

# Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK

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## **AI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the area of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), language anxiety has been one of the most extensively studied topics. However, limited research on the concept of foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) among EFL learners in English-speaking countries, particularly in the context of Vietnamese students in the United Kingdom (UK), paved the way for the present inquiry. This dissertation aims to investigate the types of FLSA that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced and how the levels of anxiety differ according to gender, academic levels, and duration of EFL learning. Moreover, the strategies that students in the research context employed to cope with FLSA will be identified. A mixed-method approach was adopted by implementing online questionnaires and interviews to achieve the aims and objectives of this study. 127 Vietnamese students who are currently enrolling in a university course in the UK participate in the questionnaire and five of the most highly anxious participants identified through the data analysis of the questionnaire were interviewed. The findings revealed that participants experienced different types of FLSA including fear of making mistakes, anxiety about understanding, physical anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, general communication apprehension, feelings of incompetence and intercultural communication apprehension. This study also concluded that while the level of FLSA in female students was higher than in other genders, academic levels, and length of EFL learning were proved not to affect the levels of FLSA. Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis indicated that preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, and peer seeking are common coping strategies used by participants. The findings are then discussed together with related literature. Based on the results, this dissertation reached a conclusion and constructed a set of recommendations for pedagogical implications as well as future studies.

**Keywords:** foreign language anxiety, foreign language speaking anxiety, English as a foreign language (EFL), international students, language learning, anxiety coping strategies, Vietnamese EFL students.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
FL	Foreign Language
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLCAS	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Measure
FLSA	Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety
ICA	Intercultural Communication Apprehension
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
SL	Second Language
TEFLCAM	The Extended Foreign Language Communication Anxiety Measure
UK	United Kingdom

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

This chapter establishes the context and justification for the current research, providing the background information. Additionally, the study's specific aims and objectives, the significance of the study, and personal motivation for research will be presented.

### **1.1. Background of research**

In response to the demands of an increasingly communicative global society, English has emerged as one of the most universal languages worldwide (Hashemi, 2011). As a result, significant resources, such as the publication of numerous books and substantial financial investments, are dedicated to the learning of English as a second language (SL) or foreign language (FL) (Hashemi, 2011). However, individuals who embark on the journey of learning and speaking English as SL or FL often experience a certain degree of anxiety and report encountering a mental block during oral communication (Ibrahim & Hamad, 2021).

According to Arnold (2019), anxiety is potentially the most pervasive factor that hinders the learning process. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) provided the initial framework for foreign language anxiety (FLA), defining it 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. Aida (1994) conducted research specifically focused on FL learners and concluded that regardless of the time spent developing linguistic competencies, learners often experience feelings of discouragement and inadequacy when trying to participate in a FL environment. In the framework of relevant concepts, Horwitz et al. (1986) were pioneers in considering language anxiety as a distinct psychological construct that is closely related to language learning. This conceptualisation helped to establish anxiety as a significant factor that can influence learners' motivation, self-confidence, and overall language proficiency.

Suparlan (2021) also highlighted that speaking is perceived as one of the challenging skills and these difficulties can significantly impact students' speaking proficiency,

especially when it comes to a FL. Moreover, speaking activities emerge as anxiety-inducing tasks that generate unease among students within the classroom setting (Mulyono et al., 2019). A substantial number of learners experience high levels of anxiety when engaging in speaking tasks (Çağatay, 2015). In fact, speaking is identified as one of the most anxiety-provoking language skills when operating in a FL context (Aveni, 2005).

Previous research investigating the impact of studying in English-speaking countries has consistently indicated a positive association with the development of students' language skills (Barron, 2003; Churchill & DuFon, 2018; Freed et al., 2004;). Nevertheless, Schartner (2016) contended that studying overseas presents not only great opportunities but also accompanying challenges. Particularly, when EFL students find themselves immersed in an environment where the target language, which they have not yet fully mastered, is also the language of daily conversation, they may experience significant levels of anxiety. The relationship between studying in English-speaking countries and FLA appears to be interconnected (Salisbury et al., 2013). However, limited research has focused specifically on the foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) experienced by EFL learners in the context of studying in English-speaking countries, and existing findings have often been generalised. In reality, cultural disparities can result in divergent factors that elicit anxiety for learners from various cultural backgrounds (Mandaci, 2018). Therefore, conducting investigations within specific contexts where learners share common cultural aspects can shed new light on the phenomenon of FLSA. Such studies have the potential to expand the understanding of this issue and contribute to the broader implications and scope for future research.

The context of this project lies within the educational setting of Vietnamese students pursuing higher education in the UK. Vietnamese students have been increasingly choosing the UK as a destination for their studies, attracted by its reputable universities, quality education, and international exposure. In 2021, there were approximately 12 000 Vietnamese students enrolling in a university course in the UK (Do & Nguyen, 2021).

According to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 2023), there has been a significant increase in the number of Vietnamese students enrolled in UK universities in recent years. This trend highlights the growing importance of understanding the challenges faced by these students regarding FLSA to provide effective language support and facilitate their academic and social integration.

This master dissertation, titled ***Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK***, specifically focuses on exploring the main types of FLSA among Vietnamese university students studying in the UK. Additionally, the study seeks to identify how FLSA levels differ based on gender, academic levels, and the duration of EFL learning. Moreover, the research will delve into the coping strategies employed by Vietnamese university students to overcome FLSA.

## **1.2. Personal motivation**

Studying in foreign countries is an advantageous and remarkable experience for several students. Primarily, relocation to a foreign country offers an immersive environment, which is the most effective way to learn a new language quickly. It enables international students to understand how language and communication work, and engaging in local dialects facilitates profound intercultural communication. Additionally, exposure to diverse cultures creates a long-lasting impression on students, increasing their comprehension of global concerns and the impact of worldwide events on different countries. Nonetheless, while such opportunities offer numerous benefits, they also pose challenges. The unfamiliar environment may lead to a certain degree of anxiety for many students, particularly those learning and using a new language. Such anxiety may differ from that experienced by those who study the language in a domestic classroom.

Drawing on the researcher's experience of spontaneously feeling anxious when first moving to the UK and acknowledging that learners from different cultural and educational backgrounds may have varying anxiety reactions, this study is designed to investigate the concept of FLSA among Vietnamese students studying in the UK. The



motivation behind conducting this study also stems from the researcher's personal and professional interest in the field of language acquisition and education. Recognising the transformative impact of language learning experiences, the researcher aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on FLSA by shedding light on the specific challenges faced by Vietnamese students in the UK. By addressing the research aims and questions outlined below, this study aims to bridge the gap in the literature and provide practical recommendations for supporting Vietnamese university students in overcoming FLSA.

### **1.3. Aims and objectives**

The aim of this research is to FLSA for Vietnamese university students in the UK. In addition, how the level of FLSA changes along with gender, academic levels, and the duration of EFL learning will be identified. This study also will discover the strategies that Vietnamese university students in the UK use to cope with FLSA. The following objectives were defined:

- 1. To explore the main types of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK.*
- 2. To examine the differences in FLSA levels among Vietnamese university students based on gender, academic levels, and the duration of EFL learning.*
- 3. To identify the strategies employed by Vietnamese university students in the UK to cope with FLSA.*

### **1.4. Research questions**

This study adopts a mixed quantitative-qualitative strategy to provide an exploration of FLSA among Vietnamese University Students in the UK. The research questions are:

- 1. What are the main types of FLSA that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced?*

*2. How do the levels of FLSA vary according to age, academic levels, and length of EFL learning among Vietnamese university students in the UK?*

*3. What strategies do Vietnamese university students in the UK use to cope with their FLSA?*

### **1.5. Significance of the study**

The phenomenon of language anxiety has gained increasing attention in recent years due to its potential impact on second language acquisition, performance, and overall achievement (Tanveer, 2007). This research topic holds significant relevance for language educators and students alike, as FLA can detrimentally affect not only various language proficiency domains but also students' attitudes and perceptions of language learning as a whole (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999). By exploring the types of anxiety during language acquisition and communication, this investigation aims to deepen our understanding of language anxiety and assist language teachers in creating less stressful classroom environments. For Vietnamese students, the findings of this study can offer valuable insights into their language learning experiences, enabling them to develop strategies to manage FLSA effectively. Educators and language instructors can benefit from a deeper understanding of FLSA, allowing them to tailor instructional approaches and provide targeted support to mitigate language anxiety among their students. Furthermore, policymakers and educational institutions can utilise the research outcomes to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for international students.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter includes an extensive review of existing scholarly works and research studies related to FLA, FLSA, and the context of this study. The gaps in literature will also be identified.

### **2.1. Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)**

#### **2.1.1. Definition of FLA**

Over the past few decades, FLA has gained significant attention from linguistic researchers due to its numerous and substantial effects on the language learning process of learners (Horwitz et al., 1986; Javid, 2014; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) provided the initial framework for FLA, defining it 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." MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) provided a definition of FLA as the subjective experience characterised by feelings of tension and apprehension that are specifically tied to the context of learning a FL. This context encompasses various language skills such as speaking, listening, and overall language acquisition. Young (1991) noted that FLA may be evidenced by psycholinguistic factors such as difficulty producing sounds accurately, inability to replicate the language's intonation and rhythm, experiencing nervousness during speaking tasks, forgetting recently learned words or phrases, or even choosing to remain silent. Campbell and Ortiz's research (1991) revealed that approximately 50% of second language (SL) and foreign language (FL) learners report experiencing learning anxiety, with FL learners reporting higher levels of anxiety than SL learners (Siegel, 1989). Horwitz et al. (1986) postulated that FL learners experience elevated levels of anxiety because they must decode information in a language they are not proficient in, leading to numerous social, cultural, and psychological factors contributing to heightened anxiety in EFL learners, resulting in difficulties in achieving fluency in the target language.

This study employed the definition of FLA by Horwitz et al. (1986), and MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) due to the objectives of exploring FLSA of Vietnamese students in the UK in both classroom and outside classroom contexts.

### **2.1.2. Components of FLA**

Horwitz et al. (1986) identified three primary components that contribute to FLA: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and the fear of negative evaluation. However, it is important to note that FLA may not solely encompass these three components. Furthermore, these three components can serve as a basis for comprehending the types of FLA, specifically FLSA, as the current study primarily focuses on speaking skills.

Firstly, communication apprehension refers to the fear experienced by individuals when engaging in oral communication (Horwitz et al., 1986). This fear primarily manifests in speaking activities within the FL classroom, which constitutes the main focus of the present study (Daly, 1991). Communication apprehension can be observed in both first and second-language acquisition contexts and is often influenced by certain personality traits such as shyness, reticence, and the fear of making mistakes (Alnahidh & Altalhab, 2020). Aida (1994) argued that learners experiencing communication apprehension encounter difficulties when interacting with others or expressing themselves in a FL classroom, particularly during speaking tasks or class participation.

Secondly, test anxiety, as defined by Toth (2010), refers to the inclination to feel alarmed about the potential consequences of inadequate performance in evaluative situations. It encompasses the fear of failure specifically in contexts such as written or oral tests and presentations and may occur prior to, during, or after a test. Notably, the oral test tends to evoke the highest levels of anxiety within the classroom environment (Horwitz et al., 1986). Alnahidh and Altalhab (2020) assert that test anxiety hampers students' performance in the FL learning process.

Thirdly, the fear of negative evaluation, as defined by Horwitz et al. (1986), entails the apprehension regarding others' evaluations, a tendency to avoid evaluative situations,

and an expectation of receiving negative evaluations from others. It is noteworthy that the fear of negative evaluation shares similarities with test anxiety. However, whereas test anxiety primarily pertains to test-taking situations, the fear of negative evaluation can arise in any social or academic evaluative context (Horwitz, 1986). This could include regular group discussions or situations involving speaking a foreign language.

In addition to FLA experienced within the classroom setting, a considerable body of research suggests that FLA can manifest in various situations involving language use and throughout the entire learning process (Aida, 1994; Cao, 2011; Cassady, 2010; Guntzviller et al., 2016). While studies exploring FLA in contexts beyond the classroom were relatively abundant, a notable study by Guntzviller et al. (2016) identified five additional elements of FLA in non-classroom contexts. These elements include physical anxiety, anxiety about understanding, fear of making mistakes, feeling of incompetence, and distinction from general communication apprehension. As posited by Guntzviller et al. (2016), physical anxiety pertains to the manifestation of nervousness through physical symptoms. For instance, individuals experiencing physical anxiety may exhibit trembling or a racing heart when using the FL. The feelings of incompetence signify learners' lack of confidence, perceiving themselves as less proficient than their peers or those around them when they use the FL. Distinction from general communication apprehension encompasses students' reluctance to engage in communication or interaction with others using the target language. The anxiety of understanding and fear of making mistakes represent two significant aspects experienced by learners – the fear of being misunderstood or misunderstanding others, as well as the fear of negative judgment by others.

The present research employs the frameworks proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986) and Guntzviller et al. (2016) to investigate the specific types of FLSA experienced by Vietnamese university students studying in the United Kingdom.

## **2.2. Types of foreign language speaking anxiety**

Scholarly investigations have indicated that there are different types of FLSA experienced by EFL learners. Young (1990) extensively enumerated several dimensions of FLSA, which encompassed interactions between teachers and students, teachers' beliefs concerning language acquisition, and students' beliefs pertaining to language learning, testing, as well as classroom instructional techniques. Price (1991) discovered that EFL learners experience significant anxiety when speaking in front of their peers and the fear of making pronunciation mistakes and the apprehension of negative evaluation were identified as the principal types of FLSA in this context. Additionally, Mak's study (2011) examining the concept of FLSA within Chinese ESL university students unveiled five aspects associated with FLSA, namely: fear of negative evaluation, discomfort when conversing with native speakers, unfavorable perceptions of the English classroom environment, negative self-evaluation, and fear of personal failure. Similarly, Hashim and Isa (2012) undertook an investigation to examine the types of FLSA among Malaysian students. The results of their study revealed that the fear of negative evaluation and low self-esteem were the predominant types of speaking anxiety among Malaysian students.

## **2.3. Strategies to reduce FLA**

Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) identified five different strategies to cope with FLA including preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking and resignation.

Regarding the preparation category, students who adopt this approach tend to make diligent efforts to prepare before attending classes. They engage in a variety of activities such as practising English, attentively listening to the teacher, asking questions to teachers and classmates and utilising dictionaries for assistance (Anggraini et al., 2022). Further, they may allocate more time to organise their sentences or structure of their presentations prior to speaking (Abdurahman & Rizqi, 2021). Relaxation can be defined as effort to lessen self-tension (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004). To be more specific,

students can employ some self-calming techniques such as engaging in conscious or unconscious body and hand movement habit in order achieve a state of calmness (Takkaç Tulgar, 2018). Thinking positively is another coping mechanism used by student to reduce FLA. Through picturing themselves delivering a successful presentation, giving themselves self-affirming language or engaging in prayer, students can achieve a positive mindset (Anggraini et al., 2022). Additionally, students may seek support from their peers to deal with FLA. They are often in pursuit of fellow students who may be facing similar challenges, requesting assistance in their learning process, and sharing their experiences of anxiety. This approach is different from asking for help, as students engage in peer seeking to compare their own emotions and feelings with those of their peers (Rafieyan & Yamanashi, 2016). Finally, resignation refers to not making any attempt to address FLA. For instance, students may avoid participation in classroom discussions or passively disengaging from all language learning activities.

The theory regarding FLA coping strategies proposed by Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) was tested by Abdurrahman and Rizqi in 2020 in an offline classroom setting to investigate students' anxiety and coping strategies during oral presentation videos. The results were consistent with previous research which demonstrates that students utilise multiple strategies to manage their speaking anxiety. Specifically, students initiate the coping process by doing preparatory activities, for example, reviewing learning materials and checking grammar and vocabulary. Both studies of Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) and Abdurrahman and Rizqi (2020) highlighted that the preparation stage is of great importance when it comes to overcoming students' language skill limitations. In addition to these studies, Woodrow's research (2006) pointed out that students tend to have a sense of regret and dissatisfaction when they have little practice. However, Anggraini et al. (2022) mentioned that many students still face anxiety in spite of advance preparation.

## **2.4. The context of studying in English-speaking countries**

### **2.4.1. EFL students studying in English-speaking countries**

International students are commonly known to face various social and academic difficulties, with language barriers and language anxiety being the most frequently reported issues (Barker et al., 1991; Samuelowicz, 1987). While extensive research has been conducted on FLA, most studies have focused solely on language learners (Cassady, 2010; Javid, 2014; Williams & Andrade, 2008; Zhang, 2001) and have not considered the community of learners who have become language users but have not yet achieved fluency, such as non-native students studying abroad in English-speaking countries. These students have attained a certain level of proficiency in their home country, which allowed them to fulfil the entry requirements of their target institutions in a foreign country. Once they arrive in the host country, these students become language users; however, they are still language learners, as language acquisition continues through everyday communication and exposure to the language. Benson (2001) defined this kind of learning as out-of-class learning. As such, the experience of FLA in non-native English-speaking students in a foreign context may differ from those who only approach the language in a classroom context in their home country. Cultural differences are also a common challenge facing international students, with up to 70% of Asian students experiencing culture shock and feelings of anxiousness upon arrival in their host country (Szabo et al., 2016). This sudden change in culture, lifestyle, and language can further exacerbate the level of FLA among students, although research on FLA in this particular population is limited.

### **2.4.2. Types of FLSA among international students studying in English-speaking countries**

A range of studies (Blume, 2013; Stewart & Tassie, 2011; Zhou & Zhang, 2014) have investigated various dimensions of FLSA, including language barriers, negative attitudes, and apprehension related to intercultural communication. Furthermore, Brown (2008) conducted an ethnographic investigation involving in-depth interviews with 13 selected participants and observations of 150 international postgraduate students at a



university in the South of England throughout an entire academic year. One of the prominent themes that emerged from the study was the students' anxiety related to their English language proficiency. They experienced feelings of embarrassment, inferiority, and anxiety, often becoming distressed due to their perceived inadequacy in spoken English, despite meeting the minimum IELTS 6 requirement for their courses. Their low self-confidence hindered their ability to actively participate in classroom discussions and engage in social interactions that required English communication. A common response to the stress caused by language difficulties was to seek comfort in communicating with fellow students from the same native countries, further impeding their progress in learning the language.

Negative attitudes among students have also been identified as one of the main types of FLSA. These negative attitudes encompass a range of aspects, including fear of public speaking, shyness, unwelcoming gestures and facial expressions from interlocutors, corrections received during communication, and high expectations placed upon the learners (Mulyono et al., 2019). For instance, Hammad and Ghali (2015) investigated the level of FLSA among 340 Palestinian EFL pre-service teachers. Through the distribution of open and closed-question item questionnaires, they found that students experienced excessive FLSA. Many students expressed fear of making mistakes and had a strong desire to achieve a high level of oral proficiency in English. This led to a reluctance to speak in the target language at a standard level, as they were overly concerned about the potential inaccuracies they might make.

Similarly, Zhiping and Paramasivam (2013) examined anxiety dimensions experienced by international postgraduate students at a Malaysian university. Through observations and semi-structured interviews with eight participants, they found that anxious students, when speaking in a FL, had a fear of making mistakes. They perceived every correction as a sign of failure and felt continuously evaluated. Furthermore, Amiri and Puteh (2018) explored the FLSA experiences among international doctoral students from multiple Malaysian universities. Using qualitative methods such as observations and

interviews, they focused on students' experiences during academic presentations, including proposal and viva sessions. The results revealed that the doctoral students exhibited apprehension in their academic presentations, and they felt that the examination panels were strict, severe, and unpredictable, which further contributed to their reluctance to speak.

Additionally, the study of Mulyono et al. (2019) claimed that intercultural communication apprehension (ICA) may contribute to FLSA among learners. Zhou & Zhang) mentioned that FL learners from different cultural backgrounds are progressively aligning their communication styles to match their hosts, leading to intercultural communication. Since they exhibit distinct norms, behaviours and worldviews, they may experience potential feelings of unease and anxiety during interactions with their host counterparts (Mulyono et al., 2019). Further, Gopang and Bughio (2015) delved into the realm of FLA and ICA and affirmed that in spite of positive views towards other cultures, some EFL students still grapple with confusion, anxiety and distraction when communicating with those of disparate convictions and values. Shyness in speaking publicly and reduced enthusiasm for acquainting themselves with diverse beliefs were also noted tendencies among these EFL learners (Gopang & Bughio, 2015).

#### **2.4.3. Vietnamese students in the context of studying in the UK**

Vietnam has witnessed a significant increase in the promotion of English language learning and English has become a compulsory subject in schools starting from Grade 3 (Van Van, 2020). However, English teaching programs in Vietnam are considered outdated and ineffective. Traditional teaching methods, such as the audiolingual method and a teacher-centred approach, prevail in Vietnamese classrooms (Van Van, 2020). English classes are often focused on form rather than real communication, lacking personal examples to facilitate understanding and emphasising the manipulation of formal elements over expressing communicative intentions (Nhan & Lai, 2012). As a result, Vietnamese students tend to perform well on written tests but struggle to use English as a means of communication (Le, 2013).

Given the increasing prominence of the English language in various aspects of contemporary life, Vietnam stands as one of the countries with a significant number of students pursuing higher education in English-speaking nations. Additionally, more than 58 Vietnamese institutions offered transnational education programs, enabling students to complete part of their degrees abroad (Dang & Glewwe, 2018). The appeal of experiencing a new culture and expanding global knowledge has led to an increasing number of Vietnamese freshmen opting for cross-border studies. The Ministry of Education and Training in Vietnam (2018) reported that 5,118 Vietnamese students were enrolled in secondary and post-secondary institutions in the United Kingdom in 2018. Focusing specifically on the higher education market, the Higher Education Statistics Agency documented that during the academic year 2017/18, there were 3,995 international students from Vietnam studying in the UK, representing an increase from 3,480 students in 2015/16 (HESA, 2023). Despite the considerable size of the Vietnamese student population in the UK, limited research has been conducted on FLA and FLSA specifically within this group. For instance, Greer and Le (2014) investigated L2 learning experience of Vietnamese postgraduates in the UK, focusing on, however, how social interactions influence LE learning process in a study abroad context rather than FLA or FLSA.

## **2.5. Other related studies**

Drawing upon the conceptual framework of FLA introduced by Horwitz et al. (1986), numerous researchers have undertaken empirical investigations on the topic of FLSA, which is widely recognised as a predominant obstacle encountered in language classrooms. While some of these studies exhibit overlapping outcomes, others present distinctive findings regarding the types of FLSA that EFL learners experienced.

Öztürk (2009) conducted a mixed-method study in a Turkish EFL context to investigate the level of FLSA, its determining factors, and students' perceptions of it. The quantitative data analysis revealed that students reported a low level of EFL speaking anxiety. However, the interviews revealed that many students perceived their speaking

skills as a significant cause of anxiety. Additionally, aspects of FLSA such as pronunciation difficulties, immediate questioning, fear of making mistakes, and concerns about negative evaluation were identified as other types of EFL speaking anxiety. Moreover, gender was found to play a crucial role in FLSA, with females expressing higher levels of anxiety when it came to speaking in a FL.

Similarly, Yentürk and Dagdeviren-Kirmizi (2020) examined FLSA in both non-native and native instructors' classrooms at three universities in Turkey and concluded that female participants present higher levels of FLSA due to concern for social approval, self-criticism, and self-comparison. The findings also revealed that the duration of learning EFL acts as an influential factor in determining the level of FLSA experienced by participants.

Tianjian (2010) also conducted an investigation into the speaking anxiety experienced by Chinese EFL learners. The study revealed that more than 50% of the students reported experiencing moderate to high levels of speaking anxiety. In contrast to the studies of Dalkılıç (2001), Öztürk (2009) and Yentürk and Dagdeviren-Kirmizi (2020), there were no significant differences in speaking anxiety based on gender; however, significant variations were observed among different proficiency groups. Personality factors were identified as the primary contributors to speaking anxiety, and there were reciprocal influences between language achievement and speaking anxiety.

Moreover, in the research examining the level of FLA among 373 Saudi English major students at Taif University, Alsowat (2016) concluded that gender did not appear to have a significant impact on FLA. Furthermore, there is no correlation between the academic level of the participants and the level of FLA, indicating that all students, regardless of their academic standing, experienced similar levels of FLA. The findings also revealed that the primary types of anxiety reported by the students were concerns about the consequences of failure, fear of forgetting acquired knowledge, and uneasiness during language tests.

The study by Chan et al. (2012) investigated different dimensions of language anxiety, indicating that a majority of the students experienced a moderate level of anxiety regarding oral communication, test performance, and fear of negative evaluation. As a result, the researchers emphasised the importance of promoting beneficial or facilitating anxiety while reducing inhibitory anxiety. They argued that teachers play a crucial role in reducing FLSA and contribute significantly to achieving this goal.

Regarding the strategies that students to overcome FLSA, in a study to examine the anxiety in learning English speaking skills among 150 Vietnamese EFL students, Tran (2015) pointed out that having more time preparing for speaking tasks in class can build students' confidence when speaking English in the classroom. Further, participants in the study mentioned the importance of practicing their listening skills to support their speaking capability, hence reducing their FLSA. On the other hand, the finding in Von Worde's research (2003) illustrated that avoidance was one of the most common perceived coping strategies among students learning FL languages. Specifically, high-anxious students were reported not attending class or sleeping in FL classes.

## **2.6. Summary of literature review**

Taken together, this chapter has presented theoretical frameworks and relevant studies to the concept of FLA and FLSA. The comprehensive examination of literature has not only established the context for this dissertation but also established the foundation for the research questions. Despite numerous studies conducted in the literature to investigate the levels of EFL speaking anxiety experienced by learners in different contexts (Chan et al., 2012; Humphries, 2011; Mahmoodzadeh, 2012; Tianjian, 2010; Wu & Lin, 2014), the reported results have been inconsistent concerning FLSA levels (Chan et al., 2012; Öztürk, 2012; Saltan, 2003) and the relationship with gender (Bozavli & Gulmez, 2012; Öztürk, 2012; Tianjian, 2010). Moreover, only a limited number of studies have examined the connection between students' academic levels and their FLSA. Additionally, the impact of the duration of learning EFL on FSA, which has been explored in other contexts (Liu & Chen, 2013; Yentürk & Dagdeviren-Kirmizi,

2020), remains unexplored in the context of Vietnamese students studying in the UK. Therefore, the current study aims to identify specific types of FLSA in the UK context among Vietnamese university students and how gender, academic levels and length of EFL learning affect FLSA. The strategies for coping FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK will also be explored.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

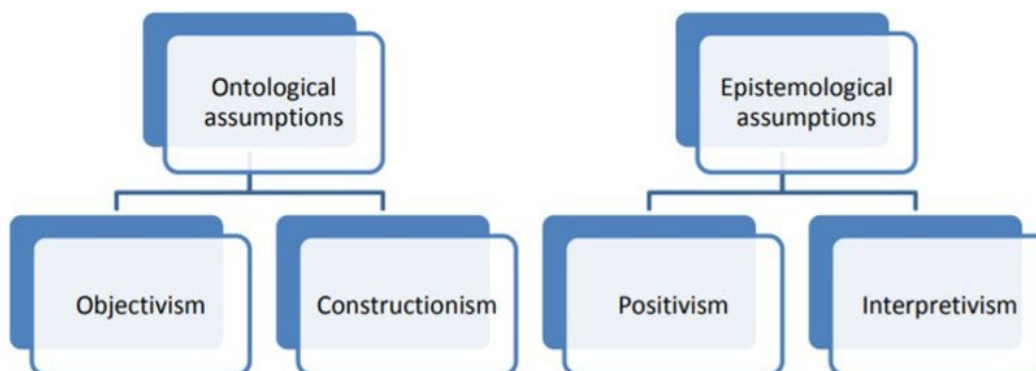
This chapter aims to outline and justify the research strategy, data collection method and the approach to data analysis employed to address the research questions below:

- 1. What are the main types of FLSA that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced?*
- 2. How do the levels of FLSA vary according to age, academic levels, and length of EFL learning among Vietnamese university students in the UK?*
- 3. What strategies do Vietnamese university students in the UK used to cope with their FLSA?*

This section also provides details on ethical considerations associated with the research method.

### 3.1. Research philosophy

The philosophical underpinnings of this study are founded upon the concepts of ontology and epistemology. Ontology refers to the beliefs concerning the fundamental nature of reality and the social world, whereas epistemology pertains to the approach adopted for comprehending and explaining "the nature of the world" (Easterby-Smith et al., 2015, p. 46). **Figure 1** below presents an outline of the different types of ontology and epistemology.



**Figure 1: Key philosophical paradigms in research methods outlined by Al-Saadi (2014)**

According to Easterby-Smith et al. (2015), ontology pertains to the interrelationship and existence of various facets of society. Considering that this study aims to examine the main types of FLSA and how the levels of FLSA vary according to age, academic levels and length of EFL learning among Vietnamese university students in the UK, the research philosophy of ontology has been adopted. In addition, as the production of statistical evidence through numerical data is essential for achieving the research aims and objectives, the concept of objectivism is deemed suitable for this dissertation (Ormston et al., 2014). Previous researchers have corroborated that objectivism is rooted in the acceptance of natural science methods for studying human knowledge; thus, employing similar approaches to data collection and interpretation as utilised in natural sciences, such as hypothesis testing and modeling (Ormston et al., 2014).

Further, Easterby-Smith et al. (2015) elucidated that epistemology encompasses the theoretical examination of knowledge and facilitates the understanding regarding the nature of the physical and social world through the conduct of interpretivism research. Bryman and Bell (2015) supported the view that interpretivism is inclined towards research objectives seeking a profound understanding of individuals' thoughts, values, and experiences. This rationale justifies the selection of an interpretive approach as an



additional research philosophy, with the aim of uncovering the types of FLSA and coping strategies for FLSA in the context of Vietnamese university students in the UK.

### **3.2. Research strategy**

This study employed a mixed quantitative-qualitative strategy to explore FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK. Mixed-method research is defined as research in which both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods are employed to collect and analysed data, combine the findings and draw conclusion (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007). This approach offers researchers various advantages, such as opportunities for collaboration, improved validity, incremental findings, practicality, and complementary insights (Polit & Beck, 2016). Guetterman et al. (2015) also emphasised that this multi-strategy approach is gaining popularity as it allows for a comprehensive understanding of complex issues and enables researchers to capture the perspectives and voices of respondents, leveraging the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Given these advantages, this study used a mixed methods design, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods.

### **3.3. Data collection methods**

Rowley (2014, p. 309) claimed that questionnaires are the most-frequently used method in conducting quantitative research, which enables researchers to facilitate the profiling of the sample in terms of numbers and to enumerate the frequency of occurrences of attitudes, experiences, opinions, behaviours, processes, or predictions. The utilisation of this particular data collection technique proves advantageous owing to its capacity to connect with and amass responses from a diverse range of individuals, transcending geographical limitations (Marshall, 2005). These special characteristics of questionnaires are most appropriate for the topic and context of this research which is to investigate types and levels of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK and the strategies they adopted to reduce FLSA.

According to Alshenqeeti (2014), the primary objective of conducting interviews is to access the perceptions, emotions, convictions, experiences, and responses of participants in a manner that is difficult to be accomplished through other means, such as observation or survey questionnaires. The interviews not only revealed new types of anxiety but also offered supporting examples of the various types of anxiety identified through statistical analyses (Pappamihiel, 2002). Thus, the interview in this study was designed to gather individual perspectives and in-depth data to supplement the questionnaire responses and to examine the relationships between the qualitative and quantitative data.

Questionnaires and interviews complement and compensate for each other's limitations in the research process. First, McDonald (2008) emphasised that interviews are time-consuming as they involve one-on-one interactions with participants. On the other hand, Wright (2005) argued that questionnaires alleviate the constraints of interviews by efficiently gathering substantial data within a short span of time. Second, questionnaires are often criticised by academics for lacking personalisation, given that researchers pre-determine the available answer options. On the other hand, interviews offer greater respondent flexibility and enable a more personalised exchange (Jain, 2021). Lastly, interviews provide researchers with the opportunity to observe participants' non-verbal behaviours, while quantified data derived from questionnaires can be used for comparisons with other studies and is deemed a reliable tool for assessing changes over time (McDonald, 2008; Wright, 2005). Considering the aims and objectives of this study, employing questionnaires to gather data appears efficacious in addressing the research questions, while analysing data from follow-up interviews allows for a more profound understanding of the FLSA among Vietnamese students studying at UK universities.

Specifically, a questionnaire was used to answer three research questions. The questionnaire was designed to identify the main types of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK and measure how the level of FLSA of the participants

differs according to age, gender, academic levels and learning duration EFL, as well as to examine the strategies Vietnamese university students in the UK used to reduce anxiety. In order to address the second research question, a quantitative method with the research hypotheses is formulated as below:

***Hypothesis 1 (H<sub>1</sub>):*** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different gender.*

***Hypothesis 2 (H<sub>2</sub>):*** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different academic levels.*

***Hypothesis 3 (H<sub>3</sub>):*** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different lengths of EFL learning.*

This is followed by interview with selected participants to gather additional information about their FLSA experiences to answer the first and the third research questions. Participants were selected in terms of their FLSA level based on the results of the questionnaires.

### **3.3.1. Questionnaires**

The data of this study was first drawn from an online survey questionnaire created through Qualtrics (**see Appendix G**). This survey was designed as a structured questionnaire including close-ended questions which have well-defined skipping patterns to follow the sequence of questions (Achrya, 2010). According to Achrya (2010), structured questionnaires with close-ended (or multiple-choice) questions are commonly employed by most quantitative data collection operations. The response format for closed questions offers the advantages of being time-efficient since the respondent can quickly answer and provides response categories that are easy to code (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). Nonetheless, this technique can introduce bias given the fact that the respondents have to choose among preconceived options that may not align with their views, as well as limit their creativity (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). As a result, to mitigate the bias in this type of questions, the questionnaire used in this

research were modified the sequence of response categories and values using a 1-to-5 scale.

There were three sections in the questionnaire. The first section included basic demographic questions including age, gender, academic levels and duration of EFL learning. The second sections included FLA-related items adopted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) of Horwitz et al. (1986) (**see Appendix D**) and The Extended Foreign Language Communication Anxiety Measure (TEFLCAM) introduced by Guntzviller (2016) (**see Appendix E**). These questionnaires regard to language anxiety which stems from speaking English (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991), which are considered to be most relevant to this study. Certain items from FLCAS and TEFLCAM were adopted and modified. Since FLCAS items solely related to FLSA in classroom environment, this current research incorporated TEFLCAM including items of FLSA outside classroom to align with the aim and objectives of investigating FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK.

The adopted version included a 5-point scale for each of 24 items to understand the main types of FLSA and measure level of FLSA of Vietnamese university students in the UK. The participants were asked to state their agreement or disagreement levels in terms of the stated expressions. Data collected from this section was analysed to answer the first and second research questions. The third section of the questionnaire included the 5-point scale items adopted from Kondo and Ling (2004) that measured the anxiety coping strategies. Data collected from the third section was analysed to answer the third research question.

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were asked whether they are interested in further interview or not. If yes, they were required to provide their email address for the researcher to contact them for participation in interviews.

### **3.3.2. Interviews**

Following the completion of a questionnaire, a qualitative follow-up interviewing approach was employed to investigate the apparent types and effects of language anxiety among selected participants, as well as their strategies to cope with FLSA.

Semi-structured interviews are employed in this study as a complement to questionnaires for triangulation and validity checking. According to Cachia and Millward (2011), based on the research questions and strategy, the interview approach can take three forms including structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. Although the format of structured interviews offers the advantage of easily quantifiable data and comparable answers across respondents, this method is unsuitable for an inductive approach as exploration is limited to scheduled topics (Cachia & Millward, 2011). On the other hand, unstructured interviews involve a broad open-ended query related to research questions and employ probes as well as follow-up questions to maintain the flow and ensure clarification, which provides an insightful understanding of interviewees' unique experiences, facilitating qualitative analysis (Cachia & Millward, 2011). This present study adopted semi-structured interview technique which features both characteristics of structured and unstructured interview techniques. A predetermined sequence of questions coupled with supplementary questions were employed in this research to delve into topics raised by the interview's participants. Brewerton and Millward (2001) suggested that this dynamic structure of interview resembles a guided conversation wherein the structure of taking turns is more formalised compared to the more casual daily interactions, and simultaneously creating a comfortable environment for interviewees while managing the direction of the discussion.

Interviews can facilitate the expression of feelings and reactions by asking the participants open-ended questions, which allow them to express their ideas spontaneously and add new information from their perspectives (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). Hence, this type of question was applied to the interviews to obtain an insight

into the FLSA experiences of Vietnamese university students in the UK and how they deal with FLSA.

After completing the online questionnaires, five participants with the highest anxiety level were invited to in-depth interviews. The interview questions are attached in **Appendix I** sample interview scripts are attached in **Appendix M**. Online semi-structured interviews were conducted via Microsoft Teams meeting to collect further information on FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK. The interview consisted of open-ended vague opinion-type questions which provide participants with more opportunities to share their experiences and opinions (Achrya, 2010). After conducting the follow-up interviews and transcriptions, the researcher compared the answers to identify the similarities and differences. Key themes from collected data were coded for analysis. The correlations between quantitative and qualitative data were also analysed in Chapter 4 and 5.

### **3.4. Sampling and participants**

According to Mitchell (2022), there were 5165 international students from Vietnam studying in the UK in 2020-2021. Lohr (2010) defined the population of social research as the entire set of elements that researchers are interested in studying. Sampling, a critical aspect of research quality, is the process of selecting a group of participants on which to base the research (Marshall, 1996). The sample of this study consists of Vietnamese university students in the UK. Due to the unavailability of a comprehensive sample list for the population, a non-probability sampling technique was used to reach Vietnamese university students studying in the UK (Acharya et al., 2013). Two non-probability sampling methods, convenience sampling and snowball sampling, were used to select participants who are available at the right time and place or who can be referred by the initial group of participants, respectively (Vehovar et al., 2016).

Participants are over-18-year-old Vietnamese students who are presently enrolled in a UK university with undergraduate or postgraduate course. Their IELTS score is 6.0 overall with no less than 5.5 in each element as this is the minimum English

requirement for applying for a university in the UK. There are 127 respondents to the online questionnaires and five participants in the interview.

### **3.5. Limitations of research methods**

This section aims to discuss three primary constraints pertaining to the research methods employed in this research.

First, the adoption of a mixed qualitative-quantitative approach causes difficulties in gathering diverse types of data to align with the study's objectives. While individual researchers may possess the capability to undertake multiple data collection and analysis methods, it is recommended that collaborating with individuals proficient in both qualitative and quantitative methodologies can facilitate a smoother integration of data (Yoshikawa et al., 2008).

Second, the utilisation of structured questionnaires featuring multiple-choice (or closed-ended) questions for data collection may introduce potential bias. Whilst these questionnaires offer advantages in terms of time efficiency, as respondents can swiftly provide answers, and facilitate easy coding of responses (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005), they also present participants with predefined response options that might not entirely align with their perspectives, consequently limiting their creativity (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005).

Third, the presence of a non-representative sample in the non-probability sampling approach employed in this research may result in diminished generalisability due to the increased sampling error (Lohr, 2010). Non-probability sampling is criticised for its deviation from the random selection process, making it challenging to establish a well-representative sample (Lohr, 2010).

Notwithstanding the aforementioned constraints, the researcher managed to alleviate the limitations associated with mixed qualitative-quantitative methods by implementing the research at an early stage. Moreover, adopting the interview method facilitated the

collection of meaningful and comprehensive data from participants in an honest and candid manner. As a result, the quantity of data gathered proved adequate to address the research questions in alignment with the study's scope.

### **3.6. Pilot test**

Siniscalco and Auriat (2005) emphasised the importance of conducting pre-testing of questionnaires due to its numerous benefits. Pre-testing helps to determine the suitability of research questions and hypotheses, as well as the adequacy of measurement levels for chosen variables (Siniscalco & Auriat, 2005). Furthermore, it ensures that the length of the questionnaire and sampling procedures are appropriately defined (Acharya, 2010). To improve the quality of the current study's questionnaire, a pilot test was conducted on a small group consisting of five Vietnamese university students who were conveniently recruited. Participants were required to fill out the questionnaire accurately. Among five participants, one master's student and one PhD student were selected to conduct a pilot interview. Participants were also required to provide honest and constructive feedback. This feedback is then used to revise and modify unclear and ambiguous questions to minimise measurement errors. These pre-tested respondents are excluded from the official survey to avoid duplication. Additional retrospective questions were added at the end of the questionnaire and interview to discern and elicit potential instances of ambiguity or inaccuracy within the content of the proposed instruments.

The piloted version, results of pilot test, and revised version of the questionnaire are attached in **Appendix G**.

### **3.7. Data analysis method**

During the data analysis process, the responses obtained from the questionnaires were assessed through Jamovi statistical software and subjected to one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), frequency analyses, and mean charts. Details of how the data was calculated and analysed for each research question will be presented in Chapter 4. The



results of the statistical analysis and hypothesis testing then were displayed in tables (**see Appendix K**). On the other hand, the data collected from the interviews was analysed using thematic analysis, which involves the identification, analysis, and interpretation of themes or patterns of meaning within qualitative data (Braun et al., 2017). Thematic analysis is suitable for this study as it can summarise, identify, interpret, and capture relevant features of the data related to research questions about types, levels, and strategies for coping with FLSA (Braun et al., 2017). Furthermore, this method is effective in recognising patterns within data related to participants' experiences, perspectives, and behaviours (Boyatzis, 1998). Thus, it is a valuable tool for comprehending participants' thoughts, emotions, and actions with regard to FLSA. In this study, the process of thematic analysis involves coding, categorisation and noting patterns. The full analysis of qualitative data from the interview is attached in **Appendix L**.

### **3.8. Ethical considerations**

In terms of ethical considerations, although educational studies typically do not inflict psychological or physical harm upon participants, it remains imperative to uphold ethical principles when conducting research, particularly in studies involving human subjects (Saunders et al., 2019).

Prior to collecting data for this study, the researcher's supervisor provided their endorsement by signing the Ethics Approval (**see Appendix A**). All participants are over 18 and were requested to give their consent through the Consent form attached on the first page of the survey link before proceeding to the survey's questions (**see Appendix G.1**). The link to the Participant Information Sheet was provided on this page (**see Appendix B**). The Information Sheet and a separate Consent Form for interviews were sent again via email to those who were chosen for the follow-up interviews (**see Appendix C**). By reading the information sheet and signing the consent form, the respondents grant their consent to be used as anonymous data in this study.

Due to the data collection procedure involving online questionnaires and interviews, there were no instances of direct physical interaction between the researcher and the participants. In terms of beneficence, the involvement of participants, limited to a 10-minute online survey containing solely closed-ended questions and a 15-minute online interview, poses no risk of health issues. However, the participants needed to commit time to complete the questionnaire and participate in the online interview. This could be an inconvenience for those with busy schedules. Second, participation in the study may trigger language anxiety for some participants, particularly during the process of interviews. This could lead to discomfort and stress.

To limit these negative consequences, the researcher undertook the following steps. First, all participants were given clear information about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks before agreeing to participate. They were also given the opportunity to ask questions and withdraw from the study at any time. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time without penalty. The researcher ensured that all data collected during the study is kept confidential and anonymous. The researchers provided support and debriefing to the participants if any discomfort or stress arises during the study. Participants were provided with contact information for support services if necessary. The study adheres to all ethical guidelines and principles of research, including the ethical treatment of human subjects.

In adherence to Oltman's (2016) recommendation, this study ensures the anonymisation of all participants in the transcripts to mitigate any potential risk of their quotes being used against them. To protect participants' privacy, the researcher only collected the personal identity of respondents that need to do the research, such as their email addresses for in-depth interviews; then replace all this information. Further, the researcher paraphrased all quotations in a way that the meaning remains unchanged. All participants' names in the study were labeled, such as Participant 1, in

the written dissertation. The researcher considered the timing of anonymisation when conducting the study; hence, all data and transcripts were anonymised.

All recordings of interviews were saved under mp4 files, and the transcriptions were saved under a Word file. All data and information collected were stored securely on Sheffield Hallam University's Q-drive to maintain the privacy of participants. In addition, the disclosure and final presentation of the data are subject to the informed consent of the participants.

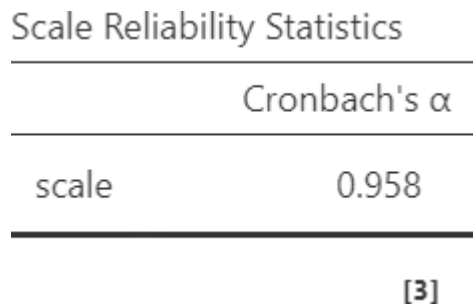
Another ethical aspect that should be taken into consideration is the researcher bias. Since the researcher is a Vietnamese student enrolling in a Masters' level course in a university in the UK, there are some potential biases. As posited by Maxwell (2008), researchers' insider status within the scope of the study may result in assumptions and preconceived notions which hinder a comprehensive exploration of the research topic. To mitigate the bias, the researcher in this study has engaged in reflexive practice as recommended by Finlay (1998) to critically examine the assumptions throughout the research process. Moreover, the researcher has ensured the transparency of documentation including decisions related to data collection and analysis to strengthen the credibility of findings and enable subsequent evaluations of potential personal bias. This current study also employed multiple data sources and analytical techniques as suggested by Patton (2002) to support the corroboration and validation of findings, thus minimising the impact of personal opinions.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaire and interviews as described in Chapter 3. The statistical data and hypothesis testing results to answer the research questions will also be displayed. The data obtained from the interview with participants is used to support the data collected through the questionnaire and will also be discussed further in chapter 5.

### 4.1. The reliability of the data

According to Cronbach (1988), the internal reliability of a research's quantitative data should attain a minimum Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 (see Appendix H). In this study, this index was computed using Jamovi, yielding a value of 0.958 (see Figure 2), surpassing the threshold of 0.7. Therefore, it can be inferred that the data collected for this study achieves a high level of reliability and the obtained value is deemed satisfactory.



Scale Reliability Statistics	
	Cronbach's $\alpha$
scale	0.958

[3]

Figure 2. Internal reliability of the research's quantitative data

### 4.2. Summary of demographic details

There was a total of 127 Vietnamese university students in the UK participating in this study. Among them, 69 individuals are identified as female, 56 individuals are identified as male, and two individuals are identified as non-binary (see Table 1). Their current

academic levels and length of studying EFL are also shown in **Table 2** and **Table 3**, respectively (see **Appendix K.1** for full details of demographic information).

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Female	69	54.3%
Male	56	44.1%
Non-binary	2	1.6%
Total	127	100%

**Table 1. Participants' gender**

<b>Academic levels</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bachelor's degree	73	57.5%
Master's degree	40	31.5%
Doctoral degree	14	11.0%
Total	127	100%

**Table 2. Participants' academic levels**

<b>Length of EFL learning</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Less than 3 years	10	7.9%
From 4 to 7 years	25	19.7%
From 8 to 11 years	43	33.9%
More than 12 years	49	38.6%
Total	127	100%

**Table 3. Participants' length of EFL learning**

### **4.3. Research question 1: What are the main types of FLSA that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced?**

#### **4.3.1. Questionnaire data**

In order to answer the first research question, the second section of the questionnaire which consists of 24 items regarding six dimensions of FLSA was used. Participants were requested to indicate their level of agreement with the statements using a five-point likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The mean variable of each item was first calculated (**see Appendix K.2**). Then the mean value of each FLSA type were computed by calculating the mean value of four items representing that category. As an illustration, there are four items concerning students' anxiety about understanding, labeled as UND\_1, UND\_2, UND\_3 and UND\_4. Thus, the mean variable of the FLSA type "anxiety about understanding" was generated using the following function in Jamovi:

<b>MEAN (UND_1, UND_2, UND_3, UND_4)</b>
--

The results from Jamovi are shown in **Table 4** and **Table 5** below.

Types of FLSA	Items	No. in the questionnaire	Label	Mean	Standard deviation
<b>General communication apprehension</b>	I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of other people.	1	COM_1	3.36	1.08
	I usually get anxious when communicating with others in English.	8	COM_2	3.35	1.12
	I find it uneasy to open a conversation with native speakers of English.	14	COM_3	3.45	1.06
	I worry about speaking in English with other people, even if I am well prepared for it.	24	COM_4	3.48	1.19
<b>Physical anxiety</b>	I start to panic when a stranger approaches and asks me simple questions in English at the supermarket.	2	PHY_1	3.28	1.13
	When making a phone call to a service, I get nervous if I am asked questions in English that I have not prepared in advance.	9	PHY_2	3.55	1.12
	When speaking to a native speaker, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	17	PHY_3	3.86	1.10
	I am tenser and more nervous when speaking in English than when speaking in Vietnamese.	21	PHY_4	3.44	1.10
<b>Fear of negative evaluation</b>	I am afraid that native speakers of English will judge my pronunciation.	3	NEG_1	4.01	0.98
	I fear that people will laugh at me when I speak English.	10	NEG_2	3.31	1.19
	I worry about failing my assignments/tests which involve presentations.	13	NEG_3	3.35	1.10
	During classroom discussions, I fear that my classmates will judge the way I express my ideas in English.	20	NEG_4	3.31	1.14

<b>Fear of making mistakes</b>	When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may say something grammatically wrong.	4	MIS_1	4.39	0.88
	I worry that I may pronounce English words incorrectly.	11	MIS_2	4.09	1.01
	When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may use the wrong words.	18	MIS_3	4.31	0.91
	I am afraid native speakers are ready to correct every mistake I make.	22	MIS_4	4.28	1.04
<b>Feelings of incompetence</b>	I feel that other people who also learn English speak it better than I do.	5	INC_1	3.43	1.14
	I keep thinking that I do not have enough vocabulary to communicate in English.	12	INC_2	3.39	1.07
	Classes move so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.	16	INC_3	3.31	1.14
	I keep thinking that my international friends are better at English than I am.	23	INC_4	3.54	1.17
<b>Anxiety about understanding</b>	I feel anxious if I don't understand what the other person is saying in English.	6	UND_1	3.43	1.05
	I worry that I may not understand what people are saying in English.	7	UND_2	3.35	1.14
	It frightens me when I don't understand what my teachers said in class.	15	UND_3	3.43	1.12
	I get embarrassed when I do not understand what a native speaker is saying in the language.	19	UND_4	4.03	1.11

**Table 4. Mean values of each item of each FLSA type**

Types of FLSA	Label	Mean	Standard deviation
General communication apprehension	COM	3.41	0.959
Physical anxiety	PHY	3.53	0.896
Fear of negative evaluation	NEG	3.49	0.874
Fear of making mistakes	MIS	4.27	0.806
Feelings of incompetence	INC	3.41	0.984
Anxiety about understanding	UND	3.56	0.896

**Table 5. Mean values of each FLSA type**

As can be seen from **Table 5**, fear of making mistakes obtained the highest mean value (4.27), depicting that this is the main type of FLSA among participants in this study. The



standard deviation of this category is the lowest (0.806), indicating a dense cluster of data points around the mean. Anxiety about understanding and physical anxiety are the second most common types of FLSA perceived by respondents with the mean of 3.56 and 3.53 respectively. Surprisingly, fear of negative evaluation, which was identified as the main type of FLA in the research of Öztürk (2009) and Chan et al. (2012), achieved a relatively low mean compared to other dimensions in this study. In other words, the majority of Vietnamese university students in the UK do not experience fear of negative evaluation in terms of FLSA. Further, general communication apprehension and feelings of incompetence obtained similar mean value (3.41), which was the lowest mean in the table, together with the highest standard deviations, implying that these FLSA types were perceived the least by participants.

#### **4.3.2. Interview data**

The data acquired from the follow-up interviews were coded for emergent themes which were then put into categories as below (**see Appendix L** for full qualitative data analysis). These data corroborated the findings in the statistical analysis.

##### **4.3.2a. General communication apprehension**

It is notable that two interviewees reported experiencing general communication apprehension when employing English within both classroom and non-classroom settings.

***Participant 1:** "I feel nervous when speaking in English because of my pronunciation and accent do not sound like native speakers."*

***Participant 2:** "I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of my classmates and my teachers."*

Other interviewees also specified their sense of panic when engaging in English exchanges with individuals encountered at libraries, airports, bus and train stations.

##### **4.3.2b. Physical anxiety**

Physical anxiety was mentioned by three interviewees.

**Participant 2:** *“I get panic if I receive any random questions from strangers on the street. I start to sweat for things that I didn’t prepare for.”*

**Participant 4:** *“It’s hard for me to breathe normally when making a phone call in English. I don’t feel good. I sometimes even stutter and my hands sweat.”*

**Participant 5:** *“My heartbeat become very fast, and I start to sweat every time before I order something in a restaurant. It is even worse when I must speak to someone over the phone in English.”*

#### **4.3.2c. Fear of negative evaluation**

Three interviewees conveyed their hesitance to actively participate in class discussions due to anxiety arising from being scrutinised by their teachers and classmates.

**Participant 1:** *“I avoid speaking in my class because I’m aware that I have a strong Vietnamese accent. Everyone would laugh at me, and I would feel very embarrassed.”*

**Participant 3:** *“When I said something in English, I’m always afraid that I would pronounce some words wrong and native speakers would judge and laugh at me.”*

**Participant 5:** *“Not confident at all when I speak English! And presentation in front of my classmates and teachers... it’s such a nightmare! You know the feeling of many eyes looking at me and criticise my accent, my pronunciation, my ideas, you name it!”*

#### **4.3.2d. Fear of making mistakes**

All interviewees also disclosed that their FLSA anxiety was derived from the feeling of making mistakes and the intricacy of their courses.

**Participant 1:** *"I felt very bad when I pronounced a word incorrectly because they laughed at me. They corrected my mistakes anyway, but I felt so embarrassed."*

**Participant 2:** *"I am more confident in writing English than speaking English. I use the wrong words and wrong grammar quite often and this makes me feel nervous whenever I try to speak English."*

**Participant 3:** *"I am currently working part-time in a restaurant. When I had to take orders for customers, I was really nervous. Initially, I thought that maybe because I was new to the job, and it would become better. However, after one year working there, I'm still scared. I even still make mistakes when saying the name of the dishes. Most of the times, I asked my colleagues to help me to order because I'm afraid of saying something wrong. I don't want the customers to laugh at me."*

**Participant 4:** *"I'm pretty shy. I just use simple words to speak because I'm afraid of making mistakes if I use any complicated words or grammars."*

**Participant 5:** *"It's so embarrassing if I pronounce a word incorrectly. You know, there are so many words in English that if we say it wrong, it turns out to a totally different meaning."*

#### **4.3.2e. Feelings of incompetence**

Two participants acknowledged consistently perceiving their classmates as more proficient in English than themselves.

**Participant 2:** *"I often feel worried when start a conversation in English because I afraid that the conversation would go too deep, and I don't think I have enough vocabulary to use."*

**Participant 4:** *"I feel nervous in class when it comes to group discussion, especially when they talk about the concepts or subjects that I may not know too many English words. Also, my classmates seem confident. I think that they are better than me...Most of my classmates are from Philippines where people speak English more often than in Vietnam. I felt a bit intimidate because I am not as good as them. Others seems quite confident when sharing their ideas."*

#### 4.3.2f. Anxiety about understanding

Three interviewees reported their anxiety about understanding when it comes to speaking English in their class.

**Participant 1:** *“When I speak to my classmates and they just smiled instead of saying something back to me, I felt confused and worried whether they understood me or not.”*

**Participant 3:** *“Not sure if what I said was appropriate or understandable or not. Maybe we are from different cultures and things just don’t make sense to them.”*

**Participant 5:** *“My classmates come from many countries such as Nigeria, Japan, India. I also meet other people who are from other parts of the world, so I hear so many accents. I am only familiar with American and British accent as that’s what I learned at schools in Vietnam. The other accents are strangers to me, and I don’t understand even half of the conversation if someone speak English with, for example, Indian accent.”*

#### 4.3.2g. Intercultural communication apprehension

Additionally, the data obtained from the interview also revealed that Vietnamese students in this study experienced higher levels of anxiety when talking to British people than when talking to people from other Asian countries. Hence, the theme of intercultural communication apprehension (ICA) has emerged, as in the study of Mulyono et al. (2019).

**Participant 3:** *“I’m very scared when I speak to British people because English is their first language. I’m afraid of making mistakes in front of them. I feel more confident when talking to people who I knew that English is not their mother tongue. For example, Thai, Japanese or Korean.”*

**Participant 4:** *“I’m worried about talking to British or even American people because I didn’t have many opportunities to talk to native speakers when I was in Vietnam.”*

**4.4. Research question 2: How do the levels of FLSA vary according to gender, academic levels, and length of EFL learning among Vietnamese university students in the UK?**

This research employed one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) as a statistical tool for hypothesis testing. One-way ANOVA was used to assess the impact of one factor on multiple other factors by determining whether there exist statistically significant differences between the mean values of two or more unrelated groups or independent groups (Kenton, 2021). This technique was adopted in this study to examine how the levels of FLSA of Vietnamese university students in the UK vary concerning gender, academic levels and length of EFL learning. The hypotheses presented in section 3.2 were evaluated at a 95% confidence interval ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) using Jamovi software. The p-value, which is the area in the right tail of the F-distribution, was calculated for each hypothesis. The p-value was then compared to the significance level ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) to state the outcome of the test. If  $p\text{-value} \leq \alpha$ , the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the hypothesis and vice versa, if  $p\text{-value} > \alpha$ , the null hypothesis is verified.

Before testing the proposed hypotheses, descriptive statistics were employed to compute the mean scores representing the participants' level of FLSA (see Figure 3).

Descriptives	
	Levels of anxiety
N	127
Missing	0
Mean	3.61
Median	3.42
Standard deviation	0.763
Minimum	1.17
Maximum	5.00

**Figure 3. Level of FLSA among participants**

The classification of FLSA used in this study aligns with the categorisation adopted by Al-Saraj (2011) and Javid (2014) to assess the participants' level of speaking anxiety (see Table 6).

Mean score	Category
1.0 - 1.79	very un-anxious
1.80 - 2.59	un-anxious
2.60 - 3.49	moderately anxious
3.50 - 4.29	anxious
4.30 - 5.0	highly anxious

**Table 6. The categories used to determine the level of FLSA.**

As can be seen from **Figure 3**, the mean score for overall FLSA was 3.61, placing participants in this current study within the category 'anxious'.

#### **4.4.1. How do the levels of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK vary according to gender?**

In order to answer this research question, the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis are proposed below:

**Null hypothesis 1 ( $H_{01}$ ):** *There is no statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different gender.*

**Alternative hypothesis 2 ( $H_{11}$ ):** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different gender.*

One-Way ANOVA (Welch's)				
	F	df1	df2	p
Levels of anxiety	18.6	2	2.65	0.028

Group Descriptives					
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	SE
Levels of anxiety	Female	69	3.96	0.657	0.0791
	Male	56	3.21	0.583	0.0779
	Non-binary	2	3.02	2.622	1.8542

**Figure 4. One-way ANOVA test result on Hypothesis 1**

It is observed from **Figure 4** that the p-value is 0.028 which is below 0.05, the null hypothesis  $H_{01}$  is rejected and the alternative hypothesis  $H_1$  is most likely correct. This means there is a statistical difference in the means of FLSA levels among different genders. In other words, the FLSA levels of Vietnamese university students in the UK change along with different genders. The one-way ANOVA test result also showed that female students experienced a higher degree of FLSA than male and non-binary counterparts and females obtained the highest mean value of 3.96.

#### **4.4.2. How do the levels of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK vary according to academic levels?**

In order to answer this research question, the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis are proposed below:

**Null hypothesis 2 ( $H_{02}$ ):** *There is no statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different academic levels.*

**Alternative hypothesis 2 ( $H_2$ ):** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLA level among different academic levels.*

	F	df1	df2	p
Levels of anxiety	0.916	2	35.9	0.409

	Academic levels	N	Mean	SD	SE
Levels of anxiety	Bachelor's degree	73	3.67	0.756	0.0885
	Doctoral degree	14	3.70	0.719	0.1922
	Master's degree	40	3.48	0.789	0.1247

**Figure 5. One-way ANOVA test result on Hypothesis 2**

**Figure 5** shows that  $p = 0.409 > 0.05$ ; therefore, the result of the sample data is not significant. There is not sufficient evidence to conclude that the alternative hypothesis  $H_2$  is correct. At a 5% significance level, the means of FLSA level for different academic levels are the same, indicating that the FLSA levels of the participants in this study do not change along with academic levels.

#### **4.4.3. How do the levels of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK vary according to lengths of EFL learning?**

In order to answer this research question, the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis are proposed below:

**Null hypothesis 3 ( $H_{03}$ ):** *There is no statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different lengths of EFL learning.*

**Hypothesis 3 ( $H_3$ ):** *There is a statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level among different lengths of EFL learning.*



One-Way ANOVA (Welch's)					
	F	df1	df2	p	
Levels of anxiety	1.19	3	34.6	0.327	

Group Descriptives					
	Length of studying EFL	N	Mean	SD	SE
Levels of anxiety	From 4 to 7 years	25	3.53	0.878	0.176
	From 8 to 11 years	43	3.63	0.674	0.103
	Less than 3 years	10	4.08	0.843	0.267
	More than 12 years	49	3.55	0.746	0.107

**Figure 6. One-way ANOVA test result on Hypothesis 3**

Since the significance value ( $p = 0.327$ ) is higher than  $\alpha = 0.05$  (see **Figure 6**), there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the null hypothesis  $H_{03}$  is a correct belief. As a result, there is no statistical difference in the group means of FLSA level depending on lengths of EFL learning.

#### **4.5. Research question 3: What strategies do Vietnamese university students in the UK use to cope with their FLSA?**

##### **4.5.1. Questionnaire data**

The final question aims to discover strategies to cope with FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK. **Figure 7** and **Table 7** depicts that preparation and positive thinking are the common measures adopted by participants in this research when it comes to dealing with FLSA (37.8% and 20.2% respectively). The total percentages do not add up to 100% as one respondent could report various strategies.

The quantitative statistics provided a general overview on FLSA coping strategies among participants, whereas the data from the subsequent interviews offered a more detailed understanding of individual variations, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Frequencies of Stategies

Stategies	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Preparation	195	37.8 %	37.8 %
Relaxation	84	16.3 %	54.1 %
Positive thinking	104	20.2 %	74.2 %
Peer seeking	79	15.3 %	89.5 %
Resignation	52	10.1 %	99.6 %
Others	2	0.4 %	100.0 %

**Figure 7. Strategies to cope with FLSA.**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Item no. in questionnaire</b>	<b>Number of responses (out of 237)</b>
<b>Preparation</b>	I practice English in my mind	1	70
	I try to make a habit of studying English every day	6	60
	I ask the teacher to speak slowly	11	32
	I pre-use the material before I am called on by the teacher	15	33
<b>Relaxation</b>	I try to calm down	2	27
	I shake my body	7	14
	I take a deep breath	12	27
	I close my eyes	17	16
<b>Positive thinking</b>	I imagine myself giving a great performance	3	28
	I try not to think of people around me	9	24
	I tell myself that mistakes are good because I can learn from them	14	31
	I believe in myself	19	21

<b>Peer seeking</b>	I tell myself that the others must also be anxious	4	22
	I look for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety	8	19
	I tell myself that difficult problems for me are also difficult for others	13	21
	I look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class to ask how they are coping with their FLSA	20	17
<b>Resignation</b>	I give up	5	7
	I just try to put up with the situation	10	20
	I sleep in class	16	11
	I stop paying attention to what other people are saying	18	14
<b>Others</b>	I don't do anything	21	2

**Table 7. Frequencies of each item in different strategies to cope with FLSA.**

#### **4.5.2. Interview data**

The data acquired from the follow-up interviews were coded for emergent themes which were then put into categories as below (see **Appendix L** for full qualitative data analysis).

##### **4.5.2a. Preparation**

Participants from the interview reported preparation was one of their FLSA coping strategies.

**Participant 1:** *“My lecturers usually upload all the learning materials beforehand so I know what we will discuss in the next lesson, and I prepare for it. Well, I must study harder... I read all the provided materials and plan things that I can say during the lesson. This relaxed me a bit.”*

**Participant 2:** *“I practice what I will say in my mind before I speak. When I have free time, ... no,... actually, every day, I also try to imagine different situations that I may encounter in daily life and then start talking by myself. It helps me a lot to reduce my anxiety and make me feel more confident.”*

Preparation prior to having a presentation in class was also mentioned by interviewees as a strategy to reduce FLSA.

**Participant 4:** *“I often have forgetful syndrome during the presentation in class. I know that I need to study harder. I need to spend few hours or sometimes few days to rehearsal so that I can be more confident, and I can remember what I want to say in my presentation.”*

**Participant 5:** *“I stand in front of the mirror and talk to myself in English every morning. This helps me to feel less anxious when talking to native speakers, and especially this is so helpful whenever I have any oral assignment such as presentation in class. I tend to speak more fluently and make less mistakes.”*

However, one interviewee mentioned that the level of speaking anxiety is still high despite of comprehensive preparation.

**Participant 3:** *“I studied very hard. I carefully prepared every time I had presentation in class, but I always feel nervous. I start to sweat when it comes to my turn to speak in front of the whole class. I make a lot of grammar and pronunciation mistakes.”*

#### **4.5.2b. Relaxation**

The participants in the interview reported adopting the strategy of relaxation, especially when preparation seems not to be helpful for them.

**Participant 2:** *“When I feel nervous right before the presentation, I close my eyes for five seconds and take a deep breath. This helps to calm me down.”*

**Participant 3:** *“My high school English teacher once told me to take a deep breath every time I’m anxious and it was really helpful.”*

#### **4.5.2c. Positive thinking**

Positive thinking strategies were adopted by participants in the interview to help them improve their academic performance as well as their ability to communicate in English.

**Participant 1:** *“I imagined the scenario when giving a great performance. This makes me feel more relaxed and confident so that I can speak more fluently and hence, get higher mark in my oral assignment.”*

Interviewees also mentioned making mistakes as opportunities for learning.

**Participant 2:** *“I barely take my mistakes seriously. I rather see my mistakes as learning opportunities so that I can be less nervous when speaking English.”*

**Participant 4:** *“I used to feel awful whenever I said something wrong. However, I realised that making mistakes is not that bad because that means I could learn something new. Looking at the positive sides of making mistakes helps me increase my confidence and develop my language ability.”*

#### **4.5.2 d. Peer seeking**

In the interview, one participant reported using peer seeking strategy to cope with FLSA.

**Participant 3:** *“I think others may have the same problems dealing understanding English in class, so I look around and find out who seems anxious and ask them how they deal with it.”*

#### **4.5.3 e. Resignation**

The findings from interview indicated that resignation was not a popular strategy to deal with FLSA among respondents.

**Participant 1:** *“I always try to do something to make me feel less nervous when speaking English to foreign people. I don’t think giving up is an option here because it means that I will never get better in my speaking skills.”*

**Participant 5:** *“If I stop paying attention to what others say in English, not only do I get lost in the conversation but also I would never be able to listen to English clearly and speak fluently. So, what the point of studying overseas if my English could not be improved?”*

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

The aim of this study is to investigate the main types of FLSA perceived by Vietnamese university students in the UK, the correlation between FLSA anxiety levels and different variables, and the coping strategies adopted to deal with FLSA. This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the findings based on relevant literature and promotes new perspectives.

### **5.1. The main types of FLSA experienced by Vietnamese university students in the UK**

The findings revealed that there are several types of FLSA perceived by Vietnamese EFL university students in the UK.

#### **5.1.1. General communication apprehension**

**Table 5** shows the mean value of general communication apprehension is 3.41, indicating that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced general communication apprehension. The data coded from the interview also depicts the existence of this type of anxiety. These observations align with established research in the field of SL and FL acquisition. Scholars such as Horwitz et al. (1986) illuminated multiple dimensions of FLA and identified the primary types of FLA including communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Regarding the context of Vietnamese EFL learners, Tran (2015) articulated that cultural background and societal expectations can contribute to FL communication apprehension, especially in higher education settings. Along the same lines, Liu and Jackson (2008) found that classroom environment can contribute significantly to FLA and suggested that students' anxiety can be amplified by a lack of engaging activities as well as interactive activities. In a study involving Vietnamese EFL learners, Truong and Wang (2019) emphasised the impact of linguistic self-perception and the pressure to adhere to native-like standards of pronunciation. Moreover, Brown (2008) proved that



the shock on arrival and the subsequent encounter with spoken English in daily interactions exacerbated international students' general communication apprehension.

### **5.1.2. Physical anxiety**

Participants in this study experienced high degree of FLSA in terms of physical anxiety as the data shown in **Tables 4 and 5**. The results from quantitative and qualitative data mirror the manifestations from previous research, such as Horwitz et al. (1986), highlighting the presence of physiological responses including sweating, increased heartbeat or trembling associated with FLA. The narratives of Participants 2, 4 and 5 in the interview further substantiate these findings, reflecting the sense of nervousness, tension and panic when interacting in English. A comprehensive framework for comprehending the physical anxiety in the particular context of Vietnamese university students in the UK is provided by the convergence of quantitative data, qualitative testimonies, and established literature. This strengthens the generalisability of anxiety theories and supports the necessity of individualised intervention strategies.

### **5.1.3. Fear of negative evaluation**

According to Semmar (2010), FL learners tend to experience trepidation when receiving adverse evaluations within social contexts, in which their perceived deficiency linguistic competence might cause unfavourable judgments by others. Consequently, students characterised by such anxiety often have a sense of hesitance towards situations wherein their performance is solely appraised on their language ability. The results of this study have confirmed Semmar's findings as fear of negative evaluation obtained of relatively high mean, especially item NEG\_1 with the mean value of 4.01 (**see Table 5**). For example, Participant 1 also claimed that she often refrained from participating in class discussions due to her anxiety over scrutiny and judgement of her Vietnamese accent. These findings corroborate the study of Horwitz et al. (1986), which proposed three major components of FLA including fear of making mistakes, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Further, Na (2007) pronounced that the of majority activities

involving speaking English in classrooms unconsciously foster an environment where students evaluate each other's linguistic proficiency and thereby inducing increasing levels of anxiety.

#### **5.1.4. Fear of making mistakes**

In this current research, fear of making mistakes is considered to be the most common type of FLSA as it obtained the highest mean value among the six categories.

Participants reported apprehension regarding making mistakes in front of their peers, teachers, and native speakers. This fear of making mistakes when speaking EFL has been recognised as an anxiety-provoking factor in Horwitz's study (2001), which highlighted that this factor hindered students from actively engaging in English conversations. Furthermore, according to Gregersn and Horwitz (2002), students' fear of making mistakes is negatively related to their desire to maintain their positive image; as a consequence, they tend to hesitate in speaking English and avoid the potential risk of making mistakes. The findings corroborate the conclusions of previous studies (Horwitz et al., 1986; Javid, 2014; Young, 1991), which suggested a connection between students' fear of making mistakes and the way teachers, peers or native speakers correct their errors. This was evident in the data collected from the interviews when participants expressed concerns regarding negative attitudes from other people when their mistakes were corrected.

The interview data appears to align with the findings in Aveni's study (2005) which emphasised a potential connection between FL learners' fear of making mistakes and their concerns that such mistakes might lower their linguistic and cognitive prestige. Additionally, DuFon and Churchill (2006) asserted that despite the extended exposure of international students to the target language, the anxiety related to error-making might persist during conversations with people possessing a superior command of the target language. Participant 3 revealed that in spite of having one year experience of working part-time in a restaurant while studying in the UK, she still experienced the apprehension because she was afraid of making mistakes when taking orders for

customers. As posited by Madil (2016), this type of FLA can give rise to speaking anxiety, hence impeding students' willingness for interpersonal communication and causing a reluctance to engage in communicative tasks.

#### **5.1.5. Feelings of incompetence**

Although feeling of incompetence obtained the lowest mean value (3.41, **see Table 5**), it can be considered as one of the main dimensions of FLSA experienced by Vietnamese university students as two interviewees reported that they encountered anxious feelings of limited lexical resource and deficiencies in the language proficiency of conversational partners.

The feelings of incompetence are intricately connected to the perceived competence of learners. Unlike proficiency or capability, which signify the genuine aptitude to perform a task, perceived competence is delineated as the belief of possessing the capability to exert an influence in terms of accomplishing an objective related to that competency (Sultan, 2012). Bandura (1993) proved that students' perception of their abilities is dependent on their degree of self-efficacy, which means that students tend to encounter anxious sentiments if they appraise low competency due to their limited self-efficacy. Further, Aling (2016) asserted that EFL students' self-assessment of their competence plays a significant role in determining their propensity to undertake challenges and risks, as well as in influencing the level of anxiety experienced during their FL learning journey. Bandura et al. (1999) corroborated that students with elevated levels of competence are inclined to perceive tasks as more manageable even when it was onerous in fact, and vice versa, when students hold a belief of diminished competency, they are more likely to be susceptible to low proficiency, heightened anxiety and increased academic stress.

#### **5.1.6. Anxiety about understanding**

Despite the significant impact on students' FLSA, limited scholarly attention has been directed to the concept of anxiety about understanding. However, drawing from the

findings of this research, anxiety about understanding can be classified into two subcategories including anxiety related to being misunderstood and anxiety arising from actual misunderstandings. Mandaci (2018) contented that this type of FLA can emanate from students' incompetence in linguistic ability or disparities in cultural norms, which are particularly evident among international students studying in a foreign country.

The quantitative data showed that Vietnamese students in this study experience anxiety when experiencing difficulties in understanding people whose English is their first language, especially item UND\_4 with a mean of 4.03 (**see Tables 5 and 6**).

Meanwhile, the qualitative data demonstrated the apprehension of being misinterpreted. Moreover, Participant 5 mentioned the diverse accents of his international classmates and other people he encountered in the UK occasionally thrust him into situations of misunderstanding. Previous researchers such as Aling (2016) proved that such situations hold the potential to escalate the stress levels in EFL students, leading to a detrimental impact on their language proficiency.

#### **5.1.7. Intercultural communication apprehension**

The qualitative data revealed intercultural communication apprehension (ICA) as another dimension of FLSA among participants in this research. Mulyono et al. (2019) elucidated that ICA pertains to the challenges arising from the similarity in EFL backgrounds and the influence of social context experienced by interlocutors. EFL similarity exists when individuals originate from closely related regions, such as America-Canada, Vietnam-Thailand or Africa-Gambia, therefore minimal differences. In contrast, if interlocutors come from a different country with distinct cultures and disparate worldviews, they tend to encounter difficulties in effectively engaging with one another. This has explained why participants in the interview reported the higher degree of anxiety when talking to British people than when talking to those who come from other Asian countries like China or Japan. This aligns with the study of Mulyono et al. (2019) which concluded that EFL learners feel more anxious to talk to British and American people as English is their native language and feel more at ease when it

comes to speaking English with people who use English as their FL or SL. The findings are also corroborated by previous studies on FLSA among international students as well as its main types, such as those analysed by Selvam et al. (2016) and Zhiping and Paramasivam (2013).

## **5.2. The correlation between FLSA levels and gender, academic levels, and length of EFL learning among Vietnamese university students in the UK**

### **5.2.1. Gender**

**Figure 4** provides evident indication for higher levels of FLSA among female students in this study compared to their male and non-binary counterparts. These findings are in line with the studies of Dalkılıç (2001), Öztürk (2009) and Yentürk and Dagdeviren-Kirmizi (2020), which concluded that FL anxiety levels differ significantly between genders and female participants experienced higher level of FL anxiety. It also confirms the outcomes of Mesri (2012) which indicated that Iranian female EFL learners exhibited higher mean scores in all anxiety dimension than male learners. However, the research of Budin (2014) conflicts with the current study by revealing Malaysian male students were more anxious in terms of FLSA than female students. In contrast, Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013), Tianjian (2010) and Wu (2012) in their studies to investigate the correlation between gender and FLA indicated that there is no notable distinction across gender. In other words, gender is an ineffective factor which affects the levels of FLA.

Higher level of FLSA in female subjects in this study can be attributed to sociocultural, psychological, and linguistic factors. Socioculturally, in Vietnamese culture, traditional gender roles and expectations can place additional pressure on women to conform to particular behavioural norms, including language competence (Hoang, 2011). As a consequence, female EFL students may encounter escalated anxiety and increased self-consciousness and apprehension when it comes to speaking English, as any linguistic mistakes or deficiencies can be considered as deviating from prescribed gender roles. In terms of psychology, Zee and Roorda (2018) articulated that females tend to be more predisposed to internalizing and overthinking their performance; hence,

they are more prone to high self-awareness and self-critique which could exacerbate their anxiety, especially in a FL context where the fear of judgment or evaluation may be magnified. Linguistically, females are proved to be more sensitive to the nuances of language and social communication, leading to increase self-monitoring and anxiety during English language conversations (Eckert, 1998). The prospect of inadvertently using language that is deemed inappropriate or less proficient might amplify anxiety levels among female EFL students (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). Additionally, in the context of Vietnamese university students in the UK, FLSA levels among female students could be intensified by a potential sense of cultural displacement and linguistic unfamiliarity. The necessity to adapt to a new cultural and language context while balancing academic and social obligations may contribute to female students' increased sensitivity and uncertainty.

### **5.2.2. Academic levels**

As can be seen from **Figure 5**, there is no correlation between FLSA levels and educational levels among participants in this study. It is in accordance with Alsowat (2016) and Yang (2012) who investigated contributing factors of English classroom and English communication anxiety, together with the interrelation between selected individual difference variables and FL anxiety. The results suggested that students across all academic levels experience an equal degree of FLA.

According to Galajda (2017), fear of judgment, linguistic self-perception and apprehension about linguistic accuracy may act as contributors to FL anxiety of FL learners regardless of their academic stage. The shared experience of adjusting to a new linguistic and cultural context in a foreign context may add to a sense of vulnerability, which may heighten FLSA across academic levels (Mulyono et al., 2019). Moreover, Vietnamese university students in the UK, irrespective of their academic level, may share mutual norms and expectations in terms of language use, hence potentially exhibiting parallel anxieties (Nguyen & Buckingham, 2019). In other words, their perception of language competence and social expectations may not considerably

differ between bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels and further contributing to the convergence of FLSA. Biserova and Shagivaleeva (2019) also suggested that the experience of international students, which is characterised by the challenges of adapting to a new foreign academic and linguistic setting, can be considered as a reason for similar levels of FLA. Therefore, the need to navigate an unfamiliar environment together with the pressure to thrive academically may overshadow the disparity in academic level and contribute to a shared experience of FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK.

### **5.2.3. Length of EFL learning**

The participants in this study were categorised under the groups of less than 3 years, from 4 to 7 years, from 8 to 11 years and more than 12 years of studying English as FL. There is no strong evidence showing the correlation between the levels of FLSA and lengths of EFL learning. Nevertheless, there are contradictory results in literature. While Liu and Chen (2013) reported higher level of FLA when the length of EFL learning decreases, Latif (2015) and Tercan and Dikilitaş (2015) claimed a negative correlation between the length of study and FLA.

The phenomenon where Vietnamese university students in the UK with varying duration of EFL learning present comparable levels of FLSA can be attributed to the following factors. The primary reason is that the educational setting and language proficiency requirements in universities in the UK might engender a uniform level of language apprehension among Vietnamese students irrespective of their duration of EFL learning. Leung et al. (2014) corroborated that the intrinsic demands of academic interaction in English coupled with the pressure to adhere the proficient linguistic use could lead to a consistent backdrop of language concern. Further, Dewale and MacIntyre (2014) pronounced that the curriculum design and pedagogical methodologies in EFL teaching might contribute to anxiety levels. To be more specific, given the learning environment emphasising spoken language proficiency across different phases of the study, learners' perceived anxiety degree may stabilise. In the case of Vietnamese EFL

students, most of them were educated to deal with grammar-based exams from primary school level to high school level mainly through the grammar-translation method, which limits learners' communication since they had few opportunities to be exposed to authentic English interaction and conversations (Hoa & Tuan, 2007). Consequently, regardless of how long Vietnamese students learn English, there is a high possibility that they experience a comparable high level of FLSA.

### **5.3. Strategies**

Through quantitative and qualitative methods, the study identified five types of strategies that Vietnamese university students employed to cope with FLSA, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking and resignation. This result supports Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) hypothesis which stated that FL learners use cognitive, affective, and behavioural coping strategies as well as resignation when it comes to FLA. Positive thinking and peer seeking are examples of cognitive strategies as they aim to conceal or alter negative language learning-related thought processes. Meanwhile, preparation is considered as a behavioural strategy due to its concentration on behavioural aspects of language learning. Relaxation is distinguished by its affective quality in that it seeks to relieve bodily tension related to emotional arousal.

It is notable that preparation was used more frequently than other strategies among participants in this study. This finding appears to support the prevalent findings in the existing research (Abdurahman & Rizqi, 2021; Marwan, 2016). While there is substantial evidence that individuals with anxiety experience heightened levels of task-irrelevant cognitions in evaluative contexts (Zeidner, 2007), preparation, which is inherently aligned with task-relevance, was proved to have comparable frequency of employment among high-anxious students as well as low-anxious students. Four participants from the interview also reported preparation was one of their FLSA coping strategies, especially before their presentation in class. Participant 4 admitted that she suffered '*forgetful syndrome*' during the presentation, and she undertook thorough preliminary preparation at home hours or even days in advance. Abdurahman & Rizqi



(2021) underscored that presenters delivering a speech in their SL or FL typically recognise their limitations of vocabulary compared to their mother tongue, which may elevate their speaking anxiety. Hence, in order to counterbalance the deficiency, participants in this study frequently invested extra efforts, for example, by '*studying harder*' as Participant 1 and 4 stated or forming the habit of practising English every day as Participant 2 and 5 stated. Such supplementary preparation measures, as highlighted by Mejía (2014), holds positive impact on students' self-confidence by helping them to enhance their overview prior to dealing with the forthcoming presentation.

Notwithstanding the beneficial influence of preparation when coping with FLSA, Participant 3 revealed that he remained nervous when speaking in English despite comprehensive preparation and constantly made mistakes. This is in line with the study of Anggraini et al. (2022) which concluded that preparation had minimal impact on language anxiety levels. Marwan (2016) claimed that when students continue to grapple with apprehension despite having adequately prepared, they tend to proceed to engage in more relaxation strategies. Both quantitative data and qualitative data demonstrated that participants employed some relaxation strategies such as trying to stay calm, moving parts of their body, taking a deep breath, or closing their eyes.

Additionally, positive thinking was a common FLSA coping strategy among participants in this study. Positive thinking strategies involve proactive cognitive and behavioural endeavours to minimise language anxiety, which encompasses a process aligned with meaning-based thinking as proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). This framework integrated cognitive processes based on information acquisition, decision making and strategic planning with the aim of overcoming the problems that obstruct the goals and hence avoiding the emergence of anxiety (Kao & Craigie, 2013). This study's findings validate previous research outcomes which confirmed that adopting positive thinking coping strategy can lower the degree of FL anxiety and stress (Folkman, 1997; Love & Irani, 2007). Further, Love and Irani (2007) suggested that FL learners who adopt

positive thinking practices tend to exhibit potential goal revision, redefine their anxiety experience and have capacity to renew and sustain their coping endeavours.

In the interview, Participant 2 perceived making mistakes as learning opportunities. Moreover, Participant 1 and 4 mentioned that the practice of positive thinking acted as a booster to their confidence and self-assurance and this tendency was particularly pronounced when making nerve-wracking mistakes. Fallah (2017) contend that FL students tend to evade the regret subsequent to their mistakes, as they are convinced such negative reflections would diminish their performance quality. That is the reason why it is necessary to recalibrate their negative feeling by employing positive and constructive self-talks.

Vietnamese university students also adopted peer seeking strategies to reduce their levels of FLSA. 20 students from the questionnaire (**see Table 7**) expressed that they actively seek out their peers who are struggling in understanding the lesson in class with the purpose of inquiring about how they are managing their FLSA. Marwan (2016) asserted that this approach can foster a sense of solidarity and yield insights into effective FLSA coping mechanisms.

The findings of this current research pointed out that resignation was not a popular strategy to deal with FLSA among respondents. All interviewees did not consider resignation as their measure of reducing FLSA. This indeed contradicts the viewpoint of Pappamihel (2002) who concluded that resignation or avoidance constitutes is one of prevailing coping strategies used by FL learners in response to FLA. However, Kao and Craigie (2013) argued that in fact, the non-adoption of resignation in the management of FLA is conducive to the progress of FL learners as learning a FL requires an active engagement. All participants in the interview were aware that refraining from taking part in class activities or avoiding English conversations would impede the pace of their language acquisition process.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1. Conclusion**

This study aims to explore FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK. Through data obtained from questionnaires and interviews, three research questions were answered and the objectives mentioned in Chapter 1 were achieved.

To answer research question 1 which investigated the main types of FLSA experienced by Vietnamese university students in the UK, participants were asked to rate their levels of agreement in a likert scale from 1 to 5 on 24 items adopted from FLCAS by Horwitz et al. (1986) and TEFLCAM by Guntzville (2016). The interviews were also conducted to gain a deeper insight into the topic of research. The data analysis showed that Vietnamese university students in the UK experienced several types of FLSA including fear of making mistakes, anxiety about understanding, physical anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, general communication apprehension, feelings of incompetence and intercultural communication apprehension. Among all, fear of making mistakes is the most common type of FLSA.

Research question 2, which delved into the variability of FLSA levels, considering distinct gender, academic levels, and duration of EFL learning, was addressed by using one-way ANOVA to analyse the data collected from the questionnaire. The results depicted that the levels of FLSA of participants in the context of this study fluctuate in accordance with gender differentials, with female respondents demonstrating a higher level of FLSA compared to their counterparts of other genders. On the other hand, the quantitative data analysis showed that the levels of FLSA do not change along with different academic levels and duration of EFL learning.

Finally, the third research question was to investigate the FLSA coping strategies among subjects in this study. The 5-point scale items adopted from Kondo and Ling (2004) and follow-up interviews were employed as data collection instruments for this

question. According to data analysis, the study concluded that participants use preparation, positive thinking, relaxation, and peer seeking for FLSA mitigation.

Previous studies have examined the concept of FLA and FLSA on EFL learners. This research has contributed to the current literature by examining an underexplored area by focusing on FLSA in the context of international students in an English-speaking country, specifically Vietnamese university students in the UK. This geographical and cultural distinction enriches the understanding of FLSA experiences. Another significant contribution is that this research extends the comprehension of FLSA dynamics by investigating how multiple variables including gender, academic levels, and lengths of EFL learning affect FLSA levels, thereby enhancing the nuanced characterisation of FLSA manifestations among Vietnamese students in higher education. Moreover, the aspect of the study involving coping strategies to manage FLSA has offered practical insights into the adaptive measures that EFL learners develop to overcome the challenges of FLSA, which can inform pedagogical approaches and support systems tailored to learners' needs. More importantly, the findings of this study can be a useful source for future research to compare the concept of FLSA among EFL students living in different countries.

## **6.2. Pedagogical implications**

It goes without saying that speaking anxiety is one of the major challenges that may impede EFL learners' communicative competence (Çağatay, 2015). Although in Vietnam, English is part of school curriculum (Tienphong, 2019), there is a lack of effective communication skills and high level of speaking anxiety among Vietnamese students reported in this study. This result illustrates that it is necessary for educators to navigate and dismantle speaking anxiety in the pursuit of communicative proficiency. It is suggested that not only language instructors but also educators should be aware of FLSA in international students. Given the immediate and continuous exposure to a foreign environment, FLSA can be incited by both internal and external factors, encompassing differences in culture and style (Hashemi, 2011). Thus, the familiarity

with different cultural norms of language learners can assist language instructors to decode anxiety-related behaviours of some students.

In light of the findings of this research, it is necessary for teachers to adopt different teaching strategies and approached appealing to different gender to minimise students' anxiety levels. Additionally, educators could implement project-based assignments which provide students opportunities to relax and prepare in advance, hence enabling them to engage in communicative tasks and in real-life contexts (Çağatay, 2015). It is also imperative for teachers to establish conducive settings where they can scaffold students towards oral competence. This objective could be achieved by allotting more emphasis to strengthen both pragmatic knowledge and communicative proficiency in all instructional contexts rather than solely in speaking-focused sessions to facilitate interaction between students and native speakers. Finally, as fear of making mistakes was perceived by many language students, teachers should encourage them not to be afraid of making mistakes to acquire communication skills.

### **6.3. Limitations and recommendations for future research**

The limitation of this study is acknowledged with the corresponding recommendations for future studies.

Firstly, this research was conducted in the context of Vietnamese university students in the UK; therefore, the outcomes should be approached with a certain degree of caution prior to applying it to other contexts. Further, due to the lack of comparative studies taken place in the UK and other English-speaking countries, it is challenging to determine how international students from diverse cultural backgrounds perceived FLA and FLSA. Thus, future studies may conduct cross-cultural research on FLA and FLSA to examine these topics from an international perspective. Additionally, future studies may investigate the concept of FLA in other English language skills such as writing, reading, and listening.

Secondly, this research is limited to exploring FLSA based on gender, academic levels, and duration of EFL learning, while other factors such as age and personalities are ignored. It is suggested that future researchers should investigate other demographic, linguistic, pedagogical, sociocultural, and psychological factors to gain a more effective and comprehensive study within the given context.

Thirdly, the sample size of this study was insufficient to represent the complete population of Vietnamese university students in the UK. This study was initially intended to conduct focus group discussion; however, there was only five participants volunteered to proceed to the next stage. Hence, the researcher decided to change the method of qualitative data collection from focus group to interview. Additionally, there were fewer interviewees than questionnaire respondents; therefore, the data gathered from interview did not adequately reflect the perception and opinion of the entire sample. Future researchers may consider examining the topic on a broader scale and conduct focus group as a qualitative data collection method to gain more participants viewpoints and represent the whole population.

#### **6.4. Reflection**

Engaging in this research project has been an enlightening journey that has greatly contributed to my personal learning, teaching practices and the potential benefits of my students' language learning experiences. The project to explore FLSA among Vietnamese university students in the UK has enriched my comprehension of the relationship between linguistic anxiety and language acquisition, enabling me to modify teaching methodologies to address such concerns more effectively. The experience gaining from this project has also fortified my commitment to developing an inclusive and supportive language learning environment for my future students. Moreover, as a researcher, I have learnt to be a reflective practitioner, protector of participants and technician. Cumyn et al. (2019) emphasised that as reflective practitioners, researchers bear the obligation of reflecting on ethical issues throughout the project. From the inception of choosing a research topic, formulating research questions to writing this

dissertation, I have diligently considered ethical facets arising from the project and acknowledged to role of a researcher to execute the study ethically and scientifically. In my capacity as a protector of participants, I have learnt how to mitigate the potential risks of the project and ensure participants' well-being. Additionally, it is imperative to assess the benefits that respondents may obtain through their involvement in the process. Finally, as a technician, I have learnt the great significance of assimilating and adhering to the research ethics protocol to align with the established ethical standards.

**WORD COUNTS: 14,967**

Chapter 1: Introduction - 1406 words

Chapter 2: Literature review - 3509 words

Chapter 3: Methodology - 3579 words

Chapter 4: Findings - 1694 words

Chapter 5: Discussion - 3462 words

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations - 1317 words



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A. ETHICS DOCUMENT

#### Appendix A.1. Ethics checklist

#### **UREC 3 Application for Research Ethics Approval FOR Higher Risk Social science type studies WITH HUMAN PARTICIPANTS UNDERTAKEN BY STUDENTS ON TAUGHT COURSES**

This form is designed to help students and their supervisors to complete an ethical scrutiny of proposed research. The University Research Ethics Policy ([www.shu.ac.uk/research/excellence/ethics-and-integrity/policies](http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/excellence/ethics-and-integrity/policies)) should be consulted before completing this form. The initial questions are there to check that completion of the UREC3 is appropriate for this study. The final responsibility for ensuring that ethical research practices are followed rests with the supervisor for student research.

Note that students and staff are responsible for making suitable arrangements to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Act (GDPR). This involves informing participants about the legal basis for the research, including a link to the University research data privacy statement and providing details of who to complain to if participants have issues about how their data was handled or how they were treated (full details in module handbooks). In addition, the act requires data to be kept securely and the identity of participants to be anonymised. They are also responsible for following SHU guidelines about data encryption and research data management. Guidance can be found on the SHU Ethics Website [www.shu.ac.uk/research/excellence/ethics-and-integrity](http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/excellence/ethics-and-integrity)

Please note that it is mandatory for all students to only store data on their allotted networked F drive space and not on individual hard drives or memory sticks etc.

The present form also enables the University and College to keep a record confirming that research conducted has been subjected to ethical scrutiny.

The form must be completed by the student and the supervisor and independently reviewed by a second reviewer or module leader (additional guidance can be obtained from your College Research Ethics Chair<sup>1</sup>). In all cases, it should be counter-signed

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<sup>1</sup> College of Social Sciences and Arts - Dr. Antonia Ypsilanti ([a.ypsilanti@shu.ac.uk](mailto:a.ypsilanti@shu.ac.uk))  
College of Business, Technology and Engineering - Dr. Tony Lynn ([t.lynn@shu.ac.uk](mailto:t.lynn@shu.ac.uk))

and kept as a record showing that ethical scrutiny has occurred. Some courses may require additional scrutiny. Students should retain a copy for inclusion in their research projects, and a copy should be uploaded to the relevant module Blackboard site.

Please note that it may be necessary to conduct a health and safety risk assessment for the proposed research. Further information can be obtained from the University's Health and Safety Website <https://sheffieldhallam.sharepoint.com/sites/3069/SitePages/Risk-Assessment.aspx>



**Checklist Questions to ensure that External Approval for the research is not required**

Question	Yes/No
Does the research involve?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patients recruited because of their past or present use of the NHS</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relatives/carers of patients recruited because of their past or present use of the NHS</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to NHS staff, premise or resources</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to data, organs, or other bodily material of past or present NHS patients</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foetal material and IVF involving NHS patients</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The recently dead in NHS premises</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prisoners or others within the criminal justice system recruited for health-related research</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Police, court officials, prisoners, or others within the criminal justice system</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants who are unable to provide informed consent due to their incapacity even if the project is not health related</li> </ul>	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is this an NHS research project, service evaluation or audit?</li> </ul> <p><i>For NHS definitions please see the following website</i>  <a href="http://www.hra.nhs.uk/documents/2013/09/defining-research.pdf">http://www.hra.nhs.uk/documents/2013/09/defining-research.pdf</a></p>	No

If you have answered **YES** to any of the above questions, then you **MUST consult with your supervisor** to obtain research ethics from the appropriate institution outside the university. This could be from the NHS or His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) under their independent Research Governance schemes. Further information is provided below.  
<https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/>

## **Appendix A.2. Ethics Proforma**

### **1. Describe the arrangements for recruiting, selecting/sampling potential participants.**

The researcher intends to distribute the self-administered online survey on the SVUK Forum, the official online platform for the Vietnamese student community in the UK, which has over 25,000 members. This large membership is beneficial for the purpose of recruiting a significant number of respondents for the questionnaire. The researcher aims to gather responses from at least 100 participants or online questionnaires and select 15 of them for subsequent focus groups.

### **2. What is the potential for participants to benefit from participation in the research?**

This study can help increase participants' self-awareness regarding their own language anxiety and the factors that contribute to it. This deep understanding can help them to manage their anxiety and improve their language learning experience. By identifying the primary types and factors contributing to language anxiety, the study can provide insights into how to design more effective language learning programs for Vietnamese university students studying in the UK. This, in turn, can help to improve their language learning outcomes. Participating in the study can also provide Vietnamese university students with an opportunity for personal growth and development, as they reflect on their language learning experiences and engage in the research process.

### **3. Describe any possible negative consequences of participation in the research along with the ways in which these consequences will be limited.**

There are some potential negative consequences for the Vietnamese university students in the UK participating in the research. First, the participants will need to commit time to complete the questionnaire and participate in the online focus group discussion. This could be an inconvenience for those with busy schedules. Second, participation in the study may trigger language anxiety for some participants, particularly during the focus groups. This could lead to discomfort and stress.

To limit these negative consequences, the researcher will take the following steps. First, all participants will be given clear information about the study's purpose, procedures, and potential risks before agreeing to participate. They will also be given the opportunity to ask questions and withdraw from the study at any time. Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary, and participants can withdraw at any time without penalty. The researcher will ensure that all data collected during the study is kept confidential and anonymous. The researchers will provide support and debriefing to the participants if any discomfort or stress arises during the study. Participants will be provided with contact information for support services if necessary. The study will adhere to all ethical guidelines and principles of research, including the ethical treatment of human subjects.

**4. Describe the arrangements for obtaining participants' consent.**

All participants are over 18 and will be requested to give their consent through the Consent form attached on the first page of the survey link before proceeding to the survey's questions. The link to the Participant Information Sheet will also be provided on this page. The Information Sheet and a separate Consent Form for focus groups will be sent again via email to those who will be chosen for the follow-up focus groups. By reading the information sheet and signing the consent form, the respondents will grant their consent to be used as anonymous data in this study.

**5. Describe how participants will be made aware of their right to withdraw from the research.** This should also include information about participants' right to withhold information and a reasonable time span for withdrawal should be specified.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary. They are free to choose not to answer any questions they wish or to withdraw their participation (within three weeks from the date they submit the survey).

The participant's right to withdraw from the research will be stated in the Information Sheet.

**6. If your project requires that you work with vulnerable participants, please describe how you will implement safeguarding procedures during data collection.**

N/A

**7. If Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are required, please supply details.**

N/A

**8. Describe the arrangements for debriefing the participants.**

The findings of this study will be shared with anyone that requests them after the Exam Board in November 2023. The researcher will share any updates on the project in reply to an email [c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk](mailto:c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk).

The debriefing information is stated in the Information Sheet.

**9. Describe the arrangements for ensuring participant confidentiality.**

**Data storage**

The data from the online survey will be gathered in an Excel file. All recordings of focus groups will be saved under mp4 files and the transcriptions will be saved under a Word file. All data and information collected will be stored securely on Sheffield Hallam University's Q-drive and the data folder will be protected using a password to maintain

the privacy of participants. In addition, the disclosure and final presentation of the data are subject to the informed consent of the participants.

### **Anonymising research data**

Firstly, the researcher will only collect the personal identity of respondents that need to do the research, such as their email addresses for in-depth focus groups; then replace all this information. Further, the researcher will paraphrase all quotations in a way that the meaning remains unchanged. All participants in the study will be given pseudonym names in the written dissertation. The researcher will consider the timing of anonymisation when conducting the study; hence, all data and transcripts will be anonymised at as early a stage as possible.

Only the researcher, their supervisors and the examiner can access the data.

The information regarding participant confidentiality is provided the Information Sheet.

### **10. Are there any conflicts of interest in you undertaking this research?**

There is no conflict of interest in the researcher undertaking this research.

The researcher will take steps to ensure that their personal biases do not affect the study's design, implementation, or interpretation of results. Ultimately, transparency and honesty are essential in addressing any potential conflicts of interest and maintaining the integrity of the research.

### **11. What are the expected outcomes, impacts and benefits of the research?**

The research is expected to contribute to the literature on foreign language anxiety by exploring the unique experiences of Vietnamese university students studying abroad in the UK. The findings of this study can add to the understanding of the factors that contribute to foreign language anxiety in study-abroad contexts and can help inform future research on this topic.

The research can provide insight into the challenges faced by Vietnamese university students studying in the UK and can inform the development of policies and support systems to address these challenges. The findings can also be used to improve the design of language programs and support services for international students.

Participation in the research can offer participants an opportunity for reflection on their experiences and insights into their language learning process. It can also encourage self-awareness and promote personal growth and development.

The research can contribute to promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation by highlighting the experiences and perspectives of Vietnamese students studying abroad. The findings can promote empathy and understanding among people from different cultures and backgrounds.

Overall, the research on "Exploring Foreign Language Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK" has the potential to make a valuable contribution to the

field of language learning and cross-cultural communication and can have a positive impact on the experiences of Vietnamese university students studying overseas.

**12. Please give details of any plans for dissemination of the results of the research.**

This research is an unpublished master dissertation; hence, the dissemination plans may be more limited compared to published research. However, there are still some possible ways to disseminate the findings. The research findings can be shared with academic advisors who have supervised the research. They can provide feedback and suggestions for further dissemination of the research. Further, some academic conferences accept presentations based on master dissertations. This could be an opportunity to share the research with a wider audience and receive feedback. The research findings also can be shared with relevant educational institutions that work with international students, such as universities and language schools. This can be done through email or by providing copies of the dissertation to relevant personnel. Additionally, if the research is of high quality and original, it may be possible to publish it in academic journals. This will require further work to be done on the dissertation to meet the standards of academic publications.

### Appendix A.3. Health and safety risk assessment for the researcher

- 1. Do you have a health and safety risk analysis for the procedures to be used?**  
(Discuss this with your supervisor)

- Yes  
 No

If **YES** the completed Health and Safety Risk Assessment form should be attached. A standard risk assessment form can be generated through the Awaken system (<https://shu.awaken-be.com>). Alternatively if you require more specific risk assessment, e.g. a COSHH, attach that instead.

- 2. Will the data be collected fully online (no face-to-face contact with participants)?**

- Yes (See the safety guidance for online research<sup>2</sup> and **go to question 7b**).  
 No (Go to question 3)

- 3. Will the proposed data collection take place on campus?**

- Yes (Please answer questions 5 to 8)  
 No (Please complete all questions and consult with your supervisor or HoD for current guidance and permission for face-to-face research outside the university)

- 4. Where will the data collection take place?**

(Tick as many as apply if data collection will take place in multiple venues)

- |                                     | <b>Location</b>               | <b>Please specify</b> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Researcher's Residence        |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Participant's Residence       |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Education Establishment       |                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | Other e.g. business/voluntary |                       |

<sup>2</sup> Safety guidance for online research includes information on how to set up online surveys and/or conduct online interviews/focus groups. These guidelines can be found in BB. Please check with your supervisor/module leader.

	<b>Location</b>	<b>Please specify</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	organisation, public venue	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outside UK	

**5. How will you travel to and from the data collection venue?**

On foot       By car       Public Transport  
 Other (Please specify)

Please outline how you will ensure your personal safety when travelling to and from the data collection venue.

N/A

**6. How will you ensure your own personal safety whilst at the research venue?**

Since the research venue is at the researcher's home and the data will be collected online, the researcher's personal safety is primarily related to online security. The researcher will ensure that their internet connection is secure and encrypted and use reputable anti-virus software to protect their computer from malware and other online threats. Strong passwords will be used for all their online accounts and avoid using the same password for multiple accounts. The researcher will regularly back up their data to protect against data loss due to technical failures or cyber-attacks.

Although the research is conducted online, the researcher will still ensure their physical safety by locking doors and windows and taking other measures to prevent unauthorised access to their home.

**7. Are there any potential risks to your health and wellbeing associated with either (a) the venue where the research will take place and/or (b) the research topic itself?**

None that I am aware of  
 Yes (Please outline below including steps taken to minimise risk)

**8. If you are carrying out research off-campus, you must ensure that each time you go out to collect data you ensure that someone you trust knows where you are going (without breaching the confidentiality of your participants), how you are getting there (preferably including your travel route), when you expect to get back, and what to do should you not return at the specified time.**

N/A


## Insurance Check

The University's standard insurance cover will not automatically cover research involving any of the following:

- i) Participants under 5 years old
- ii) Pregnant women
- iii) 5000 or more participants
- iv) Research being conducted in an overseas country
- v) Research involving aircraft and offshore oil rigs
- vi) Nuclear research
- vii) Any trials/medical research into Covid 19

If your proposals do involve any of the above, please contact the Insurance Manager directly ([fin-insurancequeries-mb@exchange.shu.ac.uk](mailto:fin-insurancequeries-mb@exchange.shu.ac.uk)) to discuss this element of your project.

## Adherence to SHU Policy and Procedures

<b>Ethics sign-off</b>	
<b>Personal statement</b>	
I can confirm that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I have read the Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Policy and Procedures</li><li>• I agree to abide by its principles.</li></ul>	
<b>Student</b>	
Name: NGOC DUYEN NGUYEN (JENNY)	Date: 29/03/2023
Signature: 	
<b>Supervisor ethical sign-off</b>	
I can confirm that completion of this form has not identified the need for ethical approval by the TPREC/CREC or an NHS, Social Care or other external REC. The research will not commence until any approvals required under Sections 4 & 5 have been received and any necessary health and safety measures are in place.	
Name: Dr Anna Sidorovitch	Date: 27 April 2023
Signature: ASidorovitch	



<b>Ethics sign-off</b>	
<b>Independent Reviewer ethical sign-off</b>	
Name:	Date:
Signature:	

**Please ensure that you have attached all relevant documents. Your supervisor must approve them before you start data collection:**

<b>Documents</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Research proposal if prepared previously	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any recruitment materials (e.g., posters, letters, emails, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant information sheet <sup>3</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participant consent form <sup>4</sup>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of measures to be used (e.g., questionnaires, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outline interview schedule / focus group schedule	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Debriefing materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Safety Risk Assessment Form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<sup>3</sup> It is mandatory to attach the Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

<sup>4</sup> It is mandatory to attach a Participant Consent Form, unless it is embedded in an online survey, in which case your supervisor must approve it before you start data collection

#### Appendix A.4. Ethical approval



Sheffield Hallam University  
City Campus  
Arundel Building  
Sheffield, S1 1WB

31/05/2023

To whom it may concern

Ngoc Duyen Nguyen is a full time MA TESOL student at Sheffield Hallam University. The MA TESOL Research Committee has granted them ethical approval for the research project "Exploring Foreign Language Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK". This approval was granted on the 31/05/2023.

Kind regards,

Dr. Melike Bulut Albaba

MA TESOL Research Project module leader

(on behalf of the MA TESOL Research Committee)

Email: [M.B.Albaba@shu.ac.uk](mailto:M.B.Albaba@shu.ac.uk)

## APPENDIX B. PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

**Title of project: Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK**

My name is Ngoc Duyen Nguyen. I am a post-graduate student at Sheffield Hallam University, and I am currently doing a Master TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). This study forms part of the assessment for my course.

You are invited to take part in a study investigating the concept of foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) among Vietnamese university students studying in the UK.

The questions below should help you understand more about the project and how I will use the data. There will be a chance for you to ask further questions and you can contact me at any time by email.

**1. What is the research about?**

The aim of this research is to explore the main factors that cause foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) for Vietnamese university students in the UK. In addition, how the level of FLSA differs according to gender, educational levels and duration of learning English as foreign language (EFL) will be identified. This study also will discover the strategies that Vietnamese university students in the UK use to cope with FLSA.

**2. Why have you asked me to take part?**

You have been asked to participate because you are Vietnamese and currently enrolling in an undergraduate or postgraduate course at a university in the UK.

**3. Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide if you want to take part. A copy of the information provided here is yours to keep, along with the consent form if you do decide to take part. You can decide not to answer a particular question.

**4. What will I be required to do?**

My research includes two stages:

- 1- Questionnaire (about 10 minutes)
- 2- Interview (about 30 minutes)

If you wish to participate in the study, you will be asked to take part in an online survey via a provided link which will last for approximately 10 minutes.

If you are chosen or willing to be participated in the interview, I would like to have a video call with you through Zoom. The interview will take about 30 minutes and will be recorded.

**5. Where will this take place?**

The questionnaire and interview will take place online.

**6. What if I change my mind?**

If you change your mind, you will have up to three weeks after submitting the survey to let me know.

**7. How often will I have to take part, and for how long?**

If you choose to participate in the research, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire which will take approximately 10 minutes.

If you are chosen or willing to be involved in the interview, you will receive an invitation for Zoom meeting which will take approximately 30 minutes.

**8. Are there any possible risks or disadvantages in taking part?**

Since the data will be collected through online questionnaires and focus groups, there will be no physical interaction between participants and the researcher. For beneficence, filling out a 10-minute online survey with only closed-ended questions and participating in a 30-minute interview will not create any health issues for you as participant.

**9. What are the possible benefits of the research and taking part?**

This study can help increase your self-awareness regarding your own language anxiety and the factors that contribute to it. This deep understanding can help you to manage their anxiety and improve your language learning experience. By identifying the primary factors contributing to language anxiety, the study can provide insights into how to design more effective language learning programs for Vietnamese university students studying in the UK. This, in turn, can help to improve your language learning outcomes. Participating in the study can also provide you as a Vietnamese university student with an opportunity for personal growth and development, as you reflect on your language learning experiences and engage in the research process.

**10. Will anyone be able to connect me with what is recorded and reported?**

Your identity will be kept hidden. I will only collect your personal identity that need to do the research, such as your email address for in-depth interview; then replace all this information. Further, I will paraphrase all quotations in a way that the meaning remains unchanged. All participants in the study will be given pseudonym names in the written dissertation. I will consider the timing of anonymisation when conducting the study; hence, all data and transcripts will be anonymised at as early a stage as possible. Only the researcher, their supervisors and the examiner can access the data.

**11. What will happen to the data collected?**

I will collect the data related to your answer in the questionnaire and recordings of the interviews.

The interviews will be transcribed in full, and the recordings and transcripts will be stored on Sheffield Hallam University Q-drive. The data will be shared with

academic staff including module leader and dissertation supervisor at the university, and the findings from the research will be presented in the form of a dissertation. These written documents will include quotations from the focus group discussion transcripts to illustrate the findings of the study. You will not be named in the presentation of these quotations - each participant will be allocated a pseudonym (e.g. "Joe" said....) and any potentially identifying details will be removed. The data will be stored until the end of the course and will be destroyed by November 2023.

**12. How will you use what you find out?**

The research findings can be shared with academic advisors who have supervised the research. They can provide feedback and suggestions for further dissemination of the research. Further, some academic conferences accept presentations based on master dissertations. This could be an opportunity to share the research with a wider audience and receive feedback. The research findings also can be shared with relevant educational institutions that work with international students, such as universities and language schools. This can be done through email or by providing copies of the dissertation to relevant personnel. Additionally, if the research is of high quality and original, it may be possible to publish it in academic journals. This will require further work to be done on the dissertation to meet the standards of academic publications.

**13. What will happen to the information when this study is over?**

The data collected for this project will be stored securely on university servers. It will then be deposited in SHURDA, but access will be restricted.

**14. How can I find out about the results of the study?**

The findings of this study will be shared with anyone that requests them after the Exam Board in October 2021. I will share any updates on the project in reply to an email [c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk](mailto:c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk).

**15. If I have further questions about the study, what should I do?**

If you have any other questions about the research, please use the details below.

**Researcher details:** Ngoc Duyen Nguyen ([c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk](mailto:c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk))

**Supervisor details:** Dr Anna Sidorovitch ([a.sidorovitch@shu.ac.uk](mailto:a.sidorovitch@shu.ac.uk))

**Legal basis for research for studies.** The University undertakes research as part of its function for the community under its legal status. Data protection allows us to use personal data for research with appropriate safeguards in place under the legal basis of **public tasks that are in the public interest**. A full statement of your rights can be found at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-this-website/privacy-policy/privacy-notice-notice-for-research>. However, all University research is reviewed to ensure that

participants are treated appropriately and their rights respected. This study was approved by the University research committee responsible for the course. Further information can be found at <https://www.shu.ac.uk/research/ethics-integrity-and-practice>

Details of who to contact if you have any concerns or if adverse effects occur after the study are given below:

<p><b>You should contact the Data Protection Officer if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• you have a query about how your data is used by the University</li><li>• you would like to report a data security breach (e.g. if you think your personal data has been lost or disclosed inappropriately)</li><li>• you would like to complain about how the University has used your personal data</li></ul> <p><a href="mailto:DPO@shu.ac.uk">DPO@shu.ac.uk</a></p>	<p><b>You should contact the Head of Research Ethics (Dr Mayur Ranchordas) if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• you have concerns with how the research was undertaken or how you were treated</li></ul> <p><a href="mailto:ethicssupport@shu.ac.uk">ethicssupport@shu.ac.uk</a></p>
---	---

Postal address: Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street, Sheffield S1 1WBT  
Telephone: 0114 225 5555

## APPENDIX C. PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORMS

### Appendix C.1. Participant Consent Form (Questionnaire)

#### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

**TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY:** Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK

*Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies.*

- |  | <b>YES</b>               | <b>NO</b>                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study, once anonymised (so that I cannot be identified), to be used for any other research purposes.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I understand that there are no known risks or hazards associated with participating in this study.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Ngoc Duyen Nguyen (Jenny) - 30036822

**Participant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Name (Printed):** NGOC DUYEN NGUYEN

**Researcher's Signature:**



**Researcher's contact details:**

Name: Ngoc Duyen Nguyen

Address: 18 Leadmill Road, Flat 31 Archways, Sheffield S1 4SG, The United Kingdom

Contact number: (+44) 07523232157

**Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.**



## Appendix C.2. Participant Consent Form (Interview)

### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (INTERVIEW)

**TITLE OF RESEARCH STUDY:** Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK

*Please answer the following questions by ticking the response that applies.*

- |  | <b>YES</b>               | <b>NO</b>                |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction and I understand that I may ask further questions at any point.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study within the time limits outlined in the Information Sheet, without giving a reason for my withdrawal or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study without any consequences to my future treatment by the researcher. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I consent to the information discussed in the interview to be recorded for the purposes of this research study.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I agree to provide information to the researchers under the conditions of confidentiality set out in the Information Sheet.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I wish to participate in the study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I consent to the information collected for the purposes of this research study, once anonymised (so that I cannot be identified), to be used for any other research purposes.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I understand that there are no known risks or hazards associated with participating in this study.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Ngoc Duyen Nguyen (Jenny) - 30036822

**Participant's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Participant's Name (Printed):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact details:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's Name (Printed):** NGOC DUYEN NGUYEN

**Researcher's Signature:** 

**Researcher's contact details:** c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk

Name: Ngoc Duyen Nguyen

Address: 18 Leadmill Road, Flat 31 Archways, Sheffield S1 4SG, The United Kingdom

Contact number: (+44) 07523232157

**Please keep your copy of the consent form and the information sheet together.**

**APPENDIX D. FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS)  
Horwitz et al. (1986)**

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
21. The more I study for a language test, the more con- fused I get.
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28. When I'm on my way to guage class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

\*Note:

- Items of communication apprehension anxiety: 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32

- Items of test anxiety: 2, 8, 10, 19, 21

- Items of fear of negative evaluation: 3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33

- Items of anxiety of English classroom: 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 26, 28, 30

## **APPENDIX E. THE EXTENDED FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION ANXIETY MEASURE (TEFLCAM) (Guntzviller et al., 2016)**

Please answer the following questions by providing the number correspondent to the option that best describe your opinion.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

1. \*I start to panic when I have to speak in the language without preparation (P)
2. \*When speaking to a native speaker, I can get so nervous I forget things I know (P)
3. \*I worry about speaking in the language, even if I'm well prepared for it (M)
4. \*I get nervous and confused when I speak in the language (P)
5. \*I get nervous when I do not understand every word in the language (U)
6. \*I fear that people will laugh at me when I speak the language (I)
7. \*I get nervous when I am asked questions in the language that I have not prepared in advance (M)
8. I am overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak this language (CA)
9. I can feel my heart pounding when I have to talk to in the language (P)
10. I feel very self-conscious when I speak the language in front of other people (P)
11. I do not feel confident when I speak in the language (P)
12. It frightens me when I don't understand what the other person is saying in the language (U)
13. I feel anxious if I cannot understand everything the other person is saying in the language (U)
14. I get embarrassed when I do not understand what a native speaker is saying in the language (U)
15. I keep thinking that other people are better at languages than I am (I)
16. I always feel that other people who also learned the language speak it better than I do (I)
17. It embarrasses me to voluntarily speak in the language (I)
18. I am afraid native speakers are ready to correct every mistake I make (M)
19. I worry about making mistakes when speaking the language (M)
20. I am more tense and nervous when speaking in this non-native language than when speaking my native language in the same situation (CA)
21. Even though I do not usually get anxious when communicating with others, I do if I have to speak in the non-native language (CA)
22. Speaking in the language makes me unusually anxious (CA)

\*Note:

P = physical anxiety subdimension; M = fear of making mistakes subdimension; U = anxiety about understanding subdimension; I = feelings of incompetence subdimension; CA = distinction from general communication apprehension subdimension.

**APPENDIX F: 5-POINT SCALE ITEMS ADOPTED FROM KONDO AND LING (2004) THAT MEASURING THE ANXIETY COPING STRATEGIES**

**Tactics for Coping with Language Anxiety Organized by a Five-Cluster Solution**

<b>Preparation</b>	<p>I try to get used to using English.          I study hard. I prepare myself better.          I peruse the material before I am called on by the teacher.          I ask for help from friends.          I check my dictionary.          I ask the teacher some questions.          I practice English in my mind.          I think carefully about where I am having trouble.          I concentrate on the class.          I listen carefully to what my classmates say in class.          I try to perform my best.          I try to read carefully.          I ask the teacher to speak more slowly.          I try to guess the meaning of a difficult passage.          I try to make a habit of studying English every day.          I try to obtain good summaries of lecture notes.</p>
<b>Relaxation</b>	<p>I take a deep breath.          I try to relax.          I try to calm down.          I close my eyes.          I pretend to be calm.          I shake my body.          I touch my hair.          I play with my hands.          I look at my watch.          I write "people" on my palm and swallow it.</p>
<b>Positive thinking</b>	<p>I try to be confident.          I tell myself that English is not so important.          I try to think positively.          I tell myself that I'm OK.          I try not to think of people around me.          I believe in myself.</p>

	<p>I try to enjoy the tension.          I think of my favorite song.          I cheer myself up.          I imagine myself giving a great performance.          I tell myself that I can do it.          I tell myself that I am better than the others.          I try to take it easy.          I try not to take it seriously.          I use the anxiety to motivate myself.          I just try to be myself.          I tell myself that I'm not anxious.          I say a prayer.          I try not to think of the consequences.          I tell myself that my answer is correct.          I tell myself that it's OK to make mistakes.          I tell myself that mistakes are good because I can learn from them.          I tell myself that even if I am poor at English, I am good at other subjects.          I try to enjoy English. I think of something pleasant.          I think of a joke.          I think of something else.          I tell myself to study harder for the next class.</p>
<b>Peer seeking</b>	<p>I tell myself that difficult problems for me are also difficult for the others.          I tell myself that the others must also be anxious.          I look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class.          I look for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety.          I ask students around me if they understand the class.          I talk with friends around me.          I look around.          I deliberately perform poorly.</p>
<b>Resignation</b>	<p>I give up.          I don't make useless resistance.          I accept the situation.          I just try to put up with the situation.          I sleep in class.          I stop paying attention.</p>



## APPENDIX G: QUESTIONNAIRE

### Appendix G.1. Letter of Consent (attached at the beginning of the survey questions)

Dear participants,

My name is Ngoc Duyen Nguyen. I would like to invite you to participate in a study I am conducting as part of my Master's degree in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) at Sheffield Hallam University, under the supervision of Dr Melike Bulut Al Baba and Dr Anna Sidorovitch.

The title of my study is “**Exploring Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety among Vietnamese University Students in the UK**”. The aim of this study is to explore the main factors that cause foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) for Vietnamese university students in the UK. In addition, how the level of FLSA differs according to gender, educational levels and learning duration of English as foreign language will be identified. This study also will discover the strategies that Vietnamese university students in the UK use to cope with FLSA. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary.

If you change your mind and want to withdraw, please inform me within **three weeks** from the date you submit this form. If you are willing to fill in the survey, please answer the following questions related to your personal information and the FLSA.

This survey should only take about **5 to 10 minutes** to complete. The study also conducts interviews after analysing the results of this survey. If you are willing to participate in the interview, please fill in your name and your email address at the end of this survey. You will be contacted if you are selected.

The data I collect will only be used for this research. Your identity will be protected, and any information collected from you will be anonymised in my research. Your data will be protected securely with a password and will be deleted by November 2023.

This project has been reviewed and approved through the Research Ethics Policy at Sheffield Hallam University. Please read the [Participant Information Sheet](#) and [Participant Consent Form](#) for your information.

Ngoc Duyen Nguyen (Jenny) - 30036822

If you have any further questions regarding this study or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please do not hesitate to contact me.

My contact information is:

Name: Ngoc Duyen Nguyen

Email: c0036822@hallam.shu.ac.uk

Thank you so much for your time to participate in this survey!

By selecting 'I agree', it will be understood that you confirm your consent for your responses and the conditions described above.

- I agree
- I don't agree

## **Appendix G.2. Survey questions (piloted version)**

### **PART I: Demographic questions**

1. What age group are you in?
  - 18 - 23
  - 24 - 29
  - 30+
  
2. To which gender identity do you most identify?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Non-binary
  - Prefer not to say
  
3. What is your academic level?
  - Bachelor's degree
  - Master's degree
  - Doctoral degree
  
4. What is your area of study?
  - Business
  - Finance/Accounting
  - Human Resources Management
  - Information Technology
  - Engineering
  - Mathematics
  - Arts/Design
  - Media/Communication
  - Education/Teaching
  - Psychology/Sociology/Politics
  - Law
  - Biosciences/Chemistry
  - Health
  - Sports
  - Social Work
  - Other (Please specify)
  
5. How long have you been learning English as a foreign language?

- Less than 3 years
- From 4 to 7 years
- From 8 to 11 years
- More than 12 years

## **PART 2: Causes and levels of FLSA**

**Please rate the following statements on a five-point scale, with:**

**1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree**

1. I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of other people.
2. I start to panic when a stranger approaches and asks me simple questions in English at the supermarket.
3. I am afraid that native speakers of English will judge my pronunciation.
4. When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may say something grammatically wrong.
5. I feel that other people who also learn English speak it better than I do.
6. I feel anxious if I don't understand what the other person is saying in English.
7. I worry that I may not understand what people are saying in English.
8. I usually get anxious when communicating with others in English.
9. When making a phone call to a service, I get nervous if I am asked questions in English that I have not prepared in advance.
10. I fear that people will laugh at me when I speak English.
11. I worry that I may pronounce English words incorrectly.
12. I keep thinking that I do not have enough vocabulary to communicate in English.
13. I worry about failing my assignments/tests which involve presentations.
14. I find it uneasy to open a conversation with native speakers of English.
15. It frightens me when I don't understand what my teachers said in class.
16. Classes move so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.
17. When speaking to a native speaker, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
18. When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may use the wrong words.
19. I get embarrassed when I do not understand what a native speaker is saying in the language.
20. During classroom discussions, I fear that my classmates will judge the way I express my ideas in English.
21. I am tenser and more nervous when speaking in English than when speaking in Vietnamese.
22. I am afraid native speakers are ready to correct every mistake I make.
23. I keep thinking that my international friends are better at English than I am.

24. I worry about speaking in English with other people, even if I am well prepared for it.
25. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.
26. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
27. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called to speak in class.

### **PART 3: Strategies to cope with FLA**

#### **Please choose the strategies that you use to cope with FLSA**

1. I practice English in my mind
2. I try to calm down
3. I imagine myself giving a great performance
4. I tell myself that the others must also be anxious
5. I give up
6. I try to make a habit of studying English every day
7. I shake my body
8. I look for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety
9. I try not to think of people around me
10. I just try to put up with the situation
11. I ask the teacher to speak slowly
12. I take a deep breath
13. I tell myself that difficult problems for me are also difficult for others
14. I tell myself that mistakes are good because I can learn from them
15. I pre-use the material before I am called on by the teacher
16. I sleep in class
17. I close my eyes
18. I stop paying attention
19. I believe in myself
20. I look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class to ask how they are coping with their FLSA

If you are willing to take part in further interview, please fill in your name and email address below.

Name:

Ngoc Duyen Nguyen (Jenny) - 30036822

Email:

**That is the end of this survey. Please click on "Submit" to submit your response.  
Thank you so much for your participation!**

### **Appendix G.3. Pilot test results**

The pilot study revealed that the first version of the questionnaire included an unequal number of items representing each type of FLSA. Given that one of the primary aims of the research involves investigating the main types of FLSA experienced by Vietnamese university students in the UK, it is imperative and essential to ensure an equitable distribution of items across each category. Hence, the researcher has judiciously introduced and eliminated questionnaire items to achieve a balanced representation of four items for each type of FLSA. Moreover, these items are deliberately interspersed throughout the questionnaire to promote a sense of diversity (Dörnyei, 2003) and to discourage participants from consistently selecting responses that resemble their previous choices.

An additional issue stemming from the pilot study pertains to the lack of clarity in certain questionnaire items. For instance, in item 20 of Part 2, the phrase "my ideas" was found to be ambiguous and general. To address this concern and ensure appropriateness within the context of the study, the item has been revised to read as follows: "During classroom discussions, I fear that my classmates will judge the way I express my ideas in English." This modification was made to enhance the precision and specificity of the item, making it more aligned with the research objectives and enabling respondents to provide more accurate and relevant responses. By rephrasing the item in this manner, the potential for misinterpretation or confusion among participants has been minimised, thereby contributing to the overall robustness of the questionnaire.

## **Appendix G.4. Survey questions (revised version)**

### **PART I: Demographic questions**

1. What age group are you in?
  - 18 - 23
  - 24 - 29
  - 30+
  
2. To which gender identity do you most identify?
  - Male
  - Female
  - Non-binary
  - Prefer not to say
  
3. What is your academic level?
  - Bachelor's degree
  - Master's degree
  - Doctoral degree
  
4. What is your area of study?
  - Business
  - Finance/Accounting
  - Human Resources Management
  - Information Technology
  - Engineering
  - Mathematics
  - Arts/Design
  - Media/Communication
  - Education/Teaching
  - Psychology/Sociology/Politics
  - Law
  - Biosciences/Chemistry
  - Health
  - Sports
  - Social Work
  - Other (Please specify)
  
5. How long have you been learning English as a foreign language?
  - Less than 3 years



- From 4 to 7 years
- From 8 to 11 years
- More than 12 years

## **PART 2: Causes and levels of FLSA**

**Please rate the following statements on a five-point scale, with:**

**1. Strongly disagree   2. Disagree   3. Neutral   4. Agree   5. Strongly agree**

1. I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of other people.
2. I start to panic when a stranger approaches and asks me simple questions in English at the supermarket.
3. I am afraid that native speakers of English will judge my pronunciation.
4. When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may say something grammatically wrong.
5. I feel that other people who also learn English speak it better than I do.
6. I feel anxious if I don't understand what the other person is saying in English.
7. I worry that I may not understand what people are saying in English.
8. I usually get anxious when communicating with others in English.
9. When making a phone call to a service, I get nervous if I am asked questions in English that I have not prepared in advance.
10. I fear that people will laugh at me when I speak English.
11. I worry that I may pronounce English words incorrectly.
12. I keep thinking that I do not have enough vocabulary to communicate in English.
13. I worry about failing my assignments/tests which involve presentations.
14. I find it uneasy to open a conversation with native speakers of English.
15. It frightens me when I don't understand what my teachers said in class.
16. Classes move so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.
17. When speaking to a native speaker, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
18. When speaking to an English native speaker, I am afraid that I may use the wrong words.
19. I get embarrassed when I do not understand what a native speaker is saying in the language.
20. During classroom discussions, I fear that my classmates will judge the way I express my ideas in English.
21. I am tenser and more nervous when speaking in English than when speaking in Vietnamese.
22. I am afraid native speakers are ready to correct every mistake I make.

23. I keep thinking that my international friends are better at English than I am.
24. I worry about speaking in English with other people, even if I am well prepared for it.

### **PART 3: Strategies to cope with FLSA**

#### **Please choose the strategies that you use to cope with FLSA**

1. I practice English in my mind
2. I try to calm down
3. I imagine myself giving a great performance
4. I tell myself that the others must also be anxious
5. I give up
6. I try to make a habit of studying English every day
7. I shake my body
8. I look for others who are having difficulty controlling their anxiety
9. I try not to think of people around me
10. I just try to put up with the situation
11. I ask the teacher to speak slowly
12. I take a deep breath
13. I tell myself that difficult problems for me are also difficult for others
14. I tell myself that mistakes are good because I can learn from them
15. I pre-use the material before I am called on by the teacher
16. I sleep in class
17. I close my eyes
18. I stop paying attention to what other people are saying
19. I believe in myself
20. I look for others who are having difficulty understanding the class to ask how they are coping with their FLSA

If you are willing to take part in further interview, please fill in your name and email address below.

Name:

Email:

**That is the end of this survey. Please click on "Submit" to submit your response.**

**Thank you so much for your participation!**



**APPENDIX H. CRONBACH'S ALPHA INTERNAL CONSISTENCY REFERENCE TABLE (Cronbach, 1998)**

<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Internal consistency</b>
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent (High-Stakes testing)
$0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$	Good (Low-Stakes testing)
$0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$	Poor
$\alpha < 0.5$	Unacceptable

## **APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. When and where did you start learning English?
2. How were your classes in primary and secondary classes?
3. How much did you speak English in class?
4. How long have you been in foreign countries?
5. What makes you anxious while speaking English in the classroom?
6. What makes you anxious while speaking English with native speakers?
7. What makes you anxious while speaking English with classmates and teachers who are not native
8. Do you feel nervous in oral exams? Why or why not?
9. What makes you less nervous when speaking English in class?
10. What makes you less nervous when speaking English in other situations in your daily life?
11. What do you usually do to reduce your general anxiety?
12. Do you know any psychological ways to regulate anxiety on your own? If yes, can you please specify?

## APPENDIX K: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

### Appendix K.1. Demographic statistics

#### K.1a. Gender

Frequencies of Gender

Gender	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Female	69	54.3 %	54.3 %
Male	56	44.1 %	98.4 %
Non-binary	2	1.6 %	100.0 %

#### K.1b. Age groups

Frequencies of Age

Age	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
18 - 23	73	57.5 %	57.5 %
24 - 29	38	29.9 %	87.4 %
30+	16	12.6 %	100.0 %

#### K.1c. Academic levels

Frequencies of Academic levels

Academic levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Bachelor's degree	73	57.5 %	57.5 %
Doctoral degree	14	11.0 %	68.5 %
Master's degree	40	31.5 %	100.0 %

#### K.1d. Area of study

Frequencies of Area of study

Area of study	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Arts/Design	7	5.5 %	5.5 %
Biosciences/Chemistry	5	3.9 %	9.4 %
Business	18	14.2 %	23.6 %
Education/Teaching	16	12.6 %	36.2 %
Engineering	10	7.9 %	44.1 %
Finance/Accounting	7	5.5 %	49.6 %
Health	4	3.1 %	52.8 %
Hospitality	12	9.4 %	62.2 %
Human Resources Management	7	5.5 %	67.7 %
Information Technology	10	7.9 %	75.6 %
Law	3	2.4 %	78.0 %
Mathematics	5	3.9 %	81.9 %
Media/ Communication	14	11.0 %	92.9 %
Media/Communication	3	2.4 %	95.3 %
Psychology/Sociology/Politics	4	3.1 %	98.4 %
Social Work	2	1.6 %	100.0 %

**K.1e.Length of EFL learning**

Frequencies of Length of studying EFL

Length of studying EFL	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
From 4 to 7 years	25	19.7 %	19.7 %
From 8 to 11 years	43	33.9 %	53.5 %
Less than 3 years	10	7.9 %	61.4 %
More than 12 years	49	38.6 %	100.0 %

## Appendix K.2. Types of FLSA

### K.2a. General communication apprehension (COM)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.885

[3]

Descriptives				
	COM_1	COM_2	COM_3	COM_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.36	3.35	3.45	3.48
Median	3	3	3	3
Standard deviation	1.08	1.12	1.06	1.19
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

### K.2b. Physical anxiety (PHY)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.818

[3]



Descriptives				
	PHY_1	PHY_2	PHY_3	PHY_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.28	3.55	3.86	3.44
Median	3	4	4	3
Standard deviation	1.13	1.12	1.10	1.10
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

### K.2c. Fear of negative evaluation (NEG)

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.800

[3]

Descriptives				
	NEG_1	NEG_2	NEG_3	NEG_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.01	3.31	3.35	3.31
Median	4	3	3	3
Standard deviation	0.980	1.19	1.10	1.14
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

### K.2d. Fear of making mistakes (MIS)

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.859

[3]

Descriptives

	MIS_1	MIS_2	MIS_3	MIS_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.39	4.09	4.31	4.28
Median	5	4	5	5
Standard deviation	0.883	1.01	0.906	1.04
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

**K.2e. Feelings of incompetence (INC)**

Scale Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.892

[3]

Descriptives

	INC_1	INC_2	INC_3	INC_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.43	3.39	3.31	3.54
Median	3	3	3	4
Standard deviation	1.14	1.07	1.14	1.17
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

**K.2f. Anxiety about understanding (UND)**

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.793

[3]

Descriptives				
	UND_1	UND_2	UND_3	UND_4
N	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.43	3.35	3.43	4.03
Median	3	3	3	4
Standard deviation	1.05	1.14	1.12	1.11
Minimum	1	1	1	1
Maximum	5	5	5	5

**K.2g. Summary**

Scale Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's $\alpha$	
scale	0.922

[3]

Descriptives						
	COM	PHY	NEG	MIS	INC	UND
N	127	127	127	127	127	127
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.41	3.53	3.49	4.27	3.41	3.56
Median	3.25	3.50	3.50	4.50	3.25	3.50
Standard deviation	0.959	0.896	0.874	0.806	0.984	0.869
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.50
Maximum	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00

## APPENDIX L. INTERVIEW DATA ANALYSIS

### Appendix L.1. Interview analysis on types of FLSA

	General communication apprehension	Physical anxiety	Fear of negative evaluation	Fear of making mistakes	Feelings of incompetence	Anxiety about understanding	Intercultural communication apprehension
<b>Participant 1</b>	I feel nervous when speaking in English because of my pronunciation and accent do not sound like native speakers.		I avoid speaking in my class because I'm aware that I have a strong Vietnamese accent. Everyone would laugh at me and I would feel very embarrassed	I felt very bad when I pronounced a word incorrectly because they laughed at me. They corrected my mistakes anyway, but I felt so embarrassed.		When I speak to my classmates and they just smiled instead of saying something back to me, I felt confused and worried whether they understood me or not.	
<b>Participant 2</b>	I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of my classmates and my teachers.	I get panic if I receive any random questions from strangers on the street. I start to sweat for things that I didn't prepare for.		I am more confident in writing English than speaking English. I use the wrong words and wrong grammar quite often and this makes me feel nervous whenever I try to speak English.	I often feel worried when start a conversation in English because I afraid that the conversation would go too deep, and I don't think I have enough vocabulary to use.		
<b>Participant 3</b>			When I said something in English, I'm always afraid that I would pronounce some words wrong and native speakers would judge and laugh at me.	I am currently working part-time in a restaurant. When I had to take orders for customers, I was really nervous. Initially, I thought that maybe because I was new to the job, and it would become better. However, after one year working there, I'm still scared. I even still make mistakes when saying the name of the dishes. Most of the times, I asked my colleagues to help me to order because I'm afraid of saying something wrong. I don't want the customers to laugh at me		Not sure if what I said was appropriate or understandable or not. Maybe we are from different cultures and things just don't make sense to them.	I'm very scared when I speak to British people because English is their first language. I'm afraid of making mistakes in front of them. I feel more confident when talking to people who I knew that English is not their mother tongue. For example, Thai, Japanese or Korean.

<p><b>Participant 4</b></p>	<p>I'm afraid of speaking in English to everyone when I first came to the UK. I felt anxious when asking questions at libraries, airports, train stations, etc.</p>	<p>It's hard for me to breathe normally when making a phone call in English. I don't feel good. I sometimes even stutter and my hands sweat</p>		<p>I'm pretty shy. I just use simple words to speak because I'm afraid of making mistakes if I use any complicated words or grammars</p>	<p>I feel nervous in class when it comes to group discussion, especially when they talk about the concepts or subjects that I may not know too many English words. Also, my classmates seem confident. I think that they are better than me.</p> <p>Most of my classmates are from Philippines where people speak English more often than in Vietnam. I felt a bit intimidate because I am not as good as them. Others seems quite confident when sharing their ideas.</p>		<p>I'm worried about talking to British or even American people because I didn't have many opportunities to talk to native speakers when I was in Vietnam.</p>
<p><b>Participant 5</b></p>	<p>I hesitated to open my mouth to speak to foreign people. I remembered the first time using the bus service in the UK. I couldn't speak a word to talk to the driver to buy ticket. I had to ask my friend for support.</p>	<p>My heartbeat become very fast and I start to sweat every time before I order something in a restaurant. It is even worse when I have to speak to someone over the phone in English.</p>	<p>Not confident at all when I speak English! And presentation in front of my classmates and teachers... it's such a nightmare! You know the feeling of many eyes looking at me and criticise my accent, my pronunciation, my ideas, you name it!"</p>	<p>It's so embarrassing if I pronounce a word incorrectly. You know, there are so many words in English that if we say it wrong, it turns out to a totally different meaning.</p>		<p>My classmates come from many countries such as Nigeria, Japan, India. I also meet other people who are from other parts of the world, so I hear so many accents. I am only familiar with American and British accent as that's what I learned at schools in Vietnam. The other accents are strangers to me, and I don't understand even half of the conversation if someone speak English with, for example, Indian accent.</p>	

**Table 8. Interview analysis on types of FLSA**

### Appendix L.2. Interview analysis FLSA coping strategies

	Preparation	Relaxation	Positive thinking	Peer seeking	Resignation
<b>Participant 1</b>	My lecturers usually upload all the learning materials beforehand so I know what we will discuss in the next lesson, and I prepare for it. Well, I must study harder... I read all the provided materials and plan things that I can say during the lesson. This relaxed me a bit.		I imagined the scenario when giving a great performance. This makes me feel more relaxed and confident so that I can speak more fluently and hence, get higher mark in my oral assignment		I always try to do something to make me feel less nervous when speaking English to foreign people. I don't think giving up is an option here because it means that I will never get better in my speaking skills
<b>Participant 2</b>	I practice what I will say in my mind before I speak. When I have free time, ... no,... actually, every day, I also try to imagine different situations that I may encounter in daily life and then start talking by myself. It helps me a lot to reduce my anxiety and make me feel more confident.	When I feel nervous right before the presentation, I close my eyes for five seconds and take a deep breath. This helps to calm me down.	I barely take my mistakes seriously. I rather see my mistakes as learning opportunities so that I can be less nervous when speaking English		I know that it's challenging to deal with my speaking anxiety and I'm aware that my ability is still limited but I never give up. I want to make progress in academic journey, not giving up and slow me down.
<b>Participant 3</b>	I studied very hard. I carefully prepared every time I had presentation in class, but I always feel nervous. I start to sweat when it comes to my turn to speak in front of the whole class. I make a lot of grammar and pronunciation mistakes	My high school English teacher once told me to take a deep breath every time I'm anxious and it was really helpful.		I think others may have the same problems dealing understanding English in class, so I look around and find out who seems anxious and ask them how they deal with it.	I once slept in the class but after that I realised it was not a wise solution. It just made me feel left behind.
<b>Participant 4</b>	I often have forgetful syndrome during the presentation in class. I know that I need to study harder. I need to spend few hours or sometimes few days to rehearsal so that I can be more confident, and I can remember what I want to say in my presentation.		I used to feel awful whenever I said something wrong. However, I realised that making mistakes is not that bad because that means I could learn something new. Looking at the positive sides of making mistakes helps me increase my confidence and develop my language ability		I think trying my best is better than doing nothing. I want myself to be improved. I can't not just let my anxiety hold me down.
<b>Participant 5</b>	I stand in front of the mirror and talk to myself in English every morning. This helps me to feel less anxious when talking to native speakers, and especially this is so helpful whenever I have any oral assignment such as presentation in class. I tend to speak more fluently and make less mistakes.				If I stop paying attention to what others say in English, not only do I get lost in the conversation but also I would never be able to listen to English clearly and speak fluently. So what the point of studying overseas if my English could not be improved?

**Table 9. Interview analysis FLSA coping strategies**

## **APPENDIX M. SAMPLE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS**

Below is the sample transcription of the follow-up interview between the researcher and Participant 2. The interview was conducted through Microsoft Teams and lasted approximately 10 minutes.

**\*Note:**

**A: The researcher**

**B: Participant 2**

**A: When and where did you start learning English?**

B: Since I was in grade 6, 12 years old. I learnt English in Vietnam.

**A: How were your English classes at that time?**

B: Well, I learnt mostly grammar rules and vocabulary, not much listening and speaking. Honestly, I just learnt English to pass my final exam in my primary school and high school.

**A: How long have you been in foreign countries?**

B: It's been one year and a half. Actually, this is the first time I've been overseas. I come to the UK to do my master and I'm now almost finished.

**A: What makes you anxious while speaking English in the classroom?**

B: I think it's because I'm afraid of saying something wrong. Well, I am more confident in writing English than speaking English. I use the wrong words and wrong grammar quite often and this makes me feel nervous whenever I try to speak English.

**A: What makes you anxious while speaking English with native speakers?**

B: I get panic if I receive any random questions from strangers on the street. I start to sweat for things that I didn't prepare for. Sometimes they speak really fast and I don't understand at all. I often feel worried when start a conversation in English because I afraid that the conversation would go too deep, and I don't think I have enough vocabulary to use.



**A: What makes you anxious while speaking English with classmates and teachers who are not native?**

B: Everyone looks so confident. I don't know where they can get that courage. I feel very self-conscious when I speak English in front of my classmates and my teachers. I barely ask question or speak voluntarily when the teachers ask questions in class.

**A: Do you feel nervous in oral exams? Why or why not?**

B: Definitely yes. I don't know how to describe it. It's terrible. I hate oral exams like presentation. I struggle with speaking English in front of one person, let alone the whole class. I made a lot of mistakes in my previous presentations.

**A: How do you feel when you make mistakes when speaking English?**

B: Of course, it's awful, but I barely take my mistakes seriously. I rather see my mistakes as learning opportunities so that I can be less nervous when speaking English.

**A: What makes you less nervous when speaking English in class?**

B: I practice what I will say in my mind before I speak. When I have free time, ... no,... actually, every day, I also try to imagine different situations that I may encounter in daily life and then start talking by myself. It helps me a lot to reduce my anxiety and make me feel more confident. I know that it's challenging to deal with my speaking anxiety and I'm aware that my ability is still limited but I never give up. I want to make progress in academic journey, not giving up and slow me down.

**A: Do you know any psychological ways to regulate anxiety on your own? If yes, can you please specify?**

B: When I feel nervous right before the presentation, I close my eyes for five seconds and take a deep breath. This helps to calm me down.

**A: Do you have anything to add?**

B: No, I think that's it.

**A: So that's the end of the interview today. Thank you so much for your participation. Please let me know if you have any questions.**