g., error-correction procedures) and ultimately create an unhealthy classroom environment.

By relating ESL in the classroom to broader sociocultural factors such as language ideologies, this study contributes to discussions of the role of English education in raising awareness of educators, students and the public concerning language attitudes towards World Englishes, the huge impact of such attitudes on student learning and possibilities of critically engaging with these attitudes and their impact. These discussions are not only necessary for

managing LA in the classroom but also for opening education up to shaping social and cultural realities.

7.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions in 2021, all data for the study were collected online. As explained in Chapter 3, the online format of the data collection process introduced an additional layer of complication to the entire process and caused unforeseeable methodological limitations in conducting observations. Although the study found that both in-class and out-of-class sources influence the social climate in the physical ESL classroom, observing how these sources shape the classroom environment online was difficult. Also, the reluctance of some student-participants in FG interviews and observations to turn their cameras on hindered the researcher's ability to observe their non-verbal behaviour. Despite the various measures implemented by the researcher to manage some of these limitations, future research should prioritise the in-person approach to minimise the impact of limitations.

Although the online, open-ended questionnaire of the study was administered to ESL teachers in all the state universities in Sri Lanka, only three universities were selected as the basis for the three other data collection instruments used in this study: FGs, in-depth interviews, and observations. Future research drawing on more universities would help validate the findings of this study. Furthermore, the universities selected mainly had Sinhalese students enrolled. These students comprise the majority of the country's population. Tamil and Muslim students were only minimally represented. Similarly, only 25% of the study's focus groups included Tamil and Muslim students. From the sample of nine teachers who participated in the in-depth interviews, there was only one Tamil teacher and no Muslim teacher. Given differences in attitudes towards English between majority and minority members of the population, it is possible that Tamil and Muslim teachers' and

learners' experiences and perceptions of English-speaking anxiety may differ as well. Therefore, future studies should consider recruiting participants who adequately represent Sinhalese, Tamil and Muslim ethnicities to explore differences in their attitudes and experiences towards English, English-speaking, LA and related areas. In addition, future studies could explore whether LA is confined primarily to state universities or is a common phenomenon across universities in Sri Lanka, irrespective of the learners' economic background, English proficiency, and the type of university (private or state-owned).

The study conducted six one-off observations of ESL classrooms at three state universities in Sri Lanka. Future research is recommended to undertake longitudinal observation sessions to capture more comprehensive data on ESL learners' LA.

The study identified a discrepancy between the perceptions of learners and teachers regarding the learners' target needs. However, investigating these discrepancies in detail was beyond the scope of this study. Future studies are recommended to undertake an in-depth analysis of these disparities so that university curricula and ESL syllabuses can be adapted and revised to minimise those differences. This is an important step since when learners feel their needs are addressed, their motivation improves, and their LA is likely to be reduced, contributing to better ESL learning outcomes.

Due to time constraints, this study was unable to test the low-anxiety classroom model in an actual ESL classroom at a state university in Sri Lanka. Therefore, future studies may evaluate the efficacy of this model in different universities in Sri Lanka and beyond.

In recent years, there has been a shift in psychology from focusing solely on negative emotions to also understanding the nature and function of PEs. In the context of SLA, the role of PEs has gained recognition due to the advancements in PP. Enjoyment, a significant component of the emotions surrounding joy, may hold the key to unlocking the language

learning potential of adults and children alike (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014). Therefore, further research could explore ways to enhance the enjoyment of learning and examine how individual interpretations of events within specific cultural contexts may impact the experience, potentially inducing enjoyment or provoking anxiety.

7.5 Summary

This chapter has presented answers to the two research questions concerning the sources of Sri Lankan tertiary ESL learners' LA and strategies for managing it. The sources are multifaceted, ranging from those that originate in the learners themselves (i.e., learner-specific), to those that are related to classroom factors (i.e., in-class), and those that arise from socioeconomic and cultural factors beyond the ESL classroom (i.e., out-of-class). These three source types are inextricably interrelated, requiring an integrated approach to address them successfully. Strategies for addressing these sources are myriad, reflecting either TP or PP. To address the three intertwined sources of LA coherently and effectively, the study drew on and integrated both TP and PP to develop a low-anxiety classroom model involving four specific features in relation to learners, teachers, and ESL classrooms.

The study sheds valuable light on the LA that impairs ESL learning in Sri Lanka and offers a model that should contribute to addressing LA in a comprehensive way. The model generated provides a relaxed, safe, and supportive environment in which ESL learners can practise speaking English, which, in turn, can help enhance their English-speaking skills and chances of employability after graduation.

References

Abeywickrama, K. R. W. K. H. (2019). *Teacher engagement and professional development initiatives: A case study of university ESL teachers in Sri Lanka.* [PhD Thesis, Deakin University]. 10536/DRO/DU:30135549

Achmad, D., & Yusuf, Y. Q. (2014). Observing pair-work task in an English speaking class. *International Journal of Instruction*, *7*(1), 151-164.

Aida, Y. (1994). Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's construct of foreign language anxiety: The case of students of Japanese. *The Modern Language Journal*, *78*, 155-168.

Akechi, H., Senju, A., Uibo, H., Kikuchi, Y., Hasegawa, T., & Hietanen, J. K. (2013). Attention to eye contact in the West and East: Autonomic responses and evaluative ratings. *PLOS ONE*, *8*(3), e59312. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0059312

Alek, A., & Nguyen, V. T. (2023). Verbal phatic expressions in EFL student teachers' classroom interaction. *Journal of Language Learning and Assessment*, *1*(1), 44-56. https://e-journal.naifaderu.org/index.php/jlla/article/view/71/14

Almutlaq, S., & Etherington, S. (2018). Investigating L2 learners' writing self-efficacy as a complex dynamic system. *International Journal of English Language Education*, *6*, 155-177.

Arnold, J., & Brown, H. D. (1999). A map of the terrain. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 1-10). Cambridge University Press.

Arta, B. (2018). Multiple studies: The influence of collaborative learning approach on Indonesian secondary high school students' English-speaking skill. *English Language Teaching Educational Journal*, *1*(3), 149-160.

Ary, D., Jacobs, C., L., & Razavieh, A. (2002). *Introduction to research in education* (6th ed.). Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Aslan, E., & Thompson, A. S. (2021). The interplay between learner beliefs and foreign language anxiety: Insights from the Turkish EFL context. *The Language Learning Journal*, *49*(2), 189-202. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2018.1540649

Attanayake, A. (2019). *Post-colonial curriculum practices in South Asia: Building confidence to speak English*. Routledge.

Attanayake, A. U. (2018). *Undergraduate ELT in Sri Lanka: Policy, practice and perspectives for South Asia*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: An analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, *1*(3), 385-405.

Aydın, S. (2008). An investigation on the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among Turkish EFL learners. *Asian EFL Journal*, 421-444.

Bacon, S. M., & Finnemann, M. D. (1990). A study of the attitudes, motives, and strategies of university foreign language students and their disposition to authentic oral and written input. *The Modern Language Journal*, *74*, 459-473.

Bailey, K. M. (Ed.). (1983). *Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language learning: Looking at and through the diary studies*. Newbury House.

Bailey, P., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Daley, C. E. (2003). Foreign language anxiety and student attrition. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, *7*(3), 304-308.

Bakar, F., & Kumar, V. (2019). The use of humour in teaching and learning in higher education classrooms: Lecturers' perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *40*, 15-25. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2019.04.006

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Bandura, A., Cioffi, D., Taylor, C. B., & Brouillard, M. E. (1988). Perceived self-efficacy in coping with cognitive stressors and opioid activation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *55*, 479-488. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.55.3.479

Bartley-Heterick, V. J. (2021). *Australian educators' perspectives of gifted education* [PhD thesis, University of New England]. Research UNE. https://rune.une.edu.au/web/handle/1959.11/56749

Beatty, P. C., & Willis, G. B. (2007). Research synthesis: The practice of cognitive interviewing. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *71*(2), 287– 311.

Blackstone, A. (2012). *Sociological inquiry principles:Qualitative and quantitative methods* (Vol. 1.0). University of Maine.

Borg, S. (2003). Teacher cognition in language teaching: A review of research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do. *Language Teaching*, *36*(2), 81-109. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444803001903

Borg, S. (2015). *Teacher cognition and language education: Research and practice*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

Boudreau, C., MacIntyre, P., & Dewaele, J. M. (2018). Enjoyment and anxiety in second language communication: An idiodynamic approach. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *8*(1), 149–170. https://doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2018.8.1.7

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Sage.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In B. Smith & A. C. Sparkes (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise* (pp. 191-205). Routledge.

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Burns, A., & Knox, J. S. (2011). Classrooms as complex adaptive systems: A relational model. *Tesl-Ej*, *15*(1), 1-25.

Butzkamm, W. (2003). We only learn language once. The role of the mother tongue in FL classrooms: Death of a dogma. *Language Learning Journal*, *28*(1), 29-39.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2005a). Dilemmas in planning English/vernacular relations in post-colonial communities. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *9*(3), 418-447.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2005b). *Reclaiming the local in language policy and practice*. Routledge.

Carver, C. S., Lawrence, J. W., & Scheier, M. F. (1999). Self-discrepancies and affect: Incorporating the role of feared selves. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, *25*(7), 783-792.

Central Bank of Sri Lanka. (2023). *Sri Lanka socio-economic data 2023*. (978-624-5917-33-4). Colombo: Statistics Department of Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Retrieved from https://www.cbsl.gov.lk/sites/default/files/cbslweb_documents/publications/otherpub/publication_sri lanka_socio_economic_data_folder_2023 e.pdf

Chahrazad, M.-M., & Kamel, K. (2022). Dealing with foreign language speaking anxiety: What every language teacher should know. *Training, Language and Culture*, *6*(1), 20-32.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage.

Chastain, K. D. (1975). Affective and ability factors in second-language acquisition. *Language Learning*, *25*, 153-161.

Cheng, L. (2008). The key to success: English language testing in China. *Language Testing*, *25*, 15-37.

Cheng, Y., Horwitz, E. K., & Schallert, D. L. (1999). Language anxiety: Differentiating writing and speaking components. *Language Learning*, *49*(3), 417-446. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.00095

Clark, A., Holland, C., Katz, J., & Peace, S. (2009). Learning to see: lessons from a participatory observation research project in public spaces. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *12*(4), 345– 360.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2017). *Research methods in education*. Taylor & Francis Group.

Cohen, L., Morrison, K., & Manion, L. (2000). *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). Routledge Falmer.

Cohen, Y., & Norst, M. J. (1989). Fear, dependence and loss of self-esteem: Affective barriers in second language learning among adults. *RELC Journal*, *20*, 61-77.

Cooksey, R. W. (2007). *Illustrating statistical procedures: For business, behavioural and social science research*. Tilde University Press.

Cooper, D. C., & Schindler, P. S. (2001). *Business research methods* (7th ed.). McGraw--Hill.

Cope Powell, J. A. (1991). Foreign language classroom anxiety: Institutional responses. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classrrom implications* (pp. 169-176). Prentice Hall.

Copland, F., & Neokleous, G. (2011). L1 to teach L2: Complexities and contradictions. *ELT Journal*, *65*, 270-280.

Coulombe, D. (2000). *Anxiety and beliefs of French-as-a-second language learners at the university level.* [PhD Thesis, University of Laval].

Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Creswell, J., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory Into Practice*, *39*(3), 124-130. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2

Crookall, D., & Oxford, R. (1991). Dealing with anxiety: Some practical activities for language learners and teacher trainees. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 141-150). Prentice-Hall.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. HarperCollins e-books.

Cummins, J. (2007). Rethinking monolingual instructional strategies in multilingual classrooms. *Canadian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *10*(2), 221-240.

Curtis, B. L. (2019). Motivating students to learn: What works? Intrinsic or extrinsic motivation? In G. Geng, P. Smith, P. Black, Yoshi Budd, & L. Disney (Eds.), *Reflective practice in teaching: Pre-service teachers and the lens of life experience* (pp. 73-77). Springer.

Czimmermann, E., & Piniel, K. (2017). Advanced language learners' experiences of flow in the Hungarian EFL classroom. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety* (pp. 193-214). Multilingual Matters.

Daly, J. (1991). Understanding communication apprehension: An introduction for language educators. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*. Prentice Hall.

Daubney, M., Dewaele, J. M., & Gkonou, C. (2017). Introduction. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 1-7). Multilingual matters.

Deiter, R. (2000). The use of humor as a teaching tool in the college classroom. *NACTA Journal*, *44*(2), 20-28. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43765313

Denscombe, M. (2003). *The good research guide: For small-scale social research* (2nd ed.). Open University Press.

Denscombe, M. (2009). Item non-response rates: A comparison of online and paper questionnaires. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *12*(4), 281–291.

Denscombe, M. (2010). *The good research guide: For small-scale social research* (4th ed.). Open University Press.

Denzin, N. (1978). Sociological methods: Critical reflections and the logic of naturalistic inquiry. In N. Denzin (Ed.), *Sociological methods: A source book* (pp. 1-29). McGraw-Hill.

Department of Census & Statistics. (2012). *Census of population and housing 2012 - final report.* Battaramulla: Department of Census and Statistics. Retrieved from http://www.statistics.gov.lk/Population/StaticalInformation/CPH2011/CensusPopulationHousing2012-FinalReport

Dewaele, J. M. (2002). Psychological and sociodemographic correlates of communicative anxiety in L2 and L3 production. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, *6*(1), 23-38. https://doi.org/10.1177/13670069020060010201

Dewaele, J. M. (2022). Enjoyment. In S. Li, P. Hiver, & M. Papi (Eds.), *The Routledge handbook of second language acquisition and individual differences* (pp. 190-206). Taylor & Francis.

Dewaele, J. M., & Al-Saraj, T. M. (2013). Foreign language anxiety: Some conceptual and methodological issues. *Journal of Psychology*, *68*(3), 71-78. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137032829_4

Dewaele, J. M., Chen, X., Padilla, A. M., & Lake, J. (2019). The flowering of positive psychology in foreign language teaching and acquisition research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *10*, 21-28. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02128

Dewaele, J. M., & Dewaele, L. (2017). The dynamic interactions in foreign language classroom anxiety and foreign language enjoyment of pupils aged 12 to 18: A pseudo-

longitudinal investigation. *Journal of the European Second Language Association*, *1*(1), 12-22.

Dewaele, J. M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). The two faces of Janus? Anxiety and enjoyment in the foreign language classroom. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *4*(2), 237-274.

Dewaele, J. M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2022). Do flow, enjoyment and anxiety emerge equally in English foreign language classrooms as in other foreign language classrooms? *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, *22*, 156-180.

Dewaele, J. M., Magdalena, A. F., & Saito, K. (2019). The effect of perception of teacher characteristics on Spanish EFL learners' anxiety and enjoyment. *The Modern Language Journal*, *103*(2), 412-427. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12555

Dewaele, J. M., Petrides, K. V., & Furnham, A. (2008). Effects of trait emotional intelligence and sociobiographical variables on communicative anxiety and foreign language anxiety among adult multilinguals: A review and empirical investigation. *Language Learning*, *58*(4), 911-960.

Dhanapala, R. M. (2021). *English language teaching programmes in Sri Lankan universities: Learner perspectives* [PhD Thesis]. University of Kelaniya. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/364210841_English_Language_Teaching_Programmes in_Sri_Lankan_Universities_Learner_Perspectives

Dissanayake, K. M., & Harun, R. N. S. R. (2012). Theory and practice of EAP in the Sri Lankan context. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *66*, 106-116.

Dolean, D. D. (2016). The effects of teaching songs during foreign language classes on students' foreign language anxiety. *Language Teaching Research*, *20*(5), 638-653.

Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press

Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9-42). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/doi:10.21832/9781847691293-003

Dörnyei, Z., & Kormos, J. (2000). The role of individual and social variables in oral task performance. *Language Teaching Research*, *4*(3), 275-300.

Effiong, O. (2016). Getting them speaking: Classroom social factors and foreign language anxiety. *Tesol Journal*, *7*(1), 132-161.

Elkhafaifi, H. (2005). Listening comprehension and anxiety in the Arabic language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, *89*, 206-220. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00275.x

Ellis, R. (2008). Learner beliefs and language learning. *Asian EFL Journal*, *10*(4), 7-25.

Ennis, C. D., & Chen, S. (2012). Interviews and focus groups. In K. Armour & D. Macdonald (Eds.), *Research methods in physical education and youth sport* Routledge.

Ewald, J. D. (2007). Foreign language learning anxiety in upper-level classes: Involving students as researchers. *Foreign Language Annals*, *40*(1), 122-142. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2007.tb02857.x

Eysenck, M. W. (1979). Anxiety, learning and memory: A reconceptualization. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *13*(4), 363-385.

Farook, A. H. A., & Mohamed, R. N. G. (2020). Students' lack of interest in learning GCE advanced level (A/L) general English: Factors and remedies. A survey research based on GCE advanced level students of T/MU/Al Hilal Central College, Mutur, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka. *American Scientific Research Journal for Engineering, Technology, and Sciences (ASRJETS)*, *71*(1), 741-745.

Fathi, J., & Mohammaddokht, F. (2021). Foreign language enjoyment and anxiety as the correlates of the ideal L2 self in the English as a foreign language context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 1-11.

Fonseca-Mora, M. C., & Machancoses, F. H. (2016). Music and language learning: Emotions and engaging memory pathways. In P. D. MacIntyre, T. S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA* (pp. 359-373). Multilingual Matters.

Foss, K. A., & Reitzel, A. C. (1991). A relational model for managing second language anxiety. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 129-140). Prentice-Hall.

Franks, P. H. (2000). Silence/listening and intercultural differences. Twenty-First Annual International Listening Association Convention, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *American Psychologist*, *56*, 218-226. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218

Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). The value of positive emotions: The emerging science of positive psychology is coming to understand why it's good to feel good. *American Scientist*, *91*(4), 330-335. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27858244

Fredrickson, B. L. (2004). The broaden–and–build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences*, *359*(1449), 1367-1377.

Fredrickson, B. L. (2006). The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. In M. Csikszentmihalyi, & I. S. Csikszentmihalyi (Eds.), *A life worth living: Contributions to positive psychology.* (pp. 85-103). Oxford University Press.

Fredrickson, B. L., Cohn, M. A., Coffey, K. A., Pek, J., & Finkel, S. M. (2008). Open hearts build lives: positive emotions, induced through loving-kindness meditation, build consequential personal resources. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *95*(5), 1045-1062. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0013262

Fresacher, C. (2016). Why and how to use positive psychology activities in the second language classroom. In P. D. MacIntyre, T.S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA* (pp. 344-358). Multilingual Matters.

Fushino, K. (2010). Causal relationships between communication confidence, beliefs about group work, and willingness to communicate in foreign language group work. *TESOL Quarterly*, *44*(4), 700-724. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27896760

Galante, A. (2018). Drama for L2 speaking and language anxiety: Evidence from Brazilian EFL learners. *RELC Journal*, *49*(3), 273-289. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688217746205

García, O., & Kleyn, T. (2016). *Translanguaging with multilingual students: Learning from classroom moments*. Routledge.

Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold.

Gardner, R. C., & MacIntyre, P. D. (1993). A student's contributions to second-language learning. Part II: Affective variables. *Language Teaching*, *26*(1), 1-11.

Gardner, R. C., Moorcroft, R., & MacIntyre, P. D. (1987). *The role of anxiety in second language performance of language dropouts.* University of Western Ontario.

Gkonou, C., Dewaele, J. M., & Daubney, M. (2017). Conclusion. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 217-223). Multilingual matters.

Gregersen, T. S. (2003). To err is human: A reminder to teachers of language-anxious students. *Foreign Language Annals*, *36*(1), 25-32. https://doi.org/doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2003.tb01929.x

Gregersen, T. S. (2005). Nonverbal cues: Clues to the detection of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, *38*(3), 388-400.

Gregersen, T. S. (2007). Language learning beyond words: Incorporating body language into classroom activities. *Reflections on English Language Teaching*, *6*(1), 51-64.

Gregersen, T. S. (2020). Dynamic properties of language anxiety. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *10*(1), 67-87. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.14746/ssllt.2020.10.1.4

Gregersen, T. S., & Horwitz, E. K. (2002). Language learning and perfectionism: Anxious and non-anxious language learners' reactions to their own oral performance. *The Modern Language Journal*, *86*(4), 562-570. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00161

Gregersen, T. S., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2014). *Capitalizing on language learners' individuality: From premise to practice*. Multilingual Matters.

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D., & Buck, R. (2021). Using character strengths to address English writing anxiety. *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition*, *7*(2), 11-35. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.31261/TAPSLA.8431

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D., & Mercer, S. (2016a). Introduction. In P. D. MacIntyre, T. S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA* (pp. 1-9). Multilingual Matters.

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D., & Meza, M. D. (2014). The motion of emotion: Idiodynamic case studies of learners' foreign language anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, *98*(2), 574-588.

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D., & Meza, M. D. (2016b). Positive psychology exercises build social capital for language learners: Preliminary evidence. In P. D. MacIntyre, T. S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA*. Multilingual Matters.

Gregersen, T. S., MacIntyre, P. D., & Olson, T. (2017). Do you see what I feel? An idiodynamic assessment of expert and peer's reading of nonverbal language anxiety cues. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 110-134). Multilingual Matters.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage.

Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2013). *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research*. Sage.

Guiora, A. Z. (1983). Introduction: An epistemology for the language sciences. *Lang. Learn.*, *33*, 6-11.

Guiora, A. Z., Beit-Hallahmi, B., Brannon, R. C. L., Dull, C. Y., & Scovel, T. (1972). The effects of experimentally induced changes in ego states on pronunciation ability in a second language: An exploratory study. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, *13*(5), 421-428. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-440X(72)90083-1

Gunawardana, A., & Karunarathma, J. (2017). Teacher research: Remedy for failures in English language teaching in Sri Lanka. International Symposium of Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya.

Gunesekera, M. (2005). *The postcolonial identity of Sri Lankan English*. Katha Publishers.

Ha, T. Y. N., Nguyen, T. B. N., Nguyen, N. L. D., & Tran, T. N. (2022). The effects of collaborative learning on young ESL learners' L2 anxiety and speaking performance. *International Journal of Asian Education*, *3*(2), 125-137.

Hakim, B. M. (2019). A study of language anxiety among English language learners in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal*, *10*(1), 64-72. https://doi.org/https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no1.6

Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of English language teaching* (4th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Harrell, M. C., & Bradley, M. A. (2009). *Data collection methods: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Tech. Rep. No. ADA512853).* https://apps.dtic.mil/docs/citations/ADA512853

Hasan, M., Islam, A. S., & Shuchi, I. J. (2020). Translanguaging as an instructional strategy in adult ESL classrooms. *ELT Echo Journal of English Language Teaching in Foreign Language Context*, *5*, 93-107.

Helgesen, M. (2016). Happiness in ESL/EFL: Bringing positive psychology to the classroom. In P. D. MacIntyre, T. S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA* (pp. 305-323). Multilingual Matters.

Herath, S. (2015). Language policy, ethnic tensions and linguistic rights in post war Sri Lanka. *Language Policy*, *14*(3), 245-261. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-014-9339-6

Higgins, E. T. (1987). Self-discrepancy: A theory relating self and affect. *Psychological Review*, *94*(3), 319-340.

Higgins, E. T. (1998). Promotion and prevention: Regulatory focus as a motivational principle. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (Vol. 30, pp. 1-46). Academic Press. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60381-0

Hiver, P., & Papi, M. (2019). Complexity theory and L2 motivation. In M. Lamb, K. Csizér, A. Henry, & S. Ryan (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of motivation for language learning* (pp. 117–137). Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28380-3_6

Hochschild, J. L. (2009). Conducting intensive interviews and elite interviews. In *Workshop on interdisciplinary standards for systematic qualitative research* (pp. 124-127). National Science Foundation Washington, DC. http:// scholar.harvard.edu/jlhochschild/publications/conducting-- intensive-interviews--and-elite-- interviews

Hofstede, G. (1986). Cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *10*(3), 301-320. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/0147-1767(86)90015-5

Holloway, I., & Todres, L. (2003). The status of method: flexibility, consistency and coherence. *Qualitative Research*, *3*(3), 345-357.

Horwitz, E. K. (1987). Surveying student beliefs about language learning. In A. Wenden, & J. Rubin (Eds.), *Learner strategies in language learning* (pp. 119-129). Prentice Hall.

Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal*, *72*(3), 283-294.

Horwitz, E. K. (1996). Even teachers get the blues: Recognizing and alleviating language teachers' feelings of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, *29*(3), 365-372.

Horwitz, E. K. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *21*, 112-126.

Horwitz, E. K. (2010). Foreign and second language anxiety. *Language Teaching*, *43*(2), 154-167. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144480999036X

Horwitz, E. K. (2016). Factor structure of the foreign language classroom anxiety scale: Comment on Park (2014). *Psychological Reports*, *119*(1), 71-76. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033294116653368

Horwitz, E. K. (2017). On the misreading of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and the need to balance anxiety research and the experiences of anxious language learners. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 31-47). Multilingual Matters.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, *70*(2), 125-132. https://www.jstor.org/stable/327317

Horwitz, E. K., & Young, D. J. (Eds.). (1991). *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*. Prentice Hall.

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for specific purposes*. Cambridge University Press.

Jayasuriya, J. (1969). *Education in Ceylon before and after Independence: 1939-1968* (1st ed.). Associated Educational Publishers.

Jayawardena, K. (2009). *Nobodies to somebodies: The rise of the colonial bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka*. Social Scientists' Association.

Jenkins, J. (2006). Current perspectives on teaching World Englishes and English as a lingua franca. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 157-181. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/40264515

Jiang, Y., & Dewaele, J. M. (2019). Language anxiety in Chinese dialects and Putonghua among college students in mainland China: The effects of sociobiographical and linguistic variables. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *40*(4), 289-303.

Jiang, Y., & Dewaele, J. M. (2020). The predictive power of sociobiographical and language variables on foreign language anxiety of Chinese university students. *System*, *89*, 102207.

Jin, Y., Dewaele, J. M., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2021). Reducing anxiety in the foreign language classroom: A positive psychology approach. *System*, *101*, 102604.

Jin, Y., Zhang, L. J., & MacIntyre, P. D. (2020). Contracting students for the reduction of foreign language classroom anxiety: An approach nurturing positive mindsets and behaviours. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*, 1-11.

Jin, Y. X., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2018). The effect of positive orientation and perceived social support on foreign language classroom anxiety. *System*, *74*, 149-157.

Jones, S. (2016). *Phatic competence: How L2 users understand and engage in phatic communion* [MA Thesis, University of Toronto]. Canada.

Kandiah, T. (1984). "Kaduva": Power and the English language weapon in Sri Lanka. In P. C. Thome & A. Halpe (Eds.), *Honouring EFC Ludowyk* (pp. 117-154). Tisara Prakashakayo.

Karunaratne, I. M. (2003, November 28-30). *Teaching English in urban Sri Lanka: Some pedagogical issues.* 9th International Conference on Sri Lanka Studies Matara, Sri Lanka, Matara.

Khajavy, G. H., MacIntyre, P. D., & Barabadi, E. (2018). Role of the emotions and classroom environment in willingness to communicate: Applying doubly latent multilevel analysis in second language acquisition research. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *40*(3), 605-624.

Khan, S. M. (2015). Influence of speech anxiety on oral communication skills among ESL/EFL learners. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, *6*(6), 49-53.

Kim, S. Y. (1998). *Affective experiences of Korean college students in different instructional contexts: Anxiety and motivation in reading and conversation courses* [PhD Thesis, University of Texas]. Austin. https://login.ezproxy.une.edu.au/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/affective-experiences-korean-college-students/docview/304459313/se-2

Kim, S. Y. (2009). Questioning the stability of foreign language classroom anxiety and motivation across different classroom contexts. *Foreign Language Annals*, *42*(1), 138-157.

Kim, T.-Y., & Kim, Y.-K. (2014). A structural model for perceptual learning styles, the ideal L2 self, motivated behavior, and English proficiency. *System*, *46*, 14-27.

King, J., & Smith, L. (2017). Social anxiety and silence in Japan's tertiary foreign language classrooms. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety* (pp. 91-109). Multilingual Matters.

Kitano, K. (2001). Anxiety in the college Japanese language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, *85*(4), 549-566. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00125

Koch, A. S., & Terrell, T. D. (1991). Affective reactions of foreign language students to Natural Approach activities and teaching techniques. In E. K. Horwitz, & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 109-126). Prentice-Hall.

Kondo, D. S., & Ying-Ling, Y. (2004). Strategies for coping with language anxiety: The case of students of English in Japan. *ELT Journal*, *58*(3), 258-265.

Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press Inc.

Krashen, S. (2018, November 9-11). *Down with forced speech* 27th International Symposium on English Teaching (English Teachers' Association/ROC), Taipei.

Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). TESOL methods: Changing tracks, challenging trends. *TESOL Quarterly*, *40*(1), 59-81. https://doi.org/10.2307/40264511

Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews. An introduction to qualitative research interviewing.* Sage.

Lamb, M. (2012). A self system perspective on young adolescents' motivation to learn English in urban and rural settings. *Language Learning*, *62*(4), 997-1023.

Lapadat, J. C., & Lindsay, A. C. (1999). Transcription in research and practice: From standardization of technique to interpretive positionings. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *5*(1), 64-86.

Larsen-Freeman, D. (2019). On language learner agency: A complex dynamic systems theory perspective. *The Modern Language Journal*, *103*, 61–79. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12536

Lascotte, D. K., & Tarone, E. (2022). Channeling voices to improve L2 English intelligibility. *The Modern Language Journal*, *106*(4), 744-763. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12812

Leary, M. R. (2007). Motivational and emotional aspects of the self. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *58*, 317-344.

Lekamwasam, S., Rodrigo, M., Wickramathilake, M., Wijesinghe, C., Wijerathne, G., de Silva, A., . . . Perera, C. (2015). Preventing ragging: Outcome of an integrated programme in a medical faculty in SriLanka. *Indian Journal of Medical Ethics*. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281552924_Preventing_ragging_outcome_of_an_integrated_programme_in_a_medical_faculty_in_Sri_Lanka

Levine, G. S. (2014). Principles for code choice in the foreign language classroom: A focus on grammaring. *Language Teaching*, *47*(3), 332-348. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444811000498

Liao, Y., & Liang, J. (2021). Foreign language anxiety among Chinese graduate students in the United States: A qualitative multi-case study. *Journal of Research in Education*, *30*(2), 35-68.

Lim, L. (2013). Kaduva of privileged power, instrument of rural empowerment? In L. Wee, L. Lim, & R. B. H. Goh (Eds.), *The Politics of English* (pp. 61-80). John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Sage Publications.

Little, A. W., Shojo, M., Sonnadara, U., & Aturupane, H. (2019). Teaching English as a second language in Sri Lankan primary schools: Opportunity and pedagogy. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *32*(2), 113-127.

Liu, M. (2006). Anxiety in Chinese EFL students at different proficiency levels. *System*, *34*(3), 301-316.

Liu, M. (2007). Anxiety in oral English classrooms: A case study in China. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, *3*(1), 119-137. https://doi.org/10.25170/ijelt.v3i1.132

Liu, M., & Hong, M. (2021). English language classroom anxiety and enjoyment in Chinese young learners. *Sage Open*, *11*(4). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211047550

Liu, M., & Hu, Y. (2009). Reading anxiety in EFL classrooms: A case study. Proceedings of the 3rd International Symposium on Teaching English at Tertiary level, Hong Kong: Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

Liu, M., & Huang, W. (2011). An exploration of foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation. *Education Research International*, *2011*, 493167. https://doi.org/10.1155/2011/493167

Liyanage, I. (2021). English language education policy in Sri Lanka: Historical developments, current realities and future challenges. In E. L. Low, & A. Pakir (Eds.), *English in East and South Asia* (1st ed., pp. 90-104). Routledge.

Lloyd, M. (1998). Ban on English-language teaching haunts college students in Sri Lanka. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *45*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Marion-Lloyd/publication/304578846_Ban_on_English-Language_Teaching_Haunts_College_Students_in_Sri_Lanka/links/5773d7a608aead7ba06e58a0/Ban-on-English-Language-Teaching-Haunts-College-Students-in-Sri-Lanka.pdf

Lo Bianco, J. (2011). A friendly knife? English in the context of Sri Lankan language planning. In L. Farrell, U. N. Singh, & R. A. Giri (Eds.), *English language education in South Asia: From policy to pedagogy* (pp. 36-60). New Delhi Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd.

Lo Bianco, J. (2013). Innovation in Language Policy and Planning: Ties to English Language Education. In K. Hyland & L. L. C. Wong (Eds.), *Innovation and Change in English Language Education* (pp. 139-154). Taylor & Francis. http://www.tandfebooks.com/isbn/9780203362716

Lopez, S. J., & Snyder, C. R. (2009). *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Lund, R. J. (1991). A comparison of second language listening and reading comprehension. *The Modern Language Journal*, *75*, 196-204. https://doi.org/10.2307/328827

Luo, H. (2012). Sources of foreign language anxiety: Towards a four-dimensional model. *Contemporary Foreign Language Studies*, *12*, 49-61.

Luo, H. (2013). Foreign language anxiety: Past and future. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *36*(4), 442-464. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/cjal-2013-0030

Lynch, T. (1997). Nudge, nudge: teacher interventions in task-based learner talk. *ELT Journal*, *51*(4), 317-325. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/51.4.317

Macaro, E. (2005). Code switching in the L2 classroom: a communication and learning strategy. In E. Llurda (Ed.), *Non-native language teachers: Perceptions, challenges and contributions to the profession* (pp. 63-84). Springer.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1995). How does anxiety affect second language learning? A reply to Sparks and Ganschow. *The Modern Language Journal*, *79*(1), 90-99.

MacIntyre, P. D. (1999). Language anxiety: A review of the research for language teachers. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere* (pp. 24-45). McGraw-Hill Education.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2016). So far so good: An overview of positive psychology and its contributions to SLA. In D. Gabryś-Barker & D. Gałajda (Eds.), *Positive psychology perspectives on foreign language learning and teaching* (pp. 3-20). Springer.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2017). An overview of language anxiety research and trends in its development. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational Implications*. Multilingual Matters.

MacIntyre, P. D. (2021). Exploring applications of positive psychology in SLA. In K. Budzińska & O. Majchrzak (Eds.), *Positive psychology in second and foreign language education* (pp. 3-17). Springer. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-64444-4

MacIntyre, P. D., Baker, S. C., Clément, R., & Donovan, L. A. (2003). Sex and age effects on willingness to communicate, anxiety, perceived competence, and L2 motivation among junior high school French immersion students. *Language Learning*, *53*(S1), 137-166. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9922.00226

MacIntyre, P. D., & Charos, C. (1996). Personality, attitudes, and affect as predictors of second language communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, *15*(1), 3-26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927x960151001

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning*, *39*, 251-275.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991a). Methods and results in the study of anxiety in language learning: A review of the literature. *Language Learning*, *41*(1), 85-117.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991b). Investigating language class anxiety using the focussed essay technique. *The Modern Language Journal*, *75*, 296-304.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991c). Language anxiety: Its relationship to other anxieties and to processing in native and second languages. *Language Learning: A Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *41*(4), 513-534.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994). The subtle effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language. *Language Learning*, *44*, 283-305.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Gregersen, T. S. (2012). Emotions that facilitate language learning: The positive broadening emotional power of the imagination in language learning. *Studies of Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *2*(2), 193-213.

MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T. S., & Abel, E. (2015). The courage to be a language learner. *Humanising Language Teaching*, *17*(4). http://old.hltmag.co.uk/aug15/mart03.htm

MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T. S., & Mercer, S. (Eds.). (2016). *Positive psychology in SLA*. Multilingual Matters.

MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T. S., & Mercer, S. (2019). Setting an agenda for positive psychology in SLA: Theory, practice, and research. *The Modern Language Journal*, *103*(1), 262-274.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Mercer, S. (2014). Introducing positive psychology to SLA. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *4*, 153-172.

MacIntyre, P. D., Noels, K. A., & Clément, R. (1997). Biases in self-ratings of second language proficiency: The role of language anxiety. *Language Learning*, *47*, 265-287.

Magyar-Moe, J. L. (2015). Positive psychology in the classroom. In J. C. Wade, L. I. Marks, & R. D. Hetzel (Eds.), *Positive psychology on the college campus* (pp. 133-166). Oxford University Press.

Mahmoodzadeh, M., & Gkonou, C. (2015). A complex dynamic systems perspective on foreign language anxiety. *Konin Language Studies*, *3*(1), 89-108.

Mak, B. (2011). An exploration of speaking-in-class anxiety with Chinese ESL learners. *System*, *39*(2), 202-214. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2011.04.002

Mantle-Bromley, C. (1995). Positive attitudes and realistic beliefs: Links to proficiency. *The Modern Language Journal*, *79*(3), 372-386. https://doi.org/10.2307/329352

Marambe, K. N., Vermunt, J. D., & Boshuizen, H. P. A. (2012). A cross-cultural comparison of student learning patterns in higher education. *Higher Education*, *64*(3), 299-316. http://www.jstor.org/stable/23256465

Matsuda, S., & Gobel, P. (2001). Quiet apprehension: Reading and classroom anxieties. *JALT journal*, *23*, 227-247.

Matsuda, S., & Gobel, P. (2004). Anxiety and predictors of performance in the foreign language classroom. *System*, *32*, 21-36.

Maxwell, J. A. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review*, *62*(3), 279– 300.

McArdle, S., McGale, N., & Gaffney, P. (2012). A qualitative exploration of men's experiences of an integrated exercise/CBT mental health promotion programme. *International Journal of Men's Health*, *11*(3), 240-257.

McIntyre, N. A., Mainhard, M. T., & Klassen, R. M. (2017). Are you looking to teach? Cultural, temporal and dynamic insights into expert teacher gaze. *Learning and Instruction*, *49*, 41-53. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.12.005

Meyler, M. (2015). Sri Lankan English: An appropriate model for the teaching of English in Sri Lanka? In H. Coleman (Ed.), *Language and social cohesion in the developing world* (pp. 178-185). British Council & Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit(GIZ) GmbH.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Sage.

Miller, V. (2017). Phatic culture and the status quo: Reconsidering the purpose of social media activism. *Convergence*, *23*(3), 251-269.

Mills, J. (2001). Self-construction through conversation and narrative in interviews. *Educational Review*, *53*(1), 285-301.

Mori, Y. (1999). Epistemological beliefs and language learning beliefs: What do language learners believe about their learning? *Language Learning*, *49*(3), 377-415. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/0023-8333.00094

Murphey, T. (2014). Singing well-becoming: Student musical therapy case studies. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *4*(2), 205-235.

Na, Z. (2007). A study of high school students' English learning anxiety. *Asian EFL Journal*, *9*(3), 22–34. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/info:doi/

Nagahashi, T. L. (2007). Techniques for reducing foreign language anxiety: Results of a successful intervention study. *Akita University Basic Education Research Annual Report*, *9*, 56-63.

Navaz, A. M. M. (2012). *Lecturer-student interaction in English-medium science lectures: An investigation of perceptions and practice at a Sri Lankan university where English is a second language* [PhD Thesis, University of Nottingham]. http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/12995/1/LecturerStudent_Interaction_in_English_Medium_Science_Lectures.pdf

Navaz, A. M. M., & Banu, M. A. S. (2018, December 17-18). *Speaking anxiety: A pilot study among the ESL undergraduates at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka.* 8th International Symposium, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL), University Park, Oluvil, Sri Lanka.

Navaz, A. M. M., & Banu, M. A. S. (2019, November 27-28). A study on language anxiety among ESL undergraduates at the South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. 9th International Symposium, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Oluvil.

Neff, P., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2023). Humor strategies in the foreign language class. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, *17*(3), 567-579.

Nie, M., Lu, J., Zheng, Y., & Shen, Q. (2022). Facilitating learners' participation through classroom translanguaging: comparing a translanguaging classroom and a monolingual classroom in Chinese language teaching. *Applied Linguistics Review*. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2022-0136

Nunan, D. (2004). *Task-based language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Ohata, K. (2005). Potential Sources of Anxiety for Japanese Learners of English: Preliminary Case Interviews with Five Japanese College Students in the U.S. *Tesl-Ej*, *9*(3). http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1065859.pdf

Oishi, S., Diener, E., & Lucas, R. E. (2007). The optimum level of well-being: Can people be too happy? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *2*(4), 346-360. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1745-6916.2007.00048.x

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2006). Validity and qualitative research: An oxymoron? *Quality and Quantity*, *41*(2), 233– 249.

Oxford, R. L. (2016). Toward a psychology of well-being for language learners: The 'EMPATHICS' vision. In P. D. MacIntyre, T. S. Gregersen, & S. Mercer (Eds.), *Positive psychology in SLA* (pp. 10-88). Multilingual Matters.

Oxford, R. L. (2017). Anxious language learners can change their minds: Ideas and strategies from traditional psychology and positive psychology. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety* (pp. 161-197). Multilingual Matters.

Papi, M. (2010). The L2 motivational self system, L2 anxiety, and motivated behavior: A structural equation modeling approach. *System*, *38*(3), 467-479. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2010.06.011

Papi, M., & Khajavy, H. (2023). Second language anxiety: Construct, effects, and sources. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *43*, 127-139. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190523000028

Parra Espinel, J. N., & Fonseca Canaría, D. C. (2010). How Public High School Students Assume Cooperative Roles to Develop Their EFL Speaking Skills. *HOW*, *17*(1), 31-56.

Patton, M. Q. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (1999). Enhancing the quality and credibility of qualitative analysis. *Health Serv Res*, *34*(5 Pt 2), 1189-1208.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Pavelescu, L. M., & Petrić, B. (2018). Love and enjoyment in context: Four case studies of adolescent EFL learners. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, *8*(1), 73-101.

Pavlenko, A. (2006). 1. Bilingual selves. In A. Pavlenko (Ed.), *Bilingual Minds: Emotional Experience, Expression, and Representation* (pp. 1-33). Multilingual Matters. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21832/9781853598746-003

Perera, M. E. (2001). *The role of classroom interaction in second language acquisition in Sri Lanka* [PhD Thesis, University of Wollongong].

Peterson, C. (2006). *A primer in positive psychology*. Oxford University Press.

Phillips, E. M. (1999). Decreasing language anxiety: Practical techniques for oral activities. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere* (pp. 124-143). McGraw-Hill Education.

Pica, T. (1987). Second-language acquisition, social interaction, and the classroom. *Applied Linguistics*, *8*(1), 3-21. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/8.1.3

Piniel, K., & Csizér, K. (2015). Changes in motivation, anxiety and self-efficacy during the course of an academic writing seminar. In Z. Dörnyei, P. D. MacIntyre, & A. Henry (Eds.), *Motivational dynamics in language learning* (pp. 164-194). Multilingual Matters.

Prasangani, K. S. N. (2023). Strengthening ideal L2 self to motivate L2 learning. *Felicitation E-Volume dedicated to Mr.H.G. Piyasiri*, 132-141. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371788251_STRENGTHENING_IDEAL_L2_SELF_TO_MOTIVATE_L2_LEARNING

Price, M. L. (1991). The subjective experience of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with highly anxious students. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 87-97). Prentice Hall.

Punchihetti, S. (n.d.). *Role of English and Asian languages in globalised contexts: The Sri Lankan case*. https://www.academia.edu/4912108/Role_of_English_in_Asian_contexts_the_Sri_Lankan_case

Rabbidge, M. (2019). The effects of translanguaging on participation in EFL classrooms. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, *16*(4), 1305-1322.

Rafek, M., Karim, R. B. A., & Awaludin, F. A. B. (2013, March). *Fear of negative evaluation in second language learning.* 4th Social Development and Environmental StudiesInternational Conference, Malaysia. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277816753_Fear_of_Negative_Evaluation_in_Second_Language_Learning/citations

Rajagopalan, K. (2004). The concept of 'World English'and its implications for ELT. *ELT Journal*, *58*(2), 111-117.

Rasakumaran, A., & Indra Devi, S. (2017). Oral communication apprehension among freshmen: A case in the Faculty of Medicine. *Journal of Human Capital Development*, *10*(1), 19-32.

Rathnayake, P. N. (2013). Clearing impediments to the use of English by the undergraduates: A case study of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *93*, 70-76.

Ratwatte, H. (2015). Reformulating language identity and effecting social change: An evaluation of the intervention to convert the'parabhasha'to a'swabhasha'in Sri Lanka. *Linguistics and the Human Sciences*, *11*(1), 107-131.

Research and Development (School Examinations) Branch, Department of Examinations, & National Evaluation & Testing Service. (2022). *Performance of Candidates: G.C.E. (O.L.) Examination 2022*. Sri Lanka: Research and Development (School Examinations) Branch. Retrieved from https://www.doenets.lk/images/resources/STAT/2022_OL_POC_1702311346658.pdf

Research and Development (School Examinations) Branch, Department of Examinations, & National Evaluation & Testing Service. (2023). *G.C.E. (A/L) Examination 2022 (2023): Performance of Candidates*. Sri Lanka: Research & Development Branch (School Examinations). Retrieved from https://www.doenets.lk/images/resources/STAT/final%20POC-AL-2022-web_1694447239752.pdf

Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.

Ridenour, C. S., & Newman, I. (2008). *Mixed methods research: Exploring the interactive continuum*. Southern Illinois University Press.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Sage.

Rosenberg, M. (1989). Self-concept research: A historical overview. *Social Forces*, *68*(1), 34-44. https://doi.org/10.2307/2579218

Rubio-Alcalá, F. D. (2002). Making oral test more human and less-anxiety generating. *Humanising Language Teaching Magazine(HLT)*, *4*(4), 1-3.

Rubio-Alcalá, F. D. (2017). The links between self-esteem and language anxiety and implications for the classroom. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety* (pp. 198-216). Multilingual Matters.

Saito, Y., & Samimy, K. (1996). Foreign language anxiety and language performance: A study of learning anxiety in beginning, intermediate, and advanced-level college students of Japanese. *Foreign Language Annals*, *29*, 239-251.

Samaranayake, G. (2016). Expansion of university education, graduate unemployment and the knowledge hub in Sri Lanka. *Social Affairs: A Journal for the Social Sciences*, *1*(4), 15-32.

Saunders, B. M. (2007). *(Post)Colonial language: English, Sinhala and Tamil in Sri Lanka*. http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~cpercy/courses/eng6365-saunders.htm

Schwarzer, R. (1986). Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation: An introduction. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.), *Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation* (pp. 1-17). Erlbaum.

Scollon, R., Scollon, S. W., & Jones, R. H. (2012). *Intercultural communication: A discourse approach*. John Wiley & Sons.

Scovel, T. (1978). The effect of affect on foreign language learning: A review of the anxiety research. *Language Learning*, *28*(1), 129-142.

Seidlhofer, B. (2004). Research perspectives on teaching English as a lingua franca. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *24*, 209-239. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190504000145

Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, *10*(1-4), 209-232. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.1972.10.1-4.209

Selinker, L. (1992). *Rediscovering interlanguage*. Longman.

Sellars, V. (2000). Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, *33*(5), 512-521.

Senaratne, C. D., & Pereira, S. S. (2018). *Hybrid identities to overcome language anxiety: A case study.* NCAS International Research Symposium on Social Sciences and Humanities 2018, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Shuchi, I. J., & Islam, A. (2016). Teachers' and students' attitudes towards L1 use in EFL classrooms in the contexts of Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*, *9*(12), 62-73.

Şimşek, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (2017). Anxiety and L2 self-images: The 'anxious self'. In C. Gkonou, M. Daubney, & J. M. Dewaele (Eds.), *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications* (pp. 51-69). Multilingual Matters.

Solomon, D. J. (2000). Conducting web-based surveys. *Practical Assessment, Research, and Evaluation*, *7*(19), 193-196. https://openpublishing.library.umass.edu/pare/article/1382/galley/1333/view/

Sparks, R. L., & Ganschow, L. (1995). A strong inference approach to causal factors in foreign language learning: A response to MacIntyre. *The Modern Language Journal*, *79*, 235-244. https://doi.org/10.2307/329622

Spielberger, C. D. (1966). *Anxiety and behavior*. Academic Press.

Spielberger, C. D. (1983). *Manual for the state-trait anxiety inventory STAI*. Mind Garden.

Stubbs, M. (2017). Language and the mediation of experience: Linguistic representation and cognitive orientation. In F. Coulmas (Ed.), *The handbook of sociolinguistics* (pp. 358-373). Blackwell Publishing Ltd. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/9781405166256.ch22

Sun, Z., Lin, C.-H., You, J., Shen, H. j., Qi, S., & Luo, L. (2017). Improving the English-speaking skills of young learners through mobile social networking. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *30*(3-4), 304-324. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2017.1308384

Syed, H., & Kuzborska, I. (2020). Dynamics of factors underlying willingness to communicate in a second language. *The Language Learning Journal*, *48*(4), 481-500. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2018.1435709

Taguchi, T., Magid, M., & Papi, M. (2009). The L2 motivational self system among Japanese, Chinese and Iranian learners of English: A comparative study. In Z. Dornyei, & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 66-97). Multilingual Matters.

Takahashi, C. K. (2013). Ideal L2 self and university English learners: An interview study. *The Language Teacher*, *37*(6), 3-8.

Tallon, M. (2009). Foreign language anxiety and heritage students of Spanish: A quantitative study. *Foreign Language Annals*, *42*(1), 112-137. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2009.01011.x

Tanveer, M. (2007). *Investigation of the factors that cause language anxiety for ESL/EFL learners in learning speaking skills and the influence it casts on communication in the target language* [Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Glasgow]. Scotland.

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (Eds.). (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioural research*. Sage.

Teimouri, Y. (2017). L2 selves, emotions, and motivated behaviours. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *39*(4), 681-709. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263116000243

Tobias, S. (1979). Anxiety research in educational psychology. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *71*(5), 573-582.

Tobias, S. (1980). Anxiety and instruction. In I. G. Sarason (Ed.), *Test anxiety: Theory, research and applications* (pp. 289-309). Erlbaum.

Tobias, S. (1986). Anxiety and cognitive processing of instruction. In R. Schwarzer (Ed.), *Self-related cognition in anxiety and motivation* (pp. 35-54). Erlbaum.

Tóth, Z. (2011). Foreign language anxiety and advanced EFL learners: An interview study. *Working Papers in Language Pedagogy*, *5*, 39-57.

Tran, T. T. T., Moni, K., & Baldauf, R. B. (2013). Foreign language anxiety: Understanding its sources and effects from insiders' perspectives. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, *10*(1), 95-131.

Tremblay, P. F., & Gardner, R. C. (1995). Expanding the motivation construct in language learning. *The Modern Language Journal*, *79*, 505-520. https://doi.org/10.2307/330002

Tsui, A. B. (1995). *Introducing classroom interaction*. Penguin Books.

Tsui, A. B. (1996). Reticence and anxiety in second language learning. In K. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices From the Language Classroom.* (pp. 145-167). Cambridge University Press.

University B. (2020). *Handbook 2020-2021*. University B.

University Grants Commission. (2023a). *Sri Lanka University Statistics 2020*. Retrieved 2 March 2023 from https://www.ugc.ac.lk/downloads/statistics/stat_2020/Chapter%202.pdf

University Grants Commission. (2023b). *Sri Lanka University Statistics 2020*. Retrieved 3 March 2023 from https://www.ugc.ac.lk/downloads/statistics/stat_2021/Chapter%205.pdf

University Grants Commission. (2023c). *Universities and higher educational institutions established under the purview of the University Grants Commission*. Retrieved 16/01/2023 from https://www.ugc.ac.lk/index.php?option=com_university&view=list&Itemid=25&lang=en

University Grants Commission. (n.d.). *Welcome to the University Grants Commission*. University Grants Commission-Sri Lanka. Retrieved 1st February from https://www.ugc.ac.lk/

Von Worde, R. (2003). Students' perspectives on foreign language anxiety. *Inquiry*, *8*(1), 1-15. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ876838.pdf

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: Development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky, Vol. 1: Problems of general psychology*. Plenum Press.

Walkinshaw, I., & Oanh, D. H. (2014). Native and non-native English language teachers: Student perceptions in Vietnam and Japan. *Sage Open*, *4*(2), 2158244014534451.

Wang, Y., Derakhshan, A., & Zhang, L. J. (2021). Researching and practising positive psychology in second/foreign language learning and teaching: The past, current status and future directions. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*, 1-10. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.731721

Weerakoon, I. K. (2015). *Attitudes and motivation: Attitudes and motivation of second language learners*. LAMBERT Academic Publishing.

Wei, M. (2016). Language ideology and identity seeking: Perceptions of college learners of English in China. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education*, *15*(2), 100-113. https://doi.org/10.1080/15348458.2015.1137477

Wickramasinghe, A., Axemo, P., Essén, B., & Trenholm, J. (2022a). Ragging as an expression of power in a deeply divided society; a qualitative study on students perceptions on the phenomenon of ragging at a Sri Lankan university. *PLOS ONE*, *17*(7), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0271087

Wickramasinghe, A., Essén, B., Trenholm, J., & Axemo, P. (2023). ‘I don’t know how we can stop ragging’: A qualitative study on the perceptions of staff and work-affiliated individuals at a Sri Lankan University, on the phenomena of ragging. *Contemporary South Asia*, *31*(3), 390-405. https://doi.org/10.1080/09584935.2023.2227113

Wickramasinghe, A., Essén, B., Ziaei, S., Surenthirakumaran, R., & Axemo, P. (2022b). Ragging, a form of university violence in Sri Lanka-prevalence, self-perceived health consequences, help-seeking behavior and associated factors. *International Journal of Environmental Research in Public Health*, *19*(14), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19148383

Widdowson, H. G. (1994). The ownership of English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *28*(2), 377-389.

Wijewardene, L., Yong, D., & Chinna, K. (2014). English for Employability-the need of the hour for Sri Lankan graduates. *British Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, *17*(1), 137-145.

Wong, C. (1984). *Sociocultural factors counteract the instructional efforts of teaching through English in Hong Kong* [Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Washington]. Seattle.

Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC Journal*, *37*(3), 308-328. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688206071315

Yan, J. X., & Horwitz, E. K. (2008). Learners' perceptions of how anxiety interacts with personal and instructional factors to influence their achievement in English: A qualitative analysis of EFL learners in China. *Language Learning*, *58*(1), 151-183. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2007.00437.x

Yang, J. (2021). Revisiting research methods in language learning psychology from a complexity dynamic system theory perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *12*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.741045

Young, D. J. (1990). An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, *23*(6), 539-553.

Young, D. J. (1991). Creating a low-anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest? *The Modern Language Journal*, *75*(iv), 426-439. https://doi.org/10.2307/329492

Young, D. J. (Ed.). (1999). *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere*. McGraw-Hill College.

Zakareya, S., & Alahmad, S. (2019). Inverted teaching for improving the teaching performance of EFL student teachers at Jubail College of Education. *English language teaching*, *12*(4), 15-20.

Zare, P., & Riasati, M. J. (2012). The relationship between language learning anxiety, self-esteem, and academic level among Iranian EFL learners. *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, *20*(1), 219-225.

Appendix A: Online open-ended questionnaire for ESL teachers

Participation Information

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Reseach Project

Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

Aim of the Research

The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.

Online Questionnaire

I would like to administer a questionnaire to you via Qualtrics. The survey will take approximately 20-minutes to complete.

Confidentiality

Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable. Should participants elect to provide an email address for possible participation in a further stage of the study, this information will also remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose than that for which it is collected.

Participation is Voluntary

Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an

explanation. If you do decide to participate in the research, you can withdraw up until you submit the survey.

Questions

The questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of LA experienced by ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication.

Use of Information

I will use information from the questionnaire survey as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the survey may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.

Upsetting Issues

It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233).

Storage of Information

To access Qualtrics, UNE login will be used. Consequently, all the data will automatically be updated to UNE's cloud server. Therefore, in addition to the research team, those who centrally manage the cloud will have access to all the electronic data. It will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.

Disposal of Information

All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files on both UNE's cloud server and research teams computers. Data will also be removed from Qualtrics once it has been analysed. Any hard copies of the data will be shredded and disposed of in confidential bins at UNE.

Approval

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No HE21-067, Valid to 26/05/2022).

Researchers' Contact Details

Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874.
You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and

my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.

Complaints

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Office
Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Tel: +61 2 6773 3715
Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

Regards,
Iromi Weerakoon

Implied Consent Information

Online Implied Consent for Participants

Research Project:
Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners in Sri Lankan state universities

- I have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree to participate in this study, with the understanding that:
  - My participation is voluntary,

    - My contribution is anonymous,
    - Information concerning my identity will be unidentifiable as explained in the information page, and
    - I may withdraw at any time without consequences & without follow-up.

- I agree that the anonymous research data collected for the study will form part of a thesis and may be published, or presented at conferences as a later date.
- I agree that I may be quoted using a pseudonym.
- I am 18 years of age or older.
- In preservation of anonymity, I understand that no name or signature is required of me to give consent. By activating the PROCEED button below I am agreeing to the above and also to participate in this study.

Demographics

Gender

- Male
- Female

Age

- 20-29 years
- 30-39 years
- 40-49 years
- 50 years or more

Designation

- Temporary Lecturer
- Probationary Lecturer
- Confirmed Lecturer
- Senior Lecturer
- Professor

- Senior Professor
- [ ] Other (Please specify)

Highest Qualification

- BA
- MA
- MPhil
- PhD
- [ ] Other (Please specify)

Years of experience as an ESL teacher in higher education sector of Sri Lanka

- Less than a year
- 1 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 15 years
- 16 to 20 years
- 21 to 25 years
- [ ] Other (Please specify)

Questions

What do you understand language anxiety to be? *(Question 1 of 5)*

What do you think are the causes for the language anxiety your students experience while speaking in English? ***(Question 2 of 5)***

What do you do to help your students feel less anxious and perform better in classroom speaking activities? ***(Question 3 of 5)***

Can you briefly explain the role socio-cultural factors (e.g., attitudes and beliefs of the society towards English and its speakers, sub-culture of the university) play in ESL students' language anxiety? ***(Question 4 of 5)***

If keeping students in a positive mental state is important in the language learning process, what do you do to make them feel positive in ESL classrooms of Sri Lankan state universities? ***(Question 5 of 5)***

Final Pages

Please indicate your preference to the following:

The next stage of this study requires a recorded 90-minute ZOOM interview. This would be undertaken at a convenient time suggested by you.

- I would be willing to participate in the next stage of the study
- I do not wish to be involved in the next stage of the study.

Please provide your email address below so that you may be contacted to organise participation in the next stage of the study.

Please note that this information is separate to the survey, will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purposes than for making contact in preparation for a ZOOM interview.

The participants for the next stage of the study will be purposively selected in 2021 and notified in due course. Thank you for offering further support to this study.

Please add your official email address in the box below.

Powered by Qualtrics

Appendix B: Approval of Human Research Ethics Committee for collecting data from ESL teachers

Ethics Office
Research Development & Integrity
Research Division
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3449
humanethics@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/research-services

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO: Dr Zuocheng Zhang & Dr Vegnes Maniam & Mrs IROMI KUMARI WEERAKOON

This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE: Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

APPROVAL No.: **HE21-067**

COMMENCEMENT DATE: 26 May, 2021

APPROVAL VALID TO: 26 May, 2022

COMMENTS: Nil. Conditions met in full

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: http://www.une.edu.au/research/research-services/rdi/ethics/hre/hrec-forms

The NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.

Michael Duffy
for Bethany Ayers,
HREC Secretary &
Research Ethics Officer

Appendix C: In-depth interview protocol

In-depth Interview Protocol

1. How would you describe yourself as a teacher? (What kind of teacher are you?) Explain the kind of relationship you have with your students. (Do you think it is important to have a close relationship with the students?)

2. How would you describe your learners? (What is your perception about your learners? Do they have positive attitudes or negative attitudes towards English language, its speakers and learning English?)

3. How do you begin your lectures? Singing songs, small talk, asking about homework, etc.?

4. From your point of view, what is an ideal classroom?

5. What professional development activities do you regularly participate in?

6. How does your class behave when you ask them to do a speaking activity (deliver a presentation, or do a role play)?

7. According to your knowledge and experiences, what makes the students anxious to speak in English in class or in society?

8. How do you identify a student who is anxious to speak in English?

9. What do you do when you notice an anxious student? (Do you do anything regularly to help them?)

10. How do you make the students speak especially the ones who are reluctant to speak? (Do you grade students in this scenario?)

11. How do you deal with students' mistakes? (Describe your error correction procedure. How often do you correct them for example while they deliver a presentation? Whenever they make a mistake during the presentation? Or after each presentation? Or after the presentations of all the students?)

12. Can you tell me your ideas about ragging and how it affects the ESL students?

13. How do you see the status of English in Sri Lankan society?

14. Some people are reluctant to speak in English in front of other Sri Lankans but comfortable in speaking to foreigners in English. Why?

15. What do you think about speaking in English in public when you feel that your English is less than perfect?

16. Do you think attitudes of the society towards English and its speakers affect your ESL students in their English learning process? How?

17. From your point of view, what kind of practices should teachers implement in the ESL classrooms to make the students confident to speak in English?

18. What can teachers do to help the students become confident to speak in English in the society?

19. Can you clarify or expand on…?

Appendix D: Information sheet for interview participants

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

education@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/education

INFORMATION SHEET for INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Research Project	**Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities**
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.
In-depth interview	I would like to conduct a face-to-face online interview with you via ZOOM. The interview will take approximately one and half hours. With your permission, I will make a video recording of the interview to ensure that I accurately recall the information you provide.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation.
Questions	The interview questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of LA experienced by ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and techniques for managing LA.

Use of Information	I will use information from the interviews as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the interview may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233)
Storage of Information	I will keep all hardcopy notes, audio and video recordings and transcriptions of the interviews in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of New England's School of Education. Any electronic data will be kept on the UNE Zoom cloud named AARNet Cloud Recordings. When recording on Zoom using a UNE login, the data will automatically be uploaded to this Cloud. Consequently, in addition to the research team, UNE team who centrally manage the Zoom cloud will have access to data. The electronic data will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.
Disposal of Information	All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.
Approval	This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No.........., Valid to ../../....).
Researchers' Contact Details	Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874. You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.
Complaints	Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

School of Education
University of New England
Armiale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

education@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/education

Bethany Ayers

HREC Secretary

Research Ethics Office

Research Services

University of New England

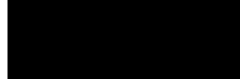
Armidale, NSW 2351

Tel: +61 2 6773 3715

Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

regards,



Iromi Weerakoon

Appendix E: Consent form for interview participants

CONSENT FORM

For

INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Research Project: Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

I,..., have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.	Yes/No
I agree to participate in this activity, realising that I may withdraw at any time.	Yes/No
I agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym.	Yes/No
I agree to be identified in this research.	Yes/No
I agree to having my interview video recorded and transcribed.	Yes/No
I am 18 years of age or older.	Yes/No

....	....
Participant	Date
....	....
Researcher	Date

Appendix F: Focus group interview guide (English and Sinhala translation)

Focus Group Interview Guide

1. Do you enjoy learning English in the university ESL classroom? Why?
2. How do you feel when you are asked to speak in English in the ESL classroom? Why?
3. What do you do when you feel anxious while you are asked to speak in English? (In class? In society?)
4. How do you feel when you make a mistake in your pronunciation or grammar (while speaking in your ESL class/society)?
5. How does your teacher react when you make a mistake?
6. How do the peers behave when you make a mistake?
7. Which do you prefer: to be called on to answer or to volunteer answers? Why?
8. How do you feel if you are graded for your speaking performance? Why?
9. Which do you prefer: pair/group speaking activities or individual ones? Why?
10. Have your attitudes towards English and/or English speakers changed during or after the ragging period? How?
11. What do you think about your teacher's behaviour in class? (Is s/he friendly, patient, helpful, understanding, and pleasant? Does s/he encourage you, appreciate you, etc.?)
12. Do you like to speak in English in the society?
13. With whom do you feel more confident to speak in English? Foreigners? Sri Lankans? Why?
14. What do you think about the people who speak English well?
15. What do you think about speaking in English in public when you feel your English is less than perfect?
16. What do you think the teachers could do to make you feel confident to speak in English?
17. Can you clarify or expand on…?

කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණ මාර්ගෝපදේශය

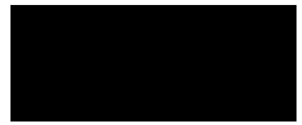
1. විශ්ව විද්‍යාල ESL පන්ති කාමරයේ ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙනීමට ඔබ කැමතිද? ඇයි?
2. ඔබට පිළිතුරු දීමට කැඳවනු ලැබුවහොත් ඔබට හැඟෙන්නේ කෙසේද? ඇයි?
3. ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කතා කිරීමට ඔබෙන් ඉල්ලා සිටින විට ඔබ කනස්සල්ලට පත්වන විට ඔබ කරන්නේ කුමක්ද? (ESL පන්ති කාමරයේ? සමාජයේ?)
4. (ඔබේ ESL පන්තියේ/සමාජයේ කතා කරන විට) ඔබ ඉංග්‍රීසි උච්චාරණයේ හෝ ව්‍යාකරණයේ වැරැද්දක් කළ විට ඔබට හැඟෙන්නේ කෙසේද?
5. ඔබ වැරැද්දක් කළ විට ඔබේ ගුරුවරයා ප්‍රතික්‍රියා කරන්නේ කෙසේද?
6. ඔබ වැරැද්දක් කළ විට සම වයසේ මිතුරන් හැසිරෙන්නේ කෙසේද?
7. ඔබ කැමති කුමකටද: පිළිතුරු දීමට කැඳවීම හෝ ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් පිළිතුරු දීමට? මන්ද?
8. ඔබේ කථන කාර්ය ශ්‍රේණිගත කරයි නම් ඔබට හැඟෙන්නේ කෙසේද? මන්ද?
9. ඔබ කැමති කුමකටද: යුගල/කණ්ඩායම් කථා කිරීමේ ක්‍රියාකාරකම් වලට හෝ තනි ඒවාට? මන්ද?
10. නවක වදය තුළ හෝ පසුව ඉංග්‍රීසි සහ/හෝ ඉංග්‍රීසි කතා කරන්නන් පිළිබඳ ඔබේ ආකල්ප වෙනස් වී තිබේද? කොහොමද?
11. ඔබේ ගුරුවරයාගේ පන්ති කාමර හැසිරීම පැහැදිලි කරන්න. (ඔහු මිත්‍රශීලී, ඉවසිලිවන්ත, උදව් කරන, අවබෝධයෙන් කටයුතු කරන සහ ප්‍රසන්න අයෙක්ද? ඔහු ඔබව දිරිමත් කරනවාද, ඔබව අගය කරනවාද?)
12. සමාජයේ ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කතා කිරීමට ඔබ කැමතිද? ඇයි?
13. ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කතා කිරීමට ඔබ වැඩිපුර කැමැති කා සමඟද? විදේශිකයන්? ශ්‍රී ලාංකිකයන්? ඇයි?
14. හොඳින් ඉංග්‍රීසි කතා කරන අය ගැන ඔබ සිතන්නේ කුමක්ද?
15. ඔබේ ඉංග්‍රීසි පරිපූර්ණත්වයට වඩා අඩු යැයි ඔබට හැඟෙන විට ප්‍රසිද්ධියේ ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කථා කිරීම ගැන ඔබ සිතන්නේ කුමක්ද?

16. ඉංග්‍රීසියෙන් කතා කිරීමට ඔබට විශ්වාසයක් ඇති කිරීමට ගුරුවරුන්ට කළ හැක්කේ කුමක්ද?

17. ... මෙය ඔබට පැහැදිලි කිරීමට පුළුවන්ද?

28/08/2021

I certify this is an accurate Sinhala translation of the *Focus Group Interview Guide*.



Dr Thilantha Dammalage

Appendix G: Approval of Human Research Ethics Committee for collecting data from ESL learners

Research Services
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3715
humanethics@une.edu.au
www.une.edu.au/research-services

HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MEMORANDUM TO:	Dr Zuocheng Zhang, Dr Vegnes Maniam & Mrs Iromi Kumari Weerakoon **School of Education**

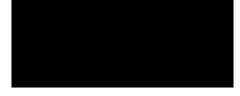
This is to advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the following:

PROJECT TITLE:	Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities
APPROVAL No.:	**HE21-193**
COMMENCEMENT DATE:	07 September, 2021
APPROVAL VALID TO:	30 December, 2021
COMMENTS:	Nil. Conditions met in full

The Human Research Ethics Committee may grant approval for up to a maximum of three years. For approval periods greater than 12 months, researchers are required to submit an application for renewal at each twelve-month period. All researchers are required to submit a Final Report at the completion of their project. The Progress/Final Report Form is available at the following web address: http://www.une.edu.au/research/research-services/rdi/ethics/hre/hrec-forms

The NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans requires that researchers must report immediately to the Human Research Ethics Committee anything that might affect ethical acceptance of the protocol. This includes adverse reactions of participants, proposed changes in the protocol, and any other unforeseen events that might affect the continued ethical acceptability of the project.

In issuing this approval number, it is required that all data and consent forms are stored in a secure location for a minimum period of five years. These documents may be required for compliance audit processes during that time. If the location at which data and documentation are retained is changed within that five year period, the Research Ethics Officer should be advised of the new location.



Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Officer

Appendix H: Information sheet for student-participants in focus group interview (English and Sinhala translation)

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

INFORMATION SHEET for Student Participants in Focus-Group Interview

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Research Project	**Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities**
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.
Focus group interview	I would like to conduct a face-to-face focus group interview with you via ZOOM. The interview will take approximately one and half hours. With your permission, I will make a video recording of the interview to ensure that I accurately recall the information you provide.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation.
Questions	The interview questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of LA experienced by ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and techniques for managing LA.
Use of Information	I will use information from the interview as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the interview may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact:

	Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233).
Storage of Information	I will keep all hardcopy notes, audio and video recordings and transcriptions of the interviews in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of New England's School of Education. Any electronic data will be kept on the UNE Zoom cloud named AARNet Cloud Recordings. When recording on Zoom using a UNE login, the data will automatically be uploaded to this Cloud. Consequently, in addition to the research team, UNE team who centrally manage the Zoom cloud will have access to data. The electronic data will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.
Disposal of Information	All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.
Approval	This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No.........., Valid to .../.../....).
Researchers' Contact Details	Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874. You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.
Complaints	Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact: Bethany Ayers HREC Secretary Research Ethics Office Research Services University of New England Armidale, NSW 2351 Tel: +61 2 6773 3715 Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

regards,

Iromi Weerakoon

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351

Australia

Phone 02 6773 3716

කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සඳහා සහභාගී වන ශිෂ්‍යන්ගේ තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාව

පහත විස්තර කර ඇති මගේ පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතියට සහභාගී වන ලෙස මම ඔබට ආරාධනා කරමි.

මගේ නම ඉරෝමි වීරකෝන්. මම ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාවෙහි නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් නැමැති විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයෙහි අධ්‍යාපනය සම්බන්ධ පාසලෙන් පිරිනමන ආචාර්ය උපාධිය සඳහා පර්යේෂණයක නිරත වී සිටිමි. මගේ පර්යේෂණ අධීක්ෂකවරුන් වනුයේ ආචාර්ය සූචෙන් ෂැං සහ ආචාර්ය වෙග්නෙස්කුමාර් මැනියම් ය.

පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතිය	**ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීම සඳහා පංති කාමර ආකෘතියක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම කරා**
පර්යේෂණයේ අරමුණ	මෙම පර්යේෂණයේ අරමුණ වනුයේ ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාවේ ප්‍රධාන ප්‍රභවයන් ගවේෂණය කිරීම සහ සිසුන්ගේ ඔරොත්තු දීමේ හැකියාව වර්ධනය කරන අතරතුර එම භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීමේ ක්‍රමවේදයන් විමර්ශනය කිරීමයි.
කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණය	ZOOM හරහා ඔබ සමඟ මුහුණට මුහුණ සබැදි සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයක් පැවැත්වීමට මම කැමතියි. සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණය සඳහා ආසන්න වශයෙන් පැය එකහමාරක් ගතවනු ඇත. ඔබගේ අවසරය ඇතිව, ඔබ සපයන තොරතුරු නිවැරදිව සිහිපත් කිරීම, සහතික කිරීම සඳහා සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයේ වීඩියෝ පටිගත කිරීමක් කරමි.
රහස්‍යභාවය	අධ්‍යනය අතරතුර රැස් කරන සියලුම පෞද්ගලික තොරතුරු රහසිගතව පවතිනු ඇත. ප්‍රථිපල ප්‍රකාශයට පත් කිරීමේදී කිසිදු පුද්ගලයෙකු නමින් හඳුනා නොගනී. සියලුම නම් ව්‍යාජ නාම වලින් ප්‍රතිස්ථාපනය වේ; මෙය ඔබගේ නිර්නාමිකභාවය සහතික කරනු ඇත. ඔබ එකඟ වන්නේ නම් ඔබගේ ප්‍රතිචාර සමහරක් උපුටා දැක්වීමට කැමැත්තෙමි. ඔබ හඳුනාගත නොහැකි ලෙස මෙය සිදු කරන බව සහතික වෙමි.
සහභාගීත්වය ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් සිදු වේ	කරුණාකර මෙම අධ්‍යයනයට ඔබගේ මැදිහත්වීම ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් සිදු වන බව තේරුම් ගන්න. ප්‍රතිවිපාක නොමැතිව සහ පැහැදිලි කිරීමක් සැපයීමෙන් තොරව ඕනෑම වේලාවක අධ්‍යයනයට සහභාගී වීම නැවැත්වීමට ඔබට ඇති අයිතියට මම ගරු කරමි.
ප්‍රශ්ණ	සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණ ප්‍රශ්න සංවේදී ස්වභාවයක් නොගනු ඇත: ඒ වෙනුවට ඒවා සාමාන්‍ය ඒවා වන අතර, ශ්‍රී ලංකා රාජ්‍ය විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්, විශේෂයෙන් ම වාචික සන්නිවේදනයේ යෙදෙන විට අත්දකින භාෂා කාංසාව පිළිබඳ මගේ දැනුම වැඩි දියුණු කරගැනීමට සහ භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය සඳහා භාවිතා කළ හැකි

ශිල්පීය ක්‍රම පිළිබඳව අවබෝධයක් ලබා ගැනීමට හැකිවන ලෙස ප්‍රශ්න නිර්මාණය කර ඇත.

තොරතුරු භාවිතය

2022 දෙසැම්බර් මාසයේ 18 වන දින සම්පූර්ණ කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙන මගේ ආචාර්ය උපාධි නිබන්ධනයේ කොටසකට මෙම සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයේ තොරතුරු යොදා ගනිමි. සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයෙන් ලැබෙන තොරතුරු මෙම දිනට පෙර සහ පසුව අධ්‍යයන සඟරා ලිපි සහ සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම්වල ද භාවිතා කිරීමට ඉඩ ඇත. සෑම විටම, ඔබව හඳුනා ගැනීමට ඉඩ නොදෙන අයුරින් තොරතුරු ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමෙන් මම ඔබේ අනන්‍යතාවය ආරක්ෂා කරමි.

කරදරකාරී ගැටළු

මෙම පර්යේෂණය මගින් පෞද්ගලික හෝ කරදරකාරී ගැටළු මතු වනු ඇතැයි සිතිය නොහැක. නමුත් යම් ගැටළුවක් මතු වුවහොත් ඔබට අවශ්‍ය නම් පහත නම් සඳහන් අය අමතන්න.

නදීරා ජයතුංග මහත්මිය, “සිත් අරණ” උපදේශන මධ්‍යස්ථානයේ මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශක, ජ්‍යෙෂ්ඨ කථිකාචාර්ය, ශ්‍රී ලංකා සබරගමුව විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය (0718898233)

තොරතුරු ගබඩා කිරීම

නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ අධ්‍යාපන පාසලේ මගේ කාර්යාලයේ අගුලු දමා ඇති කැබිනට්ටුවක සියලුම දෘඪ පිටපත් සටහන් සහ සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා පටිගත කිරීම් ගබඩා කරමි. ඕනෑම ඉලෙක්ට්‍රොනික දත්තයක් AARNet Cloud Recordings නමින් UNE විශාලන වලාකුළෙහි තබා ඇත. UNE පිවිසුමක් භාවිතයෙන් විශාලනයෙහි පටිගත කරන විට, දත්ත ස්වයංක්‍රීයව මෙම වලාකුළට උඩුගත වේ. එහි ප්‍රතිපලයක් වශයෙන්, පර්යේෂණ කණ්ඩායමට අමතරව, විශාලන වලාකුළ කේන්ද්‍රීයව කළමනාකරණය කරන UNE කණ්ඩායමට දත්ත සඳහා ප්‍රවේශය ඇත. විද්‍යුත් දත්ත මුරපදයකින් ආරක්ෂිත පරිගණකයක එකම ස්ථානයක තබා ඇත.

තොරතුරු බැහැර කිරීම

මෙම නිබන්ධනය සාර්ථකව ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමෙන් පසු මෙම පර්යේෂණය සඳහා එකතු කරන ලද සියලුම දත්ත අවම වශයෙන් අවුරුදු පහක් තබා ගනු ඇත. ඉන් පසුව අදාළ පරිගණක ලිපිගොනු මකා දැමීමෙන් සහ දෘඪ පිටපත් ද්‍රව්‍ය විනාශ කිරීමෙන් හෝ ඉරා දැමීමෙන් එම දත්ත බැහැර කරනු ලැබේ.

අනුමැතිය

මෙම ව්‍යාපෘතිය නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ මානව පර්යේෂණ ආචාර ධර්ම කමිටුව විසින් අනුමත කර ඇත (අනුමත අංකය ………., ../../…. වනතුරු වලංගු වේ).

පර්යේෂකයන්ගේ ඇමතුම් විස්තර

ඊමේල් මගින් මෙම පර්යේෂණය පිළිබඳ ඕනෑම ප්‍රශ්නයක් සඳහා මාව සම්බන්ධ කර ගැනීමට rweerako@myune.edu.au හෝ දුරකථනයෙන් +61 2 6773 3874.

ඔබට මගේ අධීක්ෂකවරුන් සම්බන්ධ කර ගත හැකිය. මගේ ප්‍රධාන අධීක්ෂකගේ නම ආචාර්ය සුචෙන් ෂැං. ඔහුට zzhang26@une.edu.au විද්‍යුත් තැපෑලෙන් හෝ +61 2 6773 3362 දුරකථනයෙන් ඇමතිය හැකිය. මගේ සම අධීක්ෂකගේ නම ආචාර්ය වෙග්නෙස්කුමාර් මැනියම් වන අතර ඔහුගේ විද්‍යුත් තැපැල් ලිපිනය vmaniam@une.edu.au වන අතර දුරකථන අංකය +61 2 6773 2509 වේ.

පැමිණිලි

මෙම පර්යේෂණය සිදුකරන ආකාරය පිළිබඳව ඔබට පැමිණිලි ඇත්නම් පහත ලිපිනයට කරුණාකර සම්බන්ධ වන්න:
Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Office
Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Tel: +61 2 6773 3715
Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

මෙම ඉල්ලීම සලකා බැලීමට ස්තූතියි, ඔබ සමඟ තවදුරටත් සම්බන්ධ වීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙමි.

සුභ පැතුම්,

ඉරෝෂි වීරකෝන්

28/08/2021

I certify this is an accurate Sinhala translation of the *Information Sheet for Student Participants of Focus Group Interview*.

Dr Thilantha Dammalage

Appendix I: Consent form for student-participants in focus group interview (English and Sinhala translation)

CONSENT FORM

for Student Participants in Focus-Group Interview

Research Project: Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

,..., have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Focus-Group Interview Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.	Yes/No
I agree to participate in the online classroom observation, realising that I may withdraw at any time.	Yes/No
I agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym.	Yes/No
I agree to having my interview video recorded and transcribed.	Yes/No
I am 18 years of age or older.	Yes/No

....

Participant Date

....

Researcher Date

කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සඳහා සහභාගී වන ශිෂ්‍යන්ගේ අනුමැති ප්‍රකාශය

පර්යේෂණය:

ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීම සඳහා පංති කාමර ආකෘතියක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම කරා

....වන මම, සහභාගීවන්නන් සඳහා වන තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාවෙහි අඩංගු තොරතුරු කියවා ඇති අතර ඒ සම්බන්දයෙන් මා විසින් අසනු ලැබූ ඕනෑම ප්‍රශ්නයකටද සෑහීමට පත් විය හැකි පිළිතුරු ලැබුන බව පිලිගනිමි.	ඔව් / නැත
ඕනෑම අවස්ථාවක මාගේ කැමැත්ත පරිදි ඉවත් විය හැකි බව තේරුම් ගනිමින් මම කණ්ඩායම් සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා සඳහා සහභාගී වීමට එකඟතාවය පළ කරමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මෙම පර්යේෂණයේ දත්ත ආරූඪ නාමකරණය යටතේ ප්‍රකාශයට පත් විය හැකි බවට එකඟ වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මම මගේ පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණය ශ්‍රව්‍ය-දෘශ්‍ය පටිගත කිරීමට හා පිටපත් කිරීමට එකඟ වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මම වයස අවුරුදු 18ට වඩා වැඩි පුද්ගලයෙක් වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත

සහභාගීවන්නා: .... දිනය: ....

පර්යේෂක: .... දිනය: ....

28/08/2021

I certify this is an accurate Sinhala translation of the *Consent Form for Student Participants of Focus Group Interview*.

Dr Thilantha Dammalage

Appendix J: Information sheet for student-participants in classroom observation (English and Sinhala translation)

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351
Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

INFORMATION SHEET for Student Participants in Classroom Observation

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Research Project	**Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities**
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.
Classroom Observation	I would like to observe one of your ESL classes online via ZOOM. With your consent, I will make a video recording of the classroom session for research purposes.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation.
Use of Information	I will use information from the observation as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the observation may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact: Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233).
Storage of Information	I will keep all hardcopy notes, audio and video recordings of the observations in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of New England's School of Education. Any electronic data will be kept on the UNE Zoom cloud named AARNet Cloud Recordings. When recording on

	Zoom using a UNE login, the data will automatically be uploaded to this Cloud. Consequently, in addition to the research team, UNE team who centrally manage the Zoom cloud will have access to data. The electronic data will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.
Disposal of Information	All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.
Approval	This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No.........., Valid to .../.../....).
Researchers' Contact Details	Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874. You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.
Complaints	Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact: Bethany Ayers HREC Secretary Research Ethics Office Research Services University of New England Armidale, NSW 2351 Tel: +61 2 6773 3715 Email: humanethics@une.edu.au Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you. regards, Iromi Weerakoon

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351

Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ සඳහා සහභාගී වන ශිෂ්‍යන්ගේ තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාව

පහත විස්තර කර ඇති මගේ පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතියට සහභාගී වන ලෙස මම ඔබට ආරාධනා කරමි.

මගේ නම ඉරෝමි වීරකෝන්. මම ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාවෙහි නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් නැමැති විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයෙහි අධ්‍යාපනය සම්බන්ධ පාසලෙන් පිරිනමන ආචාර්ය උපාධිය සඳහා පර්යේෂණයක නිරත වී සිටිමි. මගේ පර්යේෂණ අධීක්ෂකවරුන් වනුයේ ආචාර්ය සූවෙන් ෂැං සහ ආචාර්ය වෙග්නෙස්කුමාර් මැනියම් ය.

පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතිය	**ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීම සඳහා පංති කාමර ආකෘතියක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම කරා**
පර්යේෂණයේ අරමුණ	මෙම පර්යේෂණයේ අරමුණ වනුයේ ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාවේ ප්‍රධාන ප්‍රභවයන් ගවේෂණය කිරීම සහ සිසුන්ගේ ඔරොත්තු දීමේ හැකියාව වර්ධනය කරන අතරතුර එම භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීමේ ක්‍රමවේදයන් විමර්ශනය කිරීමයි.
පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණය	ඔබගේ ESL පන්ති වලින් එකක් අන්තර්ජාලය හරහා නිරීක්ෂණය කිරීමට මම කැමතියි. ඔබගේ අවසරය ඇතිව, ඔබ සපයන තොරතුරු නිවැරදිව සිහිපත් කිරීම සහතික කිරීම සඳහා සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයේ වීඩියෝ පටිගත කිරීමක් කරමි.
රහස්‍යභාවය	අධ්‍යනය අතරතුර රැස් කරන සියලුම පෞද්ගලික තොරතුරු රහසිගතව පවතිනු ඇත. ප්‍රතිඵල ප්‍රකාශයට පත් කිරීමේදී කිසිදු පුද්ගලයෙකු නමින් හඳුනා නොගනී. සියලුම නම් ව්‍යාජ නාම වලින් ප්‍රතිස්ථාපනය වේ; මෙය ඔබගේ නිර්නාමිකභාවය සහතික කරනු ඇත. ඔබ එකඟ වන්නේ නම් ඔබගේ ප්‍රතිචාර සමහරක් උපුටා දැක්වීමට කැමැත්තෙමි. ඔබ හඳුනාගත නොහැකි ලෙස මෙය සිදු කරන බව සහතික වෙමි.
සහභාගීත්වය ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් සිදු වේ	කරුණාකර මෙම අධ්‍යයනයට ඔබගේ මැදිහත්වීම ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් සිදු වන බව තේරුම් ගන්න. ප්‍රතිවිපාක නොමැතිව සහ පැහැදිලි කිරීමක් සැපයීමෙන් තොරව ඕනෑම වේලාවක අධ්‍යයනයට සහභාගී වීම නැවැත්වීමට ඔබට ඇති අයිතියට මම ගරු කරමි.
තොරතුරු භාවිතය	2022 දෙසැම්බර් මාසයේ 18 වන දින සම්පූර්ණ කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙන මගේ ආචාර්ය උපාධි නිබන්ධනයේ කොටසකට මෙම පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණයේ තොරතුරු යොදා ගනිමි. පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණයෙන් ලැබෙන තොරතුරු මෙම දිනට පෙර සහ පසුව අධ්‍යයන සඟරා ලිපි සහ සම්මන්ත්‍රණ ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම්වල ද භාවිතා කිරීමට ඉඩ ඇත. සෑම විටම, ඔබව හඳුනා ගැනීමට ඉඩ නොදෙන අයුරින් තොරතුරු ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමෙන් මම ඔබේ අනන්‍යතාවය ආරක්ෂා කරමි.

කරදරකාරී ගැටළු	මෙම පර්යේෂණය මගින් පෞද්ගලික හෝ කරදරකාරී ගැටළු මතු වනු ඇතැයි සිතිය නොහැක. නමුත් යම් ගැටළුවක් මතු වුවහොත් ඔබට අවශ්‍ය නම් පහත නම් සඳහන් අය අමතන්න. නදීරා ජයතුංග මහත්මිය, "සිත් අරණ" උපදේශන මධ්‍යස්ථානයේ මනෝවිද්‍යා උපදේශක, ජ්‍යෙෂ්ඨ කථිකාචාර්ය, ශ්‍රී ලංකා සබරගමුව විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය (0718898233)
තොරතුරු ගබඩා කිරීම	නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ අධ්‍යාපන පාසලේ මගේ කාර්යාලයේ අගුලු දමා ඇති කැබිනට්ටුවක සියලුම දෘඩ පිටපත් සටහන් සහ සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡා පටිගත කිරීම් ගබඩා කරමි. ඕනෑම ඉලෙක්ට්‍රොනික දත්තයක් AARNet Cloud Recordings නමින් UNE විශාලන වලාකුළෙහි තබා ඇත. UNE පිවිසුමක් භාවිතයෙන් විශාලනයෙහි පටිගත කරන විට, දත්ත ස්වයංක්‍රීයව මෙම වලාකුළට උඩුගත වේ. එහි ප්‍රතිපලයක් වශයෙන්, පර්යේෂණ කණ්ඩායමට අමතරව, විශාලන වලාකුළ කේන්ද්‍රීයව කළමනාකරණය කරන UNE කණ්ඩායමට දත්ත සඳහා ප්‍රවේශය ඇත. විද්‍යුත් දත්ත මුරපදයකින් ආරක්ෂිත පරිගණකයක එකම ස්ථානයක තබා ඇත.
තොරතුරු බැහැර කිරීම	මෙම නිබන්ධනය සාර්ථකව ඉදිරිපත් කිරීමෙන් පසු මෙම පර්යේෂණය සඳහා එකතු කරන ලද සියලුම දත්ත අවම වශයෙන් අවුරුදු පහක් තබා ගනු ඇත. ඉන් පසුව අදාළ පරිගණක ලිපිගොනු මකා දැමීමෙන් සහ දෘඩ පිටපත් ද්‍රව්‍ය විනාශ කිරීමෙන් හෝ ඉරා දැමීමෙන් එම දත්ත බැහැර කරනු ලැබේ.
අනුමැතිය	මෙම ව්‍යාපෘතිය නිව් ඉංග්ලන්ඩ් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ මානව පර්යේෂණ ආචාර ධර්ම කමිටුව විසින් අනුමත කර ඇත (අනුමත අංකය ...., ../../.... වනතුරු වලංගු වේ).

පර්යේෂකයන්ගේ ඇමතුම් විස්තර

ඊමේල් මගින් මෙම පර්යේෂණය පිළිබඳ ඕනෑම ප්‍රශ්නයක් සඳහා මාව සම්බන්ධ කර ගැනීමට rweerako@myune.edu.au හෝ දුරකථනයෙන් +61 2 6773 3874.

ඔබට මගේ අධීක්ෂකවරුන් සම්බන්ධ කර ගත හැකිය. මගේ ප්‍රධාන අධීක්ෂකගේ නම ආචාර්ය සූවෙන් ෂැං. ඔහුට zzhang26@une.edu.au විද්‍යුත් තැපෑලෙන් හෝ +61 2 6773 3362 දුරකථනයෙන් ඇමතිය හැකිය. මගේ සම අධීක්ෂකගේ නම ආචාර්ය වෙග්නෙස්කුමාර් මැනියම් වන අතර ඔහුගේ විද්‍යුත් තැපැල් ලිපිනය vmaniam@une.edu.au වන අතර දුරකථන අංකය +61 2 6773 2509 වේ.

පැමිණිලි

මෙම පර්යේෂණය සිදුකරන ආකාරය පිළිබඳව ඔබට පැමිණිලි ඇත්නම් පහත ලිපිනයට කරුණාකර සම්බන්ධ වන්න:
Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Office
Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Tel: +61 2 6773 3715
Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

මෙම ඉල්ලීම සලකා බැලීමට ස්තූතියි, ඔබ සමඟ තවදුරටත් සම්බන්ධ වීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වෙමි.

සුභ පැතුම්,

ඉරෝමි වීරකෝන්

28/08/2021

I certify this is an accurate Sinhala translation of the *Information Sheet for Student Participants of Classroom Observation*.

Dr Thilantha Dammalage

Appendix K: Consent form for student-participants in classroom observation (English and Sinhala translation)

CONSENT FORM

for Student Participants in Classroom Observation

Research Project: Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

I,…………………………………………………………………………., have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Observation of Student Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.	Yes/No
I agree to participate in the online classroom observation, realising that I may withdraw at any time.	Yes/No
I agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym.	Yes/No
I agree to having my classroom observation video recorded and transcribed.	Yes/No
I am 18 years of age or older.	Yes/No

……………………………….. ……………………………
Participant Date

……………………………….. ……………………………
Researcher Date

පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ සඳහා සහභාගී වන ශිෂ්‍යන්ගේ අනුමැති ප්‍රකාශය

පර්යේෂණය:

ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික විශ්ව විද්‍යාල වල දෙවන භාෂාවක් ලෙස ඉංග්‍රීසි ඉගෙන ගන්නා සිසුන්ගේ භාෂා කාංසාව කළමනාකරණය කිරීම සඳහා පංති කාමර ආකෘතියක් නිර්මාණය කිරීම කරා

....වන මම, සහභාගීවන්නන් සඳහා වන තොරතුරු පත්‍රිකාවෙහි අඩංගු තොරතුරු කියවා ඇති අතර ඒ සම්බන්දයෙන් මා විසින් අසනු ලැබූ ඕනෑම ප්‍රශ්නයකටද සෑහීමට පත් විය හැකි පිළිතුරු ලැබුන බව පිලිගනිමි.	ඔව් / නැත
ඕනෑම අවස්ථාවක මාගේ කැමැත්ත පරිදි ඉවත් විය හැකි බව තේරුම් ගනිමින් මම පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණ සඳහා සහභාගී වීමට එකඟතාවය පළ කරමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මෙම පර්යේෂණයේ දත්ත ආරූඪ නාමකරණය යටතේ ප්‍රකාශයට පත් විය හැකි බවට එකඟ වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මම මගේ පන්ති කාමර නිරීක්ෂණය ශ්‍රව්‍ය-දෘශ්‍ය පටිගත කිරීමට හා පිටපත් කිරීමට එකඟ වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත
මම වයස අවුරුදු 18ට වඩා වැඩි පුද්ගලයෙක් වෙමි.	ඔව් / නැත

සහභාගීවන්නා: .... දිනය: ....

පර්යේෂක: .... දිනය: ....

28/08/2021

I certify this is an accurate Sinhala translation of the *Consent Form for Student Participants of Classroom Observation.*

Dr Thilantha Dammalage

Appendix L: Observation schedule

Observation Schedule

University: A/B/C
No. of students in the class:
Duration:
Details of the Lecturer:

Pseudonym: Level: Senior/Junior
Age: Gender: M/F

	Indicators	Frequency
1. Managing language anxiety		
2. Evoking positive emotions of the students		

Appendix M: Observation points

Observation Points

University: A/B/C
No. of students in the class:
Duration:
Details of the Lecturer:

Pseudo name: Level: Senior/Junior
Age: Gender: M/F

Observation Point	Indicators	Yes √	No X	N/A O	Comments
Student	1. Squirming in the seat and/or fidgeting				
	2. Playing with the hair, clothes, pens, etc.				
	3. Avoiding eye contact				
	4. Appear jittery & nervous				
	5. Head orientation				
	6. Less facial pleasantness				
	7. Sweaty				
	8. Less animation and/or Freezing up				
	9. Trembling and shaky voices				
	10. Stuttering and/or stammering				
	11. Distorting sounds				
	12. Forgetting				
	13. Refusing to speak				
	14. Remaining silent even when asked to speak				
	15. Avoiding activities in the class				
	16. Short answer responses				
	17. Nervous laughter				
	18. Pretending to be busy with note taking				
	19. Showing no interest in the activity				
Teacher	20. No sense of humour				
	21. Not friendly				
	22. Not helpful				
	23. Not understanding				

	24. Has a negative & unpleasant appearance				
	25. Impatient and stressed				
	26. Harsh overt correction				
	27. Over-react to mistakes				
	28. Make students feel uncomfortable				
	29. Students are called on to answer				
	30. Favouring high proficient learners				
	31. Doesn't encourage students to speak				
	32. Doesn't appreciate students				
	33. Doesn't smile				
	34. Doesn't explain the material well				
	35. Doesn't give pair or group work or games				
	36. Doesn't give positive feedback				
	37. Doesn't give enough time to practice and/or wait-time				
Classroom climate	38. Formal, stressful atmosphere				
	39. Students are competitive				
	40. Teacher's biased, unequal treatment for students				
	41. Students are less cooperative in groups and attention seeking				
	42. Humiliation among peers				
	43. Peers are not supportive or helpful				

Appendix N: Consent form for teacher-participants in classroom observation

CONSENT FORM

for Teacher Participants in Classroom Observation

Research Project: Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

I,……………………………………………………………………………, have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Observation and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.	Yes/No
I agree to participate in this observation, realising that I may withdraw at any time.	Yes/No
I agree that research data gathered for the study may be quoted and published using a pseudonym.	Yes/No
I agree to having the classroom observation video recorded and transcribed.	Yes/No
I am 18 years of age or older.	Yes/No

……………………………… ……………………………
Participant Date

……………………………… ……………………………
Researcher Date

Appendix O: Information sheet for teacher-participants in classroom observation

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351

Australia
Phone 02 6773 3716

INFORMATION SHEET

for Teacher Participants in Classroom Observation

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project, described below.

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Research Project	**Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities**
Aim of the Research	The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.
Classroom Observation	I would like to observe one of your ESL classes online. If you consent, I will make a video recording of the classroom session for the research purposes.
Confidentiality	Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable.
Participation is Voluntary	Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation.
Use of Information	I will use information from the interviews and observation as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the observation may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.
Upsetting Issues	It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233).

School of Education
University of New England
Armidale NSW 2351

Australia

Phone 02 6773 3716

Storage of Information	I will keep all hardcopy notes, audio and video recordings in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of New England's School of Education. Any electronic data will be kept on the UNE Zoom cloud named AARNet Cloud Recordings. When recording on Zoom using a UNE login, the data will automatically be uploaded to this Cloud. Consequently, in addition to the research team, UNE team who centrally manage the Zoom cloud will have access to data. The electronic data will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.
Disposal of Information	All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.
Approval	This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No………, Valid to ../../….).
Researchers' Contact Details	Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874. You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.
Complaints	Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact: Bethany Ayers HREC Secretary Research Ethics Office Research Services University of New England Armidale, NSW 2351 Tel: +61 2 6773 3715 Email: humanethics@une.edu.au Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you. regards, Iromi Weerakoon

Appendix P: Sample online open-ended questionnaire

Q14.

My name is Iromi Weerakoon and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Education at the University of New England. My supervisors are Dr Zuocheng Zhang and Dr Vegneskumar Maniam.

Reseach Project

Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language learners in Sri Lankan state universities

Aim of the Research

The research aims to explore the main sources of Language Anxiety (LA) in ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication and investigate techniques for managing LA while boosting learners' resilience.

Online Questionnaire

I would like to administer a questionnaire to you via Qualtrics. The survey will take approximately 20-minutes to complete.

Confidentiality

Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential. No individual will be identified by name in any publication of the results. All names will be replaced by pseudonyms; this will ensure your anonymity. If you agree I would like to quote some of your responses. This will also be done in a way to ensure that you are not identifiable. Should participants elect to provide an email address for possible participation in a further stage of the study, this information will also remain confidential and will not be used for any other purpose than that for which it is collected.

Participation is Voluntary

Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation. If you do decide to participate in the research, you can withdraw up until you submit the survey.

Questions

The questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of LA experienced by ESL learners of Sri Lankan state universities, especially when they engage in oral communication.

Use of Information

I will use information from the questionnaire survey as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in December 2022. Information from the survey may also be used in academic journal articles, scholarly books and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.

Upsetting Issues

It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact Mrs. Nadeera Jayathunga, Psychological Counsellor of "Sith Arana" Counselling Center, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Department of Social Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka (0718898233).

Storage of Information

To access Qualtrics, UNE login will be used. Consequently, all the data will automatically be updated to UNE's cloud server. Therefore, in addition to the research team, those who centrally manage the cloud will have access to all the electronic data. It will also be kept on a password protected computer in the same location.

Disposal of Information

All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files on both UNE's cloud server and research teams computers. Data will also be removed from Qualtrics once it has been analysed. Any hard copies of the data will be shredded and disposed of in confidential bins at UNE.

Approval

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No HE21-067, Valid to 26/05/2022).

Researchers' Contact Details

Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research by email at rweerako@myune.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3874.
You may also contact my supervisors. My Principal supervisor's name is Dr Zuocheng Zhang and he can be contacted by email at zzhang26@une.edu.au or by phone on +61 2 6773 3362 and my Co-supervisor's name is Dr. Vegneskumar Maniam and his email address is vmaniam@une.edu.au and phone number is +61 2 6773 2509.

Complaints

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

Bethany Ayers
HREC Secretary
Research Ethics Office
Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Tel: +61 2 6773 3715
Email: humanethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

Regards,
Iromi Weerakoon

Q11.

Online Implied Consent for Participants

Research Project:
Towards a classroom model for managing language anxiety of English as a Second Language (ESL) Learners in Sri Lankan state universities

- I have read the information contained in the Information Sheet for Participants and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
- I agree to participate in this study, with the understanding that:
    - My participation is voluntary,
    - My contribution is anonymous,

- Information concerning my identity will be unidentifiable as explained in the information page, and
- I may withdraw at any time without consequences & without follow-up.

- I agree that the anonymous research data collected for the study will form part of a thesis and may be published, or presented at conferences as a later date.
- I agree that I may be quoted using a pseudonym.
- I am 18 years of age or older.
- In preservation of anonymity, I understand that no name or signature is required of me to give consent. By activating the PROCEED button below I am agreeing to the above and also to participate in this study.

. Gender

- ○ Male
- ◉ Female

. Age

- ○ 20-29 years
- ◉ 30-39 years
- ○ 40-49 years
- ○ 50 years or more

. Designation

- ○ Temporary Lecturer
- ○ Probationary Lecturer
- ○ Confirmed Lecturer
- ○ Senior Lecturer
- ○ Professor
- ○ Senior Professor
- ◉ Other (Please specify) Visiting lecturer

. Highest Qualification

- ◉

BA

- ○ MA
- ○ MPhil
- ○ PhD
- ○ Other (Please specify)

. Years of experience as an ESL teacher in higher education sector of Sri Lanka

- ○ Less than a year
- ○ 1 to 5 years
- ◉ 6 to 10 years
- ○ 11 to 15 years
- ○ 16 to 20 years
- ○ 21 to 25 years
- ○ Other (Please specify)

Q1. **What do you understand language anxiety to be?** ***(Question 1 of 5)***

The unease, worry, fear or uncomfortable feeling a second language learner might have with regards to the fluency, language ability, knowledge of their own, on the language they learn.

Q2. **What do you think are the causes for the language anxiety your students experience while speaking in English?** ***(Question 2 of 5)***

lack of exposure/ lack of confidence/ Lack of use/ misconception/ misunderstandings and some times bad personal exoerience

Q3. **What do you do to help your students feel less anxious and perform better in classroom speaking activities? *(Question 3 of 5)***

At the start of a class saying/ speaking/ to them, so that they are less afraid to talk. What I say could be motivational/ encouraging and even inspiring enough to let them understand that they can talk with all their mistakes. I ask them the exact question if the reason for their silence is shyness. And even tell them they should be proud enough to being able to handle 1 language already and moving on with another. I tell them nobody really judges them and to do away with the mental barriers. And I show them that they make sense to me even when they speak with a lot of mistakes. i don't jump at their mistakes. Keep them at ease, appriciate and encourage when the more silent students speak at all.

Q4. **Can you briefly explain the role socio-cultural factors (e.g., attitudes and beliefs of the society towards English and its speakers, sub-culture of the university) play in ESL students' language anxiety? *(Question 4 of 5)***

Major. As I said I have asked the very question, why they do not speak, and they have said "shy" or "afraid". Actual words they used. I have asked them then is it because they think that if they speak up, their mistakes will be noticed by the others and those"others" will laugh at them/ judge them? The answer has always been "yes". So yes, students do not know who these others are, I believe it is the society, and it's attitudes. it really stops the students from using the language. In the SL context English is referred as "Kaduwa' the sword. Which is used to slash. So the idea of not being fluent in English really cuts them off the acceptable/ posh/ able crowd really hangs there affecting the language use of students. On the other hand the fluent crowd is looked as posh/ talented/ smarter/ able and even richness is associated to them. There is jealousy. There is an obvious gap or a distance among some of the fluent and no fluent students.

Q5. **If keeping students in a positive mental state is important in the language learning process, what do you do to make them feel positive in ESL classrooms of Sri Lankan state universities? *(Question 5 of 5)***

Accept them with all their mistakes. Put them at ease. Share stories of students/ people who have excelled in language who had difficulties at the begining/ Encourage students/ doing confidence building activities./ Specialy if a rather silent student speak up at all give desrving attention to what he/she says and use their answer often in the class just to show them that their opinion matters and to show that we can understand him/her even with errors. The students are aware of their mistakes or rather know they have mistakes. What I do is, when they attempt to talk I make them realize I only hear their opinion and not the mistakes. But I also give the correct input in a subtle way. Like correct the sentence and write it in the board/ screen later. and tell them nobody judges them. Ask them has anybody ever pass judgments on them. Basically attack the mental barrier in ways they they can not ignore. I let them realize that more than the social issue it is a personal issue and ultimate blame is on them if they keep distancing the language because of the others.

Q15. **Please indicate your preference to the following:**

The next stage of this study requires a recorded 90-minute ZOOM interview. This would be undertaken at a convenient time suggested by you.

◉ I would be willing to participate in the next stage of the study

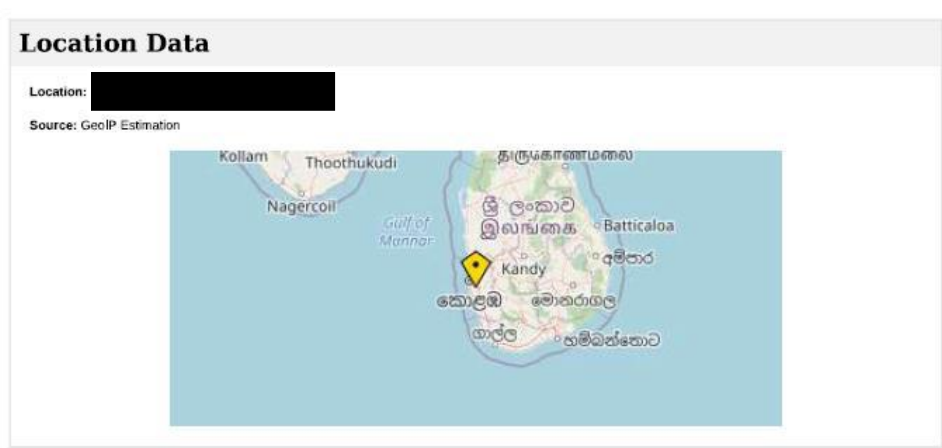
○ I do not wish to be involved in the next stage of the study.

Q16. **Please provide your email address below so that you may be contacted to organise participation in the next stage of the study.**

Please note that this information is separate to the survey, will remain confidential and will not be used for any other purposes than for making contact in preparation for a ZOOM interview.

The participants for the next stage of the study will be purposively selected in 2021 and notified in due course. Thank you for offering further support to this study.

Please add your official email address in the box below.



Appendix Q: Sample teacher interview transcript

The in-depth interview held with Amanda from University B

Iromi Weerakoon: Good afternoon, my name is Iromi Weerakoon. I'm a researcher from the University of New England, and I'm conducting a study on language anxiety among undergraduates at Sri Lankan state universities. Please note that any personal information you provide will be confidential, and you will not be identified by name in any publication of the results. If you agree, I would like to quote some of your responses, and this will be done in a way that ensures you are unidentifiable.

The questions I asked do not have a sensitive nature, and they are generally aimed at enhancing my knowledge of language anxiety and my Sri Lankan undergraduates.

I use this information as part of my doctoral thesis. The information collected may also be used in academic journals and at conference presentations. The data from the study will be kept for a minimum of five years at the University of New England, and after five years, it will be destroyed.

Are there any questions you would like to ask me about the interview or the research?

Amanda: No, we can just go ahead.

Have you read the information sheet for participants?

Amanda: Yes, I did.

Iromi Weerakoon: Great, let's start the interview then.

……………………………...*INTERVIEW BEGINS*…………………………………….

Iromi Weerakoon: How would you describe yourself as a teacher, what kind of a teacher are you?

Amanda: I'm quite laid back and sort of fun, I would say, compared to most teachers we have, especially at the university. So, I don't have a lot of rules in my class; it's a very relaxed atmosphere for most of my kids, and I usually have relationships with them, I mean connections with them outside the classroom. They call me and text me for whatever personal problems they have. So, I think of myself as a very relaxed teacher.

Iromi Weerakoon: As a relaxed teacher, have you ever gone through classroom management issues?

Amanda: I actually have not, interestingly, I don't know why because I've always been teaching either teenagers or adults. I've taught very young kids, like, maybe two or three times or so, but teaching teenagers and adults, I've never had a problem where it was difficult for me to manage. I mean, where it got really out of hand, and I had to ask for somebody's help or something like that. I've never had a situation like that, but there are some instances where, you know, the class is a little too loud, or I personally think of it as a good thing; I mean, the kids need to enjoy themselves first and then start learning. So, I think some other teachers might look at it as a problem situation, whereas I don't see it as a problem situation.

3. Iromi Weerakoon: How would you describe your learners, what is your perception about your learners, like do they have positive or negative attitudes towards English learning?

Amanda: It depends, I guess, from student to student. You can't really say that all students have positive attitudes. Especially when it comes to university, there are a lot of students who don't really want to be in this classroom. That's why I think we have to try a little extra to make that a sort of like a favourable place for them to come to because CEL [Core English Language] is not something that they, you know, willingly come to. I mean, especially language students enjoy the CEL classes a lot. If you think about our literature students, literature lectures are very stressful, so they come to CEL classes, say, to sort of wind down and relax, but it's not the same for all students.

Iromi Weerakoon: Why do you say that they do not come willingly?

Amanda: Yeah, because of especially attendance. Earlier, we had this problem where they had to have 80% attendance to sit for exams. At that moment, it went away. Most kids don't know that, but some know that they might have some problems if their 80% is not there. It's really, really difficult to get boys to the CEL lecture, and now it's worse because we are doing it on ZOOM. I've had to call them multiple times. They have personal other issues as well, but they also lack the motivation. Because they are more motivated to go for their subject lectures like Economics. This takes a lot of time to learn, and I think that's why they're scared of the language, so that has to have an effect on it as well.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you have mixed-ability students in your classes?

Amanda: Definitely; although we do give a placement test at the beginning of undergraduate life, we don't really categorize the students based on that. So we have a very mixed-ability, not just mix-ability; everything is mixed culturally and socially.

Iromi Weerakoon: What is your attitude towards it? Do you think it is a better way of grouping the students rather than same-ability, or what do you think?

Amanda: I have mixed feelings about this because if it was an ideal classroom where the other kids help each other and engage in activities very willingly, in such a situation, having a mixed-ability classroom would be ideal. But we're teaching to almost like not young adults but not full adults, somewhere in between. They have a lot of ego clashes as well, and sometimes it can be difficult to get them to work together, in which case I feel like if we had [same-] ability groups, then we could sort of play a bigger role in that two-hour three-hour period that we have.

We meet them only for about three hours a week, and we have to cater to all the students at one time. So, we don't have time, and we have around 50 students in a class, sometimes 60. Because of that, it's very difficult to pay attention to each student and what they need to do, whereas if it was students of the same level of knowledge if we call it, then it would make it a little easier for us. With our Translation and English students, we literally had nothing to do because they finished their activities within five minutes. But for some of the weaker ones, I wouldn't like to call them so, but yeah, they take a longer time to finish up the activities. So I personally, for our situation, would like it if they were [same-] ability classes.

Iromi Weerakoon: How do you begin your lectures, like singing songs, small talk or what?

Amanda: Definitely small talk. I tend to chat a lot with them. They know a lot about me, I think, and I know a lot about them and their personal life as well. So, we tend to chat a lot at the beginning, especially talking about what was studied the previous day. So, I think small talk.

Iromi Weerakoon: From your point of view, what is an ideal classroom? How should the students and teachers behave? What kind of a physical environment or a seating arrangement should it have?

Amanda: An ideal classroom, for me, I think, would be the lack of a physical classroom. I personally don't like the structure that we have at the university; it doesn't get the students to be creative; it's like they come and sit in that little chair with a small table attached to it. Now we are going into this content and language-integrated learning where English is integrated into other subjects, which is, I think, better because they understand the purpose of learning English that way. That is related to their degree program, so they feel motivated to do it. So, ideally, like Sunny [another teacher-participant who participated in in-depth interviews of this study] also says, if we could just keep them outside of a classroom at all times and just immerse them in activities and situations where they have to use the language that would be my ideal classroom.

Iromi Weerakoon: What professional development activities do you regularly participate in? workshops, seminars?

Amanda: There's a lot of workshops happening. To be honest, it's getting a little annoying as well. We have this AHEAD project, as I said, and then every department sort of organizes workshops. Some of them are really good, but some tend to be a little repetitive because they say there's no sort of triangulation. So, the same topic is covered by our department, and then Languages again. So, there are a lot of workshops happening. I'm not entirely sure how effective all of them are, but I do engage in a lot of workshops.

Iromi Weerakoon: How does your class behave when you ask them to do a speaking activity?

Amanda: There's a group, of course, five or six of them who actually would volunteer and sort of like start the speaking activity or something. Yeah, it's very difficult to get some of the students to speak, especially. If it's a reading activity or a writing activity, they would actually do it somehow or even listen. But when it comes to speaking, there are a lot of other things that come into play as well. So, it's very difficult, and I've noticed that if it's just one-on-one with or if it's just me and the student, it's very easy to get them to talk. Otherwise, it's very difficult to get the weaker students to speak. I've noticed it.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you mean that when there's an audience, it's very difficult to make some students speak?

Amanda: Yeah, and one thing I really don't like is that when we want to test speaking, what we ask our students to do is a speech in front of an audience. So, that's very different, that is public speaking. Public speaking is very different from the speaking that happens generally, speaking to one or two or three people, which is what happens most of the time outside. Public speaking calls for another set of skills, no? So anxiety is a little higher, they have this performance factor that comes in. But we in Sri Lanka tend to test speaking like that because that's the easiest way for us because we don't have a lot of teachers and invigilators. So, this is the go-to method to test speaking. Personally, I'm not a big fan of it, and I think we need to understand that a student might be able to speak really well in a sort of relaxed environment, but they might have other anxieties when it comes to public speaking. So, we can't really test and tell that their speaking is not good just because their presentation skills are not good.

Iromi Weerakoon: In such a situation, what would you suggest?

Amanda: It's better if we can use this Cambridge approach, where you take at least two students and give them a task, and they have to engage in discussion, and then we assess them. But the problem is all the practical problems we have: the time and

the number of paid invigilators. So, because of that, it's very difficult for us. Even now, although we call it alternative assessments, what we get them to do is to join the Zoom session and do a three-to-five-minute speech, and we test their speaking, which I personally don't think captures what speaking essentially is.

Iromi Weerakoon: So, what you really mean is that when some students speak in front of an audience, they get anxious, and their performance is really weak. Am I right?

Amanda: Yes, even the really good students who really don't have to worry about their grammar and vocabulary. When it comes to making a speech or making a presentation, they still get agitated because I guess we look for certain things in the presentation.

Iromi Weerakoon: If you have something else to add, according to your knowledge and experiences, what makes the students anxious to speak in English in class other than the facts that you mentioned earlier?

Amanda: So, their ego comes into play a lot, especially boys don't like. I mean, maybe it's because we think of English as not just another language. There is a lot of cultural baggage that comes into English. We assume that if you are a good speaker of English, you are smart, you are privileged, and you have a more comfortable life. That's the attitude we have about English in Sri Lanka. When you showcase that your English is not good, they sort of reveal a lot about yourself, not just the fact that you can't speak a language. If it comes to French or German, which we also have, which they learn so much later in life, if it was any other foreign language, the kids wouldn't be this anxious. As you know, I've learned French myself, so I remember in French classes, we didn't have this anxiety as much as it came to English. So that ego problem is there.

When we speak English or our accent or the words that we use are not just our language knowledge but our social background as well. So, because of that, I feel like this, especially the boys and even some of the girls don't like to embarrass themselves. They look at it as an embarrassment if they make a mistake. So even on Zoom, now we've been doing speaking activities, I find students who have a phone on the side and sort of read it out to us. You know, they try to fool us; of course, they can't. But that is because they want to portray this image of themselves through this language, which I find to be very unfair and unnecessary, but that's the situation in the country.

Especially there's this English medium, Sinhala medium problem is also there, no? So, a lot of English-medium kids, by the end of the second year or second semester, can manage their presentation, and their speaking is much better. But the Sinhala medium students still tend to stay at the same level, not the same level; they would improve, but not as much. However, the language experience they get is the same in the CEL classroom. But the confidence that they get by listening to other English

speakers and other English speakers making mistakes, I guess their lecturers are making mistakes and still talking in English, I think that has a lot to do with the English medium students improving a little bit faster than the Sinhala medium students.

Iromi Weerakoon: When you notice such misconceptions about the English language, what do you do?

Amanda: On the very first day, I have, let's say, a set of things that I let my students know, no matter what their age is. Number one, I try to explain to them that English is just another language, and number two, I even draw that continuum and say that if you make a mistake, that only proves that you actually are improving. Your brain has the capacity to learn the language, that's how you learn your first language. If your brain doesn't learn the language, that's your fault; you're not giving it enough input, you're not giving it enough time to listen to English songs, watch English movies, or watch TV series. So, I try to explain it to them at the beginning, works for some and doesn't really work for some, but that is the thing that I do at first.

And in the middle, when they still get stuck, I mean if it's in the physical classroom, you can coax them, you know, you can make jokes and defuse the situation if there's tension building up if the kid is feeling anxious, you can pair them, you know, there are different skills that you can use. But with Zoom, it has been very difficult to get them to speak because most of the kids don't turn their video on, and we can't ask them to because there's a lot happening in their homes as well.

Iromi Weerakoon: They don't switch on the cameras?

Amanda: They don't, it's really annoying. I get my TESL students to somehow turn the cameras on, but when you have 50 kids, it's not like you can really go there and get them to turn the video. So, it's very difficult, and I know for a fact, now we've been doing speaking tests, so some of the students have to go to a road because they don't have signals. Sometimes, they need to go outside to the garden, and there are people working around them. So, we can't really ask them to turn the video on also.

Iromi Weerakoon: Other than those factors, what are the other learner-related factors that make them anxious?

Amanda: I think their motivation also matters, and there are different things that scare different students. Some are afraid of making mistakes, some just don't like making presentations, and they have stage fright and whatnot. I remember this very well; it is one of the things that bothered me a lot. It was when I first started working at Sabaragamuwa. I'm usually very friendly with kids, and I don't have issues with them. I mean, if I asked them to speak, chances are they would at least take 5-10 minutes and, in the end, somehow do the speech. Because they have to, it's sort of

like respect for me, so they don't want to say no to me, so they would at least do that. There was one student who had come from Jaffna or Mannar, and her Sinhala was also really bad, and she didn't speak English as well; I could not obviously speak Tamil. So, I had to talk to her. I have a tendency to resort to my L1 [Sinhala] very slightly, and I don't want to do it a lot, but very rarely, I also do it. But for this kid, actually, there was not a lot I could do because I didn't know her language [Tamil], so it was very difficult for me to get her to speak; she actually didn't speak a single sentence. So, I finally asked her to say at least one word. I asked her questions that she could answer using only one word, and still, she couldn't respond. That bothered me a lot because we live in a multicultural society and have multicultural classrooms; we need to know the L1s of all the kids; otherwise, it can have adverse effects.

Iromi Weerakoon: What are the classroom factors that make students anxious?

Amanda: I think the vibe of the classroom matters a lot. If it's like a very serious classroom. Anyway, our lecture rooms are arranged in this theatre format, where they just sit in rows. So, if they sit in groups or in pairs and if it's not just one person who has to come up and speak, and if they can come as a group and do a presentation or whatever activity that they are doing, I think it will be a little bit better.

And the fact that we have corridors on both sides of the classroom, and when you do an activity in the classroom, it's visible for everybody out there. They don't really mind doing activities, and they would laugh and all, but when they go to the second year, they are very conscious about how they look to their Juniors, I guess, so they don't want to engage in activities that they will have to actively engage. They tend not to, especially adult students; they don't like doing activities where they have to actively maybe run around and, you know, use a lot of gestures in a drama or something like that.

Iromi Weerakoon: In that case, Amanda, if we, as you said, you have an ideal classroom in your mind, right? If we implement something like that, what will happen?

Amanda: But I think if we start them with the absence of a classroom, then anyways they have to get used to it, they will get used to it. But now we have them in a very controlled area. When we get them to do activities, they are very conscious about it now. If we are using a classroom where there is no physical classroom, it's not just the absence of the physical classroom that we need to change; we must change the syllabus, the examination system and the entire way we look at education needs to change. And I think that will, hopefully, influence the kids to look at their education in a new light as well. But now that we are very exam-oriented, they don't really see the importance of practising speaking because it's only this semester that we started testing speaking for the final exam because we are doing the alternative assessments. So, it's very difficult to get them to practice speaking because we don't test it at the end of the day.

Iromi Weerakoon: You have been talking about the physical environment of the classroom. How about the teacher? Do you think the teacher can influence students' anxiety?

Amanda: I think, of course, I think, because I remember. When looking back on my life as a student, of course, I don't think my kids feel anxious; if anything, they feel a little too relaxed in my classrooms, I think. I feel that they are very relaxed in my classes, but during my student life, there were situations where, because of the teacher, I hated some subjects, especially Mathematics and Science. I think that's why I came towards the language side: I hated my 6th, 7th, and 8th Science and Mathematics teachers. They can have an effect on you, obviously, if you like, especially if it's younger learners. If it's adult learners, of course, I think it's a little bit better because they have other objectives of attending lessons. They have a goal at the end of the day, to get the degree and you know things like that, but if it's little kids it really matters a lot, even the colour of your saree, whether you put lipstick on, whether you have long hair or short yeah even those things matter when it comes to teaching kids, and if you're not a very friendly teacher and if you have a very courteous relationship with the kids I think the kids don't feel relaxed to speak up or make mistakes or things like that, and the way you respond to their errors also.

Iromi Weerakoon: Let's go into detail. When it comes to university students, what teacher characteristics will make them anxious?

Amanda: So I think especially they don't like to get humiliated, so if you pick on a student, even though it might be for a fair reason and mistake, there should be a way to explain that to them. You should understand what errors you need to actually pay attention to; if it's a very weak student, do you correct all their errors, or do you just stick to the major errors? If it's a very weak student, if that student at least does a speech, whether it has like 100 errors, I really don't like to disturb them. I just let them do their speech and, in the end, discuss major errors that they might have made without picking on every error that they would have made because that can demotivate them a lot. But if it's a very good student, good as in more skilled student, I would tell them what they are good at, and then pick on the little errors that they do as well because they have gone a long way, and they need to improve, we need to look at their mistakes as well and let them know. But there's a way to do it. So that is very important.

Kids love it if you remember their names, especially in the first sitting. It's the same for every student. At the university, there are only their surnames on all of my attendance sheets. So, I have written down their first name and only talk to them in their first name. I tend to ask them which name they like. Personally, I would like to be called by my surname rather than my first name. So, I have experience, because of that, I ask them and write it down. I don't know. I have been repeatedly told by my senior lecturers and teachers that we need to have distance from the students, and they have given different reasons as well. But personally, I have not listened to that

advice until now, and I haven't really faced any major issues either. The students have my phone number; I mean, most of the lecturers don't like to share their personal phone numbers with the students. I've never had a situation. When I was an undergraduate, I had a lecturer who didn't share his personal phone number at all, and we had to make an appointment beforehand to meet him and get things clarified. And that's very tense, even in the lecture hall, I remember, we have to be very conscious about how everything looks, you know, how we are sitting and everything. So, I really hated it, and I feel like if it was not the case, I would have enjoyed literature lessons a lot more because that's a very enjoyable subject. But, because of that, I've made it a point to change it so my kids have my personal number, so they can call or text me. The relationship, I think, matters a lot in the classroom. Unlike teenage students who really don't know where the limit is when it comes to how to behave in a classroom, with adult undergraduate kids they know what their limits are. They know, no matter how friendly we are, what sort of a relationship they need to have with us. So, it has never been a problem for me. I think the friendlier, the better in a classroom.

Iromi Weerakoon: What are the out-of-class factors that make students anxious?

Amanda: So, the way we look at English in the first place has a lot to do with it because, as I explained earlier also, English is not just a language in Sri Lanka. It's a social status marker, and it tells you how intelligent you are, what sort of an upbringing you've had, and how privileged you have been. So, because of that, there's a lot of baggage that comes with English. That plays a major role. And ragging also, I feel like it's getting a little better now. Earlier, when we were students, we couldn't speak in English, and there was a whole jing bang around speaking in English. But Sunny [another teacher-participant who participated in in-depth interviews of this study] has, I think, worked a lot, talked to student unions, and, you know, gone right into the problem and tried to fix it a little bit. I don't think they have gone to the extent where they asked the students to speak in English, but even if they do speak in English, I think now it's getting a little bit better. And most of the students really don't have time and effort to bother with ragging, it's like a small group of kids who actually do this, so I think it's getting better with the years.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you think these societal attitudes towards English affect our students' anxiety?

Amanda: Yeah, it definitely should, because especially when it comes to language, it's not that they use it just in the classroom, no? If it was any other subject, knowledge, if you are good at that subject or not, is only reflected in the classroom. But your language, how good you are in your language, obviously gets reflected outside also, no? And now even some of the ESL students, I'm very sad to say, we have, some I mean, they don't have like I wouldn't call it perfect grammar but acceptable grammar. We have students who don't have acceptable grammar. So,

when they go outside and say that they are a graduate of whatever university, there is a certain level of language that is expected from them. So, I guess when they can't live up to that, it becomes a very anxious situation for them as well; so, oh yeah, I've forgotten your question.

Iromi Weerakoon: No worries. Please explain about the societal attitudes and their influence on students' English learning and their anxiety.

Amanda: Yeah, if you don't, if you can't speak English or if you can't speak proper English, that's looked like an embarrassment by society. So, if you are posh, your English should be good. I think it definitely translates into the classroom. That is one reason why they do not want to engage in activities which will show their weaknesses to the other kids and even to their lecturer. Because you know what your language level is. So, it definitely influences how the students behave in the classroom, and then there are certain kids who believe in this very pure language. For example, if you are a Sinhalese, your Sinhala needs to be perfect, and if you are Tamil, your Tamil needs to be perfect. Some of them look at English as a threat to them. So that also, I think, is a problem. It's rare to see students who are good in both languages. Most of the kids who come to us with really good language when they come to the university are mostly English literature students [those who sat for English Literature paper at GCE A/L examination]. So, their Sinhala or Tamil might not be as good as their English because they have been growing up with English for at least two to three years. So, I think it can definitely have an effect on how you behave in a classroom.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you think those judgmental attitudes in society actually affect our students' speaking in the classroom?

Amanda: Yeah, because I don't think that it motivates the students. Because you might feel like if they get negative feedback from outside, the kids might be motivated to learn the language. But I have never seen a situation where, because of the experience that they've had to go through outside the classroom, they feel motivated to practice speaking. Instead, if they are praised, rather than being sort of discriminated against if whatever language they can speak is seen as an advantage, that might help them. In Sri Lanka, knowing English very well is an advantage, but knowing it a little is more disadvantageous than not knowing it at all, I think. So that is, I think, a very bad situation, but I think to change that, we need to change the system a lot. I think it's definitely getting better in the years to come because of this TV and the Internet, and the kids have, I guess, more equal access, not like equal, but more equal than what we used to have to the language. So, I think that is a little better now.

Iromi Weerakoon: How do you identify a student who is anxious?

Amanda: It becomes very obvious from the body language. If they're speaking, they tend to look around a lot or play with their nails or play with their hair and the confidence that they project is very low, and they take a lot of time to sort of formulate ideas in their head.

The worst thing is when a very good student might forget a word or might not get ideas as fast as they should; they don't feel anxious about it; they would just take it as Okay, let me think, and then they would move on. But if it's a weak student to whom that happens, if they forget a word, or if they forget an idea, they tend to apologise a lot, and I've noticed that they will say, "I'm sorry, ma'am, I'm sorry". I'm like, it's Okay; you can take your time and think and continue. But they tend to think of it as a failure on their part. I mean, even now, even being an English lecturer, I still forget certain words. It's not our first language, so I still find situations where I need to stop and think about an idea before I say it out loud. But, if it's a weaker student, they tend to take it as a personal fault of their own.

Iromi Weerakoon: How do you make the students speak, especially the ones who are reluctant to speak? Do you grade the students in such cases as a strategy to make them speak?

Amanda: I don't think I have ever graded the students to make them speak because I think the grades come to them much later in our university system. The grades only come later. I think maybe that's why I haven't tried that specific technique of giving them marks as a way of motivating them, but one thing I recently did was now I had been doing speaking activities, and I've had kids who tend to look at the Internet, and you know readout a speech or something like that. But there, I've directly confronted them. I asked them, so you've done this, and they would accept, and I would give them a second chance and sort of give them probably extra provisions as well without trying to make them feel bad because, of course, they understand that it's wrong, they knew that it was wrong when they did it. So, we don't need to explain things to them or make them feel humiliated; that's not necessary. So, I try my best to make them feel comfortable, and even when I personally message them, I make sure that no other student in the meeting hears what I talk to them about when I confront them. It is not just the language that we need to improve; there's a value system that comes with it, and even if it's not a language, whatever you teach, if the kids are not doing something right, we can't just pretend that you know, okay they did the speech somehow and that job, that part is over like that we can't just stay. So, we need to address that, but we need to find the proper ways of doing that. And if they are in the classroom physically, I tend to give them as much time as they require to get prepared for the speech, whether it's a very weak student or a weak class. So, they would take as much time as necessary to get prepared, and I would always provide them with the vocabulary that they would need to do a speaking activity if there are any subject-specific or certain words that might help them. And if they get stuck somewhere in the middle, I try not to disturb them when they are doing their speech. So, I would let them do the speech and try not to disturb them at all, and it's only at the end of the speech that we would discuss, you know, what the good

things, and most of the time, I would get the peers to comment on it first, and then, if there's anything to add I would comment and say you know, this could be improved, that could be improved. Probing questions helps a lot if they get stuck somewhere; you would ask a question to get them to think, or you know, things like that, so those are the techniques that I think I use.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you use your mother tongue in classes?

Amanda: I like to use it a lot more than I'm using now because, in the department, I think there's an agreement that we wouldn't use our mother tongue with the kids. It's not like a rule, but there is an understanding that we are not supposed to. Sunny hated it, and that's one thing that I didn't agree with him. That is one of the rarest things that I don't agree with him, I think.

Iromi Weerakoon: What I want to know is your own attitude, your own opinion?

Amanda: Yes, so if it was up to me, I think, depending on the student group once again. You need to resort to your L1 at the beginning of the course, at least until the students are familiar with you and know your teaching style and what sort of a person you are. That helps them relax, and you know it motivates them to come to the class. The total immersion is good, but not, I think, at the beginning until they get used to us at least and the classroom environment. I think using the L1 is important, but the problem is if I'm to use the L1, I need to know the L1s of all the students. Now, if I have at least one Tamil student, I can't speak in Sinhala to the rest of the class if I can't speak Tamil. Luckily, most of the Tamil kids that come to our classes also know at least a little bit of Sinhala; they at least understand, and so it makes our life a little bit better, but that's not an excuse for us.

Iromi Weerakoon: When you conduct face-to-face lectures, do you pay attention to their seating arrangements? Do they change the place they sit every day, or is it the same place that they sit every day?

Amanda: They tend to sit in the same place; they come and have this designated spot that they would sit in, at least a designated row and a side that they sit on either the right or the left. But when it comes to activities, I tend to sort of mix and match and get them to go here and there, so it doesn't really matter to us when it comes to activities. I group them anyway. And now we have this smart classroom concept. The classrooms are done, but we haven't had the opportunity to use them where the kids sit in groups. So the tables and chairs have been arranged that way. There's a smart board, and there are chairs and tables that you can move around. So, that's, I think, great, but we still haven't had the opportunity to use them.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you think teacher's dress has an impact on students' anxiety?

Amanda: anxiety? Attitudes definitely.

Iromi Weerakoon: yeah, attitudes and also maybe the rapport between the students and the teacher?

Amanda: yeah. I think, I don't know, I used to wear sarees in these other places where I worked, and I used to teach kids. And I used to teach adults as well. I'm not a fan of teachers having to wear a Saree or whatever that is prescribed to them, it shouldn't be that way. But thinking back, I think all my kids were close to me. Now I don't wear a saree at all. I will go in casual, but I used to wear a saree to NSBM as well, and I taught at a place as an undergraduate, even there with little kids. Personally, I haven't had that problem. But kids might look at you as a very progressive teacher if you're not in a Saree and might look at you as a more traditional teacher if you are in a Saree.

For men, I guess it doesn't really matter because they came in with a pair of pants and a top for them. But even now, most of the lecturers wear formal shirts and T-shirts. But my husband tends to just wear cotton. I think for them also that even that difference in material can have an effect on how the kids look at you. But with very young kids, I've noticed, they tend to like the colours and whatnot in the Sarees and like to play with the fall of the saree and whatnot. But for adult learners, I really don't think it makes a difference; for me, it hasn't made a difference. How you behave if the Saree restricts you is a problem. But if you don't really care about that and your movements are still free and all of that, I think it doesn't really matter.

Iromi Weerakoon: Because even if you wear a casual dress, you can still make a very stressful environment.

Amanda: Yes, exactly.

Iromi Weerakoon: How about the teacher's age?

Amanda: Well, in my university life, I don't think the age really mattered to me, or I'm not entirely sure if the students would look at the… Once again, there are very young teachers who are very strict, and they like to maintain some distance. There are senior lecturers who are very active and close with the kids. So, I think, especially with adult learners, age might not be a problem. It is just how bubbly you are as a teacher, how happy you make them, and how fun. I think that is very important; you can relate to adult and teenage kids by being appropriately funny in the classroom, and it helps them remember things as well. So, age really does not matter; just a matter of how or what your personality is in the classroom.

Iromi Weerakoon: It seems you believe in classroom humour a lot, right?

Amanda: Yes, I do. That is, I think because I was really relaxed, and I don't know, when I was small, I used to remember things based on the jokes. You tend to remember the jokes a little bit better, and that's why even in the presentations that I made, I included memes everyone commonly knows. They're very funny and relate with the kids a lot. I've even had to read certain books and, you know, watch certain movies and TV series just to relate to my kids a little bit better. So then, you know, a TV series that you can draw jokes from, you know, maybe it's Friends or How I Met

Your Mother or Big Bang Theory, so the kids know that. And if we don't really know that and we can't draw examples from those things, and we stick to "Nimal went to the temple" and you know those kinds of examples, it doesn't really make a difference.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you see a difference in your students? Do they grab the points better when you use humour and all that?

Amanda: I think there's a response; the response is much better. I'm not sure about the retention of it. For me personally, the retention is much higher when humour is there. For kids, I'm not sure, but the response is there. Without just giving them a traditional example, if we say, “You were taking a bath, and Goytabhaya Rajapaksha [the President of Sri Lanka by the time this interview was held] called you”, without saying Nimal called you, that could get the students' attention, rather than saying just Nimal called you. But I think it contributes to the larger sort of like the mood of the classroom. Even if students might not remember or might remember that specific example, yeah, it helps bring the tension down.

Iromi Weerakoon: How about the teacher's accent?

Amanda: I don't think we need to focus on the accent at all. One other thing that I didn't agree with Sunny. he's very big on accent, and I'm not a big fan of that idea at all. Because I mean English is already a global language, we don't need to stick to either the British or the American way of pronouncing words and phrases, and even in Britain, there's no right way of pronouncing I mean, in different regions, you speak in different ways and I'm just speaking English, whatever the way, as long as somebody else understands, I think.

Iromi Weerakoon: When a teacher speaks with a Western accent, do you think that can create anxiety in the classroom?

Amanda: I'm not sure if it creates anxiety, that definitely creates an awe in the students. If your accent is very British and the kids are like, oh my God, she has a British accent, or if you tend to pronounce your "t"s a little bit too much, you know, put a little bit more stress.

If you speak in the more Sri Lankan way, and if there's a student who has a sort of, you know, better accent than you in your classroom, it puts you in a really difficult position because the kids might look at it as that's how we need to speak it, but the teacher doesn't really speak it that way. That can be a problem, but I think when it comes to my attitudes about language, most of my kids are aware, I at least let them know that accent doesn't matter, and the choice of words doesn't really matter as long as you can find you know at least using gestures and two-three words, you can communicate to another person. I had the same attitude about grammar as well. I mean, people say that English teachers shouldn't say that grammar is not important; we are supposed to say that grammar is important, that is the most important thing. I've seen people who have really bad grammar but can still communicate quite well in English, so it doesn't really matter. And I give examples of these very famous people. I'm not sure if you're familiar with Kapila Rasnayaka. He is a social media sort of activist, an environment activist. His grammar is really bad, but he works with

a lot of foreigners and does a lot of promotion activities and whatnot. So, I showed his videos to the kids and let them know that his grammar was really bad, but it doesn't really matter, your confidence should not depend on how good your grammar is.

Iromi Weerakoon: Is there enough space to walk around the classroom?

Amanda: No, not at all; right now, we are in this theatre hall, sort of a classroom. So, if we put them into groups, we can find space here and there to walk around, but if they're doing individual activities, where they are just sitting in this lecture theatre mode, then we don't get the opportunity to walk around, and there's not enough space to walk around.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you like to walk and check their work, in other words, monitor them, or do you give the responsibility to the students themselves to decide whether to work or not, because they are adult learners after all?

Amanda: I have never thought of it in that way. I've never thought of it as, I mean, I do believe that students need to have some autonomy when it comes to learning, especially adult learners. I do use it a lot when it comes to designing activities, even designing assessments; I get the students to design the assessment, so in that case, I do practice a lot of student autonomy. But when it comes to doing an activity in the classroom, I've never allowed a student to not do an activity in the classroom. I have never thought of it in that way, now I think I should think a little. Because if they can't finish an activity, that's perfectly okay, but they need to at least try to do it. If they are coming and sitting in the classroom, they need to work, or we have the option of not attending.

Iromi Weerakoon: What is your attitude towards group/pair work? And how do you group them?

Amanda: Most of the time, randomly, because we have separate classrooms very rarely, I use ability groups as well, but then again, because we have only two hours or three hours per session, we don't have time to sort of, you know, spend a lot of time on how to group them. So, you would just say count from one to something and group them. And I think if the groups are smaller, the effect is much better, so having maybe three or four kids in one group is always better than having five or six students. I like using group activities, but overdoing it can also be a little annoying for the students. So, you need to find a balance; I mean, you cannot do just group work or just pair work which becomes very annoying to the students. Especially with my TESL [Teaching English as a Second Language] classes, I give them an option: if you want to work alone, you can work alone; if you want to work in a pair, you can do that. Otherwise, I'll put you into groups. So, I don't think working alone is a bad thing; that's also necessary. I think that you have time to reflect on your own when you work alone. So, it's a combination of all, I think, right? Teachers tend to use group

work as a way to spend time, which is why the kids [students] do not have a very favourable attitude towards group work. When we tend to group them, no matter how well we have planned and whether it is really important, they think, or they might think of us as we are just lacking and getting them to do some work. With such thinking, we cannot get the output that we wanted to get.

Iromi Weerakoon: What is your attitude towards Standard Sri Lankan English and non-standard Sri Lankan English?

Amanda: Still, Sri Lankan English has not made it into the classrooms as it should because most of the kids still don't even know that there is something called Sri Lankan English unless they are language learners, either TESL, English or Translation, some sort of like a student of that nature. So we need to, in a way, find ways to incorporate that into our syllabus and classrooms as well, and it needs to be done in the policymaking stage first and then come into the classroom; this is what I see. Now, we have the freedom to design lessons when it comes to the CEL classes, and even with my TESL students, I'm doing the Testing and Evaluation course unit, so they already know that Sri Lankan English is something that you can incorporate into test situations. And, even in the classroom, it doesn't really happen still; I mean, we obviously talk in Sri Lankan English even in the classroom, but we teach something that we think is the British version of English, although that might not be the case. It has to be like we have to take a step back, take a stance and say we are incorporating Sri Lankan English into our education and then start doing it that way. So, based on the teacher's perception, we can't change the CEL syllabus or the activities that we do, so we need to have a discussion about it and then decide on it. Otherwise, I might prefer that, and then I incorporate it into the teaching and another teacher who was teaching to different groups, like now, in our case, there are different groups, no? She might not incorporate it if she doesn't like it. That's not going to work.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do you think if we incorporate this Sri Lankan English into our lessons and make our students aware that there is a variety like this, that would clear the misconceptions of our students to a certain extent?

Amanda: To a certain extent, yes, I think getting the students to be educated about that can help a lot, but it wouldn't help as much unless the outside world also knows about it. Now, if we teach them Sri Lankan English and we say that it's Okay, and they go to an interview, and the interview panel is like, what is this English that you are talking about? I mean, it's not very obvious, but. Depending on the job that you apply for and what you want to do in life, the variety of English that you want to speak or need to speak might also change. Increasing that awareness in students can definitely help, I think because then they would know most of the things that they think of as mistakes don't really need to be thought of as mistakes. So that's great, and I think it will be a boost of confidence as well to know that, Okay, we have a variety of English, and it's an accepted variety of English. But it's sad that we had to

wait for a British man to come and put it into a dictionary, and now we are saying that it's Sri Lankan English. But still, I think that knowledge will help a lot.

Iromi Weerakoon: You said you have mixed ability groups in your classes, so in that case, when you find a student who is highly competent in English, do you think that the presence of that student makes the other students anxious to an extent?

Amanda: It intimidates them a lot, especially when we have a student who follows English or Translation as his/her major subject. It is obvious to everybody that their language is very good, and their speaking speed is very good. Because of that, other students might feel that those kids are judgmental about them and not tend to be motivated to speak because of their presence. That can be a problem. It is rare to find a kid who really does not care about what other people think. But with Zoom, I think it's getting a little better because the kids don't really know each other a lot. They don't meet physically. It's only during lectures that they see each other. So, I think it's a little better, and the kids tend to talk a little bit more. I see a very big difference between the students who started their work physically and then had to convert to Zoom and the kids who started from Zoom in the first year. Oh yeah, that's because the kids who are now in the existing first-year second-semester have only been in the university for one week or two weeks. So, they are much freer in the classroom, and they speak out, and they even attend special classes and are very motivated, and they don't find Zoom to be like a boring thing or you know anything something like that, rather the third year kids and the second year kids. They just keep on talking about the years that they are missing, and you know what they miss and not being with friends, and so, and they already know the kids, and they have the social hierarchies already established. Zoom can help a lot in that regard. Those who have never been physically present in the classroom tend to be a little bit freer among them, and it doesn't really matter to them with whom they interact, whereas they have friend clicks and whatnots when it comes to the second year, second semester.

Iromi Weerakoon: Is it because of this Zoom, or is it because the first years are not familiar with each other? They don't know who the audience is, really, the peers. Therefore, they are not anxious.

Amanda: Yeah, that's what I meant. yeah. That means if you know your audience, it can cause either anxiety or your confidence can be affected. The kids already know who the good English speakers are, and they have that awareness already among the people who are physically present. And because now, since they don't even turn the video on, for the first years, it's just a lot of voices that they hear, and they do respond to each other on Whatsapp and everything. The vibe is a little different between the two groups, and I find the first years who have never been to the University to be much more confident than the ones who were there physically, and I think that has a lot to do with this ragging business as well. So they have not been

ragged because of that, I think that can have an effect as well, and they have not been sort of brainwashed, and you know, even the very bubbly kids who come to the first year by the time they come to the second year, we see how they become very serious, and they think of academics as very serious, I haven't seen that happening with our first batch until now.

Iromi Weerakoon: What do you think about this situation? Suppose there is a person who has to deliver a public lecture, and his English is less than perfect. Would you judge him for his language, or what is your attitude towards it? Should he avoid the situation rather than damage his image by giving the lecture, or should he risk and try doing it? What do you think?

Amanda: Even though I have very strong views about not having perfect grammar, not having the perfect accent is OK, but I think subconsciously I still tend to listen a little bit, I guess, with more respect for somebody who speaks perfect grammar. No matter how we talk about it, I personally think it's very hypocritical of me, but it happens. Sometimes, if your language is really bad, it can be a little difficult for people to understand you. People wouldn't actually, you know, put an effort and listen to you unless it's really important. No matter what, when it comes to my kids, I'm not judgmental at all, or whether their grammar is right or wrong, but if you are a public figure, I think I'm a little judgmental. It happens.

Iromi Weerakoon: Let's say a biology professor is going to give a public lecture. The topic is very interesting, and the content is very rich. But when he delivered the presentation, of course, he made several mistakes; how would you judge him based on the content of the message or still on the language? How do you see that?

Amanda: Ideally speaking, we would only pay attention to the content, obviously, but in real life, we don't really do that, we tend to pay attention to his language, I think, maybe because we are language lecturers as well, we tend to worry about it a little too much. The funny thing is if it is a foreigner or if it is a Chinese or Japanese or Korean or whoever speaks English and makes errors and has to pause and use phrases from their own language, we would not really judge them, as opposed to a Sri Lankan speaking in what we call broken English. And that would be judged a lot more harshly than a foreigner. I think even an Indian speaking what he called broken English might be judged by me; personally, I think that it is more harshly than a foreigner.

Iromi Weerakoon: Have you ever thought of why you do that?

Amanda: I think we are conditioned to think of people who speak in English in proper English as intelligent. It shouldn't be the case, which definitely should not be the case, but I think outside the world, we expect proper grammar from everybody, especially if it's a public personality. So, in the example about Kapila Rasnayaka, his

English grammar is really bad. It's like a statement for him. So, we don't. I personally don't judge him, and I admire him for still speaking in English, even though his grammar is really bad. But if there was what we would call an academic or an intellectual doing the same thing and the grammar was not up to an acceptable standard, what is acceptable is a problem, but still, we tend to. I think I personally would judge them still. I remember when we were English students, we had lecturers who had really bad grammar. Even if they were the Vice-Chancellor or the head of the department, it really didn't matter to us; that respect was not there, especially when we were students. If you are an English teacher or English lecturer and your grammar is not good, I mean, I don't know how justifiable it is, but that's how it works.

Iromi Weerakoon: Some people are reluctant to speak in English in front of other Sri Lankans but comfortable in speaking with foreigners. Why is that?

Amanda: I noticed this a lot at NSBM because I used to teach English at NSBM also, and we had this thing called the Global Village: one evening, different students from different nationalities would come, and you know, represent their country, and there was like a big ha ho. A lot of volunteers came in, so I saw kids who never spoke English, even though they spoke in Sinhala, spoke to these other students in English. I mean, they tried to manage using gestures or whatever and talked to them in English. I think that has once again a lot to do with the baggage that we have, thinking of English as a demarcation of what we call intelligence, that we wouldn't really talk to a Sri Lankan. The thing is, now, if it's a Sri Lankan, you have other options; you know you can speak in Sinhala, you can speak in Tamil. But that option is lost when it comes to talking to another nationality. So, I think that could be the case. I told this to my kids as well, to those who are very weak but stay motivated to learn. So, they would ask me what I should do, and I would ask them to talk to or write to a pen pal or talk to somebody outside of the country. Because that can actually help them, and they come to experience different varieties of English, so that is good.

Iromi Weerakoon: When different ethnicities communicate with each other, do you think these complex attitudes about judgments and, you know, standard variety, all still exist, or do these attitudes become stronger when two people from the same ethnicity, like Sinhalese, speak with each other?

Amanda: I think it gets worse if it's the same ethnicity because it's just something I feel. Because I feel like we always compete with people that we call our own. We wouldn't really matter or want to compete that harshly with somebody that we would consider the other. I think that's the reason for that. So, when a Sinhalese student speaks with a Tamil student, they both might make a lot of errors, but they still tend to speak to each other. I think the dynamic is a little different if it's two Sinhalese or two Tamil students.

Iromi Weerakoon: What kind of practices should teachers implement in ESL classrooms to make the students confident to speak in English and also to minimize anxiety?

Amanda: The first thing is you, how you are as a teacher. In Sri Lanka, people tend to look at English teachers in a more relaxed manner, rather than a science or mathematics teacher, who we would think of as very serious. But English teachers are mostly loved, I think, by kids, even though they might not even like the subject. So, I think that helps a lot your presence in the classroom helps a lot. And there are certain techniques that you can use as well if there's one student who doesn't really like to speak on their own, I mean it might be a group activity, it might be a pair activity that you have designed, but there's no reason to stick to it in the classroom. You can always make exceptions, and it's not that you're discriminating against some students. It's just that you are paying equal attention to all the students. Trying not to talk about the errors too much at the beginning of the course will be important.

I also had this idea that we need to change this concept that by spotting an error in somebody, a student, or whoever, we subject them to feel shy or embarrassed. I sometimes tend to feel uncomfortable if I have a lot of things that I need to point out to a student. There are a lot of errors that they are making, and I feel uncomfortable because I feel like they might become uncomfortable. But we need to change that attitude because we come into the classroom to learn something. The number of mistakes that you make in one class in one subject should not reflect on who you are as a person entirely. I also pay attention to not commenting too much about a certain student’s language. But I would prefer if that's changed, and all students look at it a in a very positive light.

Iromi Weerakoon: You said that during the activity, you try not to disturb the students. Is it after the presentation of that individual student or after the presentations of all the students that you discuss the mistakes? How do you do that?

Amanda: It actually depends. If I comment after one student, I comment after all of the students. Or if I comment after maybe two or three students or at the end of all the presentations, sometimes I do that as well. But consistency is very important. If you to treat one student in one way, you need to treat all the students in the same way. That is one thing that I think adult learners especially pick on a lot. Because if they feel like somebody is, you know, treated a little bit better or treated a little, you know, worse, then it's going to be very hard for you to get that respect back from them. Because they have a value system that they have already established as adults. You should not discriminate against them based on language or their major subject. But I've had this problem that kids, actually boys, tell me that I tend to shout at them a lot more than I shout at girls. And I think it's because I have a brother, I have a brother, and I am used to shouting at him a lot. Most boys don't take things too personally. I would shout at them, and they would, you know, do whatever it is, and then they would forget about it, and I tend to shout at boys and boyish girls more than the girly girls, I think.

Iromi Weerakoon: When you see these anxious students, have you seen that boys are more anxious than girls Oh, maybe, vice versa? Is there a difference based on the gender?

Amanda: Anxiety-wise, I think it really depends on their personality. Most of the boys who come to, I don't know if it's just in our university, most of the boys in CEL in our university, you know, a little weaker in comparison to girls. That could be because we have a lot of girls and the skills are dispersed, and we look at both skilled students and less skilled students, but anxiety-wise, I think it depends on the student's personality.

Iromi Weerakoon: And ethnicity wise?

Amanda: I think, once again, I feel like a lot of Tamil students and Muslim students are very forward in comparison to Sinhalese students. I think that could also be because we have a lot of Sinhala students, and I mean, it's dispersed, once again, I think it could be because of that. But what I've noticed is most of the Tamil students and Muslim students as well, they don't worry about making mistakes as much as the Sinhalese students I feel.

Iromi Weerakoon: Do students' previous learning experiences, like their school education, have a role?

Amanda: yeah, definitely has a role. I'm not sure if it can be just about the student. Most of the time, those who come from traditionally considered good schools have their English, and even if the English are not perfect or their grammar is not that good, they still have the confidence to speak. The confidence has been built in them through the school years, maybe not related to English, but maybe it's by doing other extracurricular activities or whatever. However, their confidence is a little bit higher. And I noticed that these kids who have English teacher mothers and English teacher fathers are also very confident.

Iromi Weerakoon: What can teachers do to help the students become confident to speak in English in society?

Amanda: I think using a lot of activities helps a lot, and we need to use situations that are authentic as much as possible like getting them to do role plays. The debates alone are not going to be enough because they tend to act like they are in P*unchi Panchi* or *Sellam Gedara* [these are two popular TV programs conducted by children in Sri Lanka]. That is not authentic for them, so because of that, we need to find situations that the students can actually relate to and that they would actually use outside of the classroom as well, so I think that can help a lot.

Iromi Weerakoon: In Sri Lanka, the usual practice is if a student graduates with a first or Second class, he or she will be absorbed into the university system and will be given a teaching position without any training on how to teach a

language. For example, those who have done English literature for their BA degree are recruited to teach the English language. How do you see this situation?

Amanda: Personally, I think that most of the people who come for English degree programmes have had some sort of experience with English since their childhood. But if you are teaching adult students, I think you need to find people who have learned English as adults, not somebody who has learned English since childhood. I have been learning English since I was in nursery school. So, I might not relate to an adult student who is just starting to learn English as an adult. So, we need to have a combination at least. When I started doing my master's, I realized there's a lot more that we need to know as teachers before I become a teacher, not just for language lecturers, it's the same for all the other lecturers as well. Just because you are good at a subject or you are good at English doesn't mean that you're good at teaching English. If you think about this tuition master's English tuition masters, some of them have failed O/L English or failed A/L English, but they've learned later on, and now they relate a little bit better to the students who need a lot of help, rather than the average student who might need some help and get through.

Iromi Weerakoon: Is there anything else that you would like to add or comment on?

Amanda: No.

Iromi Weerakoon: Thanks very much for participating and sharing your thoughts, knowledge, and experiences.

…………………………End of the interview…………………………………………..

Appendix R: Sample focus group interview transcript

Focus Group interview with ESL learners at University A

Iromi Weerakoon: Good afternoon, my name is Iromi Weerakoon. I'm a researcher from the University of New England, and I'm conducting a study on language anxiety among undergraduates at Sri Lankan state universities. Please note that any personal information you provide will be confidential, and you will not be identified by name in any publication of the results. If you agree, I would like to quote some of your responses, and this will be done in a way that ensures you are unidentifiable.

The questions I asked do not have a sensitive nature, and they are generally aimed at enhancing my knowledge of language anxiety and my Sri Lankan undergraduates.

I use this information as part of my doctoral thesis. The information collected may also be used in academic journals and at conference presentations. The data from the study will be kept for a minimum of five years at the University of New England, and after five years, it will be destroyed.

Are there any questions you would like to ask me about the interview or the research?

All participants: No

Have you read the information sheet for participants?

All participants: Yes

……………………...*The interview begins*……………………………

1. Do you enjoy learning English in the university ESL classroom?

A1: Yes, in the beginning, they grouped us according to our competence, and then they had a good programme in the university which had many speaking and grammar activities.

A2: Compared to the school teaching of English, the university teaching of English in the first two semesters went well. They grouped us based on the A-level English results.

2. Do you like to be with students of the same level or mixed-ability groups? Why?

A4: I like the same-ability groups. When we are in mixed-ability groups, the students who can speak English speak all the time, and we are so afraid to speak English at that time.

A5: When there are only 5-6 students, we are confident, and we talk in the classroom. We really like talking about day-to-day events, because that is the language that we need in the future rather than following a mere syllabus in the classroom. If we can talk about day-to-day things using day-to-day language, that would be more beneficial for us.

3. How do you feel when you are asked to speak in English in the ESL classroom?

A2: We never go for impromptu speech. Even if we are forced to go in front, we still cannot do it successfully.

A1: I always avoid such opportunities where I had to speak in English in the past. So, I don't have any experience. But later on, I understood it was wrong to avoid such opportunities. Even if somebody asked me to do an impromptu speech in Sinhala, I would still feel nervous.

A5: Because our pronunciation and vocabulary are not good enough, when we speak in English, if we make a mistake, we feel ashamed. Sometimes, we stammer. Sometimes, we get stuck. We don't have the flow. So, it is difficult to do an impromptu speech in English. Actually, in the heart, we know what we should say. But for some reason, we can't say it aloud.

A3: Until I came to the university, I hadn't spoken in English. If there is an assignment where I have to speak in English, I would practise by heart and do it.

4. If it is an impromptu speech. You get nervous, and that is totally okay. How about after you practise the whole speech? Still, do you feel that nervousness? Is there a difference in your confidence then?

A5: No. When we practise, we don't feel nervous. Even if the teacher asked us to come first to do a presentation, we would go and do it well because we knew the vocabulary, so we could speak properly.

A6: I think what happens is when we go forward to speak, we always try to translate whatever we think in Sinhala to English. So, we find it difficult because we don't know the right vocabulary to use. According to my experience, I understand that when we think in English and talk, it is easier. We don't get stuck. When we think of the whole sentence in Sinhala and try to translate it, the words do not come to our mind. But when we think in English and speak the same thing, it is easier.

A4: I feel fear when I go in front to speak English. But more than that, my biggest problem is that I also get stuck without words.

5. What does usually happen when you feel nervous?

A5: Yeah, sometimes, even without posing, I go on speaking.

A2: When we get stopped at some point, maybe without words, after that, we lose confidence in the things we say. At that time, we want to say something and finish the talk. So, we just go on speaking without much confidence.

6. When you get stuck in the middle of a speech or when you make a mistake, do you worry about it even after going to the hostels, or do you just forget it and move on?

A7: When I get stopped in the middle of the speech, after that, I don't even remember at least one word to speak. I don't worry about it too much. I have the confidence that if I get another chance, then I can do it better. But as we don't get a chance soon or more often, I face the same situation again when I get a chance to speak.

A8: If something like that happens to me, I will try about three times again to do it better. But if I can't, I will exclude the whole part and do the rest of the speech. After the class is finished, I usually ask my friends to give me feedback, and if they say that the speech is okay, then that's it.

A5: I also have the same thing to say about this situation.

7. How does your teacher react when you make a mistake?

A8: I have had that experience where I made a mistake, and the teacher corrected me several times on the spot. For example, if I make a pronunciation mistake, and the teacher corrects it on the spot, sometimes I can pronounce it correctly, but sometimes I cannot as the word is not familiar to me. So, when the teacher corrects me again and again, I lose my confidence and am upset.

A7: I had a situation in the first semester where I had to deliver a speech. I byhearted this speech. But in the middle of the speech, I got stuck, and the words didn't come. So, the teacher asked me to relax, breathe well, and repeat the speech from the beginning again. I did that as she said. Then, the second time, I did well.

A2: The teachers have never reacted in a negative manner. Sometimes, after we finished the presentation or the speech, they gave us constructive feedback, asking us to improve.

8. How do your peers behave when you make a mistake?

A6: In the school, there were times that some students ridiculed us. But in the university, anything like that never happened.

Everybody agreed with A6.

9. Do teachers grade speaking activities?

A4: Yes, most of the speaking activities we do in the classroom are assignments.

10. Is there a difference in your nervousness when you do a speaking activity as an assignment and as a normal activity in the classroom?

A3: If it is an assignment, we will be given the topic a week before. So that we have time to get prepared and practise. So, for an assignment, we actually practise by heart, and then we go and do the assignment. But if it is just a speaking activity, we don't get that opportunity. So, we get a little nervous.

A8: If it is an assignment, I'm afraid about getting marks.

A3: When doing speaking activities, whether it is an assignment or not, I get nervous.

11. Do you feel more anxious when you speak with a student of the opposite gender?

Everyone disagreed.

12. Do you feel more anxious or less anxious when you speak with students of the same ethnicity?

A2: Actually, it was by speaking to Tamils that we got the confidence to speak in English with another person. When we talk with Tamils, we don't get that nervous. Because there is no other option or media to talk with them, English is the only medium that we can use to talk with Tamils.

13. Are you afraid that other Sinhalese people will judge you if you talk in English with them?

A1: No, but there is competition with each other.

14. What do you think about ESL teachers at the university?

A7: All the teachers I had were really good and very pleasant.

Everybody agreed with this, and they said that these teachers have good experience in handling students like them.

15. Do the teachers use Sinhala in the classroom?

A1: They use simple English.

A4: In the first semester, they use Sinhala.

A7: Mostly English.

16. Do you like young teachers or old teachers?

A7: We like young teachers because they understand us well and they are very close to us because there is a very small age gap. And they're friendly. So, we can, you know, talk with them. When the teachers are old, we are afraid to talk with them, and they don't understand us, so there are some issues.

17. Do you like large classes with many students or small classes?

A5: Earlier, I liked big classes with many students because then I could always cut the class and activities. But now I like small classes. Because then I can speak without any fear. And also, I get many opportunities to speak.

Most of them liked small classes.

18. Do you like classes with opened windows and doors or classes where the doors and windows are covered/closed?

A6: I really like open classes because we're in a city and it is very hot. So, if it is an open classroom, then it will be really comfortable.

A3: I like closed classrooms because otherwise, when we speak, others can hear. Even if it is one of our friends, it's still not nice. I don't like it.

A3: I had the same idea. When it is a closed classroom, as we are at the same level in the classroom, we have the confidence to speak. But if it is an open classroom, then the others can see it, and I don't feel comfortable speaking at that time. I know that maybe they do not think anything bad about us, but still, I feel shy about speaking in front of other people. Sometimes, I used to speak very well with my friends, those who are familiar to me. But when I speak with people who are not familiar, I feel a little nervous.

A4: I like closed spaces because then there are less disturbances.

19. With whom do you feel more confident to speak in English? Foreigners? Sri Lankans? Why?

A2: I like to speak with foreigners. Because they understand what we say, even if we make a mistake.

A4: Even if we make a mistake, they understand what we're saying. And also, even if we make a mistake, it is okay because it is not our language. When we speak with a Sri Lankan, two things happen. One is that we feel that fear about what they would think about us. And the other thing is that if we are saying something, we should say it perfectly. Otherwise, he cannot understand.

A8: There is another thing that when we speak with the Sri Lankans, they quickly identify all the errors we make in the language because they know about translating and all those things. They knew that we were going to say this particular thing, but the way we said it was wrong. When we speak with foreigners, they always consciously slow down and clearly speak. But when we speak with another Sri Lankan or a Sinhalese, they just go on talking without thinking about the ability of the other person to understand.

A1: When we talk with a Sinhalese, they always judge us. But with a foreigner, that doesn't happen.

A5: Foreigners always consciously talk with us at a very good pace so that we can understand.

20. What do you think about the people who speak English well?

A4: We think that his family also uses English at home, and we think that he has gone to a good school. And he has friends who speak English. Even though we learn English as a subject, they use it for their daily communication. Even if we try to do that, we cannot do it within our environment.

A7: I always feel that it is his childhood and the environment in which he lived in that made him a good speaker of English. Then there are those who followed English medium instructions in schools.

21. When you see such people, do you compare yourself to them?

A2: Yes, sometimes. It happens only when we have to speak with him in English, not at other times.

22. If you get a chance to speak in English in public, will you take that chance even if you know that your English is not perfect? Or will you avoid the opportunity?

A1: I would have definitely avoided the chance earlier because I hated English. But now I understand it is important to learn English, so my only focus is to grab all the opportunities that come my way without avoiding them.

We all have the same idea.

23. What do you think the teachers could do to make you feel confident to speak in English??

A3: If we get more opportunities to practise English, to speak in English, that would be better. As the teacher is there, we can also get feedback.

A2: We need more practice. Group activities are better because then, together, we work on something. So sometimes, when we forget a word, others can remind us, or they can give us the right words. Rather than doing individual work, it's better to do group activities. But after the group activity, if there is a chance to present whatever we did in the classroom individually, maybe that would also be good. It is better to do the group discussion in English, but the student should be motivated to do so.

A5: I think if we are given chances to build up a conversation without getting ready for that earlier, that would be better. Because the teacher is there so that we can get feedback as well because there are times that we make mistakes, and we identify that we made a mistake. But there are other times where we don't even identify that we made a mistake.

24. Do you worry about making mistakes in your grammar?

A3: Our biggest problem is the vocabulary, because we feel that if we knew the words, then even if we make mistakes in English, we can keep on talking. But the problem right now is that we do get stuck in the middle.

A2: When the teacher gives us a topic, and then if she gives us the words related to that topic and also if she teaches different ways of writing a sentence, that would be really good. Because then we can incorporate those styles into speaking as well. Right now, when we write anything, we use the same style repeatedly. So, if the teachers can introduce us to different ways of writing, that will be really beneficial because then we can use those different styles in our speech as well.

25. What else do you do to learn English?

A3: Watch films, sometimes without English subtitles, read English newspapers, chat with friends, especially with Tamil friends,

26. Can you tell me a little bit about your English learning experience in schools?

A2: For O/Ls, we had a teacher, a male teacher. He taught English in Sinhala. He did the activities in the textbook. We never did speaking-activities. We did grammar.

A8: We had a female teacher. She did the workbook. Most of the time, she grouped us. Most of the activities we did were writing tasks. More than the workbook, she had her own activities to do with us. The teacher was strict.

A3: We had a male teacher. Most of the time, students cut the class. In the beginning, we used to go to class. But later on, it became really boring. So, we cut the class. Most of the students used to go outside, so we also followed them.

A7: We didn't learn much. There was a textbook, so the teacher did the textbook with us. She did not follow any order. Randomly, she selected some lessons and did. During O/Ls, we got different teachers each time. With some teachers, we learned, but with some teachers, we were not that motivated to learn English.

27. Have you gone to tuition classes? Was there a difference between the school teacher and the tuition teacher in the way they teach?

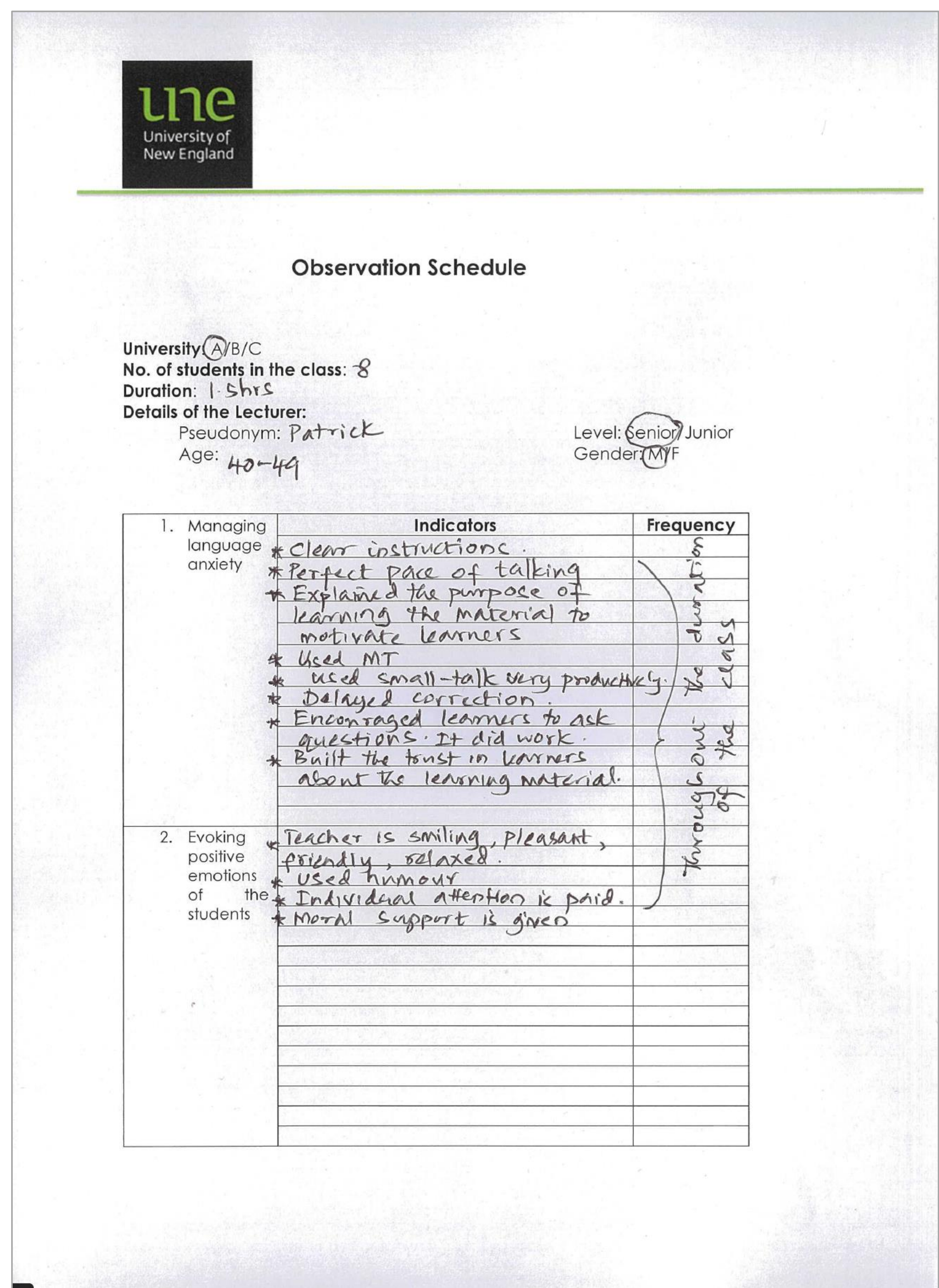
A3: The school teacher always followed the textbook. However, the tuition teacher always focused on the exam paper. So, we were more motivated to learn in the tuition class than in the school.

A4: In the school, the teacher always followed the order of the syllabus. But in the tuition class, the teacher followed a different order. She started from the parts of speech and then went on.

Thanks very much for participating.

……………………………….End of the interview………………………………………..

Appendix S: Sample observation schedule



une
University of New England

Observation Schedule

University: (A)/B/C
No. of students in the class: 8
Duration: 1.5hrs
Details of the Lecturer:
Pseudonym: Patrick — Level: (Senior)/Junior
Age: 40-49 — Gender: (M)/F

	Indicators	Frequency
1. Managing language anxiety	* Clear instructions.	throughout the duration of the class
	* Perfect pace of talking	
	* Explained the purpose of learning the material to motivate learners	
	* Used MT	
	* used small-talk very productively.	
	* Delayed correction.	
	* Encouraged learners to ask questions. It did work.	
	* Built the trust in learners about the learning material.	
2. Evoking positive emotions of the students	* Teacher is smiling, pleasant, friendly, relaxed.	
	* used humour	
	* Individual attention is paid.	
	* Moral support is given	

Appendix T: Sample observation points

Observation Points

University: A/(B)/C
No. of students in the class: 10
Duration: 1.5 hrs
Details of the Lecturer:
Pseudo name: Ivy
Age: 20-29
Level: Senior/(Junior)
Gender: M/(F)

Observation Point	Indicators	Yes √	No X	N/A O	Comments
Student	1. Squirming in the seat and/or fidgeting	√			Additionally,
	2. Playing with the hair, clothes, pens, etc.	√			* covering mouth
	3. Avoiding eye contact	√			when speaking
	4. Appear jittery & nervous	√			
	5. Head orientation			O	* Using a lot of
	6. Less facial pleasantness	√			fillers when
	7. Sweaty			O	talking
	8. Less animation and/or Freezing up	√			* Scratching head,
	9. Trembling and shaky voices	√			temple, nose, etc.
	10. Stuttering and/or stammering	√			* Biting nails
	11. Distorting sounds	√			
	12. Forgetting	√			* Boys playing with
	13. Refusing to speak		X		their beard
	14. Remaining silent even when asked to speak		X		
	15. Avoiding activities in the class		X		
	16. Short answer responses		X		
	17. Nervous laughter		X		
	18. Pretending to be busy with note taking		X		
	19. Showing no interest in the activity		X		
Teacher	20. No sense of humour		X		Additionally,
	21. Not friendly		X		
	22. Not helpful		X		Disturbed students
	23. Not understanding		X		just to encourage them.

	24. Has a negative & unpleasant appearance		✗		
	25. Impatient and stressed	✓			
	26. Harsh overt correction		✗		
	27. Over-react to mistakes		✗		
	28. Make students feel uncomfortable		✗		
	29. Students are called on to answer	✓			
	30. Favouring high proficient learners	✓ A	bit		
	31. Doesn't encourage students to speak		✗		
	32. Doesn't appreciate students		✗		
	33. Doesn't smile		✗		
	34. Doesn't explain the material well		✗		
	35. Doesn't give pair or group work or games		✗		
	36. Doesn't give positive feedback		✗		
	37. Doesn't give enough time to practice and/or wait-time		✗		
Classroom climate	38. Formal, stressful atmosphere	✓			
	39. Students are competitive		✗		
	40. Teacher's biased, unequal treatment for students		✗		
	41. Students are less cooperative in groups and attention seeking		✗		
	42. Humiliation among peers		✗		
	43. Peers are not supportive or helpful		✗		