Foreign Language Anxiety: Libyan Students Speaking in English

By

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear parents (Abdelkareem and Yasmin) and my lovely boys (Muhammad and Yazeed).

Abstract

In this thesis, I explore the sources of foreign language anxiety (FLA) experienced by English language students at a Libyan university with respect to their English language learning in general, and to speaking in particular. This thesis investigates the context in which students acquire the language in terms of the environment of the classroom during learning, and the effects of other related issues. These issues include students' attitudes, beliefs, motivations, types of anxieties (trait, state, situational), self-confidence, and communication apprehension in both native and foreign languages. The issues also include language skills and FLA, difficulty with accents, social comparison, classroom settings, the causes of and strategies to reduce FLA, and mixed-sex classrooms with reference to Islamic and Libyan gender norms in terms of communication between the sexes. The perceptions of 22 students (11 males and 11 females) and 8 expert teachers from the English language department of a School of Education in a Libyan University were collected using semi-structured interviews. A content analysis method was used for analysing and interpreting the responses.

The findings show that both the students and the teachers agree that speaking is the main source of FLA. However, the teachers attributed the cause to the students' inefficiency in the language, while the students attributed their communication apprehension or unwillingness to talk mainly to teachers' negative evaluations and teachers' personalities. The findings, in addition, reveal that learning a foreign language in mixed-sex classrooms in the context of this Islamic country and Libyan gendered culture and norms can inhibit learning due to the feeling of stress and anxiety experienced when learning alongside the opposite sex. In this study, this affected the quality of learning and discussion with some students feeling embarrassed to present their ideas, thoughts, viewpoints, and so hesitant to ask questions or receive any type of feedback. The study concludes with some tentative recommendations to reduce FLA with particular attention to speaking in English language learning classrooms in Libya.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Appendices

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this Dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

Signature:

Printed name: Rabab Aldarasi

Abbreviations

CA	Communication Apprehension
EL	English Language
ELL	English Language Learning
FL/s	Foreign Language/s
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLL	Foreign Language Learning
FLTL	Foreign Languages Teaching and Learning
SL	Second Language
SLL	Second Language Learning
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

CA   Communication Apprehension

Chapter 1   Introduction

1.1 Factors affecting foreign languages learning

Although many people are willing and motivated to learn foreign languages (FLs), they sometimes fail to do so. According to Ganschow and Schneider (2006), researchers keep asking why some students seem to learn a foreign language (FL) with ease while others struggle. Until recently, this key question plagued researchers and educators interested in the discipline of FL teaching and learning as Ganschow and Schneider (2006) report. Researchers such as Krashen (1981) and Ganschow and Schneider (2006) argue that most learners who face extreme difficulties in the FL systems – listening, reading, writing and speaking (especially spelling and grammar) – most likely are those who have experienced moderate to severe difficulty in learning their native languages. But others without a history of difficulty learning their mother-tongue also face challenges during their FL learning.

In the literature on foreign language learning (FLL), concerns about learning are attributed to many factors which can be classified as internal or external. In this section, I will introduce briefly the most common factors that are discussed in the literature and I will also introduce the study rationale, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research objectives, and research questions. Finally, I will present the organization of the thesis.

Internal factors are those that the language learner brings with him/her to the particular learning situation (Lightbown and Spada, 1999). These factors may have significant effects on a learner's achievement. First language learning systems and experiences, as mentioned above, are classified as an internal factor. Age, in addition, may be an important internal factor in foreign/second language learning. Researchers, according to Sherow (2006), have differing opinions and arguments about adult learners' ability to acquire a FL. For example, Lenneberg (1967) proposed the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) in which he suggested that first language acquisition must take place during the critical period which ends at about the age of adolescence. The CPH, according to Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978), implies that the processes involved in any language learning after the adolescent stage suggested by Lenneberg will be qualitatively different from those involved in primary language acquisition. Scovel (1969) and Krashen (1975) agree that learning

a FL after the age of puberty will take longer and be less successful (cited in Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle, 1978). Bley-Vroman (1989) and Schachter (1996) also agreed that FLL is limited by maturational constraints, probably biologically based, that are correlated to age at the start of language learning and Sherow (2006) states that most studies suggest that the younger the person, the easier it is to acquire language. However, not all researchers agree on this age related issue.

In contrast, Stevens (1999) claims that opportunities and motivations in terms of communication needs and the perceived value of learning a FL to become proficient in the target language are the major factors in how well an adult learner acquires a FL. The outcomes of Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle's (1978) research with four groups of English speakers of different ages studying Dutch did not support the CPH. The results of three tests showed that the advanced group, aged between 12 and 15, were the best among the groups in their use of the target language.

Further important variables affecting progress in FL include, as Robinson (2001) points out, cognitive abilities such as reasoning, remembering, understanding, and problem solving. Although intelligence is an internal factor, as Gardner and Lambert (1972), Genesee (1976), and Skehan (1989) state, intelligence is not necessarily a strong factor affecting learning. In fact, aptitude is possibly a stronger factor compared to intelligence because it embraces learning abilities: identifying and memorizing new sounds, understanding word usage, figuring out grammatical rules, and memorizing new vocabulary (Gomez, 2001; Sherow, 2006). Silva and White (2002) investigated the relationship of cognitive aptitudes to success in foreign language learning with 500 learners studying in American military academies and they concluded that aptitude had a significant influence on language acquisition. They suggested that:

> …future research should involve experimentation with alternative models not narrowly dependent on a general aptitude battery and static (as opposed to rate of change) performance data. Of particular interest would be alternative models that explicate the relation among a variety of predictors and individual differences in learning rate at different points in the language learning process (Silva and White, 2002 cited in Arnold and Fonseca 2004, p.123 but not referenced).

Another predictor may be self-confidence, for this also plays an important role in FLL. Self-confidence refers to judgments and evaluations about an individual's own value and worth (Park and Lee, 2005). In the context of language learning, low self-

confidence may result in a learner feeling deficient and limited in the target language. According to MacIntyre et al. (1998) self-confidence can be an important element in Foreign Language Learning (FLL), particularly in terms of assertiveness, adventurousness, and a degree of comfort with taking risks. Motivation and attitudes, in addition, will have an important influence on FLL achievements (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003). Learning motivation, manifested in a school context, involves different forms of motivational components such as interests, self-concept, and goals. These components can empower the FLL process so that they stimulate and encourage learning (Gardner, 2001). Additionally, learning styles, according to Felder and Henriques (1995), have been extensively discussed in the educational psychology literature particularly in the foreign language learning context by Oxford and her colleagues (Oxford, 1990; Oxford et al., 1991; Wallace and Oxford, 1992; Oxford and Ehrman, 1992). Felder and Henriques (1995) define learning style as 'the ways, in which an individual characteristically acquires, retains, and retrieves information' (p.21). Oxford (1990) claims that learning style can impede the process of learning when it contradicts teaching methods. However, there has been much recent criticism of learning style research, not least because 'in decontextualizing learning the concept of style may provide a discriminatory basis for dealing with difference in gender or race' (Reynolds, 1997, p.115). Besides the internal factors mentioned above - gender, preferences, beliefs, and personality - may also be significant internal individual variables that can affect the kinds of teaching and learning strategies students prefer and adopt in learning a FL (Sherow, 2006).

External factors, by contrast, are those that characterize the particular language learning setting and include social context such as social class, cultural level, home language, environmental language, ethnic and religious context, external motivation, and access to native speakers (Madrid, 1995). External factors also involve the language learning environment and include the teacher, peer group, teacher-student relationship, classroom atmosphere, teaching methods, quality of materials, reward system, and homework assignments (Kaylani, 1996). Importantly for my study, in the external variables cited in the FLL literature, emotion has been recognized as one of the most important variables according to many educators and researchers in the field (Horwitz et al. 1986; Krashen, 1981; Schumann, 1994). Emotions are also, of course, internal factors, following Lightbown and Spada's (1999) suggestion of these as factors the language learner brings with him/her to the particular learning situation. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), Aida (1994), and Lantolf and Thorne

3

(2006), emotions most likely occur through different kinds of communications with teachers and peers or through their evaluations in the classroom. Stevick (1980) argues that success in language learning depends on what goes inside and between the people in the classroom much more than it depends on other aspects such as materials, teaching methods, and linguistics analysis. Arnold (2011, p.11) agrees with Stevick that the 'inside and between' refer to the variety of emotions a learner feels inside the self, such as anxiety, and towards others (teachers and peers) and materials, and these emotions may include fear, admiration, and jealousy. The different forms of relationships between people in the classroom often reflect their emotions towards each other and these may have important implications for the learning process. Ohta's (2001) study, for example, reveals that good relationships in the classroom, in terms of peer to peer and student-teacher communication, can result in a positive affect or emotion which facilitates and encourages learning in the classroom.

In the broader context, there are arguments about the influence of emotion on factors (internal and external) mentioned earlier. The relationship, however, is complex, interwoven and inseparable and attention to the significant role of emotions and their role in education has been relatively recent. According to Garrett and Young (2009), FLL and second language acquisition (SLA) difficulties were often attributed to cognition until the end of the 20th century with Damasio (1999) reporting that:

> … emotion was not trusted in the laboratory. Emotion was too subjective, it was said. Emotion was too elusive and vague. Emotion at the opposite end from reason, easily the finest human ability, and the reason was presumed to be entirely independent from emotion (Damasio, 1999 cited in Garrett and Young 2009, p.209).

More recently, there has been strong neurobiological support for the influence of emotions on learning. Researchers such as Sylwester (1994), Zeidner (1998), Schneps et al. (2007), Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2007), Pekrun et al. (2009), Schutz and Zembylas (2009), and Pekrun and Linnenbink-Garcia (2012) confirm that emotions play a major role in learning. It follows, then, that it is important to pay attention to emotions in the classroom because they may have a significant impact on learning and influence a learner's ability to process information and to accurately grasp what is encountered. Pekrun (2014), who is interested in educational psychology and conducted research studies to examine the influence of emotions on

4

learning and education, states that the classroom is an emotional place where students frequently experience emotions in a variety of situations. For instance:

> … students can be excited during studying, hope for success, feel pride in their accomplishments, be surprised at discovering a new solution, experience anxiety about failing examinations, feel ashamed over poor grades, or be bored during lessons. In addition, social emotions play a role as well, like admiration, empathy, anger, contempt, or envy concerning peers and teachers (Pekrun, 2014, p.6).

Furthermore, emotions may have important functions in motivating students academically and affecting their behaviour, performance, health, and personality development (Darling-Hammond et al, 2014). The influence of emotions on cognition has been studied in neurobiology by a number of scientists such as Damasio who has worked on the relationship between emotion and cognition for decades. Damasio (1994), using evidence from previous research studies of the brain, and through clinical and experimental work with a large number of neurological patients who had sustained lesions to certain sectors of the brain, confirms that our emotional life is 'an integral component of the machinery of reason' (p.xii). In his book 'Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason and the Human Brain', Damasio (1994) describes the cases of two patients known as Gage and Elliot. Both men had been adult, healthy, intelligent, skilled, able-bodied men, successful at their work and living normal lives. After their surgery, their perceptual, learning, language, memory and mathematical abilities appeared to be intact and they were aware of what was occurring in the world around them. They also clearly knew details such as names and dates. But the problems that they were experiencing showed that there was something wrong. The two men suffered from an inability to solve everyday life problems, to learn from mistakes and they experienced negative changes in behaviour, a failure to come to good decisions, and an inability to make effective plans for the hours ahead. Damasio's examinations revealed that these problems occur when there is impairment in co-operation between brain structures (the amygdala and the frontal lobes). These findings, according to Damasio, are neurological proof of the profound influence and the subsuming of emotion within the aspects of cognition (learning, decision making, memory, attention, social functioning) that we use most heavily in schools. In addition, working with brain-damaged patients, Yang and Damasio (2007) suggest that:

> … emotion related processes are required for skills and knowledge to be translated from the structured school environment to real world decision

5

making because they provide an emotional rudder to guide judgment and action (p.3).

The importance of the affective domain in education generally, and in language learning specifically, has also been emphasized by numerous educators and psychologists. Over thirty years ago, Krashen (1985), still influential today in FLL, stated that comprehensible input is not enough to ensure second/foreign language learning: learners also have to be receptive to that input. Krashen's hypothesis suggests that an 'affective filter' is on when learners suffer high anxiety and low self-esteem, or low motivation, and when learners block out input. Krashen's hypothesis has been translated neurologically in the findings of Le Doux (1996). As Arnold (2011) explains, Le Doux confirms that emotion, thinking and learning are inextricably linked. Two areas of activity, according to Le Doux (1996), can be affected by emotions: attention and the creation of meaning, two processes that are fundamental to learning. Following Le Doux, the brain filters out unimportant input from the number of stimuli that it receives and it has two ways to connect to meaningful experience in order to get the necessary attention for learning to take place. The first way to connect to meaningful experience is through emotions. When emotions are experienced, some neurochemicals are produced to provide the brain with smooth recall. With the experiencing of emotions, substances of a hormone known as peptide are quickly released in the bloodstream, making highly dramatic changes in both the functions of the brain and the state of the body which can facilitate or disturb learning. Schumann (1994) supports Damasio's and Le Doux's findings, arguing that:

> … brain stem, limbic and frontolimbic areas, which comprise the stimulus appraisal system, emotionally modulate cognition such that, in the brain, emotion and cognition are distinguishable but inseparable (p.232).

Therefore, from a neural perspective, affect is an integral part of cognition. Schumann (1998, cited in Garrett and Young, 2009) also adds that emotions are at the core of cognition and they drive our decisions-making processes, and play an important role in learning. First, emotional reactions affect the attention and effort devoted to learning. Second, patterns of emotional evaluation may possibly underlie what has been considered motivation in second language acquisition. Schumann (1998) clarifies by suggesting that the emotional response of FL/SL learners occurs when 'the brain evaluates the stimuli it receives via the senses from the language learning situation… and this appraisal leads to an emotional respond' (p.28).

6

Important though all these factors are in learning a language, throughout the literature on foreign language acquisition it is anxiety in particular that has been extensively discussed. Language learners often complain about the difficulty of learning and express feelings of stress, being uncomfortable, and feeling tension in foreign language classes. These feelings have been expressed by many learners of different foreign languages in different contexts, so arguably this phenomenon is neither restricted to learning a specific language nor to specific learners. To use myself as an example, I experienced some foreign language learning anxiety (hereafter often abbreviated to FLA) when I studied English in a Libyan English language school at university level. For me, the main cause of FLA was gender[1] in mixed-sex classrooms in which the men's behaviour, comments, and their negative evaluations of women made learning difficult in what I felt to be such a stressful atmosphere. Feelings of being uncomfortable, anxiety, and the fear of the negative evaluations prevented not only me but also other women in my class from taking part in activities, particularly oral ones. This is one reason why this study focuses on one of the most common phenomenon related to foreign language learning, the phenomenon of uneasiness and stress experienced by learners which is known as foreign language anxiety (FLA). It was the main reason that I chose to look at ways in which FLA influences FL learners in the Libyan context and I shall now provide a rationale for my study and its focus.

1.2   The study rationale

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a widely spread phenomenon among FL learners. Recently, it has become recognised as one of the most important variables affecting language achievements. Some research studies (for example, Azarfam and Baki, 2012) have demonstrated that FLA has a positive influence on language achievements. By contrast, other studies, such as those conducted by Brown (1973), Chastain (1975), Scovel (1978), McCoy (1979), Bailey (1983), Lucas (1984), Horwitz et al. (1986), and MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), have shown the opposite:

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[1] I follow the WHO (Europe)(nd) terminology in this thesis, using gender 'to describe the characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed' and sex to refer 'to those that are biologically determined'. Hence I talk of single- and mixed-sex classrooms but gender issues arising in those classrooms.

FLA has a debilitating influence, sometimes leading learners to leave a language course entirely.

This research was initiated not only to satisfy my personal inquisitiveness as a teacher remembering my own experiences and worried about Libyan students' unwillingness to speaking in English language classes, but also to provide much-needed research to fill the gaps in researching this topic in the Arab context, particularly in Libya. This project is important for three reasons. First, most previous studies have been conducted in the USA, Europe, China, Turkey and Iran. This study, however, was conducted in Libya and so is one of relatively few studies conducted in an Arabic-speaking country. Second, this study will draw on a philosophical perspective to discuss the phenomenon of FLA, to provide details that have been, arguably, absent in some of the previous studies that have quantifiably explored the topic by using different scales of anxiety measurement. Finally, this study will include attention to my own experience of FLA while I was a student of the English Language at a Libyan college, discussing in addition the effects of social issues such as gender and cultural norms on language achievement. These are issues that have perhaps not been included in studies of this kind, at least not in those emerging from the Arabic world. This study may not only contribute to the scarce studies conducted in the Arab and Islamic world but may also contribute an additional perspective related to the effects of the society's norms in terms of gendered communication between the sexes and anxiety, and so it is intended to add to the existing knowledge in the field.

1.3   Statement of the problem

I contend that successful foreign language learning requires a comfortable environment in which learners feel safe and relaxed and in which they enjoy learning. Many learners who experience FLA are often unwilling to participate in any kind of activity that requires speaking or communication, either with peers or teachers or with both (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986; Young, 1991; Horwitz, 2001; Woodrow, 2006; Tsiplakides and Keramida, 2009). Libyan students have been seen, by teachers and researchers, to avoid participating in speaking activities in English language classes (Abidin et al., 2012). However, teachers do not always identify anxious students, perhaps because they lack knowledge about the influence of affective issues, particularly emotions, in education, and so they might attribute

their students' unwillingness to participate in speaking tasks to reasons such as lack of motivation, low performance, or weakness. This is in spite of the fact that English is the only compulsory foreign language that is taught in Libya through the stages of primary, preparatory, secondary and high schools.

Teachers' and students' lack of knowledge about FLA, its causes and potentially negative influences on progress, may inhibit some students, including those who study in English at Schools of Education preparing to obtain jobs as English teachers. Anxiety may reduce their capability and affect their confidence to become successful teachers who are supposed to speak fluent English in front of and with their classes.

This research will explore the reasons why some students experience FLA using a qualitative research instrument, namely semi-structured interviews. 22 students (11 men and 11 women) from the English Language Department at a School of Education in Libya and 8 of their experienced teachers were interviewed individually in order to explore the possible causes and the effects of FLA from two perspectives: students and teachers. In Chapter Five, more information about the participants, the research tools, and the contexts in which interviews were conducted will be discussed in greater depth and detail.

1.4   The purpose of the study

The overall purpose of the current study is to explore how and why FLA impacts on students' willingness to engage in oral interaction in English, and to consider its effects on students' oral performance in particular and on achievement in general.

1.5   Research objectives

The main research objective is to explore factors contributing to FL anxiety experienced in the classroom. I shall also explore the history and current state of Libya's educational context as this plays an important role in the study.

1.6   Research questions

My research questions emerged from my own experience as a learner and a teacher and from the literature on FLA. When I was a student of English I sometimes felt anxious during classes especially when I was required to speak in front of the class.

This was not because I am a shy person. I used to speak Arabic without any worries in front of my group, but the matter was completely different in English. During the classes I realised that I was not the only one who felt anxiety, there were number of women and men who looked uncomfortable when they had to speak or were required to participate in a discussion. For me, the main cause of my anxiety was the negative evaluation of some teachers in front of the class because I thought that made me look stupid. What made the matter worse was receiving negative evaluation in front of the men. It was so embarrassing when I made errors in front of them because of the relationship between us in the class. Libyan society is governed by its restrictive gendered norms and Islamic traditions, especially in my particular part of the country. Social communication between men and women is very restricted and we tend not to be familiar unless we are related to each other. When I became a teacher I realized that some of my students also felt anxious when they were asked to speak in front of each other. They avoided volunteering answers or taking part in oral activities. They seemed afraid of peers' negative evaluations and comments but as a new teacher I did not know how extensively this problem was studied as a phenomenon in the literature of foreign language learning and teaching. When I searched and read about anxiety in general and foreign language anxiety specifically, I learned about its types and levels and then tried to put my knowledge into practice. To some extent I was able to understand more by observation and asking individuals how they were feeling about the kind of anxieties my students experienced. This informal approach was motivated by an aim to help my students to overcome their anxiety and encourage them to speak without fear.

However, I wanted to learn more about emotions, especially anxiety and that is why this study began. As noted above, the questions I used came from my own experience as a learner and as a teacher and, later, from starting to read about Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA). The main questions are listed below.

- Why are Libyan students unwilling to participate in speaking activities in the classroom? Do they experience FLA?
- If learners do experience FLA, what are the causes? Are they personal? Is FLA influenced by classroom factors? Or is FLA influenced by both classroom and personal factors?
- What is the effect of FLA?
- What strategies, if any, do teachers use to increase or reduce FLA?

10

- Do Libyan norms in terms of communication between men and women have any influence on creating FLA in the classroom? If yes, how?

1.7   Organization of the thesis

This thesis is organised into eight Chapters. This Chapter has provided a brief overview of the problem of FLA, the rationale for the study and purpose of the study as well as the research objectives and questions, and the context of the study. Chapter Two presents an overview of Libya, its educational history, the education system in Libya, and changes that occurred after the revolution of 2011. It outlines characteristics of Libyan education, languages in Libya and provides a brief history of teaching English in Libya, including attention to teaching methods. Chapter Three explores emotions, explaining the theoretical approach, basic elements, characteristics, and the difference between emotions and moods that I use in this thesis. Chapter Four investigates anxiety and outlines the differences and similarities between anxiety and fear. Here I also discuss anxiety levels and categories. In addition, I focus on ways of studying FLA, its sources, and its influences and consequences in foreign language learning. Chapter Five outlines my research approach and the development of the research tools used. It discusses the methodological steps taken and points to the research challenges and ethical issues encountered. Chapter Six outlines the procedures for data analysis, and the findings of the interviews. Chapter Seven brings together the results from students' and teachers' interviews and discusses the findings by returning to the main research questions. Finally, Chapter Eight is the concluding Chapter in which I present a summary of the research aim and main questions, the main research findings and implications, and overall research findings. I also write here of my final thoughts on this study, its contribution to knowledge, the limitations of the study, my recommendations and suggestions, including suggestions for further research and I conclude with a personal reflection on the study.

Chapter 2   Background to the study: the education system in Libya and foreign language learning history.

2.1   Introduction

This Chapter provides a brief historical overview of Libya and its educational system. It also outlines the stages through which the Libyan education has passed. Initially I present brief information on the profile of Libya. I then discuss the educational history of the country since the Italian rule to the current transitional state, passing through the era of King As-Sanusi and Gaddafi's rule. Additionally, this Chapter outlines the significant educational structures in Libya, such as schools and universities and their characteristics. It also outlines the development history of English language learning and teaching in Libya during Gaddafi's era because there were huge changes throughout the 42 years of Gaddafi's rule.

2.2   An Outline of Libya

Libya is an Arabic country on the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. It is an oil-rich large country with an area of about 1.8 million square kilometres that makes it the fourth largest country on the African Continent and the seventeenth largest country in the world. It is located in North Africa and shares its borders with six countries as shown in figure 1 with Egypt and Sudan to the east, Tunisia and Algeria to the west, and Chad and Niger to the south. In the north, it lies on the Mediterranean Sea's coastline that stretches for about 1,900 kilometres. According to the United Nations (2012), the population size of Libya increased from approximately 3.1 million in 1998 to 6 million in 2010. The biggest land part of the country is in the south which is mostly desert, with the population increasing in the cities and towns located on the coast. Tripoli, the capital of the country, is located in the west. The currency of the country is the Libyan Dinar. In recent times the country gained notoriety because of its former leader Mummer Al-Gaddafi who ruled the country for 42 years until a revolution in 2011. Although other languages are spoken by Libyans, as explained below, Arabic is the official language of the country.
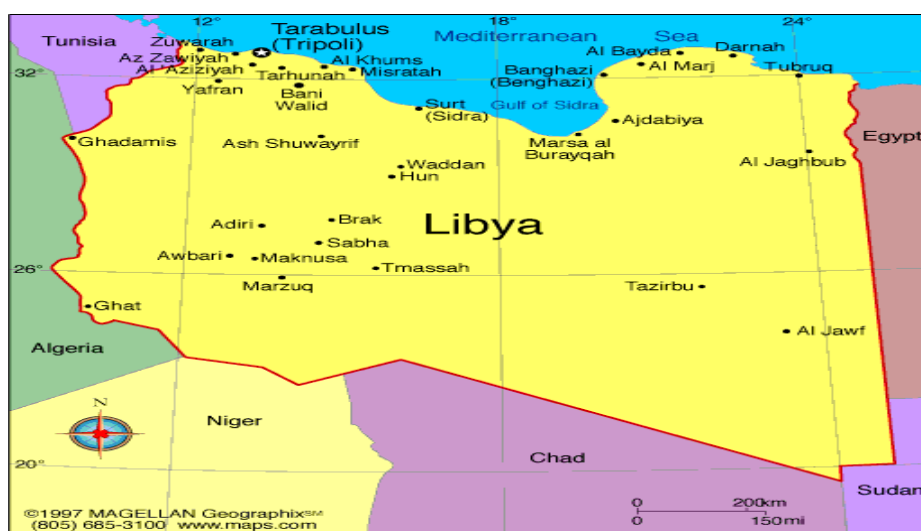
Figure 1. Map of Libya, from: http://www.worldmap1.com/libya-map.asp

2.3 The educational history of Libya

Compared with many Arabic countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and others which were colonized by the British and French, Libya has a somewhat different history. People of these other Arabic countries arguably benefited from their colonization by learning the languages of their colonizers and the majority of ordinary people of those countries can speak English and/or French fluently, partly because these languages have been transmitted through the generations. Some also suggest that people of these countries have a greater capacity to learn foreign languages, particularly in Lebanon and Tunisia (Shawish, 2010; Said, 2012). But the reasons behind this may be attributed to some cultural issues. For example, the ability to speak foreign languages often indicates high social status and good education and although these cultural factors exist in Libya, the history of colonialism was different.

2.3.1 Libyan educational history under the Italian rule

Libya is an Arabic country that was colonized by Italy between 1911 and 1942 (Appleton, 1979). Education in Libya had been based on teaching the Quran (the Holy book of Islam) in Quranic schools that had been encouraged by the Ottoman Empire from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. Small kuttabs were associated with mosques to teach children how

13

to read the holy Quran and write Arabic script. Besides Kuttabs, there were also Zawiya which taught different subjects such as mathematics, science, medicine, geography, history and religion (Busayri, 1998). The geographical location of Libya on the Mediterranean Sea, which was called 'mare nostro' or 'our sea', is near to the southern Italian coast and was called the 'quarta sponda', the Italian 'fourth shore', an ideal location for shipping and trading (Bosworth, 2006). Africa in the European world order has always been at the service of and used to the advantage of Europe (du Bois, 1988) with Libyan minerals, in particular, desirable for investment. In addition, the invasion of Libya by Italy, as Cunsolo (1965) argues, was to restore dignity to the Italians after their defeat in different parts of Africa such as Adowa, Ethiopia in 1896. These factors coincided with the Ottoman loss of control in Libya that had lasted from 1551-1911 and so Italy found a favourable opportunity to invade the country (Powell, 2015) and the Italian rule had a significant effect on education in Libya.

The Italian invasion, which lasted for more than three decades, left the Libyans in a subordinate position: Libyan people became second-class citizens in their own home country. These colonial attitudes are embedded in a belief system that goes beyond the logic of exploitation in which Libyans were pushed off their lands by the Italians, and were killed in huge numbers during Italian rule. The Libyan population was dramatically reduced 'from 1.4 million in 1907, to 1.2 million in 1912, 1.1 million in 1915, 1.0 million in 1921, 850,000 in 1930, and 825,000 in 1933' (Bosworth, 2006, p.381). This era of Libyan history, as Powell (2015) suggests, can be remembered as one of the most aggressive in the history of twentieth-century colonialism. Italian aggression against Libyans was systematic and Italian colonialism, according to Busayri (1998), has greatly influenced education in Libya. Appleton (1979, p.29) notes that the Italian rule in Libya provided only a 'poor legacy in terms of skilled and educated Libyan manpower' and he questions if it was 'some kind of "apartheid" policy' that meant the Italians did not allow Libyans to attend Italian secondary schools or if that occurred 'because the mass of the Libyan population were so basically opposed to the Italian regime that they regarded attendance at the schools … as an act of collaboration with the hated oppressor'.

Under the rule of the Italians, the Arabic language and Islam were the main targets for destruction. Religious schools were closed and Arabic and Bedouin languages were dropped from the syllabus. Libyan children were not encouraged to learn their language and, instead, they were taught to love Italy and not to trust Arabs or Bedouins. Libyan

children who were enrolled in Italian schools were not allowed to continue their education after the fourth grade. Collins states:

> … there is evidence that the system attempted brutally to erase Arab culture in Libya by prohibiting the use of the Arab language in public services and offices and the denial of Libyans' access to education (Collins, 1974 cited in Powell, 2015, p.10).

As politics, of course, affects education, then changes in educational policies occurred before the independence struggle in 1949. Arabic and Bedouin languages, and vocational education were added to the curriculum and some Islamic schools were re-opened. School enrolments grew rapidly, particularly in primary schools with all children allowed to learn in primary schools and to enrol in secondary schools which had previously been banned.

During the era of Italian colonialism, Libyans were not motivated to learn the Italian language because they considered it as the language of their enemy and Libya was left underdeveloped. Sharabi (1966) suggests that 'Italy's thirty-two-year domination (1911–43) over Libya was perhaps the most severe experienced by any Arab country in modern times' (p.31). Thus, not surprisingly, Italian is not spoken by Libyans now in the way that French is used commonly in Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Only a few Italian words remain in use today and that may be because of the nuns who were nurses and who stayed until recently working in the hospitals.

2.3.2 Libyan education during the Kingdom time

When the Italians were defeated in Libya in 1941, the country was under temporary British military rule from 1942 until 1951 when Libya became independent. Idris As-Sanusi was deemed by the constitution to be the King of Libya, a King who could exercise political power to run the affairs of the state. Under As-Sanusi's rule Libya became a Kingdom and that lasted from 1951 to 1969. However, according to Vandewalle (2006), 'the concept of a kingdom was an untried political concept that did not resonate within terms of use, the country's history or among its people' the country's history or among its people' (p.41-42) and Libya faced 'shocking economic and social realities' (p.42) including its infrastructure, hardly any trade, very high unemployment, and a high infant mortality and illiteracy rate. A UNESCO Commission visiting Libya in 1951 stated that there were only 29 primary schools in Tripoli, the Libyan capital and only one in Zawiya (Yousif et al, 1996) with just one teacher training centre for women in Tripoli according to Toruneav (1952). Although a priority was given to education, the shortage of financial resources at that time created limits to educational development.

15

Libyan educational policies were developed and came into effect through the education laws of the constitution of 1951 (Articles 28-30) which gave the right to all people in Libya (Libyans and foreigners) to free education in public schools although education was not compulsory. Schools at all levels were founded and old Quranic schools were reactivated and new ones established. School enrolments increased rapidly, at the primary level in particular, and vocational education was also introduced in different parts of the country. In 1955, the first Libyan university was established in the second biggest city in the country, Benghazi. The Arabic language was to be the main language of education with English and French introduced to the curriculum to be taught as foreign languages. Total school enrolment grew from 34,000 on the eve of independence in 1951 to about 360,000 at the time of the 1969 revolution (Clark, 2013).

Teaching English was an important issue in the Ministry of Education through the era of the Kingdom in order to promote economic and social development. But, as noted above, the situation in Libya was complex because establishing the country depended mainly on financial sources which were scarce in Libya because oil had not then been discovered. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education played an important role to help the country to overcome difficulties and that included using researchers to investigate the challenges of teaching and learning English in Libyan schools. For example, Barton (1968) in his report presented to UNESCO stated that, in 1964:

> … the Libyan government believed that its plan for extension of higher education at home and abroad were handicapped by inadequate standards of English teaching and the lack of a sufficient number of teachers trained in this subject staff members (Barton, 1968, p.1).

Steps were taken by the Ministry of Education to develop foreign language teaching and learning. For example, native speakers of English were employed to teach Libyan students in schools and universities. Training courses were given to the few Libyan teachers of English, and texts books were developed and teaching methods were recommended. English language education did receive significant e attention during the era of the Kingdom because the Ministry of Education had recognized that developing sectors such as the economy, agriculture, and social development partly depended on learning English so students could be sent to developed countries as Britain or the USA to finish their higher degree (Masters and PhD) studies there and then return home to support development in Libya. However, limited resources were made available for improvements in English Language teaching and learning.

16

2.3.3 Education during Gaddafi's regime

Libya's September 1969 coup 'put an end to a political system that was considered anachronistic by most of its observers' (Vandewalle, 2006, p.78) with Gaddafi claiming the 1st of September 1969 'as the true independence day of Libya' (Vandewalle, 2006, p. 85). But by the end of the Kingdom in 1969 and during Gaddafi's rule, which lasted until early in 2011, Libya had been exposed to destruction and corruption that involved all sectors of the country. Education was no exception, but before talking about it, it is worth mentioning that all sectors of the country, including education, had started to flourish during the King's rule because oil had been discovered in Libya in 1955 and oil was first exported in 1961 (Elabbar, 2011, p.23) and so the financial resources of Libya had significantly increased.

Education, considered by developed and under-developed countries vital to achieving a vibrant successful society, entered a period of randomness with respect to decision-making when Gaddafi came to power. Decisions were taken by Gaddafi himself or by his close followers who were influenced by his philosophy without careful study or consideration of the results that would and did result in material losses and moral prejudice. Under the dictatorship and the rule of Gaddafi, education was politicized and changed according to the relationships between Gaddafi and the world (Al Sincky, 2012). Supporting the view that education was 'highly politicized under Gaddafi', Rose (2015, p.3) suggests that it became 'a vehicle for ideological indoctrination' with, for example, attempts 'to distance the country's system from the West' and, after 1986, English and French banned from the syllabus until ten years later 'as relations with the West thawed' (p.3). Also in 1986, there were changes in the curriculum design of geography and history in primary and secondary schools and 'Libya' as a region was cancelled from the map of the textbooks of geography and history and replaced by the map of the Arab world. For St John (1983) Arab nationalism was 'the central element of Qadhdhafi's ideology' (p.473) and only when Gaddafi failed to persuade other Arab leaders to follow his Arab unity theory were Libya's geography and history reintroduced to the curriculum (Al Sincky, 2012). For Rose (2015, p3) Gaddafi ensured that the 'Libyan education system was largely cut off from Western influence' and our wealth from oil 'was applied at best capriciously to education investment'. After many years, it was obvious for many of us, particularly educators, that Gaddafi had been keen to destroy education in the country by practising actions aimed at keeping Libyans uneducated and disempowered in order that he could exert his own power. St John (1983, p. 482) reminds us that during the Kingdom, the monarchy 'had made considerable advances in the provision of education, although assessing the quality of that education is quite difficult' and that Gaddafi's claims to the contrary are 'simply not

supported by the available evidence'. Not only had Gaddafi sought to ensure that education and its curriculum followed his ideologies, he had also given become 'increasingly preoccupied with giving education a military dimension' (St John, 1983, p. 482) and so many of us were extremely worried about the state of education before the revolution which I will now outline.

2.4   The current situation: The revolution of 17th of February 2011

In common with similar revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, the so-called Arab Spring spread into Libya through social media. A small number of young people began their movement on the 15th of February 2011 in front of the police headquarters in the biggest city of the east, Benghazi, demanding the promised rights that they thought had been forgotten and ignored for years. It is arguably absurd that Libya, the land of contrasts as it is called, and a rich oil country of only 6 million people and over two thirds of its population under thirty years of age, was suffering from poverty and high unemployment. As noted above, economic opportunities for young people during the Gaddafi regime were rare. Political voices were silenced and corruption occurred across all sectors of the country without exception. By contrast with most Libyans, Gaddafi, had lived with his family and retinue a luxurious and opulent life-style inside and outside Libya.

On the 16th of February 2011, the second day of revolution, the situation changed dramatically when Gaddafi's forces violently opened fire and killed many protestors using heavy weapons such as artillery, helicopter gunships and anti-aircraft missile launchers in Benghazi. Unfortunately, the peaceful revolution started to take on a military character, which made mass protests difficult. In the east of Libya, people in the cities of Derna, Bayda, Tubruk, Guba and other villages protested against the savage way of trying to deter protesters in Benghazi (Meo, 2011). A few days later, the uprising reached cities in the west, particularly Zintan city and Jabal Nafusa (Berber cities) and Misurata. In the south, protesters attacked government buildings and police stations. The people of Tripoli joined the uprising later than others because they were under the control of Libya's State Security Forces and the secret police. When Gaddafi started to lose control, he hired a "brigade's worth" (6000 men) of sub-Saharan African mercenaries (Elabbar, 2011).

18

On the 19th of February, some revolutionaries from Derna and Benghazi, beside dissident Libyan pilots in the air force, tried to stop Gaddafi's army from entering Benghazi before the intervention of France which played a crucial rule in eventually eliminating Gaddafi's army. After days of violations by Gaddafi's forces, Libya was suspended by The European Union on 24th of February from the United Nations Human Rights Council and a decision was taken by the UN to impose a no-fly zone over Libya (MacDonald, 2011). Other military procedures were taken to support the no-fly zone by the USA and other European countries. Politically, there was international support for the uprising against the dictatorial regime and, consequently, a National Transitional Council was formed in Benghazi to act as the political face of the revolution (Abbas and Blair, 2011).

In August the same year, and after months of fighting, a dramatic development occurred when revolutionaries from different parts of the country, including Tripoli, marched to Gaddafi's main Presidential palace in the capital. Later, on October 20th, Gaddafi was finally captured and killed near his hometown Surt by revolutionaries. These brief details of the Libyan overthrow of Gaddafi are important with respect to this study because they set the scene of the dictatorial regime which controlled all sectors, including education in general and FLTL in specific, as I will show in following sections. These details, events and after-effects also impacted on this study during the data collection and the stages after in terms of frequent shortages of electricity and a lack of internet access caused by the civil war and conflicts between political, Islamic, and revolutionary parties. Writing in 2012, Vanderwalle suggests that after the civil war the key issues and questions that have beset Libya since independence in 1951 '… are still left unresolved: the creation of an institutionalized state, and the incorporation of the country's citizens into a meaningful nation' (Vanderwalle, 2012, p.2010). Writing more recently, Eaton's view is equally disturbing:

> Libya suffers from interlinked political, security and economic crises that are weakening state institutions, damaging its economy and facilitating the continued existence of non-state armed groups. As rival authorities continue to compete for power, the resulting fragmentation and dysfunction have provided a fertile environment for the development of a pervasive war economy dependent on violence. Eaton (2018, p.2)

The most recent Human Rights Watch report on Libya (HRW, 2019) notes the ongoing activity of militias from warring factions and the violence that continues to erupt and that includes attacks on oil installations which disrupt the economy and public services. Libya seems a long way from peace and stability and so, as I shall show below, this has a very significant effect on education in the country.

19

2.4.1 The Educational system in Libya and changes after the revolution

The major change in the educational system since the revolution has been, according to Rose (2015, p.3), 'a purge of the ideologized curriculum, with the beginnings of a complete rewriting. Hence subjects and topics attributed to Gaddafi have been removed and a start has been made on correcting textbooks with the stories from his troubled imagination (Fhelboom, 2013). Ascertaining statistics for education in Libya is, Rose (2015) contends, difficult, not least because much of the data is drawn from pre-Gaddafi days.

In Libya, there are two forms of education: private and public. Private schools are often only at primary level although there are a few private schools for secondary pupils across the country. Public, or state, education, from primary school to university level, has been compulsory until the end of secondary school and free since the reign of As-Sanusi. Some changes occurred in the education system during Gaddafi's rule, particularly at the secondary level. Since the 1950s the secondary school programme had lasted for three years. The first was a general year in which different subjects (Arabic language, Islamic religion, English, mathematics, history, geography, social science, chemistry, biology, physics, and arts) were studied. In the next two years, students chose one of the areas (science or arts) depending on their exam scores. In 1996 a new programme, as will be explained below, was adopted to improve the quality of education that the country sees as dependent for a better future. Hamdy (2007) has noted that from 2006 the period of study in specialised high schools was shortened to last three years instead of four years with national examinations taken at the end of the third rather than fourth year. School teachers must follow the guidance of the Committee of Higher Education (Ministry of Education) in all aspects of their professional practice and, for Hamdy (2007) their lack of any real engagement or voice in their profession added to unplanned and frequent curriculum changes may, at least in part, explain a poor level of teaching and negative impacts the school system. Similarly, Elabbar (2011) suggests that in a ten year period, from 2000 to 2010, the school system experienced 'such unplanned changes and modifications of curricula, specialisations, national exams (such as years of study)' that these 'presented challenges for school teachers and students' (p.30). According to the Libyan National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, the education system includes five main stages and I will outline these briefly below as the students who are the participants in my study came through this system before entering the university.

2.4.1.1 Kindergarten

This stage consists of two years for children between the ages of four and five. The main objectives of this stage are to motivate the child's curiosity to discover the environment, the linguistic development of the child's language, teaching basic Islamic principles and values, and developing moral and human feelings and values. This stage concentrates on different activities such as craft, painting, singing, and physical training but, according to the Libyan National Commission for Education, Culture and Science (2001), there are two important issues that should be considered and these issues still apply today. Firstly, there are only a small number of public kindergartens across the country compared to the number of children. Secondly, high quality training courses need to be provided for teachers of kindergartens and for the university students who study in the discipline and this remains an area of weakness in Libya.

Carter (2018) notes that many children receive no pre-primary school education with World Bank statistics for 2015 suggesting 'only 18% of 5 year olds were in early childhood education programme' (p.5). Importantly, too, Carter's work highlights the very negative effects on education at all levels, of the ongoing conflict, suggesting:

> Seven years on from the 2011 crisis, three governments compete for power, with deep divisions along political, geographic, religious and ethnic lines … . Fighting continues in populated areas, and there is an environment of deepening vulnerability for the population at large with a proliferation of weapons and autonomous militias, and a rapidly deteriorating economy and public sector. Carter (2018, p. 2).

Carter (2018) reports that the conflict in Libya affects 489, more than 10% of schools and impacts on the education of 244,500 children (p.3). She also notes that, in 2015, the reported average fall of school enrolments was 20% across the country but in 2017 'gross enrolment was 96.7% for children in primary and secondary school' (Carter, 2018, p.3). However, as noted by Rose (2015) we should be cautious about 'official' statistics and what is important here is that my study participants were all subject to conflict conditions, to varying degrees and at different times, through their schooling and then at university, and so what follows should be read with this in mind.

2.4.1.2 Elementary level

This level lasts for nine years and it divides into three stages as summarised here.

Stage one includes first, second and third grades and starts at the age of six. Literacy is introduced to pupils at this stage and the Arabic language, Islamic religion, mathematics,

21

arts, and physical training are taught. No exams are required to transfer from one stage to the next but achieving a certain level through practical, written and oral evaluations that takes place daily, weekly, monthly and seasonally is required.

Stage two in elementary school includes fourth, fifth and sixth grades. Besides the previous mentioned subjects above, subjects such as geometry, geography, history, science, and the English language are added to the syllabus. In this level exams are required to pass to the next grade with mid-term and final exams taken for each semester. A student is considered successful if s/he gains 50% or more in each subject (Elabbar, 2011; Tantani, 2012).

Stage three is also known as the preparatory stage. It includes seventh, eighth and ninth grades. Advanced levels of the subjects studied in stage two are studied here and by the end of each semester every school in Libya prepares its own final exams for students of seventh and eighth grades. Students in the ninth grade (17 years old) take national exams from The Ministry of Education in the capital and, according to the Libyan National Commission for Education, Culture and Science (2001), a basic education certificate is offered to a student who is considered successful.

2.4.1.3 Intermediate education level (secondary)

In 1996, the education system changed from a programme of two main disciplines (the sciences and the arts) which each lasted for three years to a system of speciality. The new and current system includes tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades, and consists of eight disciplines: social science, languages, life science, basic science, economy, engineering, arts and vocation (Elabbar, 2011). This system is intended to give every student an opportunity to choose the discipline that s/he is interested in depending on his/her achieved scores in ninth grade. Rose (2015) reports that, in 2008-2009) the division of specialities was '29% in language (of whom 71% chose English), 62% in science, and 9% in the humanities and social sciences' (p.4). Additionally, Rose comments on Libya's low general education ranking, 142 in the world out of 144, in the World Economic Forum's rankings (WEF, 2013) with low maths and science education scores (135th out of 144), the lowest score for staff training and 'perhaps most remarkably given the oil-wealth available for equipment procurement (and presumably a matter of political control), 134th for Internet access in schools' (Rose, 2015, p.3).

This period of study used to be four years but in 2006 this was shortened to three years (Hamdy, 2007). The final exams of the tenth and eleventh grades are similar to the transfer

years in seventh and eighth grades, while the twelfth-grade final exams are presented by The Ministry of Education (El-Hawat, 2003).

The revised system, to some extent, has support, especially from university lecturers who presume that the system gives students good background knowledge about their specialism before joining their universities, and this saves time, meaning they can both give the students more advanced lessons when they arrive at university and that this makes their jobs easier. In contrast, opponents argue that the new system restricts students' knowledge to just one discipline. For example, a student of English Language has only a little knowledge about geography and history. Moreover, many students claim that education at university is unnecessary and redundant because most of the content given in lectures has already been studied at secondary school

2.4.1.4 University level

Libya has 12 public universities and seven accredited private universities and, according to Rose (2015) the Libyan university student population is claimed to be approximately 300,000 with approximately 71,000 studying at one of the 107 higher technical institutes. University education is free and, says Rose (2015) postgraduate education is subsidised by up to 75%. Rose also suggests that the 'main route to achieving quick results in Higher Education reform is seen as sending students abroad' (2015, p.5) and he highlights the 2013 initiative to send 31,000 students abroad, including for a period 'intensive language study to compensate for the 10-year ban on language teaching, and the generally poor quality of language teaching available since the end of the ban' (Rose, 2015, p.5). He notes too that with very poor standards and facilities in Libyan universities the decision to spend so much money sending students overseas is not universally accepted or welcomed. The plan, of course, is that those such as me who, for my Masters and at the start of this PhD, benefitted from studying in the UK will return to Libya to help the university system improve but that will probably take a long time and it will require more resourcing in our universities. I will return to the resourcing issue later but will next explain the overall university structures and courses.

Since 1990, the Higher Education Ministry has aimed for an admission score to universities of 65% or more in arts, media, science, economy and law and 75% or more for engineering and medicine. Students who score lower than the required average are admitted to vocational institutes or higher training (El-Hawat, 2003). A 2010-2011 EC report states that a total of some 341,841 students were then studying in universities, with

90% of that number in the state universities and with women comprising 59% of the total university student population (European Commission, 2012). The period of study in all university disciplines lasts four years, except in medicine which takes between five and seven years. In 2012 all universities in Libya adopted the semester system. Research and activities including regular tests, field projects, assignments and final examinations are the usual means of measuring success or failure and the subject teacher is the only one who is responsible for students' evaluation and the preparation of exams (Libyan National Commission for Education, Culture and Science, 2001).

Research, in Libyan universities is, according to Rose (2015), 'officially integral to the university system' but 'not prominent' (p.5). A recent European Commission project, 'Exploring The Challenges For Higher Education In Libya' (Project UNIGOV, 2016), concluded the following.

> Direct consequences of the current conflict are the destruction of key infrastructures at the universities and the important decrease in class attendance, derived from increasing levels of insecurity and the high rates of displaced people. In addition, the conflict has favoured instability at a political level, making it impossible to develop long term strategic planning for the development of HES.
> Other important factors to be considered as relevant are the basic technologies and expertise, economic dependence on oil and dollar, the outdated legal framework for HE, and the lack of connections between HES and the needs of Libyan society (private and public sector and civil society). UNIGOV (2016, p.8)

It is against this background that my study occurred and I will now discuss some of the major characteristics of that system because these help to understand the English language teaching and learning context in Libya in terms of a) teachers' very different standards, knowledge, and teaching skills as I experienced those as a student and a teacher, and b) the environment of the classroom which involves the size of and type of class in terms of single-sex or mixed-sex and the effects of this on learning.

2.5 Characteristics of Libyan education

The Libyan curricula in basic, elementary and secondary schools has been characterized by randomness and a lack of consistent guidance for more than four decades. The reason behind this confusion can be attributed to the dictatorial regime which was the only power that authorised the Committee of Education. According to Latiwish (2003), political instructions from Gaddafi's office used to be sent to the Committee of Education to make changes to a curriculum with most of the changes in the social sciences. (Elabbar, 2011)
24

argued that while educational development is still a priority for the government, educational programmes in Libya continue to suffer from limited and changeable curricula. With regard to teaching staff, a shortage of Libyan qualified teachers, as Elabbar (2011) points out, is another important reason for the Libyan education system's failures. Poor development activities and a shortage of knowledge sources at secondary and university levels have contributed to the problem of teachers who often lack knowledge of their subjects, teaching skills, methodology, and educational psychology, all of which could probably enable them to work more professionally, wisely and successfully with their learners.

Class size is another important factor to consider when considering educational effectiveness in the context of Libya. For several decades, researchers such as Gary and Rosevear (1986), Franklin et al. (1991), Gunter and Gunter (1994), Hou (1994), Mateo and Fernandez (1996) have argued that large class sizes may negatively affect the learning process while reducing class size may increase student achievement and performance. Unfortunately, in the context of Libyan classes, most schools and universities have large size classes, particularly in the cities. Basic (elementary and preparatory), and secondary education, according to Elabbar (2011), struggle because of student numbers with classes often containing between 35 and 45 students and, in some cases, more than 45 students. University classes also suffer from even higher numbers of students, sometimes 150 students in a group. Such large classes for foreign language learning are often not effective because they do not offer enough time for each student to take part in the activities of the classroom and this can prevent practice from taking place and I shall develop this point later in the thesis.

With respect to classrooms and gender, classes in Libya can take two forms: mixed and single-sex, depending on the size of the area. For example, in cities, schools are almost always single-sex with boys and girls attending separate schools, although in some schools there are mixed-sex classrooms at the elementary level. In small towns and villages, the schools are mixed because of the low population. At universities, without exception, classes are mixed across the whole country. I attended mixed-sex classes up to the fourth grade of elementary level then sex single classes until I finished secondary school. The classes included between 35 and 40 students. At the university there were about 30 students in the group with more men than women, and so they tended to dominate the class. They usually took the biggest part of the activities, discussion, and answering questions and they laughed and commented negatively on women's performance although

they often had less proficiency in English than us. I believe that this affected women's learning and progression and I return to this in my research.

With respect to teaching methods in Libya, traditional teacher-centred methods are still used in education across almost all levels. In the class, the teacher is the 'controller' and the presenter although some teachers sometimes give students a role in activities. The main focus of Arabic education, particularly in Libya, as Elabbar (2011) describes it, is on rote learning and memorization rather than reasoning and independent and critical thinking. Teachers sometimes attribute using traditional methods to the big class sizes and to the long-established traditions of teaching method in schools. Most teachers in Libya use this traditional method in order to control the big classes and to be able to deliver lessons: it is easier for them to ask students to memorize the information rather than open a discussion which they think might lead to chaos. From my experience, this method has negative implications particularly for foreign language. Most students in my classes when I was a student had no opportunities to practise and perform in the target language. We used to sit and listen to the lecturers and when there were exercises and activities, men dominated the classes. I return to these issues in this thesis.

The Libyan educational system as explained above has been characterised by a lack of attention to educational development, and controlled by a dictatorial regime ignorant of Libyans' cultures and languages and Gaddafi's rule, as will be explained in the next section, prevented Libyan minorities from learning their mother-tongue in schools. I believe that Gaddafi's interference in educational affairs was the main factor behind the relative failure of foreign language teaching and learning in Libya.

2.6   Languages in Libya

Arabic is the main official language in the country although Agnaia (1996) describes Libya as a bi-lingual country with its people using Arabic and Berber and I note the use of Berber below. According to Metz (1987), there are three forms of Arabic which are distinguished from each other. First there is classical Arabic, the language of the Quran, and the language used by religious men and scientists. Second is modern standard Arabic, the language of the press, school textbooks and written communication and, finally, the regional colloquial dialects, the everyday language used by people. The different Libyan dialects, which are different from the standard language, can be classified into three forms: Tripolitania dialects spoken by the people living in western cities such as Tripoli and Misrata; Fezzan dialects spoken by people settling in southern areas as Sabha and Hun, and Cyrenaica

26

dialects, my own dialect, spoken by people living in different parts of the east including Benghazi and Derna (Metz,1987). The Cyrenaica dialects are the nearest to the standard Arabic meaning people are able to pronounce all the Arabic and English sounds as they should be. For example, the speakers of Cyrenaica dialects who learn English language can pronounce the sound /θ/ and /∂/ in Arabic and English words correctly whereas people who speak Tripolitania and Fezzan dialects struggle. They, for example, may pronounce the word thank as tank and three as tree so language learners who come from different regions in Libya are often more likely to be subjected to negative evaluations by their peers and teachers.

What is not often discussed is that there are other languages besides Arabic in Libya spoken by non-Arab minorities who pass on their languages orally to their children. These languages, as Baquish (2013) reports, originally existed in the history of languages in Libya. For example, the Tamazight language or Berber language is spoken by the Amazighen who live in the cities of Zuwara, Naloot, and Yefren (the western mountains of Libya known as Jabal Nafusa). The Tariqah language is spoken by the Touareg, living in southern towns such as Obari and Gatt. The Tbou language is spoken by the Tbou who also live in the south but in different areas as Qatroun village and Koffra city. Figure 2 below illustrates the ethnic groups of Libya.
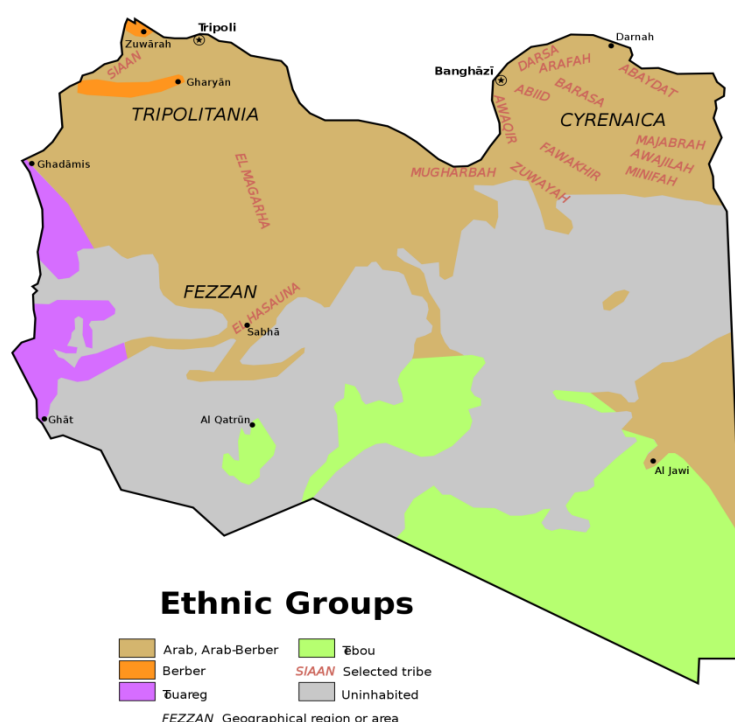
Figure 2. Languages Spoken in Libya, from:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Languages_of_Libya

Following the fall of Gaddafi, Libyan minorities, according to Baquish (2013), are demanding their rights, rights that were ignored for more than four decades. For example, the Amazighen have recently demanded that the Amazigh identity be included in Libya's new constitution, and their language 'Tamazight' made an official language alongside Arabic. The opportunity to learn Libyan minority languages in schools might help learning other foreign languages, although research on the positive transfer of language learning skills and bilingualism is complicated and understanding how bilingualism influences literacy acquisition needs to be 'through a variety of factors and circumstances' (Bialystok et al., 2005, p.589). However, at the least, the Committee of Education could prepare training courses for teachers that signalled and offered a more positive role for foreign language learning in Libya.

Against this language background, and as I shall indicate in the next section, there are political issues underlying the use and learning of English as an additional, often a second, language in Libya.

2.7   ELT in Libya: brief history

The context of English Language Teaching (ELT) is, of course, also influenced by the regime's policy. English Language teaching and learning had been through dramatic changes because of the unstable relationships between Gaddafi and the west. However, ELT in general started to shrink after the Kingdom era. At the start of the 1970s Gaddafi maintained relations with the Soviet Union since this was necessary for acquiring weapons. Gaddafi's growing interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) was an interlinked factor largely responsible for the sharp decline in Libya's relations with Western powers. Gaddafi's ambition was to have WMDs to equal Israel's weapons capability. However, the USA and Israel considered Gaddafi's ambition a threat against Israel's security and, in turn, a form of sabotage of the USA's interests in the Middle East. The poor diplomatic relations between Libya and the USA became worse when the American embassy in Tripoli was closed in 1979 and this gave rise to the 1980 'persona non grata' affirmation of four Libyan diplomats in the USA.   In February of the same year, further internal upheavals occurred between Libya and UK. In April 1984, opponents of Gaddafi demonstrated at the Libyan People's Bureau in London and shots were fired from the windows of the Bureau, shooting a police officer, Yvonne Fletcher, who was on duty (Higgins, 1985). The United Kingdom then severed all diplomatic relations with Libya and, after a couple of years, the event was a factor in British Prime Minister

Thatcher's decision to allow the American president Reagan to initiate the bombing of Libya in 1986 from American bases in the U.K.

During the 1980s, relations between Libya and the west were often characterised by conflict and mistrust on both sides. For example, in 1981 and 1989 Libyan aircrafts were shot down in the Gulf of Sidra by the USA air forces and Libya was linked to the 1986 bombing of a West Berlin nightclub and to the 1988 Pan Am Flight crash over Lockerbie for which Libya was held responsible and placed under strict international sanctions. Sawani (2009) notes that from the 1970s until the mid 1980s learning English was a compulsory curriculum component in Libyan schools and universities but things changed. The Gaddafi regime reaction to international condemnation, with respect to English Language learning and teaching, was to reduce the number of native language teachers by terminating their contracts and replacing them with Libyans and teachers of other Arabic nationalities. That, arguably, had a negative effect on the quality of English language learning.

By 1986, political relations had become worse and as a result of the international isolation of Libya the Higher Education Ministry enacted a ministerial decree in which the teaching and learning of English and French was banned under a Gaddafi imposed plan to eliminate foreign influence. The Minister of Education, Ahmad Ibrahim, stated that English and French languages were to be abolished from the Libyan curriculum at all levels, in schools and universities, and departments of foreign languages in all private and public institutions in the country were also to be closed. In addition, the Gaddafi regime banned the printing of all types of English language publications such as newspapers and magazines in English, and prohibited the import of English books (Kreiba, 2012). Teachers of English in schools had, states Sawani (2009), to teach other subjects and some who did so remained teachers of subjects such as such as history, mathematics and geography rather than returning to teaching English even when they could have done so.

 Ultimately, English language textbooks and also western musical instruments, as Al Sincky (2012) adds, were collected and burned by students who gathered in large groups in squares all over the country following an order from the Libyan authorities (Ibrahim, 2009; Kreiba, 2012). The regime's justification was that English was the language of 'obnoxious colonialism' (Al Sincky, 2012) and the aim of eliminating English and French and banning the printing of newspapers in English, as Kreiba (2012) notes, was an attempt to remove all Western influences from Libya and to convince Libyans that the western people were our enemies. The people's responses to that resolution ranged between support and opposition.

29

The supporters were often uneducated and/or those influenced by the theories and the thoughts of Gaddafi's Green Book, written by Gaddafi, in which he proclaimed European languages, particularly English, to be the languages of the enemy. Opponents, on the other hand, were mostly the better educated who saw the importance of foreign language learning to the progress and development of scientific, social, economic, and technological areas of society. The banning of English and other languages was an educational disaster resulting in generations of graduates who do not know foreign languages with the effects destructive for students in all disciplines, particularly those in medicine and engineering, because their curriculum at universities had been written in English. Moreover, it was destructive for language students who had to change their specialities entirely regardless of the number of years they had spent in the discipline of their foreign languages.

In the late 1990s, there was an increased dialogue and an improvement in diplomatic relations between Libya and the U.K. The Libyan stance became more conciliatory especially when Gaddafi took responsibility for the Lockerbie bombing. Business began to run between the two countries and, for example, Tony Blair, the then British Prime Minister, made some deals with Colonel Gaddafi including contracts in oil, construction and arms (Stearman, 2011). Because of these political improvements, English was reintroduced to the curriculum and was taught as a foreign language in both secondary schools and the universities. Baldinetti (2018) notes that Libya was re-integrated into the international community after the lifting of UN and US sanctions in 2003 and 2004 and hence the official stance on foreign languages and cultures started to change and 'Western countries (Great Britain in particular) … used the teaching of English as a tool to exercise their own soft power' (p.419). However, teachers were not motivated and they were concerned about teaching English because they lacked teaching skills: they had not been practising as language teachers for many years and so lacked teaching resources and methods, leaving them with low self-confidence, high anxiety and some fear. In the mid-2000s, the Ministry of Higher Education issued a resolution stating that English was to be taught to elementary school students for the first time in Gaddafi's rule. The resolution of reintroducing English was welcomed, especially by educated people and some parents who had not learned English before, because they understood the high value of learning English in an oil-rich country like Libya. Conversely, it was thought undesirable by some other parents who also had not learned English themselves because they thought that English would be an obstacle to their children's progress especially as they would not be able to help them. Teachers also found themselves in challenging situations as will be explained below. Reinforcing English Language Teaching and Learning was a positive step in

educating the new generations and developing the country but that step was not as it should have been. Teachers were unable to create a good atmosphere for learning and they used traditional methods which gave students negative attitudes towards English.

2.7.1 The English curriculum

Because the teaching and learning of English was banned for many years in schools and universities, the situation of teaching English in Libya had greatly deteriorated following the Kingdom era. According to Orafi and Borg (2009):

> … in the mid-1990s, the negative consequences of this situation were becoming evident (e.g. university graduates had a very limited grasp of English) and a key response by the Libyan government to this situation was the introduction, in 2000, of a new curriculum for English language teaching at secondary level (p.244-245).

The series 'English for Libya' formed the new English curriculum from 2000 until today and Orafi and Borg (2009) suggest that this is the embodied English curriculum with a focus on functional English. The course books, at different levels, are all organized in the same way. Each unit of the course book has a number of sections which focuses on one specific language aspect (a grammatical rule, new vocabulary, a pronunciation lesson, a functional use of language) in addition to the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) which are included in each unit. The advantage of this series is that every specialization, for example life sciences, has specific course books designed to serve the field's vocabulary with functional uses of language and the language skills students need to improve their language in their different disciplines. However, the grammatical lessons are the same across levels in all specializations. For example, the past simple tense is contained in the course books of the first level of all specializations (life sciences, basic science, social science, economic science, engineering, and arts). Although the series English for Libya requires the application of different teaching methods to teach the four language skills, all of which aim to teach English for communication, most teachers persist in using one method as I will explain below.

2.7.2 English language teaching methods in Libya

Many teachers, as noted earlier, had low self-confidence and suffered from anxiety when the new curriculum was introduced in 2000. Their major problem was how they were to teach spoken English because they could not, themselves, speak fluently. This situation may explain why the grammar-translation method became so popular (Kreiba, 2012). However, in the Libyan classroom, not all principles of the grammar-translation method are applied. For example, reading the written literature of the Target Language (TL) is

31

considered one of the main aims of the method (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) but most Libyan teachers have not paid much attention to this because the majority have not studied English Literature. The main focus of the method is on two elements of language learning and teaching. First is teaching grammatical rules (Larsen-Freeman, 2000) in a deductive way with examinations based on these grammar rules. Secondly, translating texts from the TL to the native language is considered important (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Teachers often teach the native language equivalents for all the words in the TL (in word lists) to enable students to translate the reading texts and these translations are usually the first question in exam papers. However, little attention has been given to reading skills although the textbooks were designed to develop these. Additionally, writing skills, another main goal in the Grammar-Translation method (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rodgers, 2001), are almost entirely ignored in most classes.

Importantly too, in the classroom the teacher is the authority and s/he decides whether an answer, which is mostly given in Arabic, is correct or not. Communication in the target language (TL) is not the goal of the teaching process and this principle is almost universally applied in Libyan classes. The communication medium is Arabic with almost all teachers' instructions and questions in the Arabic language. As noted earlier, listening, speaking and pronunciation lessons are also almost always ignored by teachers. During preparatory and secondary schools, my teachers were the only active people in the classroom while we sat watching and listening to them explaining grammar rules and translating words. No attention was given to the language skills of listening and speaking because the teachers could not speak English fluently. Over time this traditional method of teaching English has become the most common practice and many new teachers at schools and universities now still apply this method thinking it is the most suitable one in the Libyan context. Elabbar (2011) supports this view, suggesting that the Grammar Translation Method is still regarded as the best way to teach and learn English 'as it satisfies the existing culture of learning in Libya, such as the teacher-centred, silent classrooms' (p. 42). Importantly, too, Elabbar suggests that Libyan students 'are acclimatised to such methods of teaching and learning since they are used to learning the Quran and some famous poems by memorisation and low interaction' and so, she states, there is a widely held view that 'learning a language is best done following a behaviourist paradigm' (p.42).

2.8   Chapter summary

In the light of my research objectives, this Chapter has presented a brief historical overview of Libya and its educational context. It has summarised Libyan educational history from the Italian rule, to the Kingdom, to Gaddafi's regime and lastly to the current situation. It has also started to describe the Libyan educational system and its characteristics. Additionally, it has indicated the languages spoken by different ethnic groups in Libya, and finally it has described teaching English language in Libya and the methods used.

The purpose of presenting these details is to provide a picture of English Language learning and teaching in Libya and to describe the quality of teachers whose own English Language has often been neglected and who have been unable to attend language teaching courses that might have allowed them to develop their skills and improve their performance in the classroom. Libyan teachers, from my experience as a language learner and now as a language teacher myself, do not only lack the knowledge of teaching methods and skills, they also lack knowledge and understanding of the importance of the psychological side of education in general and FLL specifically. The affective domain, as I observed in classrooms, in terms of creating a comfortable atmosphere, raising self-confidence, building good relationships and motivating learners to overcome negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, jealousy, and frustration, is still not considered by many FL teachers in Libya. For this reason, I wanted to study emotions, particularly anxiety, in English Language teaching and learning in the Libyan context and to look at its sources and consequences for Libyan English language learners.

Chapter 3   Emotions: What are they?

3.1   Introduction

It is impossible to imagine our life without emotions. Following Nussbaum (2001), emotions colour every aspect of our everyday lives - the love of our beloved spouse and children, the joy of sitting at the seaside beach on the golden warm sand, the happiness because of success after hard work, the anxiety of a new job interview, the grief of losing a loved one, the fear of violence and wars, and the shame of our sins. All different kinds of emotions, positive and negative, add flavour and meaning to our life. It is difficult to imagine our life without emotions and feelings because, without emotions, everyday life and events would be merely facts. Thus, emotions are important and play a significant role in our life whatever our age, sex, gender, religion, or nationality. People may experience similar or different emotions in similar situations but emotions are not just something we feel. Emotions are, more than that, something powerful which can colour or darken our world depending on what we feel (Wollheim, 1999). We might see the beauty and the shine of the world around us when we fall in love. Similarly, we might see the darkness covering our lives when we are depressed or sad.

In the literature of the social sciences, the topic of emotions has been widely and deeply discussed in different disciplines and from different viewpoints because of its close correlations with different disciplines and its impact on many aspects inside oneself, and among people and society and cultures. One of the most important research studies that considered the roles of emotions was conducted by Hwang and Matsumoto (2014). These researchers classify the role of emotions into three categories: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and social and cultural functions. The intrapersonal, as Tooby and Cosmides (2008) explain, refers to the role of emotions within each person that helps us to survive rapid information-processing systems that, in turn, help us respond immediately to events with minimal conscious awareness. Emotions push us to defend, attack, escape, approach, reject and care for others without, necessarily, deep thinking. Emotions can also interfere with cognition, for example when we sit and take time to think deeply before taking decisions as Gendolla (2000) indicates. In many cases, our decisions are made based on whether we are, for example, happy, angry, sad, bored or excited. When we make a decision, we consider and identify the available alternatives, and then choose the one that best fits our values, goals, lifestyle, and so on, and the one that has the highest possibility of success or effectiveness (Harris, 2012). Paulus and Yu (2012) argue that emotions have a profound

influence on the choices we make. For example, negative emotions in particular, such as anger and anxiety, possibly make some people feel trapped, as if they do not have very many alternatives. According to Zafirides (2012), bad decisions are more likely to be made when we experience negative emotions whereas positive decisions are more likely to be made when a person is feeling content, happy and secure. The work of the neurobiologist Antonio Damasio (1994), referred to in the first Chapter, suggests the relationship between emotions and decision making is extremely close. He showed that his patients, who had damage in the part of the brain where emotions are generated, seemed to be functioning normally and could describe what they should be doing in logical terms, yet they were not able to make even simple decisions such as deciding what they would prefer to eat.

Part of the intrapersonal role of emotions is their influence on our thoughts. Forgas (2008) states that emotions have influence on cognition, and some thinkers as Matsumoto et al. (2006) have claimed that emotions disturb human thinking, particularly when they are intensive and so they can be an impediment to rational, logical thought. Others, notably Damasio (1994) and Nussbaum (2001), have argued that emotion is a fundamental and adaptive component of cognition which can broaden and expand rational thought. Barajas (2014) agrees that positive emotions, such as happiness and joy, can promote thinking and that negative emotions can inhibit cognition. According to Clore and Huntsinger (2007), emotions and moods have impacts on the content and the style of thought and, on affective reactions, and they state:

> … affect serves as information about the value of whatever comes to mind. Thus, when a person makes evaluative judgments or engages in a task, positive affect can enhance evaluations and empower potential responses. Rather than affect itself, the information conveyed by affect is crucial. Clore and Huntsinger (2007, p.393).

The interpersonal function of emotions, according to Hwang and Matsumoto (2014), refers to the role of emotions between individuals and others. We frequently express our feelings and emotions when communicating with others, both verbally through spoken words and non-verbally through body movements, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice, and our emotions are often judged by others. Generally, people around the world, as Ekman (2003), Keltner (2003) and Kulkarni et al. (2009) indicate, use similar body movements and facial expressions to convey their own states of emotions and moods to others in order to give them information about their feelings and intentions. Expressed emotions can also show the nature of the relationships among people interacting with each other.

Social and cultural functions of emotions, as Hwang and Matsumoto (2014) refer to them, concern the role that emotions play in the preservation of the social order within a society. Each person has a different background but s/he is a member of a group (usually more than one group) in a society, and every society has its own norms, values, traditions, ideas, and customs. People in every society usually coordinate together systematically to maintain the organization of their society and if there were not organised relationships and coordination among people then social chaos could potentially occur. In this respect, one function of culture is to shape the way we experience, express, manage, modify, perceive, and regulate our emotions according to culture's norms and values (Richeson and Boyd, 2005). The management of our emotions can be influenced by our cultural display rules that are acquired from childhood and which specify the management, regulation, and modification of our emotional expressions according to our social and cultural circumstances (Friesen, 1972). In the Libyan culture, for example, a bride does not laugh or show happiness during her wedding party because, if she does, she would give the impression that she is immature. But in the UK a bride who did not show her happiness would probably be regarded as strange.

To sum up, it is important to note that emotion is important for our survival, wellbeing, and flourishing. However, the problem of the complexity of emotions means that people interested in emotion have described it on various levels and from a number of different perspectives including, for example, physiological, biological, psychological, philosophical, and sociological. In this thesis, and in my research, the focus of discussion will be on the psychological and philosophical perspectives. This certainly does not signify that other perspectives are less important, it only means discussing those in any depth is beyond the scope of this thesis. In the next section, I will illustrate the concept of emotion from different perspectives and consider their relationship to cognition.

3.2   What is an emotion? Theoretical approach

After decades of neglect, research on affect generally, and emotions particularly, and their relation to cognition, began about thirty years ago in psychology claimed Forgas in 2008. One reason for the neglect of studying affect and emotions in psychology, as Forgas suggests:

> … may be a long-dominant view in Western thought, held since Plato's time, that affect is a dangerous, invasive force that subverts rational thinking, an idea that has recurred in many theories throughout the ages … Forgas (2008, p.94).

Yet until very recently, the meaning of 'emotion' and 'affect' were not clear and even today the term 'emotion' is still used very frequently and interchangeably with other terms such as affect and mood as many philosophers and researchers point out (Deigh, 2009; Cowie et al., 2011). Scherer (2005) adds that the concept of 'emotion' presents a particularly difficult problem because researchers, scientists, and lay-people have different answers to the question: 'What is an emotion?' and this can be attributed to differences of experiences of feelings, personalities, cultures, and languages. Fortunately, progress is now being made in drawing some lines of demarcation. During the last several decades, researchers in different areas as social cognition, neuroanatomy, and psychophysiology have recognized that affect is often a useful and even crucial component of cognition and behaviour (Damasio, 1994; Forgas, 2008) and that it has significant implications for learning and teaching. In Foreign Language Teaching and Learning, students who experience negative emotions such as fear or anxiety may be less active and less successful than peers who experience positive emotions (Arnold, 2011). For example, when a student feels high anxiety, her cognition may work more slowly than the normal rate.

In the neurobiology literature, the process of emotion has been explored by scientists such as Damasio (1994) and LeDoux (2012) who have explained the mechanisms of the brain and how it receives information and interprets it with emotions. Such researchers have also clarified what happens in our body when we feel some emotions. However, we still need to understand why we are influenced by what our brains receive as stimuli, and what is so important that makes our brain and body react to that stimulus. The answers to these questions, I think, can be helped by philosophers who are interested in emotion. In philosophy, the previous questions might possibly be interpreted as: What creates an emotion?, Why are we moved to experience emotion?, and 'What are the necessary and sufficient conditions of an emotion?'. For my study, these questions help me on the journey towards a better understanding of the causes of anxiety experienced by English Language students, their responses to anxiety, and the contexts in which they feel anxious.

Typically, emotions occur when we confront or perceive either a positive or negative, actual or imaginary, perceived change in our present situation. This important perceived change works like an alarm that stimulates emotions and signals that something requires attention (Stearns and Stearns 1988; LeDoux, 2012). It is also important to note the crucial role of familiarity, as well as change, in generating emotions (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001). In some cases, despair and frustration are caused by a familiar background and situation or event and change seems absent. For example, the death of a person to whom one had been close

might continue to make that person sad even after a long period of time, perhaps experiencing intense emotions of sadness and sometimes crying for a long time after the event when remembering or reminded of the person who has died. According to Buchanan (2007), the retrieval of emotional memories is often combined with greater accuracy and/or vividness than events that lacked emotions. Buchanan (2007) reviews the literature addressing the influences of emotion on retrieval, focusing on the cognitive and neurological mechanisms and concludes the following.

> The amygdala, in combination with the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, plays an important role in the retrieval of memories for emotional events. The neural regions necessary for online emotional processing also influence emotional memory retrieval, perhaps through the re-experience of emotion during the retrieval process (Buchanan, 2007, p.761).

Emotions are greatly sensitive to personal circumstances, and this is what Ben-Ze'ev (2001) refers to as the 'personality of emotions'. The degree of a change's significance is personal because it is determined by the subject, the person who experiences the emotion. Usually the change happens in the person's situation or, in some cases, the change may be associated with people close to the person and who influence the person's environment. In the context of this study, a teacher could influence a person who is a learner, and a teacher could change that learner's situation. If a person perceives the change as a significant concern then intensive emotions are expected to be generated. Sometimes we blame others about producing certain emotions in some certain situations because we decide the emotions generated by others are inappropriate. This might occur because, as Nussbaum (2001) points out, we do not see the world from the point of view of others' scheme goals and projects. So, if one of my students is very upset or angry because s/he receives what she considers a low grade from me and I think it is a good grade for that work, I might not regard the upset or anger as appropriate or I might, at least, not understand the emotions of that student. According to de Rivera (1989) evaluating other's emotions is like evaluating other's actions. The similarity is that both evaluations depend on our personal and cultural contexts.

Similarly, as emotions vary among people, they also differ across cultures (Mesquita et al., 1997). I have already noted how a bride in Libya is expected not to express and show certain emotions such as happiness. Peterson (2006) emphasized the important role of culture and considers it a fundamental component of an emotion using the work of Gordon (1981) and Thoits (1990) in which they described the four components of emotional experience as: (a) bodily sensations, (b) expressive gestures, (c) social situations or

38

relationship, and (d) the emotion culture of a society. Emotions, as noted, occur when a change in the present situation is evaluated as important and relevant to a person's personal concern and the description of typical emotional concern requires some consideration. First of all, there is comparative concern, in which the person compares his/her present situation against a certain background framework (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001). This framework involves comparing a novel situation to the ideal, 'ought to be', or imaginary alternative. Each person has limited flexible baselines through which s/he expresses his/her own values and attitudes and these baselines depend on some personal, biological, social, and contextual features. The limitations of the baselines are derived from our limited ability to change our values and beliefs (Ben-Ze'ev in Goldie, 2000). My student gets upset or angry at receiving what she sees as a bad grade and what I see as a good grade, because she had worked for twice as many hours as normal but I did not know that.

Social comparison also plays an important role in describing typical emotional concern. Smith (2000) argues that social comparisons are responsible for producing familiar and subtle emotions according to social comparison theory and research. The comparisons involve a person similar on attributes related to the comparison and on aspects of comparison that are significant and relevant to the self (Tesser, 1991). People who are involved in this process are important for our well-being and flourishing because they constitute our environment. People with more social relationships tend to be physically and mentally healthier than others with fewer relationships, and they may be more positively emotional. Negatively, social comparison may be a source of personal instability and self-esteem and envy and jealousy may depend on a person's personal and contextual circumstances. Group membership, in addition, can influence emotional responses. The members of the same group can share norms about something. Our emotional intensity may be influenced by the size of the group and the extent of social contacts with members of a group and events around people may result in different emotions such as cooperation, conformity, competition, envy or jealousy (Keltner and Haidt, 1999). So, my student who had worked for twice as many hours as normal and got a B compares herself to her friend who had worked only half the time and had got an A, and then might feel upset, angry, or jealous at receiving what s/he sees as a bad grade, especially in comparison to her friend who received an A grade.

Understanding emotions, as indicated above, will involve understanding aspects of situations such the typical cause and the typical emotional concern, namely, a typical emotional object, which refers either to the person who experiences the emotions or to

others. Sometimes the object is more than one person, for example, when we feel compassion for a group of people. Emotions might be also directed to fictitious or dead objects and Nussbaum (2001) illustrates the concern of emotional objects in detail. She emphasizes that emotions have an object: emotions are always about someone or something and the object is an intentional object with 'aboutness', as Gordon (1974) and Nussbaum (2001) point out. This means that it is not merely that our emotions are directed to someone or something, but that they can be more internal. When we have an emotion towards a person, we are not just pointing to the object, but we need to see, to communicate with the object in our own ways. Our ways of seeing an object are not the only ways embodied by our emotions; beliefs are also involved as Scherer (1999) proposes in his 'appraisal theory'. The importance of beliefs lies in their power to create a plausible cause which arouses the emotion (Frijda et al. 2000). Getting angry must have sets of beliefs such as that some significant damage has occurred either to the person or to someone close to that person, perhaps done by someone willingly. A person's beliefs underlying emotions do not require truthfulness for beliefs, they can be unfounded. However, people sometimes change the beliefs that trigger an emotion, but their emotion continues. My hypothetical student is angry with me because she thinks that I was not fair when I gave her a B grade although in herself she believes that my evaluation was fair.

Since emotions are presented with respect to an object, this object must have some importance or value to the subject. My hypothetical student with what she regards as a disappointingly low grade had placed a high value, an importance, on gaining a higher grade. The extent of the value perceived in the object typically generates the intensity of the experienced emotion (Griffiths, 2013). In grief, for example, people probably do not experience the same degree of grief when they read about a stranger who died in a car accident as the grief of losing one of their own parents. The importance of the two persons is not equal for the reason that we usually judge a parent as a valuable person and as important for our own well-being. Usually a parent plays an important role in our personal life and so this role seems to make reference to our own flourishing. Thus, emotions in general involve judgments about significant people or things that are parts of the person's own world (Nussbaum, 2001). For example, students I teach who express anxiety about speaking in English may regard the ability to talk in English as salient to their flourishing, perhaps with respect to success in gaining a good job. For others, anxiety might result from their judgement that they are weaker than their peers. For others, there may be no anxiety because they do not hold speaking in English to be of importance for them.

After introducing emotions and its theoretical approach, I shall now move to a discussion of what is and what is not an emotion because, as noted earlier in this Chapter, the word emotion can mean different things to different people and is often used interchangeably with mood or states.

3.3   Definitions of emotion

Linking to ideas in the previous section, Scherer defines emotion as:

> … an episode of interrelated, synchronized changes in the states of all or most of the five organismic subsystems in response to the evaluation of an external or internal stimulus event as relevant to major concerns of the organism (Scherer, 2005, p.697).

More broadly, Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2007) define emotions as 'complex psychological states that serve many functions in human behaviour and relationships' (p.344), such as marriage and friendship. The psychologist and educator Cherry, in her essay, 'Emotions and types of emotional responses' uses Hockenbury and Hockenbury's (2007, p.117) definition of emotion as 'a complex psychological state that involves three distinct components: a subjective experience, a physiological response, and a behavioral or expressive response'. Nussbaum (2001), on the other hand, describes intense emotional experiences as 'geographical upheavals' and her description seems compatible with Ben-Ze'ev's (2001) description of emotions as 'significant changes' in our current situation. The mainstream definition of emotion, as Heffner (2014) refers to it, is a feeling state involving thoughts, physiological changes, and behaviour. However, the question 'what comes first?' has been debated for thousands of years. The James-Lange Theory was the first that attempted to explain the process of emotion. That theory, developed in 1890, basically suggests that human bodies produce automatic physiological reactions to any arousal. When an event occurs, we notice reactions that are manifested as physiological arousal including increased respiration, increased heart rate, or sweaty hands, and then the role of cognition is to interpret this arousal. So, our emotional reaction depends upon how we interpret those physical reactions. Thus, the theory suggests that emotion follows cognition, which itself follows the physiological responses to a stimulus and a different emotion is triggered by each physiological reaction. Although noting that the theory has recently re-emerged in the psychological constructionist movement of affective science, the problem with the James-Lange theory, according to Scarantino and de Sousa (2018), was that it failed to fully explain motivation, differentiation and intentionality. Additionally it did not provide an adequate explanation of the differences between emotions, and emotions are not, as that theory suggests, only 'feelings'. Another important
41

common theory about emotion is known as Cannon's theory, developed in 1924 as a response to what Cannon regarded as problems with the James-Lange theory. Another important common theory about emotion is known as Cannon's theory, developed in 1924 as a response to the James-Lange theory. That theory suggests that our physiological responses prepare us just for a general fight-or-flight response. According to the theory, our reactions have nothing to do with emotions. Our responses are unrelated to our emotions because each physiological change may give rise to a variety of emotional states but might not involve our emotions at all because these come from a separate process of perception. Since emotion is a complex psychological state that may involve changes in feeling, thoughts, physiology of the body, and behaviour, as theorists describe it, it is important to discuss the elements of an emotion in order to draw a clear picture and distinguish it from moods and states and here I shall follow, mainly, Nussbaum's perspective with additional insights from Ben-Ze'ev and others.

3.4   The basic components of an emotion

Philosophers such as Nussbaum (2001) and Ellsworth and Scherer (2003) state that emotions are a matter of evaluation, and we evaluate people, things, and actions from the view point of our own scheme of goal and projects. Beside evaluation, there are other basic components which express a conceptual division of the elements of this experience and, for Ben-Ze'ev (2001) and Chakraborty and Konar (2009), these include intentionality and feeling.

3.4.1 Intentionality and feeling

Intentionality involves cognition, evaluation and motivation and focuses on the relationship between a subject and an object, while feeling conveys the person's state of mind. This section comprises four related parts on the constituents of emotions. Initially, I outline the cognitive element; secondly, I discuss the evaluation component of emotions and follow that by a third section on the motivation. The fourth section focuses on feeling which is distinguished from intentionality.

3.4.1.1 Cognition

Cognition refers to processes such as thinking, memory, attention, language, problem solving, and planning (Pessoa, 2008). According to Damasio (1994), many cognitive processes are thought to involve complicated functions that are, probably, uniquely human. Cognition plays a major role in arousing emotions and an emotional attitude toward

something cannot be generated without some information about it as Pessoa (2008) believes, because it supplies us with the necessary information about the situation or the object. Similarly, and as already noted, Nussbaum (2001) argues that emotions always involve thought of an object. In this sense, she explains that 'by cognition I mean nothing more than concerned with receiving and processing information' (p.23). So, the function of the cognition component is to describe the object. For example, the fear of snakes requires some knowledge about the risk of poisonous harmful snakes. In many cases the cognitive component is responsible for generating emotions. Your belief that your friend lies about you may be the reason you are angry with him/her (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001). My student anger at what she sees as a low grade may result from her cognition, her thinking about, how hard she worked in comparison with her friend who received a higher grade.

The complex relation between cognition and features of emotions can distort the cognitive content of the emotion (Ben-Ze'ev, 1997). Listening only to your close friend's point of view in a quarrel can generate a particular emotion which may alter if you listen to the two parts of the quarrel more neutrally. The compatibility of both partiality and closeness, in addition, increase the distortion of the cognitive aspect in emotions. Looking at an object from a short distance may not give you the whole picture of it, all we see is a warped object. My hypothetical student may become jealous of her classmate who gets an A grade because she is close to her and knows that she worked only half the time she did. So, we need distance to perceive all the aspects encompassed in order to see the whole form of the object. Nonetheless, long distance can be contradicted by an intimate perspective typical of emotions. An intensive emotion toward someone or something also may influence the functions of our cognitive faculties so they no longer work normally, and this appears clearly in cases of love and anger. Perhaps my hypothetical student became angry with her grade when she received it but, later, considered her work in comparison to her friend's work that received an A grade and then realised her own work was not good enough for an A and so stopped being angry. So, partiality, closeness and intensity of feeling may function as impediments to sufficient knowledge of our emotional context (Larsen and Diener, 1987; Bechara et al., 1997; Kihlstrom et al., 2000; Ben-Ze'ev, 2001).

Identifying the focus of concern is included in the awareness of the nature of our emotions as Chakraborty and Konar (2009) indicate. However, in anger for example, sometimes it is meaningless to become angry with someone without being aware of the causes that stimulate this emotion. I possibly become angry with myself without identifying a main concern but because of many trivial problems coming together. But the causes of our

43

emotions are more complicated than this, and often the real causes may be concealed by other reasons or evaluations. Peter is angry with his mother for insulting him, but in fact he is really angry with her for being uncaring about him. And my student is possibly angry with me not because she got a B grade but because she feels I favour the student who got an A grade. Although generating emotions depends on our cognition, which involves understanding, memorizing, solving problems and so on, it also requires evaluating situations that we experience. In the next section, I shall explain the component of evaluation, its types, functions, and its relation to other intentional elements such as cognition and motivation.

3.4.1.2 Evaluation

Evaluation is extremely significant in emotions. Every emotion involves a particular evaluation (Hockenbury and Hockenbury, 2007; Pessoa, 2008; Chakraborty and Konar, 2009). Love, admiration, and pride, for example, indicate positive evaluations, whereas anger, sadness, fear, and hate refer to negative evaluations of someone or something. The evaluative component also works to distinguish emotional states from non-emotional states. Nussbaum (2001) emphasises the important role of evaluations in emotions, stating that 'if the emotion is not there we are entitled to say that the judgements themselves are not fully or really there' (p.44). For Nussbaum, emotion is a matter of evaluation and how much we regard the importance of people and things to our well-being and flourishing.

On the other hand, some theorists commonly presume that our attitudes and judgments replicate information about the object of judgment. Yet our evaluations reflect information from our own affective responses. In social situations, for instance, the main element in our evaluation is often the feelings that they elicit inside us (Clore and Huntsinge, 2007). Ben-Ze'ev (2001) assumes that making judgements about people or different situations might partly involve the emotions. Having certain emotions depends on our beliefs and the way we evaluate the object and the value of the object to us. Ben-Ze'ev (2001) distinguishes between two main types of evaluations, namely, schematic and deliberative evaluations and he explains:

> Deliberative evaluations are present, for example, when we ruminate about a certain event and as result begin to feel angry. An example of a schematic evaluation is love at first sight. Deliberative evaluations typically involve slow and conscious processes, which are largely under voluntary control ... Schematic evaluations involve spontaneous responses depending on a more tacit and elementary evaluative system. Schematic activity is typically fast, automatic and with little awareness. It is based upon readymade structures or schemes of appraisal which have already been set during evaluation and personal

44

development. In this sense, history is embodied in these structures. Since the evaluative patterns are part of our psychological constitution, we do not need time to create them; we just need the right circumstance to activate them. Schematic activity largely occurs outside of focal awareness, can occur using minimal attentional resources, and is not wholly dependent on verbal in information. Ben-Ze'ev (2001, p. 57-58)

According to Ben-Ze'ev (2001), schematic evaluations may conflict with the deliberative in some emotions, such as in fear. My student might immediately feel upset when receiving a B grade as a result of her schematic evaluation but later, when thinking more deliberatively, she possibly feels less upset because she realises that her work was not good enough to get an A grade.

One important consideration here is that the schematic nature of emotional evaluation provides us with an ability to consider emotions as a result of the whole process of ongoing interaction rather than as an isolated result of cognitive interference. Deliberative evaluations, on the other hand, are complex and preparatory process that precede the production of emotions. Thinking of failure, for example, precedes anxiety or fear. When my student thinks that she is going to fail in a speaking exam, she could feel anxiety or fear before being in the classroom. An interesting question asked by Ben-Ze'ev (2001) is whether schematic evaluations are included in all emotions or if there are some emotions that result only from deliberative evaluations. The answer to this question tends to say that schematic evaluations are mainly responsible for the production of most emotions, so our emotions are typically generated very quickly and do not require a lengthy process of deliberation. However, this does not erase the role of deliberative evaluation in the generation of emotions. We can conclude that the type of judgement depends on the situation, the importance of the occurrence to us, and the importance of what has happened. Nussbaum (2001) provides an example illustrating the way we evaluate changes in our situations by telling the story of the death of her mother. She explains that when she was told that her mother was dead; she immediately grieved and could not at first logically embrace the proposition. Nussbaum (2001) suggests she suspended the judgement that her mother was dead but then 'assented' to the fact of her death. In this case, immediately becoming overwhelmed by painful grief temporally precedes other emotions. Importantly, too, Ben-Ze'ev emphasises that deliberative evaluations can be a result of many different emotions such as fear because of thinking of failure, jealousy when a student think about her close friend's high grades or if that friend is a teacher's favourite, or feeling anxiety because of thinking of the negative evaluation of the teacher.

My student's B grade, that she evaluated as a low grade, will lead her to act or respond to that evaluation either positively, perhaps by feeling appropriate anxiety and so studying harder and giving more time to the subject (see the next Chapter), or negatively, perhaps by feeling upset and paying less time to the subject. This reaction is the followed component after evaluation as will be discussed in the next section.

3.4.1.3 Motivation

Motivation, according to Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2007), refers to 'the forces acting on or within an organism to initiate and direct behaviour' (p.318). Broussard and Garrison (2004) define motivation as 'the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something' (p.106). The meaning of motivation here basically refers to the desire and willingness to sustain or change circumstances in a situation and, frequently, the term 'motivation' is used to describe why a person does something (Cherry, 2010).

Huitt (2011) states that motivation is an internal state or condition that serves to activate or energize behaviour and give it direction. Motivation, according to Huitt, can also be described as a need, desire, or want. Motivation can result in actual behaviour or action in various ways and Ben-Ze'ev (2001) explains three categories of desires that relate to motivation. First is a full-fledged desire which is manifested in actual behaviour such as in love, in which a person expresses his/her full-fledged desire of certain activities such as hugging and caressing. Of course, it is not necessary that all of these activities are exhibited all the time, but the total absence of all of these behaviours at all times may imply that love does not exist. Although every emotion has its own characteristics, which distinguish it from other emotions, we cannot say that each emotion has a number of restricted behaviours that are not found in other emotions. For example, a hug is not behaviour that comes only from love; it may come from compassion or fear as well, when people may hug someone they trust if they feel that person or themselves to be in danger or need of care.

Second, a desire or want will not necessarily manifest itself in actual observable behaviour because of external restrictions as in anger cases. In some cases of anger people may, metaphorically speaking, be boiling inside but not show their anger in behaviour because environmental constraints, such as fear of losing their jobs or hurting themselves or others, prevent them from behaving angrily. Importantly, the absence of emotional behaviour does not necessarily entail the absence of motivational components. We can also say that our actual behaviour depends on external constraints such as cultural norms, religious rules,

beliefs, social norms or other personal considerations. My student may not have shown her anger to me because of the cultural norms and school regulations. Third, a mere wish, such as in hope, is also a desire which may not be expressed in actual behaviour. It remains only a wish. My student might desire to have followed my instructions more clearly and so been in a position to get a better grade but she is not able to go back now and her grade remains.

Behaviour is a very important component of motivation and it reflects and expresses our emotions. Many types of emotions, such as love, anger, happiness, excitement and fear, typically appear in our behaviour. Premeditated murder, for example, is a behaviour that may reflect the emotion of anger, hate or fear of the victim. Other emotions, such as hope, anxiety, and envy, by contrast, sometimes may not manifest in behaviour and only appear as an inner desire, similar to non-intense or other emotions. Sometimes, we can tell others when we are, say, anxious or fearful. Therefore, motivation is closely attached to emotional processes, and vice versa. People can be overwhelmingly motivated to experience a certain emotion, like feeling proud. In turn, the experience of an emotion, such as fear or anger, can motivate us to take action (Deci et al., 1999; Gredler et al., 2004; Hockenbury and Hockenbury, 2007; Guay et al., 2010). My student is angry and motivated and shows it through her behaviour or she does not show it but is still motivated to do something, such as neglecting her homework.

As I have illustrated above, intentional components (cognition, evaluation, and motivation) are not the only constituents of emotions. When my student is angry or upset, she does not only think, understand, evaluate and respond to the stimulus, she experiences feelings alongside intentionality which I will discuss below.

3.4.2 Feelings

As I noted, emotions and feelings are frequently used interchangeably in everyday language. People often talk about emotions as feelings: 'I feel happy', 'She feels joy' and so on. According to Prinz (2005), emotions and feelings have been always a point of contention among psychologists and even philosophers. Prinz (2005) claims that it is popular in philosophy to regard emotions and feelings as different and philosophers, from the very first to the present day, have often made a distinction between emotions and feelings while, to some degree, accepting the common-sense view that emotions are felt. Some philosophers, such as Pitcher (1965), Solomon (2004), and Nussbaum (2001) for example, would insist on feelings being part of an emotion. In fact, the word feeling is slippery itself because it can have more than one meaning. Ben-Ze'ev (2001) indicates that

the term feeling can be interpreted as an 'awareness of tactile qualities, bodily sensations, emotions, moods, awareness in general, and so forth' (p.64). He considers feeling a basic component in emotions. He adds that feelings occur clearly in emotions rather than in other mental states, but he also emphasises that equating the two is incorrect for the reason that emotions encompass both feeling and intentional components. Pitcher (1965), by contrast, argues that some emotions, like hope and envy, are almost always experienced without any feeling sensations. Chakraborty and Konar (2009) state that '… feeling in an emotional system, has several meanings, it includes bodily sensation, awareness of tactile quality, moods and in general awareness' (p.6). Goldie indicates that:

> … emotions involve two kinds of feeling … sometimes run together in our ordinary way of speaking of emotional experience, as for example when we say that I felt very afraid. First, there is what I will call bodily feeling, the feeling from the inside of the condition of one's body as being a certain way or as undergoing certain changes. For example, in fear I feel the hairs go up on the back of my neck. Secondly, there is what I will call feeling towards, the feeling one has towards the object of one's emotion. For example, in fear I feel the dangerousness of the lion. Goldie (2000, p.235)

Nussbaum (2001) similarly distinguishes between two kinds of feelings but she does so differently from Goldie. She talks of feelings with a rich intentional content, as in feelings of unhappy love or feelings of helplessness from losing an important person from your life. This kind of feeling, according to Nussbaum (2001), may be considered as part of some emotions. Secondly, she describes feelings without rich intentionality or cognitive content, namely feelings of bodily sensations or psychological responses such as feelings of fatigue, trembling, tension, feeling short of breath, and she says these may or may not accompany emotions such as fear, love or grief. In cases of anxiety, for example, tension frequently occurs, but not necessarily in every situation does the same person feel anxiety. A student anxious about talking in English may be completely without anxiety with a different teacher or in a different group or in a different language or even with the same teacher but in a different activity. Nussbaum seems unwilling to always attach feelings to the definition of emotions because, on her account, feelings may be absent in some emotions.

Intentionality and feeling in typical mental states work together, but one of them plays the central role. In hunger, thirst, and painful and affective disorders, for instance, the dominant dimension may be feeling while in memory, thinking, and perception then intentionality will likely play the main role. Compared with other mental states, the two basic dimensions (intentionality and feeling) are important in the constituency of emotions. Explaining or even understanding how both dimensions function together is extremely complex, but there is an agreement that both dimensions, to a certain degree, depend on

48

each other. The typical relation between them is not that of causality, but that of complementing each other. When one dimension is major, the second often recedes to become hardly noticeable. When my student thinks of failure in the exam, she possibly feels anxiety, cannot focus on the test, and finds difficulty recalling information, because of the physiological changes that occur in the body such as a headache, trembling, increased heart beats, and so on. However, our emotions that we experience have many characteristics that distinguish them from moods and other mental states as I will discuss below.

3.5   Characteristics of emotions

I have declared above that the components of emotions are those which distinguish emotions from other mental states. In this section, I also state that philosophers such as Nussbaum (2001), Solomon (2004), and Pavlenko (2006) agree that emotions have some characteristics as I have attempted to depict them in this Figure 3.
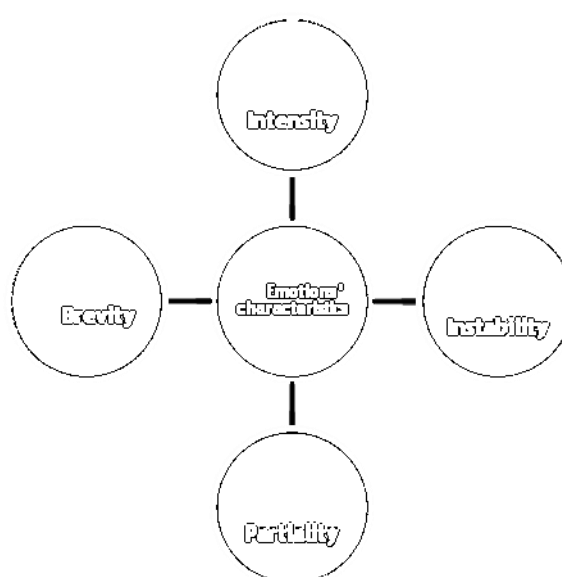
Figure 3. Characteristics of Emotions

3.5.1 Intensity

Intensity of emotion, as Schrauf and Durazo-Arvizu (2006) argue, is the main feature of emotion and it 'usually refers to the amount of arousal associated with a particular emotion' (Pavlenko, 2006, p. 290). Nussbaum (2001) refers to intensity of emotion as urgency and heat with Brehm (1999) and Russell (2003) suggesting that intensity is the

most critical feature marking out ways in which emotional experiences vary. Extremely intense emotions, such as fear and anxiety, can result in total disability in our normal functions often resulting in affective disorders like panic and phobia (Gross and John, 2003; Taylor and Liberzon, 2007; Silvers et al., 2014). However, drawing precise borderlines of emotional intensity is impossible although we can say that a low intensity of emotions usually distinguishes emotional states from non-emotional states. Diener et al. (1985) have claimed that gender is an important variable with regard to intensity, demonstrating in their research that women experience higher intensities of emotion than men and suggesting this is due to a combination of biological causes, cultural expectations, and current life experiences. Most of my women students, for example, say they usually experience a higher intensity of test anxiety than the men and some of them say they cry after a short time looking at the exam papers. Although these women express their anxiety in crying, they do not persist in crying for a long time, and that characterises the instability of emotions as I will explain below.

3.5.2 Instability

Instability is another characteristic of emotions. The instability of the mental system refers to a transition of our current state to a novel state when a significant change is appraised in our situation. Emotions are unstable states that imply some agitation (Ortony et al., 1988; Solomon, 2004). They are occasional and do not last for a long time (Solomon, 2004; Hockenbury and Hockenbury, 2007). Instability of the mental system is associated with the intensity of emotions. Most of my students seem relaxed while they sit and listen to a lecture but I have noticed that they seem to feel high anxiety when they are asked to speak. Strong emotions, such as fear or joy for example, may prevent the intellectual faculties from functioning normally. However, Ben-Ze'ev (2001) claims that instability is a matter of degree and we cannot draw clear-cut boundaries of emotional instability, because instability depends on various personal and contextual circumstances. For example, some people of high intensive emotions may live lives characterized by volatility and changeableness. By contrast, the life of people with low emotional intensity may be characterized by evenness and endurance. At the extreme, people who experience low emotional intensity may become indifferent or apathetic because they remain stable even when changes in their situations occur (Ben-Ze-ev, 2001). My students react differently to their failure in a test. Student A, for example, possibly cries, but student B might not show any reaction, while student C might laugh to show that she has a strong personality and does not really care. In this example, my students' different reactions are all directed to one

50

object (failure in a test) and their partiality is another characteristic of emotions as I will discuss now.

3.5.3 Partiality

As I have already noted, emotion is also characterized by its partiality. One sense of partiality, as Kolodny (2010) explains, is that emotions are often directed to a narrow target. That is to say, in most emotions we have one or very few objects. In love, for example, we may love our spouse, our children and family, but we cannot love all people to the same degree. The second sense of partiality, according to Ben-Ze'ev (2001), is that emotions express a personal perspective. Emotions draw our attention to varying degrees depending on what we choose to focus on and to what holds our interest. Frijda (1988), in addition, discusses this characteristic of emotions and labels it the emotional 'law of concern'. By this Frijda means that emotions are more easily provoked for valued people and things, yet may be absent from considerations about things or people which we care less and this fits well Nussbaum's views summarised earlier. My students' different reactions to their failure of the test are all directed to one object (failure in the test), but every reaction reflects the value and the importance of the test to each student. Student A's reaction, for example, shows the high value of the test for her while student C might not evaluate the test as important.

The partiality of emotions, as Ben-Ze'ev (2001) states, is exhibited by their cognitive evaluation and motivational components. The cognitive component does not present a variety of perspectives. Our attention is focused only on some specific perspectives from which we generalize and so a single event may be interpreted as a whole situation. My student who cries because she failed an exam may decide that she is a failure at everything, even though evidence from other exams might suggest that is not the case. The evaluative perspective of emotions is also partial because of, as noted above, its concern with one or few objects. We tend to evaluate the typical emotional object either positively or negatively.

3.5.4 Brevity

Emotions are typically transient states and so brief. When a person responds to a change or an event, all of his/her resources are mobilized and are focused on one specific event but only for a limited period of time. After a short period of time, the system interprets the change as a now normal constant situation and returns to its normal function again. This process is known as adaptability but this is beyond my discussion here. However, what is

51

relevant to this study is the debate about the duration of emotions. Some emotions, such as love and depression, if these are counted as emotions rather than states, can persist for a long time, while other types of emotions, such as anger, may last only for some seconds or minutes. Although the duration of emotions typically is a matter of seconds or minutes, their influence can have profound and long-term behavioural implications. For example, fear of teacher's negative evaluations often prevents students from participating in classroom activities in order to avoid embarrassment (Chakraborty and Konar, 2009; Ben-Ze'ev, 2001). If an emotion is typically so brief then perhaps what we sometimes call emotions might better be called moods and I shall address this now.

3.6   Emotions and moods

As noted above, one of the most difficult tasks for researchers, including philosophers, is to find a clear definition for emotions. It seems that it is also difficult to define moods. Whilst theoretically the distinction may be clear between emotions and moods, in practice this distinction is not so clear and the language we use to describe our feelings, moods and emotions can very easily be misunderstood or, at least, different words can mean very different things to different people.

Moods, according to Sedikides (1992), are 'frequent, relatively long and pervasive, but typically milder in intensity than emotions' (p.273). Robbins and Judge (2007) also suggest that moods are 'feelings that tend to be less intense than emotions and that often lack contextual stimulus' (p. 260). This clarification indicates that there are some common components and features between emotions and moods. Feeling, for example and as outlined above, is one of the basic components of emotions according to Ben-Ze'ev (2001) and Prinz (2005), and intensity is considered one of the distinctive features of emotions, as both Ben-Ze'ev (2001) and Nussbaum (2001) point out. However, the differences between the two affective phenomena lie in the degree of intensity and the motivational component that seems absent in moods, according to the Robbins and Judge (2007) definition.

Moods also might lack an intentional object as Price (2006) indicates. They are diffuse and general. They can be the precursor to emotions but moods can also make us more emotional and might make an emotional experience more intense. Sometimes when people are experiencing a good mood, they respond to an event more positively than if they had been experiencing a bad mood, and vice versa. When your child, for instance, plays with objects on your desk and you are in your normal state, you probably just take the child down and remove the objects. However, if you are in a good mood, you may laugh and

cuddle the child. But if s/he does the same while you are in a bad mood, the behaviour may make you angry (Robbins and Judge, 2007).

This difference between emotions and moods may point to another feature of moods, namely particular facial and non-verbal expressions. Since moods may last for a long time, it seems implausible that they will result in a particular or clearly recognizable facial or non-verbal expression during all of their 'life'. We often, though not always, realize the emotions of other people in a particular situation, especially if the emotion is intense, from non-verbal emotional expressions, often facial expressions, which can provide us with information about other people which may help us to anticipate probable next behaviour. This feature, Ben-Ze'ev (2001) suggests, does not seem as clearly present in moods as in emotions. The results of Arellano et al's (2011) research, on the other hand, showed that certain moods such as pleasure are recognisable from expressions on people's faces.

The distinction between emotions and mood tends to be complex (Yang and Diefendorff, 2009). However, there has been disagreement about classifying moods as intentional emotions, that is as emotions directed toward an object. For example, I lose a friend and I feel sad. The sadness settles down to become a background, general feature of my life, for a time at least. So, it is difficult to say if this is a mood or an emotion. I know why I am sad, because I know the object of my sadness. Philosophers such as Nussbaum and Ben-Ze'ev do not welcome the idea of considering moods as intentional emotion since moods basically lack an object. They are not usually directed to a person or a certain event, whereas an emotion will always have an object. Ben-Ze'ev (2001) stipulates that the object of emotions should be a human being or a living creature. For example, when we enjoy the sunshine, we call this a mood not an emotion because the object is not a human being or a living creature. So, the intentional object, following Ben-Ze'ev, constitutes the difference between moods and emotions. Solomon (1993), on the other hand, indicates that moods are intentional states and as he suggests, the content of moods concerns the world in general. Furthermore, Solomon disagrees that moods and emotions are different categories of psychological state. However, he does say that the emotional reactions are directed to specific objects while mood responses are directed to the world in general, stating:

> … an emotion focuses its attention on more-or-less particular objects and situations, whereas a mood enlarges its grasp to attend to the world as a whole, without focusing on any particular object or situation… Moods, in their indiscriminate universality, are metaphysical generalizations of the emotions (Solomon, 1993, p.71).

In analyzing the components and features of moods, the evaluation component, the most significant component in emotions, also seems present in moods. For example, when we feel bored or frustrated, we may evaluate this situation as something bad, as a negative. By contrast, we might evaluate the situation as a good, as a positive, when we are enjoying or excited about something. The motivational component, again one of the basic components in emotions according to Ben-Ze'ev (2001), Gredler et al. (2004), and Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2007), also seems less present in moods. Feeling bored or frustrated, for example, might not lead us to take any action. So emotional motivation may more likely lead us to some immediate action whereas moods may cause us just to think, for a while at least. Thinking of issues about life may, for example, have an effect on moods and moods also affect our thoughts. So, thinking negatively about life as a student in large classes in Libya and with no clear prospect of a good job may produce negative moods such as anger or misery. The issue is whether, in this example, anger is a mood or an emotion. This discussion may lead us to think of moods as cognitive in nature as Robbins and Judge (2007) argue.

It is also important to ask about the role of beliefs in generating emotions and moods. I have already noted that beliefs have an essential power that creates a plausible cause which arouses the emotions. Emotions involve the acceptance of beliefs about the object (Nussbaum, 2001). Take grief, for example. As noted earlier, we typically experience grief when we lose a parent: this emotion is generated because we have beliefs that this person is significant for our existence, flourishing and also that they were a valuable person. However, moods lack this characteristic, perhaps because moods have no clear object. In cases of gloom, calmness and irritation, for example, beliefs typically play no role in stimulating those moods. In contrast, other moods such as boredom, frustration, and excitement might have a kind of judgment, appraisals and/or beliefs. Emotions, by contrast, do have a specific nature. They are typically intensive and urgent but fleeting and brief. Moods, on the other hand, seem to have a less specific nature and may be milder in intensity than emotions. This may lead us to regard moods as experiences that last longer than emotions. Most moods, such as boredom, joy, frustration, calmness or feeling pleased, may be experienced for some minutes, hours, days, and even months and years (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001; Nussbaum, 2001).

In the light of the difference between emotions and moods, the nature of the affective cause creates another distinction between the two affective phenomena. Typically, in emotions, the cause is unexpected and urgent: that is why the generated emotions are so often intense.

54

Typically, in moods, the cause is diffuse or less specific, sometimes occurring over a longer period of time. Weather, for example, can affect moods either positively or negatively: a rainy day can generate a depressed mood although the cause is general and there is no obvious cause-effect relationship between moods and events (Ben-Ze'ev, 2001).

Having suggested differences between emotions and moods, it is worth trying to account for the relationship between the two in the sense of mutual influence. To return to my hypothetical students, I can imagine a situation in which a student reacts angrily to being asked to talk in class. That student might react with the emotion of anger because she is in a negative mood and is generally feeling frustrated at having to be a student of the English Language when she would prefer to be an engineer. Alternatively, that student might react with the emotion of anger that then leads to a mood of frustration that she is not doing as well as she would like in her studies in general. Robbins and Judge (2007) report that emotions can turn into moods if the subject loses the focus on the object that arouses them. For example, when a colleague criticises our inappropriate behaviour at work, we might show our emotion as anger toward the object (our colleague). But when our anger is dissipated, we may just generally feel depressed, and this might be a mood or it may be that the criticism resulted in a lack of confidence, a loss of faith in our abilities, or memories of past criticisms. Here, as with the student example above, a different complex of emotions, self-appraisals, and past experiences may come into play. In such cases, we cannot attribute our feeling to a single event. Typically, the later feeling would not be as intensive as the first one, but it might persist for longer. So, ongoing emotions such as anger or anxiety might become moods over time. The emotion of anxiety experienced by foreign language learners might turn into mood as can be seen in the hypothetical example here and as will be shown later in this thesis.

3.7   Chapter summary

This Chapter has summarised key theories and debates to emotions and introduced a variety of definitions and debates. I have also outlined the basic elements of emotions (intentionality and feelings) and illustrated the characteristics of emotions and how emotions may differ from moods. Through my discussion above and the examples I have presented, I have tried to show that emotions can have a significant influence on our lives generally, and in education particularly. As regards foreign language learning, emotions can affect language acquisition positively and negatively. In the next Chapter, I will

discuss one of the most common phenomenon in the literature of foreign language learning, namely anxiety, and explain how it can affect language learning.

Chapter 4   Anxiety

4.1   Introduction

Emotions, as I explained in the previous Chapter, are significant in our lives and serve important functions with both positive and negative emotions probably necessary for our well-being and flourishing. Positive emotions such as love, joy, and contentment, according to Fredrickson (2001), prompt individuals to engage with their environments and undertake activities. They also motivate us to work, not only for the present moment but also for long term. But negative emotions are also important and effective in our life and can have a great influence on the way we behave, think, and perform. Negative emotions such as fear and anxiety, can, for example, influence our physical health (Cohen and Pressman, 2006), decision making (Loewenstein et al., 2003), behaviour in the workplace (Pervez, 2010), and mental health (Borst et al., 2012).

In this Chapter, I will address 'anxiety', a negative emotion as classified by Rachman (2004). Anxiety is one of the most common and complex emotions which has been extensively studied over the course of the last thirty years. It has been demonstrated that anxiety can be the cause of a number of physical and mental health problems (Barlow, 2002). In addition, here, I will focus on the influence of anxiety on learning, particularly, foreign language learning (FLL) and its possible causes and effects. But before this, it is worth explaining what anxiety is and so I shall present a description and psychological analysis of anxiety for two reasons. First, anxiety in general is complex, unclear, multifaceted, and elusive compared with some other emotions. Second, the concept of anxiety in the psychological literature is commonly used to refer to reactions to certain events or situations.

4.2   What is an anxiety? Description and psychological analysis

Anxiety is a normal emotion experienced in certain situations. It is the emotion experienced when a person thinks s/he is under threat and cannot cope with a situation. Common examples include the anxiety felt on giving a public presentation for the first time, or entering a room to have a medical check-up or an interview. Anxiety is an emotion experienced by everyone. But for some people anxiety can seem unbearable. In the psychology literature there have been many definitions of anxiety. Rachman (2004), for

example, defines anxiety as 'the tense, unsettling anticipation of a threatening but vague event; a feeling of uneasy suspense' (p.3). Anxiety as English and English (1958) define it is:

> ... a fusion of fear with the anticipation of future evil ... a continuous fear of low intensity a feeling of threat, especially of a fearsome threat, without the person being able to say what he (or she) thinks threatens (p.34-35).

Anxiety is defined as a state of uneasiness and apprehension or fear caused by the anticipation of something threatening. Kaplan and Sadock (1998) describe anxiety as a diffuse, unpleasant, vague sense of apprehension. Similarly, Barlow (2002) defines anxiety as 'a future-oriented mood state in which one is ready or prepared to attempt to cope with upcoming negative events' (p.64). Almost all of these definitions of anxiety share a core theme that embraces the anticipation of threat from a real or imagined situation or event. When feeling anxious, it sometimes becomes difficult to identify the cause of the uneasy tension or the nature of the anticipated event or situation. Anxiety crucially includes uncertainty as to the expectancy of threat. Bishop (2007) states 'it is triggered by less explicit or more generalized cues, and is characterized by a more diffuse state of distress' (p.1). So this emotion can be confusing and puzzling for the person experiencing it. In addition, Rachman (2004) describes the purest form of anxiety as 'diffuse, objectless, unpleasant, and persistent' (p.3) and that seems to suggest it is mood-like rather than an emotion. Anxiety does sometimes have no clear object or cause and that is why people may commonly not recognize why they are anxious, and instead think there is something wrong with them. These negative thoughts unfortunately increase the degree of anxiety which can have a negative influence on one's mental health (Liebert and Morris, 1967). Anxiety, nevertheless, is normal because it serves a function as a 'productive alarm system' which activates when we expect a coming danger or threat (Winton et al., 1995). According to these researchers, this alarm helps us to respond and cope with the potential danger or threat. Without the emotion of anxiety people would not have been able to survive. Pure or normal anxiety, in addition, is temporary, and that means it persists only for a short time and ends when the anticipated threat disappears or becomes manageable (Bishop, 2002). In the next section, I will focus my discussion on anxiety as an emotion.

4.3   Anxiety and fear

Confusion with the term 'anxiety' is caused by its frequent interchangeable use with other phenomena such as fear, worry, panic, tension, stress, and phobia. The term anxiety can have different meanings and be used to refer to several different experiences and

behaviours (Vanin and Helsley, 2008). Steimer (2002) argues that fear and anxiety, for some authors, are not distinguishable while others do believe that they are different phenomena. Rowan and Eayrs (1987), for instance, assume that it is necessary to distinguish between fear and anxiety because both emotions are widespread and used interchangeably. Moreover, both emotions share common arousal triggers and characteristics. For example, both anxiety and fear can cause tension, discomfort, uncomfortable feelings, and unpleasant expectations of certain situations. However, the two terms can be distinct in cause, period of time, and maintenance. Anxiety, according to Bishop (2007), is diffuse, shapeless, objectless, and unsettling, often being a response to a blurred or unknown threat.

By contrast, fear is used to describe an emotional reaction to a specific, perceived danger, to a threat that is identifiable, such as a poisonous snake or an important examination. Most fear reactions are intense and have the quality of an emergency. Rachman (2004) defines fear as 'a reaction to an external stimulus. It is episodic, and appears to be associated with autonomic hyper-arousal when the individual is exposed to the stimulus' (p.3). Pavuluri et al. (2002) also define fear as 'a common adaptive response to an immediate, threatening situation' (p.274). Kaplan and Sadock (1998) present two examples of both anxiety and fear to clarify the difference between the two. To be anxious is to feel nervous and to feel a few butterflies in your stomach while walking alone down a dark street, possibly thinking that someone may walk closely behind you or come towards you to threaten you. This feeling of anxiety is created by our imagination: our minds create visions and thoughts which are not actually about real threats but that make us believe that we are in danger. Fear, on the other hand, is an emotional response to a specific, known or perceived threat, as when a stranger points a gun at you and tries to shoot you. The feeling of fear in this case is not the result of your imagination; rather it is a real, clear, immediate danger or something that threatens you. To summarise the differences between anxiety and fear see Table 1 below from Rachman (2004, p.5).

Fear	Anxiety
Present danger	Anticipated danger
Specific focus of threat	Source of threat is elusive
Understandable connection between fear and threat	Uncertain connection between anxiety and threat
Usually episodic	Prolonged
Circumscribed tension	Pervasive uneasiness
Identifiable threat	Can be objectless
Provoked by threat cues	Uncertain onset
Declines with removal of threat	Persistent
Offset is detectable	Uncertain offset
Circumscribed area of threat	Without clear borders
Imminent threat	Threat seldom imminent
Quality of an emergency	Heightened vigilance
Bodily sensations of an emergency	Bodily sensations of vigilance
Rational quality	Puzzling quality

Table 1. Differences Between Fear and Anxiety, from Rachman (2004, p.5)

The importance of this table is in its descriptions of the symptoms of both anxiety and fear and these help us to understand the effect of anxiety, not only on the language learner's cognition but also on other systems as Rapee and Heimberg (1997) suggest. These researchers clarify that anxiety manifests itself through three independent systems that connect tightly to function together. These systems are, firstly, the mental or cognitive system, which refers to the thoughts that come into the mind telling us there is something unusual or wrong. The second, physiological system refers to the changes or symptoms that may occur in the body when feeling anxious (stomach ache, fast heart beats, shortness of breath, and changes in the facial muscles) but some people do not always, or even often, have such symptoms. Anxiety is sometimes hidden because it does not show in the face or body and this will depend on the person's ability to control and to hide any physiological symptoms. It also most likely depends on the intensity of the emotional arousal, and the degree of our senses' perceived disposition, expectation, experience, attitude, environmental circumstance, consequences, and so on (Ekman, 1993). The third system, the behavioural system, involves the common urge to flee or avoid, what is often called 'flight or fight'. Pappamihiel (2002) explains that anxiety overall is closely correlated to 'threats to self-efficacy and appraisals of situations as threatening' (p.331). Psychologists such as Kaplan et al. (1979) and Morris et al. (1981) have attempted to analyze anxiety into

two main distinctive components to facilitate an understanding of the anxiety construct. These constructs are worry and emotionality. According to Kaplan et al. (1979), 'worry' refers to cognition. It is associated with one's thinking about concerns about approaching or expected events. 'Emotionality', in contrast, refers to the affective area of anxiety which is the anxious individual's awareness of bodily arousal or tension (Toth, 2010). Sarason (1984) has extended the construct of anxiety suggested by Liebert and Morris (1967) to include constituents of behaviour and physical activities such as hair pulling, wringing hands, playing with pens or clothes, fidgeting and so forth. There are also bodily reactions such as physiological changes including sweating, trembling, rapid heartbeat or blushing; psychosomatic symptoms which include tense muscles, headaches, insomnia, stomach ache, dry mouth and swallowing difficulties, and speech difficulties, for example, stuttering or having a quivering voice. These physical activities, psychological changes and psychosomatic symptoms can be shaped differently to construct different types of anxieties as shown in Figure 4 below.
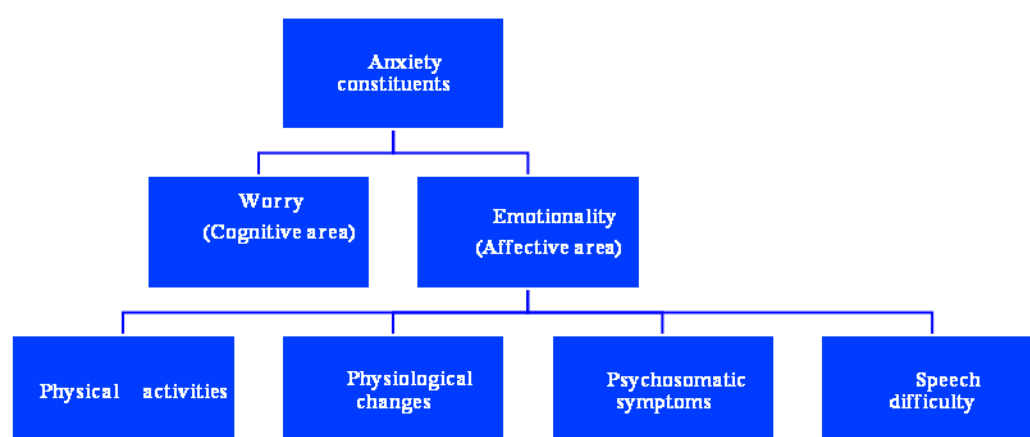
Figure 4. Emotions' Constituents

Before we move to the next section, I would like here to clarify that there are two classifications of anxiety: normal/regular anxiety and pathological anxiety with pathological anxiety commonly referred to as an anxiety disorder and classified as a mental illness. These classifications, according to Rachman (2004), are based on the intensity, symptoms, and the characteristics of the emotion. Here, in this research, the focus is on the normal or regular type, others are beyond the scope of this research but it seems worth

describing the levels of anxiety and showing each one's features in order to distinguish between them as I will explain now.

4.4   Levels of anxiety

Many people believe that anxiety is dangerous, harmful, abnormal, and a kind of mental illness (Rachman, 2004). But, in fact, it is beneficial and necessary for our safety when we have the right amount of it. So, the degree of its intensity, duration, and how well an individual copes with it will determine if the level of anxiety every person experiences is normal and necessary or not.

The psychologist Basavanthappa (2007) distinguished between normal and abnormal anxieties when he classified them into four levels (mild, moderate, sever and panic) and he has shown the physiological and emotional changes each level causes. Mild anxiety is associated with everyday life. It is a feeling that something is unusual and requires special attention. Sensory stimulation increases and helps to focus attention for learning, acting, solving problems, thinking, and avoiding dangerous situations. Mild anxiety also encourages individuals in learning, creativity, and achieving goals. Students who experience mild anxiety, for instance, may focus more than previously on their studies. Moderate anxiety, on the other hand, is a disturbing feeling and individuals experiencing this level of anxiety become nervous or agitated. Processing information, learning, and solving problems with moderate anxiety can become more difficult, but not impossible. Moderate anxiety is characterized by a concentration on immediate concerns and specific details but it may mean a disability to recognize other things. As individuals progress to severe anxiety, their capacity for thinking and reasoning becomes much more difficult. Primitive survival skills reduce, defensive responses arise, and cognitive skills greatly diminish with, often, muscle tightening and vital signs changing, such as a raised heart rate. A severe anxious person is likely to be irritable and edgy and most often uses the fight or flight response. Panic, the fourth level of anxiety as Basavanthappa classified it, is associated with dread and terror. It is characterized by the disorganization of the personality and the person can no longer function or communicate normally. Rational thought stops, motor activity increases, abilities decrease and individuals who experience panic most often cannot grasp details and lose control, even with support. Table 2 below summarises the psychological and physiological responses to anxiety levels.

Anxiety level	Psychological responses	Physiological responses
MILD	Wide perception field Sharpened senses Increased motivation Effective problem-solving Increased learning ability Irritability	Restlessness Fidgeting Butterflies Difficulty sleeping Hypersensitivity to noise
MODERATE	Perceptual field narrowed to immediate task Selectively attentive Cannot connect thoughts and events independently Increased used of automatisms	Muscle tension Diaphoreses Pounding pulse Headache Dry mouth High voice pitch Faster rate of speech Upset and frequent urination
SEVERE	Perceptual field reduced to one detail or scattered details Cannot complete tasks Cannot solve problems or learn effectively Behaviour geared toward anxiety relief and usually ineffective Doesn't respond to redirection Feels awe, dread or horror Crying Ritualistic behavior	Severe headache Nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea Trembling Rigid stance Vertigo Pale Tachycardia Chest pain
PANIC	Perceptual field reduced to focus on self Cannot process any environment stimuli Distorted perceptions Loss of rational thought Doesn't recognise potential danger Cannot communicate verbally Possible delusions and hallucinations May be suicidal	May bolt and run or be totally immobile and mute Dilated pupils Increased blood pressure and pulse Flight or fight or freeze

Table 2. Psychological and physiological responses of the anxiety levels from Basavanthappa (2007, p. 365)

As I have indicated, the main focus of my research is on the normal levels of anxieties (mild and moderate). Others levels, as Basavanthappa (2007) indicates, can be classified as illness which requires clinical treatment. Importantly, mild and moderate anxieties could be experienced at a moment or as a characteristic of the personality. Below, I will show the categories of anxiety as classified in psychology, but before this I will discuss the appropriate amount of anxiety that psychologists refer to as necessary versus the unfavourable.

4.5   Appropriate and inappropriate anxiety

Anxiety is needed because it serves, as noted earlier, as a biological alarm system triggered by danger. It is also useful for assisting individuals to cope with adversity (Noyes and Hoehn-Saric, 1998). This level of anxiety is known as 'appropriate anxiety' in psychology. Appropriate anxiety is useful and important to protect one's life. As noted earlier, the person who feels anxiety believes that s/he is, to some extent, in a threat situation and, in some cases, the danger is not actually real for people sometimes imagine a threat or danger which does not really exist. This type of anxiety is known as 'inappropriate' anxiety, because it is unwarranted.

Of course, responses to daily life events differ between individuals. Some people respond to ordinary events with intensive stress and uneasiness, while others do not. The difference between the two may be related to many aspects such as the background of the person, a genetic predisposition, or issues related to the individual's beliefs. Health, for instance, is a source of anxiety for many people and anxious people may test their health many times while feeling well. In some social relationships, everyday sources of anxiety may be expressed as, for example, 'does s/he still love me?' (Rachman, 2004). People who experience high levels of anxiety are hyper-vigilant because they tend to believe that there is possible danger that may threaten their bodies, or their emotions or relationships or life-styles. They think regularly about 'ifs' and 'maybes'. Rachman (2004) states that 'anxiety tends to be pervasive and persistent, with uncertain points of onset and offset' (p.3). Although emotion is characterised by its instability, anxiety can change into a phobic anxiety disorder if it becomes connected to certain well-defined situations or objects (ICD-10 classification of mental and behavioural disorders, WHO, 1992).

4.6   Categories of anxiety

According to Toth (2010), distinctions between categories of anxiety were outlined in the 1960s by psychologists such as Cattell and Scheier (1961), Lazarus (1966) and Spielberger (1966) and I explain below.

4.6.1 Trait anxiety

When people say that a person is 'anxious', this has at least two interpretations. According to Levitt (1980), one interpretation refers to the possibility of being an anxious person in any situation; we could say the person is a worrier. This form of anxiety, known as trait anxiety, is a relatively constant part of the personality or a personality characteristic. According to Spielberger et al. (1983), trait anxiety is 'an individual's likelihood of becoming anxious in any situation' (cited in MacIntyre and Gardner 1991, p. 87). Individuals who experience trait anxiety respond to everyday life events in an anxious manner, tending to be more worried and stressed than most people as they are likely to react to certain environmental stimuli and a wide range of situations as threatening and dangerous (Woodrow, 2006). Over time, the anxious style of these individuals may become a pervasive and stable aspect of the character (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Dörnyei (2005) also adds that trait anxiety can be considered one of the primary traits of human personality. Thus, before I started my study, I was aware that FL learners who experience trait anxiety are possibly more unwilling to participate in oral activities in the classroom than less anxious learners. Classification of anxiety is important here because it helps us identify which students have anxiety as part of their personality and may, therefore, require special care from FL teachers.

4.6.2 State anxiety

The second interpretation of 'anxious', as Levitt (1980) proposes, is an anxious state of mind or being 'anxious at a moment'. State anxiety, as MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) describe it, manifests itself as a 'temporary change of emotions as a result of outside factors, leading to a rapid agitation of emotions' (p.90). State anxiety as MacIntyre (1999) defines it, is the 'moment-to-moment experience of anxiety' (p. 28). When experiencing state anxiety, there is accompanying worry or tension. Sometimes a person who experiences anxiety might enter a state of uneasiness and restlessness because s/he might feel very tense and will react, or possibly over-react, to external provocations. This type of anxiety usually ends soon after the end of the situation that triggered it (Toth, 2010). So for learners who experience state anxiety there will be causes that agitate their feelings, and

65

identifying these causes might help us understand, for example, their unwillingness to speak in English. Teachers might then find strategies to encourage them to speak in the classroom and to overcome their anxiety.

4.6.3 Situation-specific anxieties

The situation-specific approach to anxiety is based on the assumption that definite types of situations are more likely to generate anxiety than others. However, there is personal dissimilarity among people as to what particular settings they perceive as anxiety provoking. The same person may feel consistently anxious over time in some certain situations. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) suggested that situation-specific anxiety is a form of trait anxiety because it is a stable characteristic of the person. However, its occurrences are associated with limited specific contexts, specific situations which may not generate anxiety for other people. For instance, talking in public, including in FL classes, can be a cause of anxiety to some people but not to others. It is important to recognise the situation that generates anxiety so that anxiety arousal situations can be avoided. Situation-specific anxiety contributes to understanding many problems, especially those related to education. A number of studies have found correlations between situation-specific anxiety and learning subjects such as mathematics (Ashcraft, 2002; Cates and Rhymer, 2003), computing (Howard, 1986; Bozionelos, 2001; Wilfong, 2006), and foreign languages (Ely, 1986; Horwitz et al., 1986; Gregerson, 2003).

4.6.4 Social anxieties

Toth (2010) argues the following about social anxiety.

> Social anxiety is used as an umbrella term to refer to common forms of apprehension among psychologically healthy people, such as, audience anxiety, stage fright, speech anxiety, social-evaluative anxiety, communication apprehension, shyness, etc (Toth, 2019, p.8).

According to Leary (1982), social anxiety is 'anxiety arising from the prospect or presence of interpersonal evaluation in real or imagined social settings' (p.102). The severe form of this is known as 'social anxiety disorder' or 'social phobia', defined by Michail as:

> A marked and persistent fear of one or more social or performance situations in which the person is exposed to unfamiliar people or possible scrutiny by others. The individual fears that he or she will act in a way (or show anxiety symptoms) will be humiliating or embarrassing (Michail, 2013, p.174).

Socially anxious people want to make a good impression during social interaction but at the same time they may distrust their ability and communication skills to do so. Socially anxious people fear meeting new people or making new social relationships. They also fear undesirable evaluations so they prefer to avoid communication or escape entirely from social interactions and, in extreme cases, their fears may lead them to complete social isolation (Michail, 2013). This category of anxiety, according to Toth (2010), can be experienced in the field of education, including in foreign language learning, and I shall now move to this to discuss initially the psychological classification of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety.

4.7 Psychological classification of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLA)

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), FLA is different from trait and state anxiety and is classified as a situation-specific anxiety because it takes place particularly in the foreign language learning context. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000) support Horwitz's at al's (1986) claim that FLA is:

> … a form of situation-specific anxiety. That is, it is neither a trait anxiety, which generally refers to a person's tendency to be anxious, nor a state anxiety which is experienced at a particular moment in time, for example, having to speak in a foreign language in front of classmates (p.87).

FLA is created from a combination of other anxieties that are associated specifically to foreign language learning as shown in Figure 5 below.
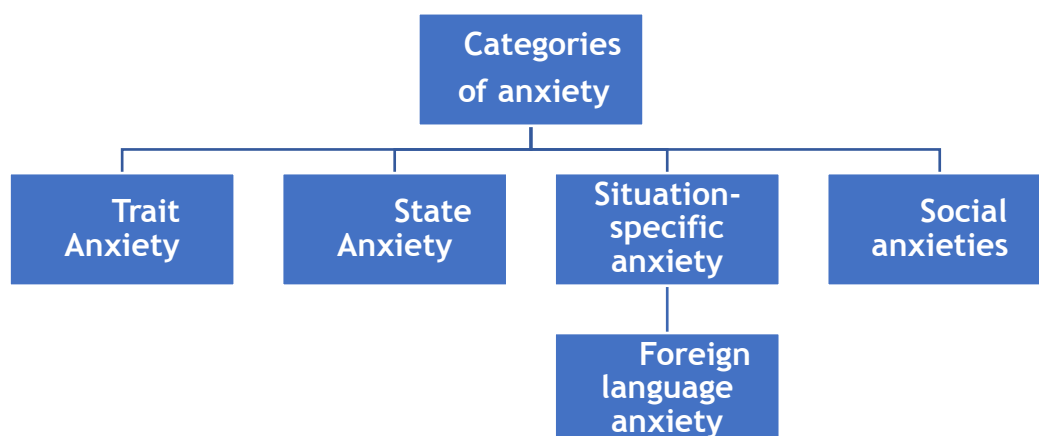
Figure 5. Classification of FLA according to Horwitz et al. 1986

Toth (2010), on the other hand, assumes that FLA can best be classified as social anxiety, because foreign language learning takes place in a social situation and demands interaction

67

in different interpersonal encounters inside and outside the classroom (teacher-learner, learner-learner, learner-native speaker/other non-native L2 speaker). Toth (2010) agrees with MacIntyre (1995) that classifying anxiety experienced in this domain in the wider context is much more useful than placing it in a specific set of anxieties. If we think deeply of the approaches to the description of language anxiety, we will notice that they are classified into two types: language anxiety and social anxiety as a basic human emotion that may be created by various combinations of situational factors (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989; MacIntyre, 1995). For instance, a shy student may experience anxiety when asked to give a presentation or short talk in front of an audience, even if that audience is her classmates. Additionally, people who experience communication apprehension are possibly shy. However, some people who are shy do not suffer communication apprehension (Berger et al.,1984). Figure 6 below depicts the different categories of anxiety.
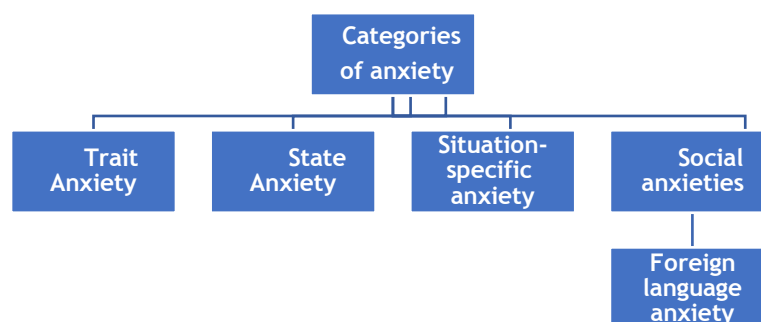
Figure 6. Classification of FLA, following Toth, 2010

4.7.1 Definitions of foreign language learning anxiety

Research into FLA has a long history spanning over three decades with different definitions of language anxiety. FLA as Horwitz et al. (1986) describe it, 'is a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system' (p.125). According to Haskin et al., (2003), FLA 'is a feeling of uneasiness, aggravation, self-doubt, lack of confidence, or fear; intricately entwined with self-esteem issues and natural ego-preserving worries' (p.230). Horwitz et al. (1986) have defined FLA as 'a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, and behaviours related to classroom learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning arising process' (p.128). MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) define FLA as 'the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language texts, including speaking, listening, and learning' (p.284). Horwitz et al.'s definition of anxiety is general whereas

the other definitions are more specific to FL learning. Haskin et al.'s definition is deeper than others because is distinguished by correlating the feeling of anxiety to some psychological issues of the self, ego and emotions. In this study I use Haskin et al.'s definition because it shows the influence of the psychological variables on anxiety and their relationship with language learning.

4.7.2 The influence of anxiety on foreign language learning and achievement

Anxiety has been claimed to be the most significant affective aspect that most pervasively impedes the learning process (Daubney, 2002). Learners of second and foreign languages, almost inevitably, experience different levels of anxiety during their learning and performing the target language. Some learners, as Horwitz et al. (1986) indicate, claim to have high motivation for learning foreign languages including a genuine liking for native speakers of the target language but they may have a mental block against language learning while claiming they are good learners in other subjects. Horwitz et al. (1986) found that the main factors that hinder their learning are communication apprehension, teachers' and peers' negative evaluation, and test anxiety. After a considerable number of research studies, FLA has been suggested as an important affective factor experienced commonly by many language learners and the factors found by Horwitz and Horwitz will be discussed below in more detail.

Of course, and as I have already indicated, anxiety in itself does not always have negative implications since a certain amount of it can be considered appropriate anxiety that can encourage a student to learn and acquire a language. Bailey (1983) found that anxiety is a key to successful language learning. On the other hand, a negative relationship between FLA and achievement is also established in the literature. Empirical research has noted that anxious learners complain that they lose the ability to think and concentrate in the classroom; are less willing to contribute to learning activities and tasks; have lower performance than non-anxious learners and, in extreme cases, they avoid practising and performing and seek, instead, to escape from the learning situation (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001).

The results of MacIntyre and Gardner's (1989) study showed that anxious students had more difficulty in learning and recalling a list of vocabulary items compared with less anxious students. Golchi (2012) examined listening anxiety and its relationship with

69

listening strategy use and listening comprehension with 63 Iranian IELTS learners. The researcher used four instruments: a Background Questionnaire developed by Lee (1997), a Listening Anxiety Questionnaire developed by Kim (2000), Lee's (1997) Listening Comprehension Strategy Questionnaire and an IELTs (International English Language Testing System) listening test. The findings showed that listening anxiety had a negative relationship on scores in listening comprehension and listening strategy use. Furthermore, the results revealed that learners with low anxiety used metacognitive strategies more than more anxious learners and that those more anxious learners also performed worse than low anxiety learners in the listening comprehension test.

Elkhafaifi (2005) also investigated the effect of anxiety on listening comprehension and achievement with 233 native speakers of English who were post-secondary students of Arabic as a FL. For data collection, the researcher used two measures of anxiety and a background questionnaire. The findings revealed that listening anxiety had negative effects on language learning and achievement. There is also some evidence that FLA influences reading comprehension. A study conducted by Wu et al. (2011) show that anxiety prevented foreign language learners from comprehending texts they read. Hsu (2004), in addition, examined the influence of anxiety on reading comprehension of 125 junior military college EFL learners and revealed that anxious students faced greater difficulty in recalling information and the details of the text content than less anxious students.

Researchers such as Daly (1978), Faigley et al. (1981) and Cheng et al. (1999) agree that there is a significant negative correlation between language anxiety and writing performance. More recently, a study conducted by Shang (2013) attempted to explore the possible correlations between foreign language writing anxiety and year of writing experience, writing self-efficacy, and actual writing competence with 146 English Language learners from a private university in Taiwan. The findings revealed that students generally experienced anxiety when writing in English with anxiety quite persistent in EFL writing regardless of how long students had been learning and practising writing in English as a FL. The outcomes of the previous studies can be interpreted from a cognitive psychological perspective and so I shall now outline the possible influence of anxiety on cognition.

4.7.3 The influence of anxiety on cognition

A good deal of research has proposed that anxiety causes cognitive interference in performing particular tasks, such as those illustrated above. Researchers such as

MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) and Oxford (1999) agree that FLA has a subtle and pervasive effect on cognitive processing. Gardner, Tremblay and Masgoret (1997) agree that FLA is associated with:

> … deficits in listening comprehension, impaired vocabulary learning, reduced word production, low scores on standardized tests, low grades in language courses or a combination of these factors (p. 345).

Earlier, Eysenck (1979) had suggested a re-conceptualization of anxiety in terms of cognitive interference:

> … anxiety-arousal is associated with distracting, self-related cognition as excessive self-evaluation, worry over potential failure, and concern over the opinions of others; therefore, the anxious person has his/her attention divided between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient. This theory is able to explain the negative effects observed for language anxiety (cited in MacIntyre and Gardner 1994b, p.285).

Cognition interference caused by anxiety, as Tobias (1986) suggests in his model of the cognitive effects of anxiety, has subtle impacts on language learning and achievement. Tobias' model suggests that FLA influences the three stages of learning: Input, Processing, and Output. The input stage refers to the initial representation of lexical items or phrases and when anxiety is aroused at this stage, fewer stimuli may be encoded than had anxiety not been present. Repeated exposure to the task may be essential to overcome the impacts of the anxiety. Students with high levels of input anxiety tend to compensate for missing or inadequate input by asking their teachers to repeat sentences and re-read texts in the target language several times more than less anxious learners. At the processing stage, information and messages are received and understood and if anxiety is provoked during this stage then cognitive operations like understanding, concentration and learning may suffer, especially if the meaning of new items is not well recognised. The amount of processing anxiety encountered seems to rely on the complexity of the information, the way the material is organized and presented, and the extent of the reliability of memory (Bailey, Onwuegbuzie and Daley, 2000). When anxiety is aroused at this processing stage, the efficiency with which memory is used to solve problems may decrease, and a learner's ability to comprehend messages or learn new lexical items may be reduced. Finally, the output stage reflects previously learned material in the production of the target language in either spoken or written use. If anxiety is aroused at this stage, this often leads to unsuccessful retrieval of vocabulary, inappropriate use of grammar rules, or an inability to react, to speak or to write, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) indicate that the three stages of anxiety are interdependent, that is, each stage relies on the successful completion of the

71

one before, although not all would agree and more research is probably needed be confident. Tobias (1986) suggests that both high and low anxiety experiencing learners may be prone to cumulative interference at all three stages. Bailey, Onwuegbuzie and Daley (2000) interpret Tobias' suggestion as follows:

> … anxiety that reduces or restricts the proportion of effective input may place a greater burden on the processing to compensate for the proportion of input that previously was not successfully registered. The anxiety that also may ensue at this processing stage may be exacerbated by the reduced efficiency of the ongoing processing, which, in turn, may heighten anxiety levels at the output stage, cumulating in further deficits (p.475).

Determining the affected stage of learning might be helpful but the distinction between the three overlapping phases remains difficult. According to Khan and Zafer (2010), the distinctions help both teachers and learners in locating the cause of performance problems that can, possibly, be traced back to an earlier stage of learning. Khan and Zafer (2010) state the following to show the effects on anxiety:

> … a student may fail a test in a language course because anxiety interfered with the learning of vocabulary items and the student thus lacks sufficient knowledge to pass the test. However, a fully competent student may also fail the same test because anxiety arousal during testing interfered with the retrieval of vocabulary items that had been mastered (p.200).

The performance of these two learners might also be different if in a more relaxed performance context. Nevertheless, anxiety can affect the efficiency and the effectiveness of cognitive processing as Eysenck (1979) cautions. Khan and Zafer (2010) suggest that, following Eysenck, anxiety can affect both the time needed to finish a task and the quality of performance on the task. The effects of FLA revealed by the previous research findings suggest possible causes for the phenomenon and in the next section I shall explore these.

4.8   Sources of FLA

According to Horwitz et al. (1986), anxiety consists of three basic elements: communication apprehension (CA), fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety and in this section I shall discuss each factor..

4.8.1 Communication apprehension (CA)

Communication Apprehension (CA) has been investigated and defined by many researchers. Devi and Shahnaz (2008) describe CA as a feeling of being anxious or frightened that is associated with real or anticipated communication with another person or

persons. Spielberger et al. (1983) defined CA as 'tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system' (p. 15). But Berger et al. (1984) assert that oral communication anxiety is a negative mental state, not a behaviour, and it can be produced even by only thinking about communication because it relates to 'the way a person feels about communication, not how they communicate' (p.46). In their study, Berger et al. emphasize the importance of distinguishing CA from reticence and shyness, explaining that people who experience CA are perhaps those who avoid contact with other people. Reticence, on the other hand, is more likely related to people who are unsuccessful communicators because they lack sufficient communication skills. Shyness, according to Berger et al., (1984) is 'the tendency to talk less than the norm' (45), possibly as a result of high CA or other fundamental reasons such as upbringing and/or genetic factors. CA, according to Aydin (2008):

> … occurs in cases where learners lack mature communication skills although they have mature ideas and thoughts. CA refers to a fear of getting into real communication with others (p.423).

My instinct is that students might look shy and avoid participating in oral activities possibly because they are experiencing CA. CA, in psychology, can be classified into four types as Richmond and McCroskey (1998) suggest. First, trait like CA is concerned with how, generally, individuals feel across situations and time periods (Witt et al, 2006). This type of CA includes people who may be more inclined to avoid communication than others. In other words, people with this type of CA may feel more uncomfortable with regard to communicating than the average person regardless of the context, audience, or situation. They tend to avoid exposure to public speaking situations and frequently feel uncomfortable or nervous when talking with others at, say, a party or if asked to give a talk in class. Their apprehension is part of their personality which might result from a lack of self-confidence, experience or skill (Witt et al, 2006).

Second is context-based CA, which is prompted by a single, particular type of communication context that cuts across receivers and time. The main causes of this type of CA are (a) formality which indicates that some people feel comfortable when talking to familiar people in a meeting or a small group but they become anxious and fearful when asked to communicate in more formal settings. Formality can trigger apprehension and can make even the most confident and professional speakers feel anxious and intimidated, particularly if the relationship between the speaker and some of the audience members might be adversarial in settings such as a courtroom or even a conference. Another cause is (b) uncertainty which becomes high in speaking contexts in which it is difficult to

73

anticipate or control the flow of information. The feeling of context-based CA is comparable with a first day in a class with a new teacher: you cannot predict anything. The third, related cause (c) is novelty which refers to speaking in new settings when we can become more anxious and apprehensive because of a new environment. Even those who are normally comfortable with speaking in public often experience this form of CA in new contexts.

The third type of CA is audience-based CA which McCroskey (1982) defines as a fairly enduring orientation with a particular person or group. Oral communication for some people triggers audience-based CA because of the existence of a specific person or persons regardless of context and time. Since this form describes CA prompted by specific audience characteristics, these characteristics include similarity, subordinate status, audience size, and familiarity. This type of CA more possibly occurs when students make presentations in front of their teachers. Last but not least, is situational CA defined by Richmond and McCroskey (1998) as the 'type of CA that represents the apprehension that is experienced only with a given individual or group in a single situation or at a given time' (p.174) with each communication event entailing and merging together particular elements including physical, temporal, social-psychological, and cultural elements to make a unique communication situation. This resulting situational anxiety can occur in classrooms with certain activities and maybe with certain teachers.

In the context of foreign/second language learning, CA has received extensive attention from both researchers and educators (Daly and McCroskey, 1984; Horwitz et al.,1986; Cheng, Horwitz and Shallert, 1999; Liu and Jackson, 2008). In an article entitled 'Don't speak to me in English', written by McCroskey et al.(1985), CA as experienced in second language settings has been analyzed. According to these authors, the close association between CA and communication avoidance means we should be concerned about CA in a foreign language learning context. Individuals who generally fear communication in a particular situation often tend to avoid being in that situation. Thus, a student who tends to avoid communicating in the target language may be not highly apprehensive about communicating generally, but they may be apprehensive only about communicating in that language, or with that teacher, or in that group. The conclusion drawn by McCroskey et al. (1985) is that a student apprehensive about communication in a foreign language may, as a result, often fail to experience the practice so essential to the development of competence in the target language. Importantly, the sources of CA, as McCroskey and his colleagues (1985) suggest, stem either from the lack of learners' self-confidence in their ability with

74

the target language or from their general CA. The former, it has been suggested, may be caused by teachers while the latter, a general CA cause, is often not recognised. However, recently and after a series of further studies, researchers such as Piechurska-Kuciel (2012) suggests that CA stems from many sources, including the speaker's personal characteristics, communication context, nature of the audience, or a situation with the further factors of formality, familiarity, uncertainty, and novelty, as noted above. My student who is has low self-confidence in her ability in the target language also possibly feels anxious as a result of the fear of negative evaluation by the teacher and/or peers and I discuss this now.

4.8.2 Fear of negative evaluation

Another cause of FLA suggested by Horwitz et al. (1986), is fear of negative evaluation, described as 'apprehension about others' evaluation, avoidance of evaluation situations, and expectation that the others would evaluate oneself negatively' (p.128). Although a fear of negative evaluation appears in some way similar to test anxiety, as Horwitz and et al. (1986) suggest, it is broader in scope because it is not limited to specific test-taking settings and could apply in any social situations such as a job interview or an L2 speaking situation. In the literature of FLA, many research studies reveal that fear of negative evaluation is at the top of an FLA factor list. For example, a study conducted by Yahya (2013) with 104 students at the Arab American University in Palestine used the foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) designed by Horwitz (1986). The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and the results suggested that a fear of negative feedback factors had the highest mean (2.93), followed by communication anxiety factors (2.80), and test anxiety factors (2.68). So, this result indicates that fear of negative evaluation may be the most important factor of FLA for some learners.

Although the issue of FLA, its resources and effects on learning has been extensively discussed, until recently exploration of the relationship between FLA and fear of negative evaluation attracted little attention from researchers in the field (Kitano, 2001). Shabani (2012) also suggests that the number of studies focusing on this relationship is still too limited. However, Shabani's study, which aimed to investigate the sources of fear of negative evaluation and its correlation to FLA with 61 EFL Iranian learners, concluded that learner fears derived from a fear of leaving an unfavourable impression, receiving negative judgments, saying or doing the wrong thing, negative thoughts of and receiving criticisms for shortcomings by teachers and peers, fear of being found at fault, and disapproval by others.

75

Fear of negative evaluation, for Horwitz et al. (1986), is caused mainly by the teacher, usually the most fluent speaker in the class. Horwitz (1988) also found that learners who are scared of making errors in front of their teachers and peers most often participate less in language activities and avoid communication settings. In this regard, Young (1991) agrees with Horwitz that the reason why learners do not participate in classroom activities is the fear of making verbal errors. Additionally, Horwitz (1988) noticed that students' beliefs contribute to the fear of negative evaluation. Some students believe nothing should be said in the target language until it can be said correctly. The problem here is that most learners are not aware that making errors in the language classroom is part of learning and, instead, they consider errors as a kind of deficiency or lack of intelligence. Gynan (1989) concludes that some students were concerned about the correctness of their speech in comparison to a native-like accent or pronunciation. Pronunciation for some learners, as Gynan found, is the most significant aspect of FL learning and, as my experience and data here will show, students often express significant anxiety with respect to worries about speaking in English without a good accent or with regard to the content of their speech. Oxford and Ehrman (1995) also claim that the fear of making linguistic errors and failing to express oneself clearly are important causes of language anxiety. Koch and Terrell (1991), moreover, indicate that speaking in front of classmates most likely generates anxiety. These researchers agree with MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991) finding that fear of negative evaluation is closely related to communication apprehension. Jones's (2004) work revealed that learners frequently expressed a feeling of being frightened and even panic because of the fear of making errors and appearing awkward, foolish or incompetent in front of peers or others. Ohata (2005) conducted an in-depth interview study with five Japanese students who enrolled in English language course in the USA to examine the factors causing FLA. The results indicate, again, that fear of negative evaluation and losing face in front of others, as well as lacking confidence in learning and performing in English, were the main reasons for FLA.

Aydin (2008) investigated the relationship between negative evaluation and language anxiety, and the causes and levels of fear with 112 Turkish EFL learners. A foreign language anxiety scale and a scale to measure fear of negative evaluation were used. The results showed that students suffer a high level of anxiety if they fear negative evaluation and that this was often caused by a fear of negative judgement and/or leaving an unfavourable impression on teachers and classmates. As I illustrated above, CA and/or fear of negative evaluation could be the main reasons for the generation of anxiety in the

classroom, but some of my students also become anxious when they are in exams and I shall explore this now.

4.8.3 Test anxiety

Teachers' observations, learners' experiences and research outcomes suggest that test anxiety is one of the significant factors that negatively affects the foreign/second language learning process. Fear of and feeling anxious because of examinations and tests seems very common among learners in all subjects with some learners experiencing a very intense feeling of anxiety which most likely affects their performance and achievements. Here I will outline the concept of FL test anxiety in the context of FLL and suggest some possible causes and effects of test anxiety by referring to a number of previous studies.

Test anxiety is form of apprehension about academic evaluation. It is a fear of failing in test situations and is often an unpleasant experience, consciously or unconsciously, for learners in many situations and it comes, often, from a fear of failure (Horwitz and Young, 1991 cited in Aydin, 2008). According to Young (1999), students' test anxiety may be caused by perceptions of test validity, time limits, testing techniques, test format, length, the testing environment and the clarity of test instructions. However, test validity is considered the most important factor that produces test anxiety. Young (1991), for example, demonstrated that learners feel a high level of test anxiety and fear when the test involves content that has not been not taught or provided during a course. Time limits and feeling under a time pressure, however, is another variable that increases test anxiety and may decrease the performance of learners. Ohata's (2005) study revealed that when students feel under a time pressure, their thinking, concentrating, and organizing of ideas becomes more difficult. Inappropriate test technique, as Young (1991) states, is another cause of test anxiety, with students often feeling anxious if they have spent hours preparing for a test and then find question types with which they had no previous experience. Besides the factors mentioned above, there are other variables such as learners' capacity, task difficulty, the fear of scoring low grades and lack of preparation for a test which may also make students feel anxious and uncomfortable during testing. From my experience, I have observed that some of my students might perform badly in tests because they feel anxious during the test as a result of one or more of these reasons. Some, especially women, seem to feel anxious only at the beginning of the exam and ultimately they perform well. So gender, as research suggests, might also play an important role in degrees of anxiety. Rezazadeh's (2009) study, which was conducted in Iran, showed that female students at university experience higher levels of anxiety in tests compared to males. But besides the

77

FLA sources suggested by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) above, anxiety might result from other personality factors and these variables, as I shall explain, below can overlap with each other or with other non-psychological factors such as classroom factors to result in feelings of anxiety.

4.9   Personal factors

In this section, I shall talk about some psychological variables such as self-concept, self-confidence, beliefs, attitudes, motivation, and learner styles and their relationship to anxiety.

4.9.1 Self-concepts (self-image, ideal self, self-esteem)

Self-concept refers to the way we think about ourselves and this is unique, dynamic, and always developing. According to Purkey (1988), self-concept generally refers to the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence (cited in Kostić-Bobanović and Ambrosi-Randi, 2008, p. 284). Lawrence (2006) defines self-concept as:

> … the sum total of an individual's mental and physical characteristics and his evaluation of them. As such it has three aspects: the cognitive (thinking); the affective (feeling); and the behavioural (action) (p.2).

As these definitions suggest, self-concept is a broad term, often subsuming three sub-categories: self-image, ideal self and self-esteem. According to Lawrence (2006), self-image refers to 'the individual's awareness of his mental and physical characteristics' (p.3). The development of self-image starts with parents who play a crucial role in shaping the first image of the child. The image, made verbally or non-verbally, is the image in which a child perceives him/herself of being loved or not, clever or not, and so on. School life, of course, adds more experiences and a child may come to believe that she is a capable learner or not or, for example, that she is popular amongst her classroom peers or not. Self-image, as Lawrence (2006) points out, includes physical image or body image, which is the way in which an individual perceives her appearance, function and abilities. The ideal-self, on the other hand, refers to what an individual would like to be. As a child perceives what she is, she is also learning that there are ideal characteristics, behaviours, and skills that her parents and/or teachers highly evaluate and would like that child to have. Beside the family and the school, society has power in shaping self-image and the ideal-self of the child. Comments made by family and other people on the child's shape, size, style, behaviours,

78

manners and so forth alert the child to standards and values in her society. As the child grows, she compares herself with peers in and out of schools and peers' comparison often occurs most significantly during adolescence when it has a particularly powerful influence on the development of the self.

Self-esteem is probably the most important component of self-concept but it has a complex nature because of its overlap with self-concept. For centuries, self-esteem has been a complex issue in psychology. Although many psychologists have attempted to define self-esteem, it seems quite difficult to grasp such a complicated concept in a single agreed definition (Rubio, 2007). However, Cast and Burke (2002) state that self-esteem 'refers most generally to an individual's overall positive evaluation of the self' (p.1042). Rubio (2007), in addition, defines self-esteem as:

> … a psychological and social phenomenon in which an individual evaluates his competence and own self according to some values, which may result in different emotional states, and which becomes developmentally stable but is still open to variation depending on personal circumstances (p.5).

As I explained earlier, self-image is the mental image the person perceives about herself when she compares herself to others or to her perception of the ideal. Through the psychological literature, Rubio (2007) concludes that the theoretical construct of self-esteem includes six main components: competence, worthiness, cognition, affect, stability and openness. These dimensions have been used by psychologists such as Coopersmith (1959), White (1959), Rosenberg (1965, 1979), Branden (1969), and Mruk (1999). Studies of self-esteem show that all dimensions are important

to a certain degree and all might influence an individual, depending on her particular traits and circumstances. So, my students will have different images about themselves depending on their personal traits, the way their self-esteem develops and their own contexts.

The development of self-esteem, as many psychologists (e.g. Rosenberg,1965; Coopersmith,1967; Mruk, 1999) illustrate, can be influenced by many factors but one of the most significant factors is parents and their degrees of warmth, respect, expectations and, also, birth order may be an influence. These variables can influence self-esteem positively or negatively and, besides parents, school can play a crucial role in self-esteem development especially during the early stages when a child starts evaluating her performance in the class. Reasoner (1992) has developed a model with five constituents of self-esteem in the classroom: Security (knowing that I am safe, physically and emotionally), Identity (knowing who I am), Belonging (knowing others accept me),

79

Purpose (knowing what I want to do and achieve) and Competence (knowing I can) (cited in Arnold 2011, p.17). In language classes, teachers can develop these five elements at the same time as they work to improve students' language skills. Arnold believes that language teaching activities that focus on self-esteem are important and can be successful because they have strong personal meaning for students. As a teacher, I can work as a prompter and keep telling students that they can do difficult tasks if they want to do them. This step is preceded by making a comfortable atmosphere in which my students feel secure and have a sense of belonging to the class. I would also try to avoid negative evaluation in order to raise students' self-confidence as this plays an important role in FL and will now be discussed.

4.9.2 Self-confidence

Self-confidence is one of the most significant factors that influences learning in general and language learning in particular. In education, self-confidence refers to a learner's belief in her abilities and skills to, for example, understand, answer questions, solve problems, and make decisions. Clément et al. (1994) define the self-confidence construct operationally: 'self-confidence includes two components - anxiety as the affective aspect and self-evaluation of proficiency as the cognitive component' (p.443). Self-confidence plays a significant role in students' language anxiety and FLL and the relationship between anxiety and self-confidence is most likely negative (Huang, 2004). Daly et al.(1997) found that highly anxious people generally have lower self-confidence compared with those less anxious. Also, Clément's (1980) theory emphasized that self-confidence implies a lack of anxiety and is a significant factor in FLL. Bong (2002), and Zimmerman and Kitsantas (2005) agree with Clément that highly confident language students with low anxiety learn the target language easier and faster than a less confident student with high anxiety. Self-confidence was also the most significant elements from a motivational prescriptive as explored by Clément (1980) and his colleagues. Similarly, Flowers and Marston (1972) assert that self-confidence is correlated with motivation and that it motivates learners to work hard in the classroom. Confident students may be obvious to the teacher. They usually look enthusiastic, are hard workers, have high motivation, are resolved to keep learning even when they have difficulties, have the tendency to participate in activities which can be expressed in various forms of behaviours such as hand raising, interrupting, and offering replies (Flowers and Marston, 1972). Of course, the previous behaviours are not exclusively signs of confident students. In other words, some confident students may

80

prefer sitting calmly and quietly in the classroom. But students lacking confidence, in comparison, often seem less motivated and may be recognized through their avoidance behaviours, sitting silently, being unwilling to be involved in classroom activities, or even not attending classes although, of course, there may be other reasons for these behaviours.

Researchers such as Bağış (2007) and Gardner and MacIntyre (1989) emphasis the direct and reciprocal relationship between self-confidence and attitude, explaining that students low in self-confidence most probably have negative attitudes towards the course and the class setting. Low confidence students most likely have relatively stable negative feelings such as a fear of humiliation, fear of failure, incompetence and anxiety towards the teacher and course with an unwillingness to become involved in speaking activities. Low self-confidence, ultimately, can lead to negative emotions like anxiety, fear, or depression. In my classes, there are, of course, different kinds of students. Some seem confident and they have high motivation, show enthusiasm, like the English language and believe in their abilities and skills to learn it, keep asking questions in English, volunteer answers, often prefer to sit at the front and seem eager to learn and enjoy competing with their peers. In contrast, there are low confidence students who, I believe, may have a negative attitude towards English and who sit quietly and are often unwilling to participate in activities, looking anxious, avoiding communication and if they have to speak, hesitating before they do so.

Clément et al. (1994) suggested strategies to improve the self-confidence of students, proposing that regular direct contact with target language native speakers can increase self-confidence and eliminate anxiety and overcome fear. Moreover, they suggest that a positive supportive classroom atmosphere can encourage students to become more involved in language activities which, in turn, can increase their self-confidence and moderate their anxiety. With my low confidence students, I use strategies suggested by Clément et al.(1994) except regular contact with native speakers of English which is difficult because of the current situation in Libya. However, I personally apply strategies suggested by Hadfield and Hadfield (2008) such as giving students planning time to have ideas and to think of what to say; encouraging students to share ideas and work in pairs or groups before they speak to the class; ensuring that each student participates in activities, and giving opportunities for repetition to give them more confidence.

Although self-concept (self-esteem and confidence) plays a major role in learning FLs, there are additional variables, as I shall clarify below, that increase students' anxiety and may influence learning negatively.

81

4.9.3 Attitudes and beliefs

Attitudes and beliefs have relatively recently joined the growing body of research in the field of affective factors influencing foreign language learning and, according to Hosseini and Pourmandnia (2013), attitude:

> … is usually defined as a disposition or tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain thing such as an idea, object, person, or situation. Students have positive or negative attitudes towards the language they want to learn or the people who speak it (p.63).

Most scholars agree that how successful learners are in learning a language is directly affected by what they think about and how they value the target language, native speakers of the language, the target culture and, also, the learning context. Numerous studies have explored the relationship between attitude and proficiency in the target language (Mantle-Bromley, 1995; Malallah, 2000; Bain et al., 2010; Kiziltan and Atli, 2013) and suggested that attitudes, besides other affective variables, are as significant as aptitude for language attainment. Based on the theory of planned behaviour, Montano and Kasprzyk (2008) reported that:

> … attitude is determined by the individual's beliefs about the outcomes or attributes of performing the behaviour (behaviour beliefs), weighted by evaluations of these outcomes or attributes. Thus, a person who holds strong beliefs that positively valued outcomes will result from performing the behaviour will have a positive attitude toward the behaviour. Conversely, a person who holds strong beliefs that negatively valued outcomes will result from the behaviour will have a negative attitude (p.71).

This means that attitude is connected to an individual's values and beliefs and encourages or discourages the choices made in all areas of activities (Gardner, 1985). Wenden (1991) simplified Gardener's argument when she classified attitude into three related elements: cognitive, affective and behavioural. The cognitive constituent refers to beliefs, thoughts, and opinions about the object of attitude, here the target language and FLL. The affective constituent involves negative or positive feelings and emotions towards, here, English language learning. The behavioural constituent includes the tendency to adopt particular learning behaviours (Wenden, 1991). So, my students who have a positive attitude towards the English language and culture may be more motivated than others who do not have such positive attitudes and they may exert greater effort to learn the language.

In the context of FLL, Victori and Lockhart (1995) defined beliefs as:

> … general assumptions that students hold about the nature of language learning, about factors influencing language learning, and about the nature of language learning and teaching (cited in Bernat and Lloyd 2007, p. 79).

Language educators and researchers (such as Ehrman and Oxford, 1995; Benson, 2001; Wenden, 2001), have recognised that FL learners bring a complex web of personal variables like attitudes, beliefs, experiences, learning strategies, expectations, perceptions to the language classroom. Mantle-Bromley (1995) argues that working on learners' attitudes should constitute an integral aspect of second language learning pedagogy for two reasons. Firstly, attitudes have a considerable influence on behaviours such as communication in a FL or even selecting and reading books. Secondly, there is a strong connection between attitudes towards FL learning and FL achievement. The importance of attitudes and beliefs lies in their contribution to the learning process and ultimate success. Bernat and Gvozdenko (2005) explain that:

> … second or foreign language students may hold strong beliefs about the nature of the language under study, its difficulty, the process of its acquisition, the success of certain learning strategies, the existence of aptitude, their own expectations about achievement and teaching methodologies (p.1).

From my experience, some students complain that English is a difficult language to learn and its difficulty lies in memorising vocabulary and using words in the appropriate place. They also say the morphology and syntax of English is difficult to understand and teaching and learning methods are sometimes inappropriate. The affective element of beliefs plays a greater role in language learning than the cognitive one according to Sheorey (2006). Preconceived beliefs may have a direct impact on, or even determine, learners' attitudes and motivations, and they might also precondition learners' success or failure. Positive beliefs can help learners to overcome their difficulties and therefore maintain motivation, whereas learners who hold negative or unrealistic beliefs and attitudes may be more susceptible to anxiety and frustration. Negative beliefs and attitude are primary variables generating anxiety as Yang (1992) indicates in her review of FLA research. Horwitz (1988), in addition, found that some English language learners hold a belief that English should only be practised in real, authentic interactions when learners can speak fluently. Those learners attached great significance to speaking with an excellent accent or supported the idea that language learning is basically about interpreting from English. Moreover, Horwitz (1988) showed that those learners had a belief that two academic years would not be sufficient to make them fluent in English. Unrealistic and flawed beliefs, unfortunately, can lead learners to disappointments and frustration, and consequently raised anxiety levels. My students who feel disappointed and hold a belief that English is a

83

difficult language to learn often fail in exams because they have low motivation and might exert little effort because they already have a belief that they will not pass.

More recently, Kiziltan and Atli (2013) investigated young Turkish learners' attitudes towards the English language and English lessons in Turkish elementary schools. Two questionnaires were developed to determine the learners' attitudes towards ELL inside and outside the classroom. The study showed that the pupils seem to have developed positive attitudes towards skills and sub skills, materials, the course book, and activities. Moreover, it was concluded that the learners' attitudes developed positively according to language skills and learning environment but there was no significant difference in the attitudes of learners towards English according to gender. A study conducted by Abidin et al. (2012) sought to explore 180 Libyan secondary school learners' attitudes towards learning English in terms of behavioural, cognition, and emotional aspects. The study, in addition, investigated if there was any difference in learners' attitudes toward the English Language based on their demographic profiles (sex, years of study, and discipline). Participants from three different disciplines, basic sciences, life sciences, and social sciences, completed a questionnaire and the findings generally showed a negative attitude towards English language learning. The study also revealed that the attitudes of women students were slightly more positive than those of the men, and social science students showed higher positive attitudes towards learning English than basic and life science students. This result, the researchers concluded, might have been influenced by the curriculum content and the students' specialization. Finally, regarding years of study experience, first level students showed higher positive attitudes compared with other groups. The researchers recommended that teachers should understand the necessity of respecting and considering psychological aspects affecting learning such as students' feelings, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour before thinking of their cognitive abilities.

In addition to the previous causes of FLA suggested by Horwitz et al.(1986) and the psychological causes as noted above, learning a foreign language can also be affected by the classroom setting and so below I discuss the influence of this.

4.10 Classroom setting factors

The classroom setting, with respect to single-sex or mixed-sex classes, is another important variable that might influence student achievement and performance and gender has become a significant issue in education. Numerous studies conducted in many different contexts have attempted to investigate the effect of mixed-sex classrooms on learning different

subjects, including foreign languages. The research findings on the effects of mixed-sex classes range between those that seem to demonstrate that mixed-sex classes have negative effects on foreign language learning to those which show an insignificant influence on learning to those which indicate the positive effects of co-education, mixed-sex settings.

Some education experts and parents have a preference for single-sex schools and programmes on the basis that boys are more dominant in classrooms and that separating students by sex might enhance girls' opportunities to excel in some subject areas, for example, in science and maths. The mixed-sex classroom, that is co-education, according to Howe (1997) and Warrington and Younger (2000), has a negative impact on both sexes. Boys in the classroom can have a negative influence on girls' academic engagement and outcomes because boys seem to be more disruptive, have more negative interactions with teachers, and fight more with each other as well as with the opposite sex. Other studies, such as that by Francis (2004), suggested that boys are more involved in classroom' activities and laboratory work, particularly in science and mathematics, subjects in which girls often have fewer opportunities to participate. However, there are studies which suggest the opposite. According to Dale (1974), girls' academic progress was not influenced by co-education although the research findings did indicate that girls experienced some disadvantages, particularly in mathematics and science performance. Dale (1974) also believes that mixed-sex classes provide the optimal preparation for adult life, providing girls and boys with good opportunities to communicate and learn about each other. Consequently, students in co-education classrooms tend to have a broader outlook on life as they have been exposed to both boys and girls. Moreover, Hannan and Shortall (1991) point to the positive attitudes of both boys and girls in mixed-sex classes with respect to the personal and social development aspects of their schooling.

Schools looking for strategies to enhance student motivation and academic achievement could consider offering single-sex classrooms as one effective change that could address learners' needs. Single-sex education is an old approach that has recently gained new momentum in many countries including Australia, New Zealand and the U.S.A. Teaching boys and girls in separate classrooms has been shown to have advantages and disadvantages. Single-sex schooling supporters have argued that current mixed-sex classrooms disadvantage males, while single-sex schooling increases their achievement and shrinks the gender gap caused by co-education schooling. For example, Sax (2005, 2007), the founder and executive director of the National Association for Single Sex Public Education (NASSPE), reports that the single-sex classroom is advantageous for both sexes

85

for the reason that boys and girls have a dissimilar set of 'hardwired' skills and aptitudes that are best accommodated by single-sex schooling. Sax's view, arguing for differences in cognitive skills between the sexes, fits with the commonly held view that girls are much better than boys in language and boys outperform girls in maths and science but this is very controversial. Personally, I do not believe differences are necessarily 'hard-wired' but may, instead, result from cultural context and background, especially but not only in a country such as Libya and I return to this.

Separate sex classes, according to Sax, facilitate lesson delivery for teachers, allowing girls and boys more freedom to discover their own interests and abilities. Single sex classes may also preserve the right of understanding and participating for both boys and girls, and make girls feel less stressed and more self-confident in mathematics and chemistry classes, and so their learning becomes more enjoyable. Other researchers, such as Carpenter and Hayden (1987) and Dale (1971,1974), also argue that single-sex schooling is beneficial for girls, mainly in mathematics and science. On the other hand, single-sex schools, as Pahlke et al. (2014) claim, do not provide any social or educational advantages over co-educational programmes within the school system. Pahlke et al.'s claims were based on a study which appeared in the Psychological Bulletin, a journal published by the American Psychological Association, by a team of psychological researchers at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, who studied all available recent research on single-sex education published since 2006 and conducted in 21 different countries. Their review shows no evidence to support proponents' claims of the benefits of single-sex education, and throws doubts on assertions from advocates of same-sex schools that boys and girls have different abilities, capacities, degree of intelligence and strategies in learning and must therefore be separated in class to reach their full potential, as Sax (2005, 2007) argues. The findings, moreover, demonstrate that learners who attended single-sex schools were not any better off than others who attended mixed-sex school programmes in terms of self-esteem or performance in subject areas such as science, technology, engineering and maths.

Although there have long been debates and competing findings about the potential impact of single and co-education schooling, Smyth (2010) has studied and summarised the main previous studies conducted in many different countries. Smyth concludes that the findings of the research might be influenced by the methods and analytical techniques employed, and the outcomes considered and that, of course, is true for all research, including all of the studies I cite here. Smyth also states that there seems to be a sort of consensus on whether single-sex classrooms are better for girls' or boys' academic achievement. Further, there

appears to be evidence that attitudes to subject areas tend to be more gender stereotyped in a mixed-sex educational setting, which is one of the reasons why there is some support for single-sex classes. Exploring the effects/benefits of co-education raises a number of broader issues, some of them related to the societal context within which the two settings take place (Smyth, 2010).

As I indicated in Chapter Two, there are co-education and single-sex schools in Libya, and their separation depends on the population of the area. When the population is high single-sex schools exist but where there is a low population co-education schools occur. However, all state universities are co-educational. Co-education settings and influences from the Libyan norms and Islamic traditions limit the communication between men and women, as I will discuss in detail in Chapter Seven, and this may be a source of anxiety for many students. So it is possible that students of English might change their attitudes towards learning English if they are affected by communication apprehension as a result of a mixed-sex class.

Anxiety, as I have argued, can be the result of many different causes - some common, some personal, and some which might affect particular students because of their unique contexts, personalities or circumstances. However, whatever the reason, anxiety can have significant consequences that affect language learning, as outlined in the next section.

4.11 Foreign language learning anxiety consequences

Although the phenomenon of foreign language learning (FLA) anxiety has been the subject of research for many years, because of its complexity only quite recently has our knowledge of the consequences of classroom communication anxiety increased substantially, helped by conceptualizing FLA as a multidimensional construct according to Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000). Glaser (1981) explained that communication apprehension contains cognitive, behavioural and psychological aspects in its nature. Curran (1977) pointed out that the problem of anxiety involves people's communication behaviour, their own estimation of that behaviour, their comfort with interactions, and their estimation of others. Guiora (1983), on the other hand, argues that foreign language learning itself is 'a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition for the reason that learning a foreign language threatens learners' beliefs, culture, self-concept and worldview' (p.8).

Since oral communication is the primary goal of many second/foreign language learners, many language learners say that developing their speaking ability is the key to achieving

their aims (Lightbown and Spada, 2006). However, speaking is often judged to be the most difficult skill. Many learners claim to have a mental block, difficulty in recalling vocabulary, and difficulty in pronunciation when speaking and Horwitz et al. (1986) indicate that the feelings of apprehension or nervousness associated with speaking are often the result of speaking task requirements which demand listening comprehension and immediate responding

Anxious FL learners have different reactions as researchers illustrate. According to Sanchez-Herrero (1992), anxious learners are those who lack the ability to distinguish aurally among words or to pronounce new sounds well. As noted above, some anxious learners try to avoid stress and embarrassment by refusing to participate, preferring to sit at the back in the class, tending not to converse in the FL, either with classmates or their teachers, tending to sit silently, and, when called upon to speak, tending not to respond or, if they do, to speak in a whisper (Bailey, 1983; Phillips, 1991, Fukai, 2000). Such students also tend to miss classes, freeze-up in role-play activities, and have difficulty recalling previous learned information (Ely, 1986; Horwitz el al., 1986). In addition to researchers' descriptions of anxious learners, I have also identified behaviours by my anxious students. They often hesitate before they speak, pause between words, mispronounce words, ask to repeat what has been said in order to better understand it, respond slowly, use Arabic words when forgetting the English equivalents, stutter and stammer, get stuck and, in extreme cases, escape from classes when asked to speak in front of the whole class to avoid embarrassment. For all of these reasons, I aim, in this study to explore the causes that trigger my students' anxiety when they speak.

4.12 Chapter summary

This Chapter has presented a philosophical and, mainly, a psychological analysis of anxiety and revealed similarities and differences in fear and anxiety. It has also illustrated the levels and categories of anxiety and I have started to focus on the main topic of this research, Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA), noting its different classifications according to different perspectives and researchers, its sources, its relationships with personal factors like self-concept, self-confidence, beliefs, attitudes, and its impacts on foreign language learning and achievement. I have also outlined ways in which classroom settings can affect anxiety. The interference between these factors and their relationship with each other and to anxiety is complicated because the effect of each factor depends on its classification, level and intensity. Sources of FLA experienced by Libyan students may be, I think, in

some ways different from those experienced by students of some other nationalities. The complex Libyan norms and Islamic traditions regarding communication between different the sexes and their interference with education in general, and FLA specifically, may have significant effects on learning and achievement although these factors will perhaps apply in other contexts in which the cultural norms and especially gendered norms pertain. This is what I set out to explore in my research and so, in the next Chapter, I will outline my research methodology, presenting the method I used for data collection and discussing my participants and their profiles. I shall also explain how the data was collected and the difficulties I encountered during the process, particularly with respect to the current situation in Libya.

Chapter 5   Methodology

5.1   Introduction

This Chapter outlines the methodological approach, steps and procedures which I used in this research. Initially I present a justification of using a qualitative method for collecting data. I then introduce the research tool, semi-structured interviews, and discuss ways in which these are valid and reliable with respective to my overall approach. I explain how participants were selected and show the profiles of the research participants before detailing the procedures of data collection. In addition, I discuss ethical issues and my positionality as a researcher and I note some difficulties I encountered. Finally, I outline the data analysis process used.

5.2   A Qualitative method of research

For this research study, I chose a qualitative research method using semi-structured interviews as the major research tool. Since the process of qualitative research facilitates gathering rich data and findings, I used this overall method to help me better understand anxiety with respect, generally, to teaching and learning English in the Libyan context and with a specific focus on speaking. Strauss and Corbin (1990) explain that qualitative research is that kind of research that generates findings that could not be reached by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. Hancock (2002, p.2) clarifies that 'qualitative research is concerned with finding the answers to questions which begin with: why?, how?, in what way?' and Flick (2002) states that qualitative methods are valuable because they help us focus on 'why' rather 'how many'. In addition, Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggest that qualitative research is distinctive because it is conducted in the natural world. This all fitted what I wanted to explore as did Guest et al.'s (2012) argument that:

> … researchers and practitioners in fields as diverse as anthropology, education, nursing, psychology, sociology, and marketing regularly use qualitative methods to address questions about people's ways of organizing, relating to, and interacting with the world (p.1).

Holliday (2005) claims that using qualitative research gives researchers the opportunity to look deeply into behaviour within specific social situations and as I wanted to investigate the Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLA experienced by Libyan students, qualitative research gave me the opportunity to explore and try to identify the causes of the FLA and to better understand the situation of English language learning and teaching in the Libyan

90

context. It also provided an opportunity to collect rich data, to explore my questions in context, and to gain an understanding of participants' behaviour from their own frame of reference.

The advantage of using qualitative research, as Best and Khan (1998) point out, involves observing and asking participants about profound details and Berg (2004) states that qualitative research 'provides the framework to explore, define, and assist in understanding the social and psychological phenomena of organizations and the social settings of individuals' (p.11). For these reasons, I chose to use semi-structured interviews. However, I was aware, from the beginning of my study, that I would need to ensure that my research was rigorous and so I turn now to ways of ensuring that the sort of qualitative research I used met the standards of 'good' research.

5.3 Reliability, validity and trustworthiness in qualitative research

Reliability and validity are, in some form, essential elements of confidence for any research method. Attention to validity and reliability, according to Singh (2014), can raise transparency and reduce opportunities for researcher bias in qualitative research. Stenbacka (2001) considers reliability serves the 'purpose of explaining' in a quantitative approach and of 'generating understanding' in a qualitative approach to research (p. 552-553) and I wanted to better understand. With respect to validity, Bashir et al. (2008) explain that this refers to '…the extent to which the data is plausible, credible and trustworthy; and thus, can be defended when challenged' (p.35). Best and Kahn (1998) defined validity as 'the quality of the data collection procedure that enables it to measure what it is intended to measure' (p.17). The researcher, according to Golafshani (2003), must ensure reliability and validity of the study based on sustaining neutrality, and trustworthiness. This research study attempts to consider and present the trustworthiness of the research data collection tool, and consequently its findings, by respecting and applying these modified concerns of validity and reliability to the research conducted and, in addition to some further discussion below, I return to this in Chapter Eight.

I attempted to ensure reliability and trustworthiness of my method by applying best practices in qualitative research, such as reflexivity to explain my position as a researcher. Reflexivity, as Steedman (1991) suggests, entails researchers being aware of their influence on the processes and findings of research, based on the idea that knowledge cannot be separated from the knower. Reflexivity, as Nightingale and Cromby (1999) state,

pushes us 'to explore the ways in which a researcher's involvement with a particular study influences, acts upon and informs such research' (p.228). Nightingale and Cromby (1999) explain that there are two types of reflexivity: personal and epistemological.

> Personal reflexivity involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how the research may have affected and possibly changed us, as people and as researchers. Epistemological reflexivity requires us to engage with questions such as: How has the research question defined and limited what can be 'found?' Thus, epistemological reflexivity encourages us to reflect upon the assumptions (about the world, about knowledge) that we have made in the course of the research, and it helps us to think about the implications of such assumptions for the research and its findings. How has the design of the study and the method of analysis 'constructed' the data and the findings? How could the research question have been investigated differently? To what extent would this have given rise to a different understanding of the phenomenon under investigation? (p.32).

Following Nightingale and Cromby's (1999) ideas, this research was shaped by my own experience, beliefs, and values towards the phenomenon. It was also shaped by the Libyan culture, norms and religion which influence the educational system of the country. FLA has previously been investigated mostly by quantitative, often psychologically-based, research whereas my research is qualitative and personal reflexivity means it has been shaped by my own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life, especially as a teacher, and by my own social identity. This means I needed to be epistemologically reflexive. My approach enabled me to investigate the phenomenon qualitatively in order to gain a deeper understanding of anxiety and the factors affecting Libyan students' English speaking but I needed to stay aware of the assumptions I made in this research and the implications of my assumptions as I interpreted my data. I also needed to stay aware that a study using a different approach or a different researcher using my approach might have come to different interpretations, working conclusions and understandings. With this in mind, in the next section I will explain in detail the tool I used for data collection and why I chose it, and the types of and contents of the questions I used.

5.4   Research instrument: Semi-structured interviews

Research interviews are sometimes referred to as dialogue, a method used commonly in many contexts, including educational research. Gill et al. (2008) state that the purpose of the research interview is to investigate individuals' views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations on specific topics and Kvale (2006) suggests that interviewing has become a powerful method for exploring participants' private and public lives. Kvale adds that social

scientists depend on interviewing to investigate varieties of human experience in order to understand the world from people's points of view and to clarify the meaning of their lived world. Such interviews, as Kvale (2006) states:

> … give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words, and open for a close personal interaction between the researchers and their subjects (p.481).

I chose interviews for data collection because I wanted my participants to express what they felt about FLA, and to talk about the reasons for their anxiety, and I wanted them to be able to express in detail any and all of their concerns and fears about their learning and, especially, their speaking. Although I could not guarantee that my participants would share all of their thoughts with me, interviews would enable me to explore the phenomenon of FLA from different angles including those based on my participants' sex, personal variables, and efficiency in English. Based on the degree of structuring, interviews can be classified into three categories: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews, and unstructured interviews (Fontana and Frey, 2005) and I will explain each briefly.

The structured interview is sometimes called a standardized interview and all participants are asked the same questions in the same order. Gray (2004) suggests that questions in structured interviews are often read out in the same voice in order not to influence the interviewee by the tone of the interviewer. An unstructured interview, on the other hand, is non-directed and flexible. It is more informal than a structured interview and the interviewer could ask participants different questions in whatever way s/he sees fit. Interviewees are encouraged to talk openly, frankly and to give as much detail as possible (Dana et al., Dawes and Peterson, 2013). A semi-structured interview is different in that the interviewer usually has a framework with themes to be explored in form of a list of questions (often referred to as an interview guide) about a particular topic. However, the interviewee has flexibility in how to reply. It is not obligatory in semi-structured interviews to ask the questions in the same order but the researcher is free to pick up questions that s/he thinks it is appropriate to ask at a suitable time and depending on how the interviewee has answered (Corbetta, 2003). As I was interested in what my participants thought and felt and experienced and as I wanted to allow them the freedom to respond as they wished but, also, to understand their thoughts about certain things, I chose the semi-structured interview.

Two sets of open-ended questions were designed for each group of participants in order to explore the causes of FLA from two different perspectives, teachers' and students'. My

aim in applying semi-structured interviews was to ensure that I could explore the range of factors that could impact students' oral performance. Appendix 3 shows the general areas covered in the Students' Interviews and Appendix 7 shows the Teachers' Interview topics. I did not ask each question in the order shown in the appendices but I used the forms as a guide to me and as a memory aid. As each participant talked they often answered more than one area and I marked each topic area question when they talked about it. At the end of each interview I made sure I had covered the main areas.

5.5 The research participants

The participants consisted of two groups. The first group consisted of two subgroups, the first were 11 Libyan men students aged between 19 and 23 years. The second were 11 Libyan women students also aged between 19 and 23. All participants were students in the English department of a School of Education in Libya. I emailed all second, third, and fourth students, and then I selected the volunteer participants randomly. Students from the first year were excluded from this study because they would have insufficient experience of English language teaching and learning in the school. Table 3 and 4 shows detailed information about the students' sex (M=man, W=woman) with their academic level and years of experience of English language learning in total. All 22 students responded to the interview questions.

Coded names	Student's age	Academic level	Years of experience in ELL
M1	19	2nd	8
M2	19	2nd	8
M3	19	2nd	8
M4	20	2nd	8
M5	20	3rd	9
M6	20	3rd	9
M7	21	3rd	9
M8	21	3rd	9
M9	22	4th	10
M10	22	4th	10
M11	23	4th	10

Table 3. Participants' Profile (First subgroup/Men students)

Coded names	Student's age	Academic level	Years of experience in ELL
W1	19	2nd	8
W2	19	2nd	8
W3	19	2nd	8
W4	20	2nd	8
W5	21	3rd	9
W6	21	3rd	9
W7	21	3rd	9
W8	22	4th	10
W9	22	4th	10
W10	22	4th	10
W11	23	4th	10

Table 4. Participants' profile (Second subgroup/Women Students)

The second group of participants was eight Libyan experienced tutors (four men and four women) who had been teaching English as a FL for more than eight years. Two of them hold a PhD and the other six hold Master's degrees. Participants' degrees had been achieved in the UK, Malta, Malaysia and Egypt as indicated in Table 5 below.

Coded names	Teacher's sex	Degree and place	Years of experience
T1	M	MA Malaysia	12
T2	M	MA UK	9
T3	M	MA Malta, PhD UK	34
T4	M	MA Malaysia, PhD UK	9
T5	W	MA UK	12
T6	W	MA Egypt	8
T7	W	MA UK	12
T8	W	MA Egypt.	10

Table 5. Participants' Profiles (Second group/Teachers)

5.6 Data collection

Data collection began after I applied for and received ethical approval from the University of Glasgow to collect the data through two sets of semi-structured interviews. Before I travelled to Libya, I had applied for and received approval to invite volunteer participants from the English Department of a School of Education in Libya. I then presented my Plain

Language Statement and Consent Form (Appendix One and Two) to the volunteer students and teachers, and made sure that they understood that their participation was optional.

Finally, I started collecting data by face to face interviewing with both the students and teachers. Fortunately, all who had offered to participate were able to take part in the interviews which were conducted and recorded individually in a quiet room in the School of Education Building. Interviews lasted between 18 and 30 minutes. The interviews were conducted in Arabic for three main reasons. First, I wanted to ensure that each participant understood the interview questions and, secondly, I wanted to help participants (both teachers and students) feel comfortable when they expressed, for example, their feelings, experience, beliefs, concerns, attitudes. Thirdly, I wanted to ensure that participants could fully express themselves when talking rather than be constrained or inhibited by asking them to talk in English as an Additional Language. I discuss this decision in section 5.8 below but, in sum here, the next step was translating all of every interview into English and transcribing them for analysis. Initially, I listened to each dialogue twice, transcribed them in Arabic first and then translated them into English. In the next section I present the ethical issues encountered and discuss their significance to the study. I will also talk about some cultural issues that influenced the data collection.

5.7 Ethical issues and positionality

Ethical considerations are necessary for any research study with people in real world settings (Bell, 1999). Livesey (2014) states that:

> … ethics refers to the morality of doing something. Ethical considerations apply to choices about the type of research being undertaken such as whether it is ethical to study people without their knowledge or if it is, for example, ethical to deceive people about the purpose of a research study. Ethical issues, therefore, guide choices about how people are persuaded to participate in research, and how are they are physically and psychologically protected during and after the study (p.89).

I was not studying people without their knowledge or deceiving my participants about the purpose of my research study. Participation was entirely optional and I did not think my participants would need physical or psychological protection during or after my study. Creswell (2008) confirms that ethical protocols are significant because they protect the human rights and values that could otherwise be threatened by the research. May (1997) adds that neglecting ethical considerations could harm, perhaps, both the subjects and the researcher. According to the British Educational Research Association (2011):

> … educational researchers should operate within an ethic of respect for any persons involved in the research they are undertaking. Individuals should be treated fairly, sensitively, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice regardless of age, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, nationality, cultural identity, partnership status, faith, disability, political belief or any other significant difference. This ethic of respect should apply to both the researchers themselves and any individuals participating in the research either directly or indirectly (p.6).

When I conducted this study, I was a 38 year old heterosexual woman and a Libyan Muslim who had lived in the Islamic culture in Libya for most of my life. I had taught EFL at a Libyan university and spent seven years as a researcher in the UK for Masters and Doctoral studies. As a result, I fully understood the Libyan culture and how participants in my research might think of me as a woman researcher and how this could be a potential source of academic and social problems. Thus, in this research study I considered all aspects and domains of the ethical issues, for and among the students and teachers, including by respecting the cultural context of gender. For instance, I was completely aware of gender issues such as dealing with the opposite sex and collecting data with men participants. When I began interviewing participants, I ensured appropriate behaviour in consideration of the relationship between men and women in the Libyan culture. For example, I used appropriate language and a formal manner of communicating particularly with male teachers because some were older than me and needed to be given particular respect because of this. In addition, I ensured appropriate cultural awareness by giving all subjects a choice of when they preferred to be interviewed and I was also very careful not to publicise their names or use their responses for any other purposes than those in my Plain Language Statement and consent forms. Hence, I ensured, for example, that the names of participants were fully encoded during all stages of this research so that none of them could be identified.

Further ethical issues in my study relate to the conflict situation that existed in Libya during my research. When I invited my participants to take a part in my study I made sure that students had permission from their parents. Although all of the participants were older than 18, I did this so their families agreed and knew where they were when they talked to me and so they knew the topic of my research. This was especially important as the data collection was undertaken during periods of conflict and unrest in the city. As a researcher I had to protect myself and my participants from any possible danger or harm and be aware of risks. Although the university building was relatively far away from the dangers of the fighting and bombing, anything could change at any time and I and my participants had to travel to the university. My interviews with students and staff were conducted during the

97

days when they were at the university and I always ensured interviews were between classes so participants did not need to be on or to leave the campus earlier or later than usual. Also, if the unrest was bad in their home area at the time they might not come to the university. For all of these reasons I really stressed to each participant that they were free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and their decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study would not affect them in any way, or jeopardise their relationship with me or any of their teachers. This was particularly important at a time in the region of civil and military unrest. Everyone felt under pressure and all of us were probably more anxious than normal and so I had an ethical responsibility to make sure my study did not add, in any way, to that anxiety. I discuss the initial reluctance of my participants to have our interviews recorded and the generally high levels of anxiety may have contributed to this anxiety as many people, staff and students, felt insecure and unsure who could be trusted.

Further ethical issues, because of the unrest and conflict in Libya, related to myself as a doctoral candidate and these issues became very significant in the course of my studies. Researchers undertaking qualitative research, and particularly qualitative research on sensitive topics, need to be able to make an assessment of the impact of the research on both the participants and themselves. Dickson-Swift et al. (2007) have written that qualitative researchers, especially those looking at sensitive topics, 'need to be able to make an assessment of the impact of the research on both the participants and themselves' (p.328). I have noted above the need to minimise risks to my participants during data collection but from the start to the finish of my doctoral journey there were ethical – physical and emotional – risks to myself and to my wellbeing that I had to manage. My PhD studies started in Glasgow but personal family circumstances and the political situation meant I had to return to Libya with my husband who had also been a doctoral student when the troubles in Libya were at their height. The universities were closed and survival and caring for my young children became the only priority so this interrupted my studies. After the 'revolution', the gendered cultural issues I have already discussed and the continuing political situation and conflicts meant it was almost impossible to leave Libya to resume my studies. Electricity was and still is a challenge with frequent power cuts and so accessing the internet for resources and communicating with my supervisor was sometimes impossible. It was also impossible to leave Libya to come to the UK for my viva and so this was originally scheduled via webcam in May 2018. However, civil unrest in my city at that time meant it was impossible, the risks were too high, for me to leave my home and travel to access the internet and so that viva was postponed. Eventually I was

98

viva-ed with Zoom at the end of April 2019 from an internet office where I knew they had a back-up generator in case of an electricity cut. Even during my corrections month, after the viva, there were times when I had no internet access as there were bombings and unrest in my city. I think these are all ethical issues and they are all related to risks. Many times I thought I would never finish my PhD and for a thesis about emotions and anxiety, it is, I think, important that I record this. I return to ethical considerations in my final Chapter but note, below, some of the challenges of conducting this research.

5.8   Researching multilingually

As noted in section 5.6, I interviewed my participants individually in the Arabic language, the participants' first language. Although I knew it would take time later to translate each interview into English, I made this decision to ensure participants felt comfortable when expressing their feelings and talking about their experiences of anxiety. If I had asked them to talk in English then my interviews could have been seen as a test of English and not an interview in which I genuinely wanted to know their experiences and thoughts.   This was especially important because anxiety is a sensitive issue to talk about in Libyan society, particularly for men and especially for men talking to a woman. Moreover, I hoped that using Arabic would provide deep, rich and valuable information that most probably could not have been gained by using English simply because my participants might not have been able to express their emotions of anxiety because of the difficulty of finding the best vocabulary that could tell me what they thought. I can talk more deeply about my own emotions in Arabic than in English and I was looking for that sort of depth in my interviews. I did not want the participants to concentrate on thinking of the accuracy of the information they wanted to communicate or to worry about making language errors. That is why using the first language of the participants was chosen: to seek thoughtful responses without participants worrying about thinking of their language errors and fearing I might be evaluating them and even taking a negative impression about their English. Of course there were disadvantages of interviewing participants in Arabic not English. I have noted the additional and very significant time it took for me to translate my transcripts into Arabic but there were other challenges too. Halai (2007), writing about bilingual data, notes that 'interviews are not just words spoken at a certain time in response to a social situation' because those words 'are embedded in the culture of the place' (p.345). So when I translated the interview transcripts into English I needed to make sure my translations were understandable. So I was also interpreting as well as translating to make the text understandable for the reader. van Nes et al (2010) state that translation involves

99

interpretation and I tried to interpret the meanings and messages of the participants in ways that would mean readers of the English translation could understand what participants meant. I am sure that sometimes I have not been completely successful in my translations but I could not follow the advice of van Nes et al (2010) and employ a professional translator. I did, however, always try to express what I thought my participants had meant and I agree with Shklarov (2007) that as someone from the participants' culture and a first language user of their first language I could mediate between the different linguistic worlds of Libya and the UK and I was aware of ethical and cultural sensitivities as I explain in my data discussion. I am aware that some researchers are today questioning languages in PhD theses and so, for example, Holmes et al (2013) suggest 'the need for the decolonisation of the linguistic imperialism of English' (p.298) but, for the moment, my thesis has to be in English and so I had to do my best, including in my translations, to follow the guidelines on trustworthiness as noted in section 5.3 and the final Chapter.

5.9   Research difficulties and notes

Here I indicate some of the difficulties encountered during the research study and present some reflections from my notes that were made during the data collection process. Throughout the data collection, many students had concerns about their participation in the research and asked me questions such as: "Do our teachers know that we are participating in this study?", "Does this study have any effects on our results?", "Are you sure that we are secure if we give you negative comments about our teachers?", "Will our teachers be told about what we will tell you?". These questions highlighted the students' concerns and their fears about some of their teachers and clearly showed the significance of the ethical procedures and behaviours that protect participants from any threat or concerns of the research. My responses to their concerns were to repeat and re-explained that their participation in the research would be unknown, kept confidential, especially with regard to their teachers.

An unexpected difficulty presented during the study was that some of the teachers had no idea what FLA was and neither had they thought about the gendered effects of mixed-sex classrooms on their students' learning. Much time was taken to explain the topics to each teacher individually before each interview and I return to this during the data analysis and discussion. Additionally, although I had anticipated this, the nature of my research topic (anxiety) tends to be a sensitive topic when discussed in the Libyan culture particularly

100

with men. I am aware, and it is a limitation of my data, that some men participants might not have been willing to share their anxieties in interviews with me, particularly as I am a woman. The small number of male students in the English department, as well as some men's refusal to take part in the research, accompanied by the ongoing unrest in Libya, meant delays including having to wait for many weeks for one participant who was a volunteer fighter on the city boards. These delays and the situation in Libya meant extra time from me to collect my data, to start my analysis and consequently, and eventually, to submit this thesis.

Due to their very busy teaching schedules, I also found some difficulty in arranging appointments with some teachers, so I had to rearrange meetings with four teachers three times and this also took more time than I had planned for data collection. Voice recording was another real difficulty. Most female students hesitated when they saw this in the Consent and Plain Language Statement and were concerned that their voices would be recorded because they were afraid that their teachers might hear their comments about them. Some participants, especially students, tried to talk about things beyond the interview questions, and also hesitated to say what I think they wanted to say or they talked only indirectly about their teachers. Thinking back on my data collection now, I regard the biggest issue to relate to those restrictions caused by Libyan norms and the political situation in Libya. However, I did collect my data and, below, start to explain how I analysed that data.

5.10 Data analysis

For my data analysis, I chose to use a content analysis method to help explore, describe and then to interpret the semi-structured interview data. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) state that qualitative content analysis is one important method among numerous research methods that can be used to analyze text data. Content analysis would allow me to concentrate on the characteristics of language as communication with attention to the content and contextual meaning of the text. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as:

> ... a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (p.1278).

Additionally, researchers such as Cavanagh (1997) regard content analysis as a flexible method for analyzing qualitative data. Kerlinger (1986) describes content analysis as a

method of studying and analyzing communication in a systematic, objective, and quantitative manner in order to measure variables but I was not looking for quantification or, necessarily, objectivity. So Mayring's (2000) definition of content analysis was helpful:

> … an approach of empirical, methodological controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content analytic rules and step by step models, without rash quantification (p.2).

Patton (2002) describes content analysis as a 'sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings' (p.453) and that suited my aims here.

After data collection and ensuring all the participants' continuing consent, the data analysis process was started when I returned to the UK although it had to be finished from home in Libya. The first step was transcribing all the interview data and ensuring that all the original recordings were saved properly. Then, after supervision meetings in which we talked about the data, I started to elicit and summarise the findings from the interviews response according to the main aims of my research and I started to code extracts into themes. This approach of analysing the interviews encompassed the qualitative content analysis method, which is commonly used for this type of research, and it assisted me in revealing images of the participants and the ELT situation in Libya. As I have shown in Tables 3, 4, and 5, I coded the 11 women participant students as W1 to W11, the 11 men students as M1 to M11, and the eight teachers as T1 to T8.

5.11 Chapter Summary

In this Chapter, I have presented the research approach, the main research instrument, semi-structured interviews, and the methodological steps and actions which occurred in my research methodology. These procedures were followed in order to explore the FLA experienced by Libyan students. In addition, this Chapter noted some of the difficulties faced during data collection, such as the sensitivity of the topic "anxiety" in the Libyan culture and some cultural challenges during the collection of the data. The next Chapter presents and shows the data analysis and outcomes of the interviews.

Chapter 6   Data analysis and findings from the interviews

6.1   Introduction

Having discussed emotions in general and FLA specifically, and the methodology used for data collection, this Chapter presents the data analysis and outcomes of the interviews with a particular focus on the factors causing FL anxiety, especially communication apprehension, amongst Libyan university English Language students and teachers. Initially, in this Chapter, I will outline the students' interview questions, the students' interviews' analysis, the teachers' interview questions and the teachers' interviews' analysis.

I analysed the responses of students based on their sex (men and women's responses) to see if differences were present and I then merged them in order to further explore if the main causes of FLA are similar or different across the sexes. Finally, teachers' responses were analyzed in order to compare and contrast these with students' perspectives and I also discuss teacher responses in this Chapter. It should be noted that some extracts are repeated as they illustrate different or related issues.

This section presents the data analysis and findings for the semi-structured interviews, the main instrument of the research data collection. These semi-structured interviews were designed to investigate mainly the sources of FLA from learners' and teachers' perspectives regarding learning English in general and speaking specifically. In addition, the interviews explored other related issues such as students' attitudes, beliefs, motivations, types of anxieties (trait, state, situational), self-confidence, communication apprehension in both native and foreign languages, language skills and FLA, difficulty with accents, social comparison, and the classroom setting, in order to better understand FLA and to think about possible strategies to reduce FLA.

6.2. Students' interview questions

In the semi-structured interviews used for this research, I asked a series of open-ended questions with accompanying questions that asked for more detailed and contextual information. All students were asked about the same topics questions and the same applied

to the teacher group (see Appendix 3 for student question topics). My participants' answers provide rich in-depth information that helped me to better understand their learning context and their shared and unique experiences.

Since my research questions attempted to investigate the causes of FLA experienced by Libyan students, I designed these questions taking all the possible sources of the phenomenon including personal variables, classroom settings, Libyan norms, Islamic traditions and culture, into consideration. The personal variables and classroom setting I discussed in the previous Chapters in the literature review were also mentioned by the participants of this study.

6.3 Student interview analysis

During the process of conducting the interviews, some students' responses to some interview questions varied in both content and length. Some students provided valuable rich information while others provided only short answers. It should be noted that all extracts are italicized. In Question one, for example, "Do you enjoy learning English", some example responses were short with M11 answering, "*Yes*" and M2 responding, "*Yes, I do*", and W11 saying, "*Yes. I do very much*". In contrast, other's responses were longer and provided more information with M5 responding, "*Actually I did when I joined the university. But the security situation in the city as you know affects my study. We are in a war and I am a fighter so I cannot come every day to the school*". And W2 stated:

Sometimes I feel that I enjoy learning English and sometimes I do not. It actually depends on the teacher who teaches the subject. Some teachers make me enjoy learning English but others do not. Some teachers do not explain the lessons as it should be and don't respect us, this makes me hate the teachers and the language, and sometimes I regret that I chose to study English.

The length of responses might indicate the different personality of the students as participants who gave longer answers tended to seem confident and others whose responses were short might have been experiencing communication apprehension or shyness. However, participants' responses, particularly those of the men, started to get longer when I asked the second question, "Why are you learning English? What are your motivations?". M3, for example stated, "*Because I believe that English is language number one in the world. Besides, it is a very interesting language to learn and I'd like to learn it for the future, I mean I'll get job if I learn it*". And M8 said, "*I am learning English because I like learning foreign languages. I am going to learn Italian too to help get a good job*". Because the topic of the second question might have been more interesting for

104

the students than the first question, the students as I noted above started giving longer responses. Their motivation seems intrinsic, and their attitudes towards English tended to be positive. The students believe that learning English is important and might guarantee gaining jobs. Moreover, the responses show that the participants have different backgrounds. For example, M5 said:

When I was in preparatory school I liked English so much, it was very easy and I enjoyed it, but later when I got to secondary school I started to dislike it because of the teachers who taught me. The problem was that they were young and they couldn't deal properly with us. They couldn't solve the problems of students properly and instead they made quarrels with us. Honestly I passed by the help of my Aunt who was a friend to some of the teachers in the school.

Also, W1 reported:

I choose to study English because I like it so much, I didn't used to like English before but my mother encouraged me to study it, she is an English teacher. Besides, my teachers in secondary school were wonderful. Moreover, people with English language certificates have good future and jobs in this country.

Many responses get longer and richer after question 4, and some important themes surface from students' responses such as the teacher's personality, the number of women in a classroom, men's behaviour, favouritism, proficiency in English, pronunciation, cultural distraction. Below, all of these responses will be interpreted according to the main themes. Due to the complex entangled associated and, sometimes, contradictory cluster of FLA causes declared by students, it was useful to analyse the responses of each question based on the students' sex in order to gain a clearer picture of gendered learning contexts and the different FLA causes. After I transcribed all of the interviews I went through each interview and highlighted the main themes with different colours. I then classified other data as sub themes with some added after collecting the data. For example, 'teacher' was a main theme and, after collecting and analysing the data, the responses of the students showed different aspects of the teacher's behaviour and attitudes which they said caused anxiety and so I collected all of these responses together and labelled themes into sub themes such as teachers' negative evaluation, teachers' personality and traits, teachers' not providing opportunities for practice, lack of teachers' support, teachers gendered favouritism, and the sex of the teacher. I show this on the transcript in Appendix 4.

Responses of men students suggested different views and reasons for FLA with some of these unique to men and others similar to women. Here I shall present the analyzed data according to the interview question themes which are: attitude, beliefs and motivations, types of anxieties (trait, state, situational), self-confidence, foreign language anxiety

(FLA), sources of FLA, communication apprehension in both native and foreign languages, mixed-sex classrooms and gender issues, language skills and FLA, difficulty of accents, social comparison, causes and strategies of reducing FLA. And then I go back to the interview questions and note these themes beside the questions and explain their purpose and relationship to the research literature/theory.

6.3.1 Attitudes

The first question "*Do you enjoy learning English?*" was a starter question. It was designed to investigate students' attitudes toward ELL. The men's responses, as I mentioned above, tended be short. All men participants in my study said they thought learning English was enjoyable. Although students confirmed their positive attitudes toward ELL, some expressed some concerns about it. For example, M1 clearly expressed some difficulties in leaning although he didn't reveal what they were at the beginning of the conversation. He said, "*Yes I enjoy learning English although there are many problems*". M6 showed his positive attitude towards ELL, but he demonstrated his negative attitude regarding some language skills that were shown later during the conversation, saying "*Sometimes, I enjoy learning some skills but I don't enjoy others*". M5 also showed different kinds of concern related to the political situation in the country and he answered, "*Actually I do, but the security situation in the city as you know affects my study. We are in a war and I am a fighter so I cannot come every day to the college and enjoy my study as I want*". M7 expressed his admiration and liking for the English language and ELL, and desire to learn more in one of English speaking countries and he stated, "*I certainly do. And I hope to study English abroad. English is an impressive language*". The women's responses suggested that most of them (W1, W2, W3, W5, W8, W10, W11) generally enjoy learning, for example, W1 responded, "*Yes, I think I do*" and W3 also said, "*Yes. And I like to develop and build up my skills*".

However, other women in my study reported that they do enjoy ELL but they expressed their concerns about some difficulties. W2, for example commented, "*Sometimes I feel that I enjoy learning English and sometimes I do not, it depends on the teachers*". W8 also declared that there were some barriers preventing her from enjoying learning, and she stated, "*I enjoy learning English but sometimes I face some difficulties with some subjects*". By contrast with all of the other women participants, W4 clearly answered, "*Not so much*" and W9 also said, "*Not so much particularly now at the university. I enjoyed it in secondary school because it was easier than our studying now*". An uncertain attitude towards learning English was stated by W6:

106

I don't know exactly. I like English so much and I study so hard but I feel that there is no progression in my level. I make a great effort and study for a long time before and during the exams but my marks are often low.

W6 and W9 seemed to feel that learning English was not enjoyable because of English language difficulty at university level. W6 indicated that the efforts she gave to learning were followed by a lack of achievement. Responses of W6 to the next questions will reveal the reasons behind this.

6.3.2 Beliefs and motivations

The second question, *"Why are you learning English? What are your motivations*?" was designed to investigate students' beliefs and motivations. As explained in Chapters Three and Four, these variables are important factors in FLA, and they may have a significant influence on foreign language learners as will be shown in Chapter Seven. Responses of the men to this question were all similar. They all said they believed that English is the international language and should be learned. In addition, all responses showed that all men students had a similar motivation; to gain jobs, for example, M2 stated, *"because I like it, it is the international language. And learning English here in Libya offers you a good job especially in oil companies".* And M3 responded, *"because I believe that English is language number one in the world, besides, it is a very interesting language to learn and I'd like to learn it for the future, I mean I'll get a job if I learn it".* M11 said, *"because I like learning languages in general and English specifically and as you know when you have an English language university certificate, you have a good chance to get a good job in Libya".* M10 showed his source of belief motivation, saying: *Because I love it, and when I was young my father encouraged me to learn English, he taught me some words. Besides, I like watching English movies like Opera and Doctors, I like the way they speak. So I think I made a good decision when I chose to study English, and it will be easy to have a job when I graduate".*

Similarities and differences between women's motivations emerged from responses. Some women seemed to have intrinsic motivation for learning English, for instance, W2 answered, "*I like to learn other languages besides Arabic because I like to communicate with foreigners, and I like to understand what people who speak English in TV talk about".* W3 also said, "*I was keen to learn English because I like English culture so much, I wanted to know more about their lives, habits, and I like to watch English movies".* Moreover, W6 said:

I always have a dream that I could speak English fluently. I faced some situations where I hoped I could interact with foreign people well. I hope to travel to Britain or any country where people speak English to learn the language by communication.

These examples suggest that some women participants had internal motivation with the purpose to learn for communication with foreigners and native speakers of English. In addition, these extracts reveal that some students have a curiosity to learn about the English culture (referred to in Chapter Four). Similar motivations were expressed by W7, W1, and W4's. W7, for instance, said:

I like English so much. Besides, it is the international language, and all the instructions of any type of technology are written in English so everyone should learn English to get on with this life. Moreover, it was my father's decision to study English to get a job in a company or a school. And I hope to carry on in high level study to get an MA in English, then a PhD. At that time I will easily get a good job in any university because all fields study general English. If I achieved this, I would be respected by people.

Besides the internal motivation, these responses indicated that some women participants had external motivation including the support of their parents and teachers who encouraged them to learn English in order to get jobs. W7, for example, seems to be aware of the importance of English in everyday life. Moreover, she pointed out the respect Libyan society has for educated people. In addition, students generally seem aware of the fact that having English language qualifications meant they could get good jobs in an oil country like Libya in which there are many European companies. So, the students' positive attitude towards English and Libya as an oil country, as I explained in Chapters Two and Four, seems to be a motivation to learn English. On the other hand, two participants (W4 and W9) stated that studying English was not their choice, W4, for example, reported:

I'm learning English because my father convinced me to learn it. He hadn't learnt it from school but by communication with foreigner workers in a company. My father died while I was in secondary school. I'm struggling learning English now because I knew from the beginning that English was difficult for me, but it was my father's will was for me to continue. I cannot let him down.

In addition, W9 clearly stated, "*In fact it was not my choice to learn English but my parents forced me to do it*". W4 was likely unwilling to study English because it seems that she had a belief that English was a difficult subject for her although her father had convinced her of its importance. Both participants are possibly not motivated to learn English and, as many researchers have suggested, finding out the reasons for a lack of motivation is important. I suggest that this may be helped by taking affective factors into account. If students have low self-confidence or self-esteem, high anxiety and inhibition, their levels of motivation may be diminished. Moreover, teachers' negative attitudes

towards students and non-supportive classroom environments can diminish students' willingness to take part in lesson. A lack of positive reinforcement, approval and appreciation of students by teachers can influence motivation to learn in negative ways.

Another different motivation surfaced in the comment of W11 which showed that thoughts can generate emotions and influence motivation. Because W11 thought that her aunt was an ideal, she admired her and tried to be like her. In keeping with Ben-Ze'ev's (2001) points about the importance of social comparison section (Chapter Three), W11 reported:

Actually when I was a child I was influenced by my aunt who was an English language student. I liked the look of her desk - full of English books and dictionaries in her room. I admired her when she spoke English. When I grew up a little I asked her to teach me English, and she really did, and I liked it so much. My motivation at that time was to be like her. Later when I enrolled at the university I chose to study English because I'm interested in English grammar and I enjoy learning English vocabulary and reading passages.

It seems that W11 had internal motivation which had been generated by the influence of social comparison, and external motivation from the support and encouragement of an 'ideal' person. In addition, W11 also seems confident of her decision, possibly made on her own, to study English due to her positive earlier experiences which may have worked as a good positive motivation. So motivation does seem connected to self-confidence and both variables seem to be connected to types of anxieties as I will discuss now.

6.3.3 Types of anxieties (trait, state, situational), and self-confidence

In question three, I asked: 'In general, would you describe yourself as person who is: confident, anxious, or it depends?'. Students (M1, M2, M3, M6, M7, M9) answered, "*It depends on the situation*" while M4, M5, M8, M10 and M11 said that they were confident with no man reporting he would describe himself as anxious although later in the interview some did talk about anxiety. The difficulty of expressing emotions for some Libyan men is an example of the social and cultural functions and contexts of emotions discussed in Chapter Three, and I will return to this in Chapter Seven when I will talk about the influence of the Libyan cultural norms and traditions on emotions. The cultural function of emotion did, I believe, affect this study, as I noted and explained in Chapter Five when I explained this was one of difficulties when collecting data and when cultural gendered norms may have resulted in very brief responses as noted at the beginning of this Chapter.

Responses of four males (M1, M2, M3, M9) indicated that their anxiety depends on the situation and their responses revealed that they experienced state anxiety, anxiety which

occurs as a result of outside factors as explained in Chapter Four. M1, for example, said, *I often feel anxious when thinking of my study and my future, but I am confident in situations where I think I am doing the right thing"*. And M2 reported, *"I am usually confident in everyday life but sometimes I become anxious in situations regarding my study or my mother's sickness, something like that"*. M7 said, *"There are many situations which would make me anxious such as the current situation in Libya, life became difficult, and we don't know what is coming after this war"*. M9 also stated, *"I feel confident, for example, when I can adapt to the most difficult circumstances, while I feel anxious when in situations where I cannot manage them.*

The responses of M6 showed that he experienced situational specific anxiety, anxiety that is generated consistently over time in certain situations as I explained in Chapter Four. M6 said: *"I feel anxious only when I prepare myself for an interview for a job, for example, or when I prepare for exams"*. In contrast M4, M5, M8, M10's responses suggested that they are relatively confident. For instance, M5 said *"I always take things easy and that's maybe why I am confident"*. M8 similarly reported, *"I am confident in my work, study, and communications with people"*. However, the response of M4 was unique and he stated, *"I am confident in everything I do, and there is nothing makes me anxious"*. His answer revealed that he might have a very high level of self-confidence and, at the most extreme, a form of narcissism as I indicated in Chapter Four.

The women's responses showed they say that they are generally less confident than men. W1 and W5 said that they are confident, but for W2, W3, W4, W7, W8, W10 and W11 it depends on the situation, and W6 and W9 describe themselves as anxious. W1, for example reported, *"I am a confident person when I meet new people, talk to teachers, or go alone to shop and such things"*. In order to know which type of anxiety students experienced, I included a fourth question, "Depending on the answer above, in which situations are you confident or anxious?". W5 said:

Generally, I'm a confident person … I think I am confident most of the time but certainly I feel anxious and frightened in dangerous situations like our current situation in the city, I feel anxious when I hear raised voices because I might think it is bombing or the sound of the aircraft.

It appears that W5 has learnt to associate raised voices with bombings so W5's anxiety overlaps with fear or might be as a result of fear of her dangerous situation (see Chapter Four). I might suggest that W5 may experience situational anxiety. However, other participants (W2, W3, W4, W7, W8, W10, W11) more possibly experience state anxiety as

explained in Chapter Four, with uneasiness and restlessness because of external provocations. For example, W2 said:

It depends on the situations. Sometimes I am confident but sometimes not … I feel confident when I do everything I used to do before, but I feel a little anxious when I try something new or meet new people, for example.

W8 similarly stated, "*It depends on the situation. But I am often a confident person … I get anxious, for example, when I meet people for the first time or go for a job interview*". However, W6 and W9 seem more obviously to experience trait anxiety, as discussed in Chapter Four, as a constant characteristic of the personality as Levitt (1980) explained. They reported that they feel anxious in most of their behaviors and so anxiety may be one of their characteristics and part of their personality. W9 said:

I am a very anxious person … I am always anxious and my mother often blames me for my anxiety and tells me to feel confident, but I cannot. I feel frightened even about trivial things. And here in the school I cannot go even to the cafeteria alone. I need a companion and when I go shopping with my mother I don't dare to talk to the shop assistants, my mother speaks with them … I often feel that I am in a dangerous situation, and I think that everything I do could put me in trouble, I frequently hesitate before I do things.

This kind of anxiety, as Richmond and McCroskey (1998) suggest, is trait like Communication Anxiety which measures how, generally, individuals feel across situations and time periods. Individuals such as W6 and W9 may be more willing to avoid communication, in any situation, than others and that will extend to, but might not be only be related to, classroom learning and speaking situations.

After examining students' general levels of anxiety, the interviews focused on their experiences, if any, of FLA, the main topic of this research and discussed in the next section.

6.4 Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA)

A key question used to start to gauge FLA was "Do you feel confident about English language learning? Could you explain why?". Eight of the men (M1, M2, M3, M5, M6, M7, M8, M10) stated they experienced FLA. For instance, M1 said, "*No, I'm not confident*". M2 said, "*Sometimes yes and sometimes no*" and M7 stated, "*I like learning English but the problem is that I don't feel confident at all*". M10 suggested he felt, "*Not that confident*". In contrast, M4, M9, and M11 claimed that they did not feel anxious, for example, M4 reported that he felt confident and said, "*Yes. I do. I don't know how to explain, but I'm confident*". M9 also said, "*Yes. I feel confident because I like this field and*

111

I am sure that I have made the right decision when I decided to study English". M11 believes that he has an aptitude to learn more than one foreign language because he is good in his first language, and he stated:

In general, yes. I do. I learn English without difficulties, maybe because I am very good in Arabic which helps me learn other languages easily. I am learning French as well and I have no problems. I think I have the capacity to learn more than two foreign languages. I simply like learning languages and I'm really interested in them.

Surprisingly, M9 and M11 reported some FLA in the next question although they denied any FLA in this question and seemed confident. M9 said, "*I feel anxious while in exams. I feel anxious even before the exams start".* And M11 replied:

It depends. Well, I generally feel confident in the classroom but sometimes I get anxious when I find myself forgetting to do homework, you know teachers sometimes say bad words and make others laugh at you, and this is really embarrassing. I also feel anxious when I have no background about the topic they talk about such as the cultural issues which are difficult for foreigners to understand or when I read English jokes. Sometimes I feel like a stupid person although I understand the language but I cannot grasp the meaning.

It should be noted that the responses to the second part of this question, "Could you explain why?" have been merged in analysis with the next questions because some students revealed their anxiety causes only when they answered this part of question. Hence I merged the two questions' responses in order to avoid repetition and confusion.

Similarly to the men, some women (W1, W8, W10, W11) declared that they felt confident but W1 and W2 describe themselves differently. Although they talked of the same problem, it seems that this depended on their beliefs. W1, for example said, "*Generally, yes. I'm confident but I have a little problem which is that I often cannot understand lessons the first time, I should ask for repetition".* While W2 hesitated to say she was either confident or anxious, she did say, "*I don't know. I know myself very well. I have some difficulty in understanding lessons. I'm a little bit slow. I take a long time to think and understand".* W1 described herself as a confident person which, for her, possibly means that her perception of herself as a 'slow learner' is not enough of a reason to make her anxious. By contrast, W2 clearly believed that being a 'slow learner' was enough to make her experience FLA. Besides W2, other women participants such as W3, W4, W5, W6, W7 and W9, possibly experience more FLA as their interviews suggested. The women who said they experience FLA, as MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b) suggest, also said they experience feelings of tension and apprehension particularly associated with foreign language texts, including speaking, listening, and learning. They gave various reasons for their anxiety and I explain and classify these below.

112

6.4.1 Sources of FLA

The second part of the previous question, "could you explain why?" has been, as noted above, merged with this question which was: "In general, in the English Language classroom, do you feel confident, anxious, or it depends? What makes you feel that way in the classroom?". The responses to this question varied across men participants. M4 was the only man participant who reported that he was confident and that the comments of others did not influence him and I noted, above, that his responses might mean he bordered on narcissism. On the other hand, perhaps he understood very well the language learning process as he asserted that self-confidence is an important element in learning foreign language.

I am confident of myself. I don't care about others if they comment or think of me as a stupid even if I make errors. Learning any language needs self-confidence - if you lack it, you cannot learn it easily.

In contrast, M6 and M7 said they were somewhat anxious in the classroom. M6 said, "*Not so much, it depends on the situation. I feel confident in language skills classes but I feel more anxious in other subjects as linguistics or applied linguistics*". M7 also reported*, "I don't feel confident because my pronunciation is terrible, I' m afraid to mispronounce words, if that once happened, my classmates certainly would laugh at me"*. M1, M2, M3, M5, M8, M9, M10, and M11, on the other hand, answered "*it depends*", and their responses have been added to those of M6 and M7 in order to reveal possible causes of FLA. M5 said, "*Sometimes yes, but not all the time. When I understand the lesson clearly I get confident but if not I get anxious*". In addition M8 stated, "*It depends. If I was certain of my answer I would feel confident but if not I would prefer to keep silent*". The possible causes of FLA for men will be discussed below.

In contrast, the majority of women students (W1, W2, W3, W4, W6, W7, W8, W10, W11) stated that "*it depends*", while W5 and W9 reported that they never felt confident in the classroom. It appears that most men and women participants in this study experienced some FLA. However, I should note that I come to this tentative conclusion based on responses to later questions in the interview when participants added more explanations and details of their anxieties. I will, therefore, indicate the question numbers when I start to list the possible causes.

6.4.1.a Teachers

Causes of FLA were shown mainly in the responses of the second part of the fourth question and the last question, "Which, if any, of these factors might make you feel
113

relaxed, confident or anxious? Atmosphere, Types of tasks, Teachers, Teaching styles, Learning resources, Mixed sex classrooms, Another situation?". Many of the men's responses suggest that teachers are the main source of their anxiety. M2, for example, said, "*It depends on the subject and the teacher. My anxiety increases when the teacher evaluates me negatively*". M9 also said "*The teacher's personality often makes me anxious especially those who follow what students suggest*". Men in this study agreed that teachers played a major role in generating their anxiety in the classroom but participants suggested that this occurred in different ways and forms as outlined below.

A negative evaluation of teachers

Some of the men in my study reported that some teachers commented negatively on their performances and used 'swear words' when students made language errors, which embarrassed them in front of their classmates. M1, M2, M5, M8, and M11 clearly expressed their concerns regarding what they perceived as their teacher's bad manners. M2, for example stated, "*My anxiety increases when the teacher evaluates me negatively or comments badly even on one of the other student's work because the next turn it will be me*". M8 said, "S*ome teachers criticize us negatively and that makes me anxious*" and M11 added, "*You know, teachers sometimes say bad words and make others laugh at you, and this is really embarrassing*".

Women participants, such as W1, W3, W4, W6, W7, W9, W10, and W11 also expressed their negative attitudes towards teacher's negative feedback in front of the class. W4 said that some teachers negatively evaluate their work and discourage them by their comments: "*Some teachers … make me feel disappointed when they say that we are poor students and careless*". The comments of W6 and W7 showed how a teacher's manner and relationship with students can influence students' emotions toward learning. W6 responded, "*It depends on the teacher. I always feel anxious particularly in speaking and listening lectures because I don't like the teacher. He always embarrasses me in front of the class when I cannot understand a question or give an answer*".

The influence of anxiety on students' cognition, with respect, for example, to concentration and memorization, as explained in Chapter Four, can result from a teacher's negative evaluation. This seems the case in W9's comment, "*Some teachers' harsh manner makes me very anxious in the class. When they comment on our work negatively I lose my concentration, I feel I am lost and cannot connect the information together because I feel my brain stops working*". Teachers' negative evaluation, which study participants said

114

manifested in using swear words and negative comments and criticism, is possibly related to the teachers' personality and traits as I will suggest below.

A teacher's personality and traits

The perceived personality and traits of teachers are another cause of anxiety as M4, M5 and M8 expressed. M5, for example, stated,

It depends on the teacher. If she or he is friendly and I am familiar with them, I feel comfortable and confident even when I make mistakes. I don't care about how many mistakes I make because I am sure that the teacher will not embarrass me in front of the class – s/he may correct my mistakes without embarrassing me ... Some of them talk about other things such as 'themselves' so much in the class and ignore important points in the lessons which might be involved in exams - it is just wasting time.

M9 reported that, "*A teacher's personality often makes me anxious especially those who follow what students suggest*". This participant felt that some teachers are so responsive, and so flexible in response to some students' expressed needs and wants, that they lack clarity and focus. Some students also suggested that they might feel anxious when the content of their lessons is offered to them in ways they think are unconnected or if a teacher does not seem well organized and the lessons do not seem well-planned.

For women students, the teacher's personality, traits and manners were highlighted as some of the main explanations of their FLA. Women students such as W1, W2, W4, W5, W6, W10, and W11 complained about a teacher's harsh manner and attributed their feeling of anxiety to this. Besides anxiety, the women participants also expressed their emotion of fear and the state of depression as well, W1, for example, said:

It depends on the teachers. The teacher may make me confident or anxious. It depends on his manner. If he is friendly, I feel confident, and I can participate in the tasks and activities in the class, but if s/he has a harsh manner, I feel very anxious and frightened.

W2 added "*Some of them make me very anxious and sometimes scared ... they tell us that we are careless. This really makes me depressed*". And W11 said:

I may feel anxious in other subjects when their teachers are tough or have bad manners ... the only thing that may make me become anxious is a few teachers ... they think that we learn without making errors which is impossible. Some of them are impatient.

Some teachers might not be aware of the importance of making errors, an essential part of learning as I will explain in the next Chapter. Those teachers might also be unmotivated to teach or their behaviour may reflect a lack of knowledge about teaching and learning a

115

foreign language and, again, I return to this in the following Chapter. W10 summed up her experience as follows:

... everything depends on the teacher. I mean the teacher's personality can make the atmosphere, types of tasks, learning resources, relaxing or stressful. Sometimes we do similar tasks with different teachers. Those with friendly teachers are relaxing but others with tough teachers become difficult and cause anxiety ... This semester I enjoyed two classes, speaking and grammar, I really liked them. I felt so confident during the classes because the two teachers were fantastic. They were not like other teachers. They were so friendly with us. They encouraged us to work during the class even when we made errors. In contrast, I didn't enjoy writing and morphology because of the materials and teachers. The teachers were so tough - we couldn't get on well with them. They didn't even listen to us. I always felt anxious during those classes.

Considering such data, it seems that a teacher's personality and traits, to a large extent, may encompass and influence matters of evaluation, their relationships with students, and different roles with respect to teaching and motivating students. With respect to FLA, my data indicates different examples of what students judge to be undesirable manners and behaviours from teachers and, for some of my participants, these can lead to different negative emotions including, but not only, anxiety. Students said that they sometimes felt frightened and depressed due to some of their teachers' 'roughness' and unsympathetic manner and they thought this affected their learning. W1, as shown above, stated, "*If s/he [the teacher] has a harsh manner, I feel very anxious and frightened*".

Teachers not providing opportunities for practice

Another factor that might explain FLA occurs when, according to my student data, teachers do not provide what students think to be adequate opportunities to practise the language and inadequate use of English for communication. A number of students complained that some teachers made little effort with respect to practising the English language in real contexts or to encouraging them to understand the language. M10, for example, said, "*Teachers don't support us to learn. They come to class just to deliver lessons, they don't care if we understand or not*". W3 also stated, "*Teachers give the theoretical side of lessons only, and we sit and listen. We rarely practise*". W11 similarly said, "*Some teachers ... focus only on the theoretical side and ignore the practical side which is more important in communication than the theoretical side*". Not providing explanations, such as grammatical rules, and ignoring practising by providing suitable activities to help students to become more accurate and fluent in using the language is, from my experience, one of the most common problems of Libyan classrooms, as I indicated in Chapter Two. Since most students' purpose for learning the English language

is for communication, they pointed to a lack of practice as a main cause of anxiety, saying they felt lacking in confidence in their abilities and skills and that they struggled with anxiety while trying to speak and write. But besides thinking they lacked practice, the participants said that a lack of teachers' support, as I will show below, is another reason for their anxiety.

Lack of teachers' support

Some students talked about their teachers' role in the classroom with respect to support. The responses of some participants indicated that some teachers had not motivated students to learn. M2, for instance, said, *"They don't encourage us to learn or participate in the activities"* and M3 stated, *"Teachers also don't motivate us to work and to practise and that is why I feel anxious"*. W2, moreover, reported *"Some teachers make me very anxious and sometimes scared. They don't support us or encourage us to study"*. And W4 answered, *"Some teachers encourage us to learn and work hard with us, but some others don't. They make me feel disappointed"*. These students' comments indicate, as above, a lack of opportunity to practise and their wish that their teachers took a 'prompter' role. This role, as I will discuss in Chapter Seven, contributes to students' progress because some learners need external motivators such as their teachers and parents in order to learn. Teachers' support is no less important than other negative behaviours by teachers and I will outline these now.

Teachers' gendered favouritism

This issue was one of the most important frequently offered for FLA by the men students. M1, M2, M5, M7, M8, and M10 mentioned that some of their teachers favoured the women students more than them, the men. During the conversations, I asked them *"for what reasons?"* and their responses were typified by M5:

When a teacher talks only to very good women and ignores others that makes me feel really anxious and sometimes angry because I feel that I am trivial and have no value, and this is bad behaviour by the teachers because they should know that there are individual differences between students.

Similarly, M7 said:

I do not feel confident at all when I speak English in any situation. No, I am not. Let me tell you about my problem. Our teachers, not all of them but most of them, prefer women rather than us, men ... they don't give us chances to participate in activities. They pay all the attention to women. In every class I feel anxious and angry because of this ... I really get angry because we are often ignored, and sometimes teachers don't even respond to our questions. I feel that they come to the class only for teaching those women, they explain the

117

lesson only to them, discuss only with them, respond only to their questions, and we are entirely not seen in the class.

The perception of gendered favouritism, as students in these examples revealed, highlights numerous issues that will be discussed in the next Chapter but some of these issues may be related to the predominance of women students compared to men in the School, as men participants such as M1, M2, M3, M6, M8 and M10 declared. M1 said, "*… the number of women is much bigger than men in my classroom*" and another student, M8, said, "*I am a confident person but teachers should understand that I am the only man in the group in this semester*". M6 also stated, "*The main cause of my anxiety is that I am usually the only man in the group*". It seems clear from these responses that these male students think that women students attract the attention of teachers more than men and one reason behind this, as the comments show, may be that there are usually more women than men in classes. In the next Chapter, I will discuss the possible reasons behind this perception of gendered favouritism but, now, I turn to the sex of the teacher as this also emerged as a reason my participants gave for their FLA.

The sex of the teacher

Two male participants, M2 and M5, expressed their concerns about the sex of their teacher. M5 said:

It depends on the sex. If the teacher is a man and I am familiar with him, I would be relaxed and confident, but if it was a woman, I certainly would feel anxious because I don't like women teachers to have a bad impression about me when I speak incorrectly.

W2 also referred to the teacher's sex and she stated, "*I feel relaxed with women teachers but not with men*". Although the sex of the teacher may be another important factor with respect to anxiety in teaching and learning foreign languages, as will be discussed later, other participants did not mention anything regarding this factor and so it seems that, in my study and in this context, students' anxiety was more associated with the teacher's personality than their sex although, of course, just because students did not mention this in the interviews that does not, necessarily, mean they did not think it. It may be relevant that, compared to other disciplines, there is a balance in the number of women and men teachers in most English Language departments in Libyan universities.

6.4.1.b Mixed sex classrooms

Besides the 'teacher' being cited in my data as a major cause of anxiety, the second most important source of FLA as reported by the majority of male participants was the mixed-

sex classroom. A number of men (M1, M2, M3, M6, M7, M8, M9, M10, M11) agreed that the presence of women in the classroom generated and increased their anxiety. During the interviews men indicated a number of different reasons for concern about mixed-sex classrooms and I outline these below.

Speaking in front of a large group of women

A number of men (M1, M2, M3, M9, and M10) clearly stated that speaking English in front of many women in their classes was a major source of anxiety. For example, M10 said, *"It causes me some anxiety when I speak in front of very good women"*. M3 similarly commented:

I'm anxious in the class especially when I'm required to talk to a group or to the whole class, and my anxiety increases when I see many women in the class ... when some teachers ask me to speak in a mixed-sex class I feel extremely anxious until I forget what I want to say.

The effect of anxiety on learning and practice seems to be clear. M3's comment is evidence of the effect of anxiety on cognition as I outlined in Chapter 4 (section 4.8). In addition, M2 said:

... because women in general are better than men in English, and their number is bigger than us, so they dominate the classroom. They communicate, talk, discuss with the teachers more than we do, and ask many questions and teachers respond to them without problems.

Because the number of women in almost all English classes is greater than men, as many men participants noted in their interviews, it seems that women take the majority part in class activities, discussion, interaction and asking questions and this seems to have led some of the men to believe that women were doing better than them and, for some, made them feel relatively ignored by their teachers and even oppressed. This is complicated. In the Libyan culture men are used to being and feeling 'superior' in everyday life but because women in general do better than most men in school, particularly at foreign language learning, they dominate classes and this factor seems to cause anxiety, especially as it intertwines with cultural and religious factors and I will discuss these in the next section.

Cultural and religious factors

To prevent illicit relationships between men and women and to build a 'good society', communication between men and women is strictly regulated in Libyan and some other Islamic cultures, so it is perhaps not surprising that most of the men and some of the

119

women interviewed in this study talked of struggling in mixed-sex classes. Some of the men said they found it difficult to deal and work with women because they are unfamiliar with such situations. M2 clarified why he was unable to work with women in this comment:

I feel anxious when we are asked to work with women. I get anxious because as a man I cannot deal with women - I'm not familiar with working with them in the classroom…You know, since primary 4 we go to single-sex schools because in our culture and religion it is not good for boys to communicate with girls and vice versa. It is what we grew up with and used to do since we were children. For me, I feel uncomfortable when I work with them.

M9 similarly stated, "*I am not familiar with how to deal with women - I mean we aren't used to communicating with them since childhood. Our culture and religion don't encourage communication between the sexes*". The responses of men participants revealed the influence of the religious and cultural norms, not just on the social domain but on learning as well. Some of the men in my study, as I will discuss in the next Chapter, said they felt anxious when dealing with women students because they are used to regulations and norms that were acquired from parents, schools, and the whole society regarding communication between the sexes. Unfamiliarity between men and women in the classroom is possibly also relatively connected to the peers' negative evaluations of each other while speaking in case they make errors as will be outlined in the next section

Peers' negative evaluation

Another cause of FLA talked about by my participants is the fear of negative evaluation from peers. Men such as M1 and M6 said they were anxious about women's comments if they made errors while speaking and this raised their level of anxiety. M1, for example, said, *"I feel anxious when a teacher asks me to speak English in front of the class - the number of women is much bigger than men in my classroom, and it is so embarrassing when I make errors while speaking"*. M6 also showed that women's behaviour increased his anxiety and decreased his self-confidence and esteem "*I usually feel anxious especially when I have to speak English in front of women, and my anxiety increases when I feel they begin whispering or laughing, this behaviour gives me the sense that I'm a fool*".

Women participants such as W1, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, and W10 also complain about the men peers' negative evaluation and what they see as bad behaviour in the classroom. W1, for instance, commented "… *men laugh when a woman starts to speak. Although I'm confident, I don't like their comments. They are few but they keep teasing and making fun of women speaking"*. W3 also added, "… *men usually laugh and make*

120

jokes when a woman speaks either in Arabic or English. That is so rude. I don't like their behavior". Furthermore, W7 added:

… because when a woman starts to speak the men look at each other and make some signs and they start laughing. Their behaviour and movements attract my attention and make me lose my concentration until I forget what I am going to say.

As seen from the extracts above, both men and women complained about negative comments and evaluations from the opposite sex. Women, as the men in this study stated above, tend to be more successful and fluent in English than men and they might assess men's speaking as poor. This might partly explain women's negative evaluations of men. Men's negative evaluations and bad comments were said to occur not just when women are speaking in English but in Arabic as well and this might be considered as 'misbehaviour' by those men as Saleh (2002) suggests and as discussed in the next Chapter. But the gendered phenomenon of peers' negative evaluations in FL classrooms is possibly a reason for preferring single-sex classrooms for many Libyan students and I turn to this now.

Mixed or single-sex classrooms?

In order to investigate the type of setting students preferred and why, question 11 asked: "Would you prefer to be in a class with women only, men only, or in a mixed class? Could you explain why?". A number of men participants (M1, M2, M3, M6, and M7) said they would prefer single-sex classes because they believe these would be less likely to make them anxious. M3, for example, commented "*I prefer men only to feel more relaxed and to practise freely*". M6 also expressed the advantage of single-sex classes believing these could provide a comfortable atmosphere to practise speaking without being under the pressure of having women there, and he said, "*Men only, of course. To feel more relaxed while practising or doing any other spoken exercises such as presentations*". Similarly, M7 showed his preference for single-sex classes and he explained his feelings about making language errors in men's only classes, saying:

Ooh. For me I completely prefer men only. Yes, men only. I will tell you why before you ask. I prefer men only to feel more relaxed and more confident. I am sure that if I made mistakes in men only classes, I wouldn't be anxious because I don't care about men, they are all average like me - even if they laughed and teased me, they couldn't influence me.

M4 has a completely different view, and he said, "*I don't mind. Whatever the kind of the class, it doesn't influence me*". As noted earlier, M4's responses to all of the interview *questions*" showed that he is a very self-confident person and he says nothing affects his learning or causes anxiety. On the other hand, participants M5, M9, and M10 preferred

121

mixed-sex classrooms for different reasons. M5 for instance, responded "*I prefer mixed classes, they are more enjoyable*". M9 also prefer mixed classes because he believes that women are better than men in English and so it is more useful to study in a mixed setting where he can assess his level by comparison with women. But M9 also says he benefits from being with men students in the class as their presence makes him feel less anxious and, he says, that encourages him to learn. M9's comment is supported by M10 with respect to men's company in classrooms increasing his self-confidence and helping him feel more relaxed: "*I prefer mixed-classes for two reasons: women are often better than men in English, so we benefit from their presence and I can compare my level with them, and the existence of men helps me to feel relaxed in the classroom*". Another reason for a mixed-sex class setting preference is manifested in M10's comment, in which he described the context in the language classroom, saying:

I prefer mixed-sex classes, because women are much better than men in the class. If the class was only men we would not make any progress because women often volunteer answers to the questions and help us doing the exercises. They sit in the front rows. They enjoy lessons more than we do. They work actively with teachers. They actually dominate the class maybe because there are more of them than us. In contrast most men sit passively, they whisper and gossip at the back of the class, and that is why I think teachers don't pay us any attention.

It seems clear that the men in my study believe that generally women do better than them in English and that is why some of men prefer being in mixed-sex classes and think this advantages them. M10's declaration reveals two possible explanations. First, women volunteer answers and do exercises and that might lower men's responsibility in the classroom and thus reduce their anxiety. But secondly, men sitting passively without sharing in activities because of the women' dominance and teachers' perceived favouritism might be merely an excuse to hide the men's lack of motivation and desire to work hard.

The interviews with women showed that only a few participants (W1, W2, W8, W11) preferred mixed- sex classes. W2, for example said, "*I prefer mixed-sex classes because after graduation I will work as a teacher and I will probably teach men, so I think I should benefit from being with men and have some experience about how to deal with them in the future*". W8 agreed with W5 but she preferred mixed-sex classes for different reasons, because "*...it is more enjoyable. Men create a nice atmosphere in the classroom. We interact with each other as friends although we haven't been used to being familiar with each other before*". W11 generally preferred mixed-sex classrooms except in one situation:

I prefer mixed classes because they are more enjoyable than single-sex classes which would be boring. But maybe during speaking practice I would prefer single-sex and separate groups to avoid laughing at each other and hearing comments.

However, others such as W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, W10 and W11 reported their preference for single-sex classes, with W4, for instance, stating, "*I have a hissing quiet voice, men laugh at me when I speak, they repeat what I say in the same way, and they really annoy me when I speak*". Similarly, W6 preferred single-sex classes:

... to feel more relaxed and more confident. I don't care if I make mistakes if the class is all women because women understand that we are here to learn and making mistakes is part of language learning.

In addition, W7 wished she could study apart from men, saying:

I prefer to separate men from women. If my class was only women, my level would be much better than now. All universities are mixed-sex classes. The problem is that men in my class have bad behaviour, they act as children. They don't behave as grown up people.

Finally, W9 also favoured segregation, explaining:

... because I would feel more comfortable in the class. My friends and I can understand each other very well so we can work in the class without being under stress by men. For me I cannot talk to men, I feel embarrassed. You know in our culture we grew up in an environment that believes it is shameful for girls to talk to boys since we were children. I used not to talk to men and now I feel I am bad if I do it.

Examples of responses display a preference for sex segregated classrooms for the majority of women in order that, they say, they could feel more relaxed and self-confident during learning and that includes feeling more comfortable about the normality of making errors while practising English. It does seem that the women students struggle with what they regard as men's misbehaviour in classes and this, they say, generates anxiety and prevents them from fully participating and sharing in classroom activities. Some women's preferences for mixed-sex classes may stem from their relatively high self-confidence in language learning and their good background knowledge about English and ELL. The women students who favoured mixed classes assessed themselves as good or very good compared to their peers. Perhaps this comparison supported them and increased their confidence to learn well and enjoy being in classes with men.

Foreign language learning, as the participants' responses in this study show, and as noted earlier in Chapter Four, can be affected by the sex of classroom peers and by gendered attitudes. Many students, as seen above, prefer and feel more comfortable when learning with same sex peers and perhaps here this is particularly because these students are from a society in which communication between the sexes is strictly regulated. So, in the Libyan

123

FLL context, and perhaps in other Islamic and highly gendered contexts, gendered anxiety more possibly increases as a result of the unfamiliarity between students of different sexes and below I will show below the experience of two students who are the only men in their groups.

Being the only man in a class

Two men participants explained, as noted above, that they were the only men in their groups and they thought this made it difficult to share in activities. For example, M6 said, *"The main cause of my anxiety is because I am usually the only man in the group"*. M8 equally indicated, *"I am the only man in the group in this semester so it is difficult for me to interact with women and participate in the speaking activities"*. It seems that men do not feel relaxed when they are the lone man in a group of women. These men suggest that they lack the sense of belonging to which I referred in Chapter Three and which, basically, relies on a similarity between people (Keltner and Haidt, 1999). It is also possible that men believe that gendered differences prevent them from being involved in a different sex group and I develop this in Chapter Seven. Importantly, though, the company of the same sex was reported here to increase self-confidence and relaxation. As M10 said, *"Because my friends support and help me in the class, I feel relaxed and confident when I'm in their company, and when they leave a class I leave with them"*.

All the previous issues reported by the participants are potential causes of anxiety. In the next section, I will provide the participants' views regarding one of the most important affective sources of FLA as noted in the literature (e.g. Horwitz et al., 1986), namely Communication Apprehension.

6.4.1.c Communication apprehension (CA)

After asking participants an open-ended question to explore possible sources of anxiety (see Appendix 4, Q.6), I then focused on Communication Apprehension (CA) as this, as noted in Chapter Five, is one of the most common sources of FLA. In Q.7 different situations causing CA were explored to see if my participants experienced a general CA or only specific-situation anxiety. I asked if specific situations would make the students feel anxious and I asked them to explain why.

Men's responses to this question revealed that all participants, except M4 and M11, experience CA in different situations and circumstances. M3, M6, and M9 experienced CA

when speaking in Arabic or English in mixed-sex classes or to a group of women. M3, for example, said:

I would feel relaxed when I speak Arabic or English to male friends, strangers, or teachers and in any situation, but not to a group of women even in Arabic, so you can imagine in English, no I can't, no I can't, we aren't used to talking together, it is not our culture and religion.

M6 similarly stated, "*I would feel anxious when I speak either Arabic or English to a group of women only or a mixed group, but I wouldn't in all other situations*". M10, in contrast, showed his confidence while speaking Arabic to a mixed-sex class but he said that would feel anxiety when speaking to a group of women only. His CA occurs while speaking English in situations where there are women because of his fear of their negative evaluation.

I would feel confident in all situations either in Arabic or English where I speak to men. Men in my class are average and below average, so I am not afraid of their evaluations, I am better than them anyway. But I don't feel the same in other situations where there are women. Frankly, I wouldn't feel confident because there are very good women students in my class. I get frightened when they watch me speaking English while I make mistakes especially in grammar.

It seems clear that some men in this study believe their anxiety is caused by women peers and not by the target language used for interaction and those men, as just seen, reported that they feel anxious even when they speak Arabic (their first language) in front of women. However, participants M1, M2, M5 and M7 reported that they feel confident and relaxed when they speak Arabic in all given situations, but they would feel anxious speaking in English. M7 reported that he would feel anxious speaking English in all situations: "*I always feel confident when I speak Arabic with anyone but I don't feel relaxed when I speak English, I feel anxious and stressed especially when I have to speak to a group of women*". M1 and M2 stated that they would feel anxious only when they speak English in front of women, with M1 stating:

I would feel confident when I speak Arabic in all the different situations you mentioned, but I wouldn't feel the same when I speak English. I am certain that I would feel more relaxed when I speak English to men only even if they are strangers.

M2 also described his relaxation when he speaks Arabic because he believes himself proficient in his mother-tongue and so no language errors are expected. On the other hand, he experiences CA when speaking English in front of women.

Actually I don't mind if I speak Arabic in a single or mixed-sex classroom. I used to give presentations and I have no problem with speaking in front of any group of students, but

125

speaking English to a group of women only is really an anxious situation, no I don't dare do it.

M5's response, on the other hand, was unique in my interviews as he said:

I would feel anxious only speaking English to a group of men because if I didn't speak fluently, men certainly would laugh and comment. I also would feel anxious if the teacher was a woman, I certainly would feel anxious because I don't like women teachers to have a bad impression about me.

M5 is the only male student who said he fears negative evaluation from other men but he also expressed his fear of women teachers forming negative impressions of him. M8 also talked of CA in only one situation and that, too, but without attention to their gender, was about speaking to teachers because of his fear of a negative evaluation.

I would feel confident in all the situations if I was certain that my answer was correct, and mostly it is correct. But I might feel a little anxiety when I talk to my teachers, maybe because they are better than me in English and I care about their evaluation.

The interviews with women, on the other hand, showed that few of them had much self-confidence and they had different types of CA. W11 was the only woman who feels confident in all cases: "*I would feel confident in all situations because, as I told you, I am usually a confident person and I have good English, so I have no need to feel anxious*". W1, on the other hand, said:

I'm confident in all situations in which I speak Arabic, but I might feel some anxiety when I make errors while I speak English in front of anyone – gender doesn't influence me at all because making errors is embarrassing in all cases.

It seems that the relationship between proficiency in language and self-confidence provides students with the capacities to speak their first and target language, English, in different situations without barriers as W1 suggests. However, lack of proficiency is, according to the participant data from this study, a possible reason for CA. Because W1 is fluent in her mother tongue, she is confident enough to communicate in various situations while she experiences CA and feels anxious when she speaks English due to her perceived lack of proficiency. On the other hand, numerous women subjects, such as W2, W3, W4, W6, W7, and W10, reported that they would feel confident when speaking aloud in both Arabic and English to women in different groups, while anxious when they have to speak to men in all situations. They clearly stated that the presence of men is the source of their CA in and outside the classroom. Moreover, and as already noted, the young women in my study expressed their concerns about the behaviour of young men in the classroom, such as laughing, teasing, making jokes and negative comments, saying these tended to inhibit

126

them from participating in speaking activities. In general terms, W3, for instance said, "*I would feel confident when I speak Arabic or English to women in all cases, in contrast, I would feel anxious if I speak to men in all cases*". W6 also added:

Speaking aloud for me depends on the sex of people I am talking to. I generally would feel anxious, either in Arabic or English, when I speak to men in all situations particularly in the university. Men make bad comments which make you feel stupid, and giggle if a woman says something wrong - they laugh and tease her although they are worse than all women in English. With women I would feel relaxed if I speak Arabic or English in all situations, this is maybe because we are friends in the class, so we never tease or laugh at each other. For teachers, it depends on their personality, if they are friendly I would feel confident even if I made errors but if not I certainly would feel anxious.

W7 similarly commented:

I think I would be confident in all situations except speaking English to teachers, in a mixed-class or to a group of men only because when a woman starts to speak the men start looking at each other and making some facial signs and they start laughing. Their behaviour and movements attract my attention and make me lose my concentration until I forget what I am going to say. The problem is that those men who laugh are average and below average, they enjoy teasing women and making jokes about us and telling each other to look at the woman who speaks ... and winking, that is really awful.

From the two previous comments, W6 and W7 and others (W2, W4, W5, W8, W9, W10, and, possibly, W3 and W1) feel CA when speaking to teachers for different reasons. W2, for example, clarified that her CA occurrence depends on the teacher's sex, "*I would feel relaxed with women teachers but not with men, and that's with strangers as well*", while W4 attributed her CA to the teacher's personality and she stated, " *I also would feel anxious with rough teachers*". W8, in addition, said the proficiency of teachers could generate CA, and she reported, "*I also might feel anxious when I talk to my teachers which may be because they are better than me in English*".

Throughout the data collection, a unique case was encountered in my interviews. From her responses, W9 seems to experience a high level of CA which prevents her from interacting with people in different situations in both Arabic and English. Through the interview, W9 clearly stated that her low self-confidence has negative impacts not only on her learning of English but also on her social life. Her high anxiety manifests itself with strangers outside the university as well as with familiar people she meets every day in the university, such as her teachers and classmates. Her intensive anxiety leads her to avoid social communication with people in order to feel secure and relaxed, and she commented:

I would feel little anxiety if I talk Arabic to women only, but I would be very anxious in other situations ... First, I cannot speak good English, and I cannot speak in front of men,

they are scary and I haven't been used to communicate with them since I was a child. And I also get scared of strangers and I avoid talking to teachers as much as I can.

I am not a psychologist and I do not want to suggest that I am sure what W9's interview data reveals with respect to experiencing trait anxiety or if her anxiety is a state of mind and not an emotion. A state is much longer than an emotion and pervasive, and trait anxiety is an 'individual's likelihood of becoming anxious in any situation' (Spielberger et al, 1983, cited in MacIntyre and Gardner 1991, p. 87). Individuals who experience trait anxiety respond to everyday life events in an anxious manner, tending to be more worried and stressed than most people as they are likely to react to certain environmental stimuli and a wide range of situations as threatening and dangerous and so W9 may have trait anxiety.

Besides presenting and analysing the previous mentioned causes of FLA for this group of Libyan students, the participants revealed other factors that they believe prevent their learning English in general and speaking in particular. In the next section, I will show other causes which were presented by fewer students because this does not mean these causes were less important or, necessarily, that they apply only to those students who talked about them.

Test anxiety

Test anxiety is one of the important factors of FLA in the literature on language learning and teaching, as discussed in Chapter Four. Some participants stated that they experience test anxiety, M6, for instance, said, "*I feel anxious only when I prepare myself for an interview for a job, for example, or when I prepare for exams*". M9, in addition, said:

I often feel confident if there is no kind of assessment. I feel confident during classes where we learn and practise the language but I feel anxious about exams. I feel anxious even before the exams start.

M11, in addition, reported that his test anxiety increases in the presence of women, and he said, "*Women cause some anxiety during evaluation times*". From his responses, M11 often feels confident in the classroom, so the presence of women might be the main cause of his anxiety or it may be that this student basically experiences test anxiety and that women's existence in the class just raises the level of anxiety.

Women participants, such as W4, W5, W6, and W8, also expressed their concerns and anxiety because of exams. W4, for example commented "*I certainly feel anxious and*

128

frightened especially when he [the teacher] talks to us about the difficulty of the exam". Moreover, W5 also added:

No, I never felt confident - I usually feel anxious and worried in the class and my anxiety increases in the exams, some of them have questions not covered in the studied curriculum, and I don't like this because it makes me very anxious and I cannot remember what I have studied - even the vocabulary gets lost from my memory as I get confused when I have to answer these questions.

W6 detailed her experience of test anxiety and reported, "S*peaking and listening are the worst, particularly in exams. I get stuck when I listen to an English conversation or a talk in the lab*". W8 also answered, "*I also feel more anxious because of examinations. They always cause me anxiety because I get frightened about failing or getting low marks*". It seems that students in the School of Education used to be examined only on topics that had been explained by teachers and so their anxiety has possibly increased as the exams now include questions beyond the studied material. W5, for example, described her anxiety as negatively affecting her cognition with a lack of concentration and forgetting.

Besides the previous causes of FLA talked about by the participants of this study with respect to people in the classroom, personal variables and the most common causes of FLA, different language skills, as I explain in the next section, were also highlighted.

6.4.2 Language skills and FLA

At this stage of the interview, I attempted to investigate which of the language skills caused the most and least anxiety with Question 8: "Does listening, reading, writing, speaking make you feel anxious? Can you explain why? (any skill more or less than another?)".

Most of the men in the study agreed that speaking and then listening are the skills that can make them the most anxious, while reading and writing are more relaxing or at least less anxiety causing. For example, M1 stated:

Writing and reading are my favourite skills and I feel relaxed when I practise them, but I really feel anxious in speaking and listening, they are difficult … when I listened and I couldn't understand, it became difficult for me to continue the conversation, I got stuck.

M3 also said:

I will start with the one that causes more anxiety - speaking, listening, writing, then lastly reading. For me, speaking and listening are the most because if I didn't understand the

129

meaning of the words said to me I got confused and would not be able to think properly and respond quickly.

M2, M5, and M6 agree that the skills most likely to make them anxious are speaking and reading aloud, while listening and writing are more relaxing. M2, for example said, *"Speaking in front of women as I said and reading aloud makes me anxious, but I don't feel anxiety with writing or listening"*. M6 also explained, *"Yes. Speaking is the main cause of my anxiety if it was to a group of women, then reading aloud, but I feel OK in writing and listening"*. M7 and M8 declared that speaking is the only skill causing anxiety with M8 saying, *"I only feel anxious in speaking because I care a lot about pronunciation and the structure of the sentences"*. Most comments of the participants in this study show that they care about learning, speaking and listening and how to be fluent in English, and the main purpose of their learning English, as seen in Question Two, is for communication. This is in tension with the predominant teaching method, Grammar-Translation, that is used in schools and still, often, in university, as I explained in Chapter Two. M10 and M11 also experience anxiety in listening and speaking. M10 said, *"Listening causes me more anxiety because when a teacher speaks quickly sometimes I cannot stop him to repeat again, that causes me some anxiety, and speaking in front of the women is really causing anxiety"*. Slightly differently, M11 said, *"Only listening to difficult accents makes me feel anxious"*. In contrast, M4, the extremely confident student discussed earlier, said he was not anxious with respect to any of the skills: *"None of them causes me anxiety"*.

To sum up, speaking was reported as the skill causing the most anxiety amongst the male study participants, often because most students feared negative evaluations from their teachers and peers. After speaking, listening caused the most anxiety and participants expressed their concerns about the difficulty of vocabulary and accents or listening to fast speech. Reading aloud also causes anxiety to some male students, often due to the fear of mispronunciation. Writing and reading comprehension seem to cause less anxiety for the men I interviewed here perhaps because, as I noted above and in Chapter Two, the Grammar-Translation Method focuses on reading and writing as the fundamental skills to be learned and taught.

The results of a number of the women's responses (W1, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W8, W9, W10) revealed that, again, speaking is the skill that causes anxiety more than others. However, W1 and W8 declared that speaking is the only skill which caused them to feel anxious. For example W1 said, *"Um … frankly, speaking in the class is the only skill that causes me anxiety especially if the teacher is tough"*. Similarly, W8 stated, *"Only speaking*

might cause me some anxiety because sometimes I cannot express myself". Other women subjects made connections between the difficulty of speaking and listening. For example, W5 reported:

I feel ok in reading and writing, but not in listening and speaking. I mean we have not practised listening at all, we know nothing about listening skills, there are laboratories but we haven't used them, and teachers do not care about listening lessons especially in secondary schools, teachers skipped them.

Also, W6 said:

Speaking and listening are the worst. I get stuck when I listen to an English conversation or a talk in the lab. And I get confused and forget what I want to say even when I prepared well at home. Sometimes I participate in conversations but Mr X often embarrassed me and he never encourages me or comments positively on my performance. I always remember his words that make me think I'm stupid. I feel if Mrs X had taught me speaking I would be much better than now. She taught me only one semester. She never commented badly on our errors and in contrast, she always said "errors are part of learning, and this room is the place where you make errors, never feel embarrassed because of mispronunciation, it is natural, we are not native speakers, but we are good, motivated, hard working learners". To be honest, I don't hate speaking as a subject but I don't like Mr X because of his bad manner and his way of embarrassing us when we make mistakes in pronunciation or don't know how to say a word in English.

Additionally, W10 reported that speaking and listening are the most difficult because, *"They are urgent; there is no time to think of constructing sentences while speaking and to think about unknown words in listening"*. While W11 believes that listening may be difficult because it impedes her speaking performance, she said:

Sometimes listening makes me feel a little anxious when I cannot understand the speech 100%. I often understand the general meaning but I feel bad when I cannot capture the details. Speaking came second because it depends on listening. If I cannot grasp the details very well, my conversation might be boring or brief. For reading, I feel relaxed in the class, but reading might make me feel anxious in exams when I meet new important vocabulary which I cannot understand.

Many of the women interviewed in this study feel that speaking is the most difficult skill for a number of reasons which are probably associated with and influence each other. The difficulty of understanding spoken speech could be the result of a lack of vocabulary, difficulty in understanding some English accents, or a lack of practice in listening skills. All of these possible explanations and more, such as a teacher's 'bad manners' or negative evaluation, seem to affect fluency, to create difficulties in expression and to cause anxiety for some students.

After speaking and listening, some women participants stated that writing came next and might cause anxiety. W9, for instance, said:

131

Speaking and listening are the most anxiety making skills, then writing - they are very difficult maybe because in secondary school the focus was on reading and grammar but we were never taught listening, speaking, or writing. They were totally neglected.

W4 said:

Speaking is the skill that makes me most anxious, especially if the teacher can speak Arabic and he would comment negatively in Arabic on my poor English. Then writing causes me anxiety because in secondary school they didn't teach us how to write short sentences, they jump to writing paragraphs. We didn't learn the basics. Reading aloud also causes me some anxiety too, because sometimes I find it difficult to pronounce some words.

In contrast W3 commented:

I have less anxiety in writing because I have time to correct my mistakes. Reading and listening comes after because I practice a lot. In contrast, I don't feel so confident when I speak, especially this year because of the teacher's bad comments when we make errors.

Again, the difficulty and anxiety in speaking, listening and writing may be caused by applying some principles of the traditional method Grammar-Translation Method in secondary schools (as explained in Chapter Two) as this concentrates on teaching reading passages and grammar and tends to neglect other skills. The previous factors such as the lack of familiarity between students, teacher's negative evaluation, cultural and religious practices and norms, a lack of practice in speaking and listening to different accents as will be outlined now, often occur in combination to create anxiety.

6.4.2.a Difficulty with accents

Difficulty with accents is another possible factor for FLA which was explored in my study. Participants were asked the following question in order to find out which of the three possibilities causes more FLA: "How do you feel when you communicate in English with: A native speaker of English (British, American, etc.), An Arab speaking English (Libyan, Iraqi, etc.), A non-native speaker of neither English nor Arabic (Pakistani, Indian, etc.)?".

Communication with native speakers of English

Responses to this question vary between participants. M1, M2, M3, M5, M6, and M11 stated that communication with native speakers of English is most likely to cause them anxiety, then communication with non-native speakers of neither English nor Arabic, and the least anxiety with Arabic speakers. M1, for example, said*, "I never talk to a native speaker ... but I guess I would be frightened. For others, it depends on the speakers' accent. If their language was clear I think I would be less anxious".*

Similarly, M5 said:

I think that talking with native speakers of English would be difficult and might cause some anxiety. I always have difficulty about how to construct sentences although I have good vocabulary. And I think this problem would increase if I talked to a native speaker.

M11 reported:

I feel confident when I talk to non-native speakers of English or native speakers who speak Standard English but I might experience some anxiety when I communicate with people from parts of the USA or Scotland who speak with difficult accents, they really confuse me and make me feel that I have never studied English before. I feel really disappointed.

These examples showed that students face difficulty with some accents and even those who had no experience of communicating with people using English as a first language assumed that they would encounter such difficulties. W4 and W11 are the only two women who agree with M1, M2, M3, M5, M6, and M11 and explained they felt anxious interacting with native speakers of English for two reasons. W11, for instance, explained that, "*I might feel a little anxiety with native speakers because I cannot grasp the detail or understand known words in new contexts*". W4 added, "*I think communicating with native speakers causes me more anxiety because they speak quickly and drop some sounds or they might use expressions which I don't know*". An inability to capture details when listening or interacting with native speakers, as W11 suggested, might be explained by W4's response about speakers' accents and some phonological phenomena such as elision and assimilation. In addition, the difficulty of understanding word functions, English expressions, or typical phrases used by native speakers is, more possibly, what causes anxiety amongst my participants about communication with users of English as a first language.

In contrast, women participants like W1, W2, W3, W6, W7, W8, and W10 stated that they feel little anxiety when communicating with native speakers. W1, for example, said:

Well. I have not had many chances to talk to native speakers, but I remember once in Egypt I talked to a British person. I felt a little bit of anxiety at first, but later I felt relaxed. I could understand the speech easily and I was understood as well.

W2 also talked about her experience and stated:

I have no problem when I speak to a native speaker. My cousins were born and live in the United States. English is their first language. They cannot speak Arabic fluently. When they came for a visit, we had many conversations. I didn't feel afraid of talking to them even when I didn't know how to say a word in English. I tried to explain by signing. It was a nice experience. I didn't feel anxious except the first time but after that everything went ok.

133

W7, in addition, commented:

When I communicate with British or American people I feel less anxious than when I do with Arabic speakers. For example, the last time I talked to a doctor in the hospital in English I felt confident after I communicated very well with her, she could understand me very easily and I understood her. That made me happy with myself. But I don't feel the same when I talk to a Libyan teacher. I don't know why.

W8 had a similar experience, saying:

I once met an English couple on the beach. I felt happy because I could communicate well with them, we could understand each other easily, and they told me they were doctors working in the general hospital of the city, and I told them that I was an English language student.

Real communication with native speakers of English could predictably cause high levels of anxiety for many students at first or if they have not had the chance to communicate with native English speakers but my data here suggests anxiety is then reduced after being involved in conversation especially when a student feels that s/he could understand what has been said and that s/he has been understood. Frequent communication with native speakers might also increase students' self-confidence and esteem and help them to feel more comfortable in the classroom, motivating them to participate in classroom activities.

Communication with an Arab speaking English (Libyan, Iraqi, etc.)

Most men participants declared that communication with Arabic speakers caused them less anxiety than with a native speaker of English. However, M10 was the only man who had another view, *"I feel anxious especially with Libyans because most Libyans who can speak English like showing off and they make me feel that they are better than me".* Anxiety with respect to talking with Arabic speakers, particularly Libyans, was mentioned by five participants only (M10, W1, W2, W3, W6, and W7) although anxiety about accents is reduced as M8 reported below. Besides, saying that interaction in English with Arabic speakers created anxiety, W1 reported:

Yes. I feel they cause me more anxiety than native speakers. They like to evaluate anyone talking to them. They make me feel that I am less fluent than they are. They like showing off when they can speak a foreign language.

W3 said:

I feel anxious with Arabic speakers in general and intensive anxiety with Libyans in particular because I had bad experiences with Libyan teachers in the class. I remember

134

once one of the teachers laughed at me when I spoke in the class, and made all the class laugh at me.

W6 expressed her high anxiety, saying:

I get confused when I talk to Arabic speakers in English. I might say things I shouldn't in the context because I cannot concentrate. I might say 'yes' to a question that I was supposed to say 'no' to - I cannot control myself. I feel that I want to respond but I cannot focus or understand the speech correctly.

Compared to communication with native speakers, some students find communication with Arabs speaking in English more anxiety provoking perhaps because the main purpose of communication with native speakers is to be able to understand and to be understood, whereas some fellow Arabic speakers might evaluate the quality of speech rather than the communication. These examples may indicate a culturally widespread habit which is social evaluation literacy known as ′criticism′ in the Arab world. In the Libyan culture, as well as others, criticism is regarded as mostly negative and my female students talked of feeling uncomfortable when communicating with Arabic speakers for fear of being negatively evaluated. W3's comment demonstrated 'criticism' in which she extends her negative experiences with teachers to other people.

However, the responses of those such as W4, W8, W10, and W11 showed that communication with Arabs tends to be relaxing for different reasons. W4, for example, said, *"I would feel relaxed with other groups because I'm familiar with their accents"* and W8 replied, *"I think it will be easy to talk to them because I will use the Arabic language in case I forget what to say in English"*. W10, in addition commented, *"Well. I think it is easy to speak English with Arabs like Libyans or Iraqis, because finally we will understand each other even by facial expressions"*. Moreover, W11 responded:

I think I would feel relaxed with Arabs and non-natives because I had many opportunities to communicate with them, and I really feel more relaxed when I communicate with them because whatever they said it wouldn't be like native speakers. They often use common words and put them in short sentences when they talk to non-natives in order to be understood.

Besides the familiarity mentioned by W4 above, different strategies may be used with Arabic speakers to alleviate anxiety and hence allow communication to cause less anxiety. Using the Arabic language in the case of recall failure or not knowing the necessary English word, using facial expressions to exchange information, and having the belief that Arabs who speak English commonly use simple sentence structures, all helped my some of my participants to feel a reduced sense of anxiety but these strategies could not be applied with non-native English and non Arabic speakers.

135

Communicating with a non-native speaker of neither English nor Arabic (Pakistani, Indian, etc.)

M8, M9, and M10 reported that non-natives are the most difficult to communicate with due to their 'broken' accents. M8 expressed his concerns about processing two skills (listening and speaking) at the same time which causes anxiety, and he commented:

I think I would feel seriously anxious with non-natives of neither English nor Arabic because I would have to listen and understand their English, which might be broken, and respond at the same time.

In addition, M9 declared he had no chances to communicate with native English speakers but he did believe that communication with non-natives might cause anxiety. He said, "*Some of those nationalities speak unclear English so they might cause me anxiety. They, for example, may say 've are' instead of 'we are'*". M10 also reported "*Non-natives make me anxious because I cannot understand them easily, they speak unclear English*". Similarly, M9 and M10 noted the difficulty of understanding non-native speakers because they thought their pronunciation was sometimes unclear. Similarly, W2, W6, W7, and W10's responses revealed that non-native speakers of neither English nor Arabic caused them anxiety. W2, for example, responded, "*I get anxious with some non-native speakers of neither English nor Arabic like Pakistanis or Indians because of their accent or the topic we talk about*". W7 also stated:

Other nationalities who I met made me anxious because I cannot understand their speech. They speak broken English and they don't understand me either. I think their accent is terrible. As you know most of them can speak Arabic and sometimes when I cannot understand them in English I had to talk Arabic with them, so they repeat what they have already said in Arabic which in fact is very easy to be understood, the problem for me is their pronunciation.

However, the responses of W1, W3, W4, and W8 suggested these participants felt less anxious when communicating with non-native speakers of neither English nor Arabic like Pakistanis or Indians. W1, for instance, stated, "*I had many chances to communicate with my Indian teachers in the last two years in this university. Although they speak broken English, they didn't cause me any anxiety as Arabs do*". W3 also said, "*I have no problem with them. I was taught by Indians years ago. I never felt anxious when I communicated with them*". W4 similarly reported "*I would feel relaxed with other groups because I'm familiar with their accents*" and W8 said, "*No, I don't think they cause me any problems because I can understand them. I used to communicate with them when they were in the school*".

It seems that women participants who said that they feel more relaxed, at least less anxious, when communicating with non-native speakers of neither English nor Arabic are familiar with such situations because they are possibly used to adapting to Indian and Pakistani accents. However, others seem struggle with anxiety caused, they say, by speakers' accents.

Other participants, such as W5 and W9, stated that their anxiety is generated in all speaking cases and that this is not associated with talking to particular nationalities or those with particular accents. For example, W5 commented, *"I always feel anxious when I speak English, it is not related to the person in front of me, and there is something inside me making me feel like this"*. W9 also stated, *"I cannot tell because I never had a chance to talk to a native speaker or other foreigners but I am sure I would feel very anxious because I cannot speak English well"*. W9, as noted earlier, seems to experience trait anxiety and so this is, perhaps, why she reports her feeling of anxiety regardless of the speaker's accent or nationality. I have also pointed to the FLA experienced by W5 and her anxiety seems to be associated with all speaking situations because, as she described herself, she is not a fluent speaker. Those students who could describe themselves either positively or negatively gauge their levels by social comparison and I will discuss this below.

6.4.3 Social comparison

Social comparison is common between students in every classroom (as I explained in Chapter Three, 3.2). Most students compare themselves to their peers perceiving others to be better or worse than them in order to assess their own level. This social comparison may generate different emotions amongst students. A student who compares himself to another who is better might feel jealousy, envy, anger, or anxiety. So it was important to investigate this factor in order to see if students in the Libyan context compared themselves to each other and, if so, if this had any effect on anxiety. The extracts above show that this comparison does occur and students were also asked this question: "Would you assess your English language skills as: very good, good, average, below average? Please explain how you are making your assessment".

The men's interviews demonstrated that M1, M4, M6, M8, M10 did assess their level by comparison to their colleagues. For example, M4 said, *"Very good. I know by marks and comparing myself to others"*. M10 similarly stated, *"Good. My results and comparing myself to my friends - I am good"*. Others such as M3 and M11 stated that they evaluated themselves by comparison only with M3 reporting, *"I'm average compared to the guys"*.

Others such as M2, M5, M7, and M9 said they relied only on their examinations marks for evaluation. M7, for example, said "*Average... my marks tell that I'm average*" and M9 similarly stated, "*Good. My marks are often at this level*". Responses to this question showed that most of the women's responses in my study (W1, W2, W3, W4, W7, W8, W9, W10, W11) suggested they assessed their English by social comparison to their colleagues in the classroom. For example, W2 commented, "*Good, I think, compared to the class*" and W4 said, "*Good. Compared to my friends - some friends doing better than me, some others are less good. I hope to get better*". W7 said:

I can assess myself as a very good student because I can write and speak very well. I am not an 'excellent' but I am very good compared to my friends in the class. There are few excellent students in my class - they are very clever and doing better than me, and there are very weak students who keeping silent all the time. I tell myself that I am better than the last group because I can share and do the activities with the good students in the class.

W8 also compared herself to others and used her results, saying:

Very good. I make my assessment through my scores and when I compare myself to my friends in the class I think I am better than many in speaking and writing in particular because these skills are the most difficult for many students.

However, W5 and W6 reported that they make their self-assessments only based on their results. W5, for example, said, "*Average, I think, or maybe under average. My results are often low*" and W6 similarly stated "*Good. My results are often at this level*".

These findings suggest that the women in my study tend to use social comparison more than their male counterparts. Comparing oneself to others is a strategy of self-assessment but this strategy may cause a degree of anxiety for some students. However, this may be 'positive anxiety' (as I explained in Chapter Four) in which anxiety creates a spirit of competition and motivation, that is, it may drive students to work harder and encourage them to reach the same or a higher academic level than their peers. Below I will outline different strategies my students said they used to lower the level of anxiety.

6.4.4 Strategies of reducing FLA

The final question of the interview was designed to further explore possible causes and occurrences of FLA and to ask students about any possible ways of reducing this anxiety. I have already classified and discussed possible FLA causes above and noted the influence of teachers and mixed-sex classes and so, here, I will focus on possible FLA reduction strategies, first as suggested by the men in my study. The question asked was: "Which, if

any, of these factors might make you feel relaxed, confident or anxious – Atmosphere, Types of tasks, Teachers, Teaching styles, Learning resources, Mixed-Sex classrooms, Another situation? Could you explain why?".

6.4.4.a Atmosphere

Most male participants (M1, M2, M3, M5, M6, M7, M8 and M10) stated that the atmosphere in class can be uncomfortable and anxiety provoking for learning for a variety of reasons including mixed-sex classrooms, as noted above, and problems they judge to be caused by teachers and teaching resources. For example, M1 said that it depends on the teacher, "*Sometimes relaxed and sometimes anxious, but all depends on the teachers*". M2 and M7 reported that favouritism affects the class atmosphere with M2 commenting that he felt "*anxiety because of favouritism, and mixed-sex classrooms*". M7 gave more details, saying:

Teachers, mixed classes, teaching styles, lack of labs, books, references and lack of internet make the atmosphere anxious. This is my personal experience, I remember last year I did not attend some classes because of favouritism - I felt that there is no need to attend the classes since teachers don't care about us. I remember that my friends and I escaped from some classes since our presence was not important for teachers ... the university should make all of these things available and teachers should learn how to deal with us according to our levels or divide us into groups of women and men to avoid favouritism.

It seems, from my data, that perceptions of teachers' favouritism for some students, possibly related to those students' advanced level or, as seen in some extracts above, to gendered reactions, affects the atmosphere of the classroom and hence may affect levels of anxiety, learning and progress for some students.

Besides favouritism, M7 noted a lack of teaching aids and M6 also shared with M7 a point about a shortage of teaching aids and resources which, from his viewpoint, makes for an unpleasant atmosphere, saying, "*It makes me feel anxious because the School lacks stuff like learning aids and air conditioning - if these were supplied I'm sure we would feel more relaxed*". M7 also suggested sex segregated classes for learning English and he implies that teachers should have better educational and psychological knowledge in order to deal with different types of students. However, different views and feelings emerged from the female participants regarding the atmosphere in class. W2 was the only participant who feels that the atmosphere is often relaxing, and she said this, "*… makes me relaxed, we are a nice group*".

In contrast, findings of the other women participants, such as W1, W3, W4, W6, W7, W10, and W11 agreed with M1 that the atmosphere depends on the teachers. W1 explained:

I feel very relaxed when I attend some classes in which I enjoy the exercises and the activities we do. But I dislike some classes, they keep me busy thinking of them…. Not because of the material, it is all depends on the teacher. He or she controls the class and the material, so she or he can make it easy and interesting or difficult and boring.

W4 concentrated on the teacher's personality, saying:

I feel relaxed with friendly teachers where I become able to do the exercises with my friends. All women like to work together, we help each other, I like this atmosphere, and it makes me feel confident and enjoy learning. But the atmosphere can be bad with some other teachers.

W10 similarly stated that the atmosphere depended on the teacher:

Some teachers and mixed classes make a terrible atmosphere. However, everything depends on the teacher. I mean the teacher's personality can make the atmosphere, types of tasks, learning resources relaxing or stressful. Sometimes we do similar tasks with different teachers - those with friendly teachers are relaxing but others with tough teachers become difficult and cause anxiety. I hope teachers learn more to be more professional in teaching English.

W3 went further, talking about classroom behavior and discipline. This extract may seem to be rather racist but I do not think this is the case. The problem is that most non-native speakers of English, especially Asian teachers from India and Malaysia, have a very particular pronunciation and so it is difficult for some language learners to recognize words. When this occurs, students start asking for words to be repeated until the teacher gets to the point when they may think they are losing control of the class. There are other language teachers from different nations, such as Iraq, Egypt and Sudan, and they are treated with respect by Libyan students but, in my experience, it depends mostly on the teacher's personality and way of managing the class and getting on with the students. W3 said:

I think it has got much better now compared to when Indian teachers were here. They couldn't control the classes. Students made a lot of noise during the lessons, cheated in the exams, didn't respect teachers at all because they were foreigners. Now teachers are Libyans and some of them have strong personalities so we cannot make noise at all during the class because we fear teachers' responses such as expulsion or suspension for misbehaviour.

Perhaps due to her perceptions of herself as a weak student, I have suggested trait anxiety and a low sense of self-confidence and a negative social comparison with her classmates, W9 feels that the learning atmosphere is uncomfortable and generates anxiety:

For me it often causes anxiety, most students are better than me in the class, they speak and participate in activities and make errors but they keep trying. They are more active than me because they trust in themselves, while I sit silently because I feel frightened from communication even in Arabic.

Finally W11 returns to opportunities for practising, suggesting, *"If they [teachers] just give us more time for practising, we will be professional and skilful teachers"*. Student perceptions seem clear, the teacher's personality and pedagogy can create what they regard as a good enjoyable learning atmosphere in which all students, with their different abilities, aptitudes and backgrounds, are included and engaged in activities. In particular, the responses of the women in my study indicated that some teachers lack knowledge of pedagogical principles and skills of teaching foreign languages and I return to this in Chapter Seven. Students also suggested that teachers might increase their students' anxiety by choosing types of tasks that generate anxiety and I outline these responses below.

6.4.4.b Types of tasks

Participants gave different answers to this part of the question and some of them said some tasks and activities did not cause anxiety. For instance, M9 said, *"There are varieties of tasks and I think they are often relaxing"*. M10 also reported, *"It makes me relaxed because we work as groups"*. However, M2 stated, *"In each subject we do the same tasks every time, there is nothing new, it becomes boring, there should be more new activities and more practice"*. M11, in addition, complained about being passive and feeling isolated because of a lack of practice in the English language during classes. And he suggested having more time for doing more exercises in other skills in addition to speaking and listening in order to be able to use language for communication.

Most of the time in classes we only sit and listen, there is a shortage of tasks and activities except some in speaking and listening classes - I think we have to practise more than that in every skill to be good communicators.

M7 also pointed to the lack of practice and believed that practising the language is important because it reduces anxiety and he commented:

Teachers don't want to make efforts to help us, all they care about is to give the lesson, no matter if we practise or not, they really don't care and, as you know, lack of practice makes us feel anxious when we communicate because we have not trained as we should.

According to the answers of M9 and M10, it seems that some students enjoy, and do not feel anxious with, varieties of activities and tasks which they believe make learning more effective. Some students tend to prefer working in groups rather than in what they see as

141

isolation and this may help them to feel more secure and gain more chances to share their experiences and ideas, and also to increase the level of their confidence in their abilities. Others, as seen above, such as M2, suggested having more practice and more varieties of tasks to learn English effectively and hence to decrease the intensity of his anxiety.

Participants such as M1, M5, and M6 agreed that any listening and speaking tasks, such as presentations and reading aloud, are those that cause the most anxiety. M5, for instance said, "*Presentations and reading aloud make me anxious*". M6 also said, "*It depends. Presentations or reading aloud, for example, makes me terribly anxious*". M1, moreover, added, "*I feel relaxed and confident in tasks of writing and reading but anxious in tasks that require listening and speaking, but if teachers asked us to prepare at home it would be easier especially in listening*". M8 also said, "*I might feel a little anxiety when I have to talk without preparation*" and M1 said listening and speaking tasks are the most difficult and increase his anxiety, but tasks of reading and writing are relaxing, suggesting that these provided time to think and re-do tasks. Additionally, M1 and M8 suggested that preparation is a good and effective strategy for reducing anxiety and hence would allow better, less anxious learning. Three women, W2, W7, and W11, said that specific tasks do not generate much anxiety, but others stated that types of task could be without anxiety only under certain conditions. W1 said, "*If teachers explain what is required from the tasks it's OK, otherwise they may cause anxiety and I feel lost*" and W9 said, "*If I don't understand it well, it causes me anxiety. Some tasks will be difficult especially gap-filling which follows listening, or those which require speaking*". Similarly W4 suggested, "*It depends on my understanding of the task. When the teacher explains the task, or gives me an example, I feel relaxed. But when I don't know what is required, I feel very anxious*". With reference to understanding, W6 also said, "*depending on my understanding of the lesson, if I understand the lesson well, the tasks cause no anxiety, but if not, they increase my anxiety and fear*".

W10 associated anxiety not so much with types of tasks as with types of teacher's personalities as reported above but worth repeating here.

Sometimes we do similar tasks with different teachers - those with friendly teachers are relaxing but others with tough teachers become difficult and cause anxiety. I hope teachers learn more to be more professional in teaching English.

It seems that tasks can be a factor in the generation of anxiety and especially so when teachers do not, in the students' views, play the roles of facilitators or clarify what students need to understand with respect to what is required. It is also clear from students'

comments here and above, that some teachers may concentrate on explaining theory such as the word stress and the rules of rising and falling intonation in phonetics and discount or do very little practice. In addition, it is important to note that students associated anxiety with types of tasks and their reactions to them to teachers' personalities and styles of teaching and I will continue this below.

6.4.4.c Teaching styles

The responses to this point provided more possible FLA causes and suggestions for reducing it. Participants M1, M2 and M5, for example, focused on using the first language, Arabic, in the teaching process. M1, for instance commented, "*Teachers who use a little bit of Arabic make learning easy especially when the lesson contains terms such as in syntax and morphology*". M2 also said, "S*ome of the theoretical subject teachers speak English only, so sometimes I cannot understand some terms, and if that happens at the beginning of the lecture I feel lost up to the end which causes me anxiety all the time*". M5, in addition said, "*Teachers should not talk English all the time. Sometimes I feel lost and cannot understand the whole lesson - I cannot connect the information together or connect the relationships between this and that*".

These examples suggest that using the students' first language, for some students on particular occasions, could facilitate learning the target language and reduce anxiety. Some students' comments also suggest that their anxiety possibly increases when they encounter unknown terms in a lesson. Anxiety such as this may play an important role preventing the mind from using other cognitive process such as guessing, memorizing, comprehension and reasoning (as I noted in Chapter Four). Students experiencing situational anxiety may feel confused and some, such as M5, say that they cannot connect information. However, M4 also suggested an important point in his comment about the use of the students' first language and translating terms into Arabic, saying, "*Teachers themselves and their teaching styles usually make me nervous. Some teachers speak Arabic most of the time, and translate every word. That disadvantages us*". What they perceive to be excessive translation might seem unfavourable for some students, perhaps for high level students with a good vocabulary which allows them to process lessons without the need for translation. Other students such as M3 reported "*Some teachers focus on teaching grammar so much even in speaking and reading classes, we need to learn how to speak fluently. Generally, most of us are not good at speaking*". Similarly, M9 said:

Teaching English in Libya is traditional, most teachers follow the same style, they don't focus on teaching English for communication, and they focus on teaching grammar and linguistic rules while they don't give us enough time to practise speaking or writing and I think that is not what we came for. We came here to learn how to communicate, not to learn only the theoretical side of the language.

My own experience and the student interviews here suggest that most English language teachers referred to in this study are applying some principles of Grammar-Translation Methods which focus mainly on teaching grammatical rules and using translation into the first language of the learners. It also appears that some students think this method contradicts the purpose of English learning which, for them, is learning language for communication as I indicated early. The comment of M9 also reveals that learners may be passive, ineffective and not engaged in the learning process while teachers concentrate on teaching the theoretical aspects of the language and do not provide what the students here regard as adequate opportunities for practice. The comment of M4 below also suggests that some teachers have an authoritative and perhaps an uncaring teaching style.

... others don't give us chance to discuss the lesson or interact with them, they talk during the class and when they finish, they leave the room. We need time to practise what we have learned. Teachers don't care about this.

Teaching style obviously depends also on a teacher's personality, whether the teacher is extrovert or introvert, analytic or intuitive, realistic or imaginative, as Hadfield and Hadfield (2008) suggests. But M6 stated:

Teaching styles sometimes make me anxious when I cannot understand the lesson because some students sometimes ask questions not related to the topic and the teacher responds to them and forgets about the main lesson.

As M6 points out, an improvising teacher, responding to students' wants and needs, may for some, himself included, make a lesson feel chaotic and lacking the focus he wants. There are additional teaching styles and pedagogies applied by teachers mentioned in this study that students think cause FLA. M8 said:

I think some teachers are not professional in teaching, they might be good at speaking English but they are not good at teaching, they don't know how to explain lessons well, even very good students sometimes cannot understand lessons, therefore they ask us to make presentations regularly, it is just wasting time - by the end of the semester the material either is too brief or not understood.

M6, M8, and others above seem to be requesting teachers who might be more methodologically trained and who might be planners with a clear organized teaching style and some of the students in my study suggest this would mean they are more supportive and responsive, up to a point, to students to facilitate learning and make it less anxiety

144

causing. A number of students believe that the purpose of learning a FL is for communication and in order to achieve the goal, they want some of their teachers to teach differently and to make FLL less anxiety provoking.

Women participants such as W3, W6, W7, W8, W10, and W11 agreed that some teaching styles do not cause them to feel anxious. W2, for example, said, "*Every teacher has his or her own style and I generally learn from them but sometimes a teacher causes some anxiety when they try something new*". However, other participants pointed to some barriers caused by teaching styles and behaviours applied by their teachers. W1, for instance, said:

There are some teachers who apply very interesting and modern styles particularly those who use communicative methods. At the same time, there are some others who use very boring styles which make most of the students escape the classes.

As the students' responses show, some teachers apply mainly the principles of the classic Grammar-Translation Method and, as I said, this is the most widespread method applied in Libya especially by older teachers. Other teachers, who might believe that communication is the purpose of FLL, might mix teaching methods or use predominantly communicative methods and styles. These teachers seem to be preferred by the students here, perhaps because the students feel more comfortable and more self-confident when they share activities and do tasks and perhaps they feel less anxious when learning to communicate in English if they believe that is the main purpose of ELL. But applying teaching methods, particularly those focusing on teaching listening and speaking probably requires learning resources and these caused some anxiety to some learners as I explain in the next section.

6.4.4.d Learning and teaching resources

Most students negatively criticized the School for its poor facilities which some said caused anxiety and others said meant they felt bored. M2, for instance, said, "*They are traditional, teachers use only board and sheets, I am sure that in Britain and the United States teachers apply modern styles for teaching foreign languages*". M5 also responded, "*They are traditional; we need modern visual and audio aids for better learning*". This is a very short section because my participants did not have much to say about resources and it is interesting that the two extracts are about teaching methods perhaps as much as about resources. Having now presented my analysis of the students' responses and come to the conclusion that, in my study, teachers were very frequently cited as causes of anxiety, I will look at teachers' views about their students' FLA.

6.5 Teachers' perspectives towards FLA

The second part of this Chapter, as noted, is the analysis of teachers' interviews. Here I am not analyzing the questions as they were ordered in the interview prompt list (Appendix 7) because some data are irrelevant to FLA. Instead, I have ordered the section according to the main themes and causes of FLA from the perspective of the eight teachers interviewed.

6.5.1 Teachers' experience of and views of FLA

In question three of the interview, attention was focused on the main topic of the study (FLA), but I asked teachers about their own experiences of FLA when they were learners or as teachers. The aim of the question was to investigate if the teachers have felt FLA before or even now and, if so, what kind of strategies they apply in order to decrease their students' anxiety. So, the question was: "Could you please tell me something about your own experience as a language learner and about your own anxieties, if any, that you had then or have now?".

The responses of the teachers indicated that all teachers, expect T6, had experienced FLA when they were students. For example, T1 reported:

When I was a student I loved learning English and experienced some anxieties when some lectures focused on the theoretical and neglected the practical side on the pretext of the shortage of time. At that time I had to work and study by myself and that really raised my anxiety because I was not sure of my way of learning. As a teacher, I rarely feel anxiety.

T1's experience of anxiety caused by a lack of practice is similar to what a number of the participant students reported above. So, T1 now is aware of the importance of practice in the classroom and presumably knows that when practice is ignored or inadequate then students' anxiety might increase.

T2 frankly said:

You might get surprised if I told you that I hadn't experienced anxiety when I was a student except when I forgot or ignored my homework. My anxiety came from the anticipated negative comments which the teacher might make. Generally, I was very good at classes but I didn't enjoy doing homework. For now, I do feel anxious when I am not well-prepared for my lessons. And I might feel a bit anxious when I know that there are very good students in my class.

As seen in the section above, students become anxious because of the negative evaluation of teachers and peers. Similarly, T2's comment shows that he had, as a student, been anxious about negative evaluation and that now, as a teacher, he feared students' negative

evaluations especially if lessons have not been well prepared or, interestingly, if there are very good students in the classes.

T5 similarly said:

I always blamed myself for being anxious when I was in the university. I spent four years sitting silent in the class, and didn't speak although mostly I knew the answers. When the teacher asked a question, I hope I spoke. For my high school studies, I encouraged myself to speak in the class even when I wasn't sure if my answer was correct or not. I didn't care, I only wanted to speak. I think I was good in presentations, more than in other tasks that required writing or reading, because I had the motivation to speak rightly or wrongly. As a teacher now, I don't think that I have anxiety.

What became fascinating as I spoke to the teachers was how, if at all, they remembered their own experiences as learners and acted on those to ensure their students did not experience similar anxieties. T7 talked clearly about her own experience of FLA caused by her teacher's negative comments, saying:

Yes. When I was a student I really suffered anxiety, sometimes a high level of anxiety. Actually it depends on the situation itself. I remember once that I was chatting with my friend in the class, when the teacher noticed us. She asked me in English, 'What did you tell your friend? Tell us'. I was so embarrassed and very anxious because I must answer in English in front of the mixed-sex class which consisted of about 50 students. I stood up with difficulty and I couldn't express myself as I was supposed to do. I wanted to tell her that I asked my friend to pronounce a word in the book, but accidently I found myself saying 'I asked her to pronounce this word for me'. The teacher then commented badly on my sentence and made the whole group laugh at me. Since that time I was very scared of talking in front of my class or to talk to teachers. Now I might feel a little anxiety when I talk only to native speakers.

As seen above, the teachers' responses showed that they had, as learners, experienced anxiety caused by different situations occurring in their classrooms. In the last two comments the participants mentioned teachers' negative evaluation as a source of anxiety, so these comments indicate that these teachers have experience of and, presumably, an understanding of the effects of anxiety on learning and, perhaps, these teachers might try to make their classes less stressful and anxiety provoking than those they experienced. T6, in contrast, was the only participant who said she had not experienced any FLA.

I never felt anxious when I was a student or now as teacher. When I started studying English I was surprised when I was at the first of the top ten in the first year although I had not made so much effort or prepared for exams. I knew that I would pass but I didn't expect to be at the top. The result made me more confident that I would finish my BA and MA.

Teachers' responses showed that three of eight participant teachers experience anxiety now because of teaching high level students or while meeting native speakers and so I was

147

interested to see if this experience, or lack of FLA experience, was mirrored in knowledge about FLA or their views of their students' FLA.

6.5.2 Teacher's perspectives on their students' FLA

After exploring teachers' own anxieties as learners and tutors, I moved on to explore their perspectives about their students' anxieties with the following question: "Do you think that some of your students experience foreign language anxiety? Could you explain in what circumstances? For what reasons?".

All participant teachers believed that their students experience an amount of FLA and they suggested that students' anxieties occur often when they are asked to speak. However, teachers attributed students' anxieties to a variety of different causes. T1, for example, said:

Yes. Sometimes I feel they are anxious in listening and speaking in particular because they may feel shy or they know if they make errors in pronunciation or grammar in front of the class they will be laughed at or hear bad comments from their peers. And there are some women who start crying in the speaking exams before I even ask the questions .... they are scared of the exams because they have not prepared well.

T1 notes some sources of FLA as negative evaluation by peers, but he thinks that lack of preparing is the main cause of test anxiety. T1's suggestion is possible but, as I indicated in Chapter Four, Young (1999) attributed test anxiety to causes such as perceptions of test validity, time limits, testing techniques, test format, length, the testing environment and the clarity of test instructions and he also noticed the relationship between anxiety and listening.

T2 said, "*Yes. They do* [experience FLA] - *especially when they speak. Anxiety occurs obviously in speaking activities like presentations or making conversations. But I think most of them experience anxiety in other skills and about examinations*".

T3 summarized the main factors of FLA, seeming to have some prior knowledge of FLA, saying:

Yes. Sure, they do. Although all aspects of using and learning a foreign language can cause anxiety, listening and speaking are regularly the most anxiety provoking of foreign language activities. The reasons for foreign language anxiety can be communication apprehension, test anxiety or fear of negative evaluation by teachers or peers.

148

The teachers seem to agree that speaking then listening are the most anxiety provoking skills. Although all teachers of the English language in the school have a Masters degree and some have a PhD, few of them talked using terminology that might have indicated reading about and knowledge of FLA, such as communication apprehension. However, the teachers did talk of key FLA concepts and factors in their own words. In addition, T6 attributed students' anxiety to their low academic achievement, stating:

Yes. They are some - I believe they experience anxiety particularly in speaking. And there are some who I think should be in other fields. Some are very weak - they lack the basics of language which are supposed to be learned before university. They really disappoint me. In exams for example, they couldn't understand some vocabulary such as 'bridge' and 'solve problem', they ask for translations of these words - it is unacceptable, you know, they are in second and third year and they don't know the meaning of common words like those.

Low academic achievement for T6 is a cause and explanation for anxiety. So students who lack the vocabulary needed for speaking might feel anxious because they are unable to communicate in FL and achieve the successful interaction but she says nothing of her/his own role.

T4 mentioned another situation which might generate anxiety, saying:

I can confirm that some of my students experience foreign language anxiety. Although some anxiety is good for learning, I believe. It motivates the desire to learn. The most common anxiety circumstance occurs once I ask them to speak in English, or to write an essay about a certain topic in English. They show a considerable amount of unease. I could assume that the main reason is the fear of committing mistakes.

T4 talked about the appropriate anxiety that I explained in Chapter Four, suggesting an understanding that some anxiety is useful for learning because it motivates students to work hard. T4's comment supported Bailey's (1983) conclusion that some anxiety is a key to successful language learning. T7 suggested other possible causes for FLA and the extract below suggests an understanding of FLA:

Yes, of course. They do. I think FL anxiety is somehow correlated with students' academic achievement. I mean that students who are average and below average more possibly experience more anxiety than good students. I personally see that in speaking classes. But this doesn't mean that good students in English don't experience anxiety. I have a student who speaks English fluently, but every time she takes part in a conversation she shakes and her mouth dries up. Sometimes I feel she is frightened of me although I am doing my best to be as friendly as I can. Through my experience of teaching and approaches to my students I can say - in this context - I mean in this university and department - that foreign language anxiety and communication apprehension are caused by two main factors. First, the influence of mixed-sex classrooms and, second, teachers' personalities.

149

The teachers' responses revealed some anxiety provoking factors mentioned earlier by the students such as communication apprehension, negative evaluation, test anxiety, gender issues in mixed-sex classrooms, low academic achievement, and teachers' personalities. In addition to the factors realized by the teachers, T8 suggested that facial expressions (as explained in Chapter Four) and physiological reactions can be seen when students are anxious.

... especially when I ask them to speak or read aloud, I think some of them become very anxious because they don't like to be seen as a poor student ... their anxiety is remarkable ... I can see changes on their faces and in their voices, and their shaky hands.

On the other hand, one participant, T5, had a different view. She was uncertain of the existence of FLA, saying:

I don't think they do experience anxiety. I think they pretend. They are possibly scared of being laughed at. There are very good students here in grammar, writing, reading, literature et cetera but their problem is that they cannot speak well because they have been taught by Indian teachers for years - they didn't focus on teaching speaking skills.

Overall, my teacher interviews revealed that the phenomenon of FLA is recognised by most of the teachers I interviewed and they seemed aware of some sources of their students' anxieties. The teacher interviews also suggested that speaking activities are the main cause of anxiety, but most teachers (except T7) seem unaware, at least they did not report in interviews with me, that their own personalities, negative evaluation, and gendered behaviours in mixed-sex classes, as reported by students, may also be major causes of anxiety. In the next section, I will consider the teachers' perspectives on the effects of anxiety on student achievement.

6.5.2. Effects of FLA on learners

In order to investigate the teachers' views regarding the effects of FLA on their students I asked: "From your experience of teaching, what are the effects of anxiety on language learners?". Responses suggested different views. Both T1 and T8 agreed that FLA affects performance. T1 said, "*I think students who experience anxiety are less active in the class and attain less academic achievement than others*". Similarly, T8 stated, "*Anxiety prevents them from practising and performing well. It distracts students' attention and makes them feel confused and less able to produce language*".T2 added:

Anxiety affects all the processes of learning. It hinders students' progress and pulls them back from real participation during class activities. It also makes students think of

150

concentrating on the theoretical side of the language, I mean it makes the main purpose of learning to pass from one level to another. I noticed that the most anxious students, especially men who are afraid of speaking, either sit silently and refuse to participate in the classroom activity or escape the class completely to avoid embarrassment in front of classmates.

In Chapter Five I presented the participant's teachers' details in Table 4, and I noted that they were eight experienced Libyan tutors (four men and four women) who had been teaching English as a FL for more than eight years. Two of them hold a PhD and the other six hold a Master's degree. These degrees had been achieved in the UK, Malta, Malaysia and Egypt. Some of these teachers also talked of having experienced FLA in their classroom but they seemed to have no knowledge that FLA was a field of theoretical and empirical study. Because of this, I needed to explain FLA and make sure that the teachers understood it so that they could respond to the interview questions. When I clarified the phenomenon, teachers started to connect between the theory and practice. So, as I suggest below, the teachers recognized the influence of FLA on learning. T3, for instance, described the effects of anxiety:

Anxious learners suffer from mental blocks during speaking activities, lack confidence, and they might employ avoidance strategies such as skipping class. They also forget previously learned material. They also have a tendency to remain passive in classroom activities - more than their less anxious peers.

T4 noted that anxiety can mean that students do not enjoy learning and talked of 'unreasonable' anxiety:

The main effect of anxiety on language learners is that it deprives them of a joy of learning and it limits their wish to learn. Most of the time, they are missing the joy of learning a second language because of their unreasonable anxiety.

T5 recognised the effects of anxiety occurring during exams and she reported:

Certainly anxiety has negative effects on students, particularly during examinations. We notice that some very good students don't perform well in exams because they get anxious and frightened about observers and exam papers so they forget what they have already studied, but when they finish their exams and leave the examination room, they remember information.

Finally, T7 said:

I think the effects are sometimes positive and sometimes negative. You may not believe this, but when anxiety ranges from low to moderate, it makes students study harder and pay more attention to learning the target language. On the other hand, when anxiety gets high, it prevents students from learning. I mean they cannot focus on the information, they have a kind of mental obstacle, and some of them get completely stuck.

151

The participant teachers' extracts often reflect aspects of the theory I presented in earlier Chapters. For example, the classification of anxiety presented by T7 links to Basavanthappa's (2007) distinction between normal and abnormal anxieties (see Chapter Four). That researcher classified anxiety into four levels (mild, moderate, sever and panic) and showed the physiological and emotional changes each level causes. Mild and moderate anxiety, as T7 suggested, is useful and even necessary for good learning because the intensity of anxiety here is low and it requires students to make efforts to learn. T7 also showed a good understanding of the negative effectives of high anxiety which manifested as intensity of anxiety (as noted in Chapter Four) and can result in total disability in our normal functions. This type of anxiety often results in affective disorders like panic and phobia as Taylor and Liberzon (2007) and Silvers et al. (2014) suggested. Additionally, teachers' responses regarding the effects of FLA seem to range from one stage to another, as Tobias (1986) suggested in his model as presented in Chapter Four. Some teachers think that the influence is mainly at the input stage, others thought that the main effect is on the process stage, while the last group focused on the effects in the production stage of learning which included exams and tests. Two teachers (T1, T6) think that the influence is mainly at the input stage. One teacher (T3) thinks the effect is on the processing stage, while the last group (T2, T4, T5, T7, T8) believe that the influence is at the output stage. The next section explains what teachers said about the situations they thought caused anxiety.

6.5.3. Situations causing anxiety

In question six I asked, "In what situations (activities, tasks, or circumstances) do you think your students become more anxious in the class?". In reply, T2 said:

From my experience speaking comes first, then reading because the 'affective filters', as Krashen hypothesized, are high in these two skills where a learner has no time for processing the information in his or her mind. I also believe that teaching methods can make students anxious. The Grammar Translation Method, for example - one of its principles is 'correction immediately' in the classroom, so the teacher corrects students' mistakes in front of the class - this principle might prevent students from participating to avoid the teacher's correction which might be in a harsh manner or leads to them missing classes.

According to T2, speaking and reading aloud are the causes of FLA and he also attributed anxiety to the Grammar-Translation Method which, as noted, is widely applied in Libya (see Chapter Two). Correcting students' mistakes immediately they are heard is used extensively in Libyan classroom and this possibly generates anxiety for some students, and I will discuss this further.

T3 added: "*I do believe that speaking tasks make students experience higher anxiety*" and T4 also agreed: "*Mostly, during speaking tasks*".T5 also said, "*I noticed that most students get anxious when I ask them to read aloud in front of the class, and when I ask them for a presentation or any speaking activity. Even the very good students suffer from this problem*". T6 suggested, "*I think they get anxious when I start asking questions at the end of the lectures, because they are required to speak in the class. You know, when they get anxious it will be difficult for them to speak*" and T8 said, "*Students normally become more anxious during exams and in any task or activity that requires speaking*". T7 also mentioned gender and mixed-sex classes, saying:

I think each student might have a kind of anxiety in one or more types of tasks or activities, but speaking in front of the class in all forms is the most common cause of anxiety especially in mixed-sex classrooms. Here in this department I believe that mixed-sex classrooms are one of the main problems, especially for men.

All teachers agreed with the students that speaking activities are a major source of anxiety but some teachers, as I noted earlier, said some anxiety is necessary for learning and, in the next section, I will provide the extracts that support this view.

6.5.3.a Positive anxiety

In order to examine teachers' knowledge about the positive side of anxiety, I asked them (question 7): "Do you think that some foreign language anxiety may play a positive role in language learning? Could you explain in what way?". Three teachers (T1, T5, T8) stated that anxiety has no positive impacts on learners or has only negative consequences on their academic achievement and production of the language. T1, for instance, said, "*No. When they practise they feel OK because they are familiar with each other*" but T8 said, "*No. I don't think so. Anxiety has negative effects on students and prevents them from achieving their goals*". Although fear of failure is a form of anxiety, as suggested by Horwitz and Young (1991), T5 seemed confused about this question and insisted that it was a different topic. Her interview indicated a misunderstanding although explanations were offered before I started recording. She reported, "*No. I don't think that anxiety has any positive effects but I think fear of failure does. When students are frightened of failure they more possibly study harder*". This indicates this teacher's possible lack of pedagogical knowledge, particularly about psychological issues and their impact on the process of learning. However, all of the other teachers clearly reported that anxiety can play a positive role and increase learners' academic development. T2, for example, explained:

Yes. I think so. It depends on its amount. If it is intense I believe that its effects are negative but, if it was a little or limited, it becomes beneficial because it pushes learners to
153

be positive and active. I often tell my students that a little anxiety makes them worry and care about their study.

T6 agreed:

Yes. I think anxiety possibly makes students work hard and pushes them to study the difficult materials. So when students get frightened of failing in a subject, they study harder, so anxiety plays a positive role here.

In addition, T4 described the relationship between positive anxiety and motivation *"Yes, I do. It sometimes plays an important role related to motivating their desire to learn a language"*. Similarly, T7 said, *"Yes. Anxiety makes students work hard when it is low"*. It seems that a number of the teachers interviewed are aware of the balance between positive and negative amounts of anxiety, and they understand that some FLA might be useful and necessary for learning, particularly learning difficult subjects and topics for which a reasonable level of anxiety encourages a learner to make extra efforts to study. Teachers were also aware that too much anxiety hinders learners' cognitive skills such as memorization, understanding, and solving problems. Next, I shall show what possible strategies teachers use in order to reduce their students' high-level anxiety.

6.5.4   Strategies for reducing FLA

At this stage of the interview, I wanted to know what kinds of strategies, if any, teachers used to reduce their students' anxiety and make them feel relaxed in the classroom and so I asked question eight: "Are there any strategies you apply to make your students feel less anxious in the class?". Responses to this question varied between those who actively used strategies to help reduce FLA and those who talked of what I would label 'inappropriate strategies". T1, for instance, said:

Yes. I usually ask my students to prepare before the next class - this strategy makes them feel more confident of themselves. But if any student makes a mistake I often use strong words as punishment. I also, during practice sessions, prefer not to stand on the stage of the class, I go between desks to make them feel relaxed. Participation in conversations also makes students familiar with each other and less frightened of speaking.

After T1 finished answering the question, I continued the conversation and asked the next question in order to ensure that I had understood what T1 meant by 'strong words' as a strategy to develop learning. I asked, *"Do you not think that strong words and a harsh manner might make your students feel anxious and have negative effects on their performance and achievement?"*. I was surprised by T1's answer: *"No. No. I use this strategy in order to make them think twice before they pronounce the word. My students will thank me in the future because I taught them well"*.

154

T2 uses different techniques to reduce students' anxiety and he said:

Well, one of the strategies which I believe is very effective is telling my students 'I will never select one of you to give an answer unless you put your hand up' and 'You must speak English inside the classroom but you still can use Arabic when needed or your conversations are interrupted'. In addition, keeping in touch with your students and giving them time to express what makes them anxious more possibly makes them feel relaxed. I think these strategies work well with my students, they trust me and they feel secure in my class. I noticed that they start feeling more confident of themselves and encouraged to speak.

T2, as the extract suggests, has considered the affective side of student learning, so he attempts to create a secure warm atmosphere in order to lessen anxiety and increase self-confidence to encourage his students to speak in the classroom. This teacher seems to know well that reducing anxiety and trying to understand students can be useful and this may well depend on the teacher's personality, as noted by students earlier in this Chapter. Some students said that some teachers are tough and have a harsh manner and that this generates anxiety and fear. Some students also said that other teachers have a 'good' personality and get on well with them and then they feel less anxiety when they participate in speaking activities during their classes. T3 suggested:

I personally believe that given the large uptake of role-play activities, the use of portable players for oral English conversation, a series of informal, talkback radio-style audio clips, delivered in a timely fashion through podcasting, can help alleviate some of the pre-class anxiety and allay student concerns about issues such as assessment, and do so more flexibly and effectively than the traditional methods of using subject textbooks and printed handouts.

While T3 referred to ways of teaching and resources, T4 said that he explains to his students that anxiety is a normal feeling in learning:

I try to explain to them that it is just normal to feel that way, and at the same time, encourage them to do their best to reduce it [anxiety] *to the minimal level they could, so it will not have powerful control over their language learning process.*

Another strategy was used by T5 and T6 in order to reduce their students' anxiety. T5 said,

I personally try to be more friendly with students who are anxious in order to approach them by sitting near to their desks and I may tell a joke in order to help them calm down and feel relaxed - after that I can ask them my questions.

T6 also referred to the teacher-learner relationship, saying:

For me, informality makes students feel less anxious. My relationship with my students is informal - I treat them as friends to make them feel relaxed when they speak both inside and outside the room. I also never evaluate my students negatively or embarrass them in the class.

155

T7, in addition, believes that the teacher's personality is a key factor in reducing anxiety, saying:

Yes. Of course I do. I used to teach listening and speaking, and I think the personality of the teacher plays a major role in decreasing high levels of anxiety. I myself dislike embarrassing my students when they make grammatical or pronunciation errors. I used to give my feedback privately, and I keep telling my students that making mistakes is part of learning. One of the good strategies I use is encouraging them to speak by making them work in pairs or small groups to help each other, and I don't usually correct all the mistakes. I focus only on the most important ones when I give my feedback - it is important not to evaluate your students negatively or discourage them.

Finally, T8 also referred to groupwork and types of activities which can be used to make students feel less anxiety.

Yes. During the practice time I always divide the class into small groups in order to feel safe and secure, and I use cards, playing language games such as guessing or acting - these strategies make the learning process less serious and more relaxed.

Different strategies have been revealed from teachers' responses that show they use a variety of ways to reduce students' anxieties. These include using anxiety reducing techniques, activities, pair work, small groups, informality, 'appropriate' evaluation and error correction, telling jokes, and using the students' first language. Some teachers, as comments showed, seemed to understand FLA and take active steps to ensure it can be reduced. However, it is necessary to know that each student is an individual who will react differently. What reduces one student's FLA might increase another's or, at least, have no positive effect. In the students' interview analysis, I showed that a number of learners in this study have negative attitudes towards mixed-sex classrooms because they consider these anxiety provoking and so I will now outline the teachers' perspectives towards gender and the influence of mixed-sex classroom on language learning.

6.5.4.a Mixed-sex classrooms

In order to see if the teachers recognised any FLA caused by mixed-sex classes or gendered issues, and to see if they though men or women experienced FLA differently, I asked: "Who do you think experiences foreign language anxiety more - men or women? Does that differ according to context/circumstances? What are the reasons for the differences in your opinion?". All of the teacher participants, except T4 and T6, suggested that men are more subject to anxiety than women and they noted the effect of mixed-sex classes. T1, for example, reported, *"I think men experience more anxiety because they care*

156

about women's comments. They don't like to look stupid in front of them - I felt like that when I was a student". I asked, *"Do you think the relatively small number of men makes them more anxious*? T1 answered, *"That is possible. Yes. That is right. I think if the number of men is bigger than women, women would experience more anxiety, and men's academic level would increase".*

Moreover, T2 also thought that men experience more anxiety and he mentioned the effects of gender with respect to the teacher's sex and the culture on students learning, and he said:

I think it depends on the context and circumstances. It is noticeable that most language learners are women and their academic level is much better than men students. Consequently men experience more anxiety than women. Besides, is the influence of our culture on learners - it's known that communication between the two sexes is undesirable unless necessary. So men and women in each group mostly are unfamiliar with each other. The other factor is the teacher's sex. Most students prefer their teacher to be of their sex to feel less stress. I think if the context was vice versa that women would experience more anxiety.

Similarly, T5 asserted that:

In my opinion men experience more anxiety than women in our department because the number of men is small in each group. So when a man speaks in front of a large number of women who are good in English he would feel under a spotlight and this normally makes him feel stressed and anxious. But if the context differs, I think women would experience more anxiety. I think the small number of any sex makes them experience more anxiety than the other sex.

T8 also seemed to agree:

I think men, because they are few in each group, and that makes them feel anxious and have low self-confidence. I have taught groups in which the numbers of women were low - in that context the men were more active and had more self-confidence than groups in which men's numbers are fewer.

Interestingly, T6's interview indicated that she had not previously thought about gender and FLA but she revealed, with respect to anxiety, that FLA might be experienced by men who were in the minority in classes.

I don't know. This is the first time I hear this. Maybe, but I don't believe this is a main reason for their bad performance in speaking. I know if a student is good in English, he or she can speak in any kind of class. You can see some women speak English fluently but men cannot although they have sisters, girl-friends or maybe wives. They are used to communicating with women all the time so why would they get anxious in English classes? I personally don't believe in this theory. No.

157

In order to clarify T6's views about the effect of mixed-sex class, I asked her, "Imagine that we divided any class into two groups in terms of their sex (women and men), do you think that they will feel more relaxed and more confident when they speak?". T6 replied, *"Impossible. This is not a solution. They are university students, they are adults, and they are not primary pupils to feel scared or anxious of speaking a foreign language or talking to women"*. Arguably, T6's comments indicated a lack of knowledge and previous thinking about the impact of psychological factors on adult learners. Her interview also suggested that she believes adult learners do not experience low self-confidence, self- esteem, FLA, or communication apprehension simply because they are adults. It seems that T6 evaluates and only sees the world from her own perspective, as Nussbaum (2001) has suggested is possible and as I discussed in Chapter Two.

T4, on the other hand, thinks that LLA language learning anxiety does exist with adults, but she believes the sexes experience FLA equally, and he stated, *"Both, I believe. Both sexes experience the foreign language anxiety equally"*. However, my data suggests that most teachers believe that, in their context, men students tend to be more affected by anxiety than women because they are in the minority with respect to their numbers in classes and they also suggest that other factors, such as the sex of the teacher, the country's gendered cultural and religious norms and their students' previous experiences may affect FLA and communication.

6.6 Chapter summary

This Chapter, through a presentation of my interview data, has indicated some important outcomes and themes that now need to be discussed and more closely linked to theory. The analysis identified, for me, some 'new' possible sources of foreign language anxiety, besides those which were presented in Chapter Four. The extracts here also reveal the effects of other factors and other emotions discussed in Chapter Three and related to the teachers' personality, evaluation, manner, nationality, sex and issues of gender. So, too, the data suggests the importance and effects of mixed-sex classrooms, the negative evaluation of peer and teacher evaluation, communication apprehension, test anxiety, teachers' and learners' motivations, attitudes and beliefs, and the impact of culture, beliefs and norms on student attitudes and FLA. These inter-related findings will be discussed and clarified in the next Chapter. There will also, in the following Chapter, be more clarification of the relationship between self-confidence and esteem with respect to FLA and a discussion of

the findings of the interviews in terms of a possible implementation of a supportive plan for teaching methods to reduce the negative effects of FLA.

159

Chapter 7: Discussion and Implications

7.1 Introduction

In the light of the main research issues regarding FLA experienced by a group of Libyan students in the English department in this School of Education in Libya I summarized my data including FLA's sources and consequences, in the previous Chapter. Here I suggested that the data revealed a number of significant points that require further discussion and clarification. To guide the discussion here, I will return to the research questions that the project sought to answer. I will first present a brief summary of the findings that pertain to the particular research questions followed by a discussion of those findings with reference to the literature and theory.

7.2 Research question 1

Why are Libyan students unwilling to participate in speaking activities in the classrooms? Do they experience FLA?

The first point to raise here is that, rather than asking 'Why are Libyan students unwilling to participate in speaking activities in the classrooms? Do they experience FLA?', I should have asked a question that related only to the group I worked with rather than a question which suggests my research can answer this question with respect to all Libyan students. 'The data analysis summarised in Chapter Six suggested that a number of the learners with whom I worked experienced FLA which made them unwilling, or at least hesitant, to participate in speaking activities. However, it is known that adopting active or inactive speech roles in EFL can result from other reasons apart from anxiety. Littlewood (2004), for example, conducted a study with 567 Hong Kong students, and found that there were six factors that hindered participation in the classroom and caused anxiety: tiredness; fear of being wrong; insufficient interest in the class; insufficient knowledge in the subject; shyness and, finally, insufficient time to formulate ideas. Aware of these possibilities, my findings do seem to support the significant body of research studies, discussed in Chapters One and Four, which indicate that FLA is an important reason for learners' unwillingness to participate in oral activities. One of these studies, for example, was conducted by Savaşçı (2014), who studied 22 young adults enrolled at an English-medium university in a Turkish EFL setting. Using Likert-type scale questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, that study revealed that anxiety was a main reason for learners' reluctance to

talk in class, as well as noting other inhibitory factors such as the fear of being despised, teacher strategy, and culture. The next section shows in detail the factors that caused the anxiety experienced by the students in my study.

7.3 Research question 2

[Question 1: Why are Libyan students unwilling to participate in speaking activities in the classrooms? Do they experience FLA?] If so, what are the causes? Are they personal? Is FLA influenced by classroom factors? Or both?

Through the data analysis and findings in Chapter Six, communication apprehension was suggested as the main cause of FLA and this factor, in turn, seems to result from other sources, mostly related to classroom issues and, particularly, to the participants' perceptions of the teacher. The analysis showed that a teacher's negative evaluation, personality and traits, favouritism, a lack of practice, and a lack of teacher support were the main explanations offered by my participants for their FLA. Additionally, other reasons emerged from the data, still related to the teacher, such as gender and the teacher's sex. The second important factor emerging from the data analysis was a mixed-sex classroom and data here pointed to anxiety created by, for men, having to speak in front of a large class of women, negative peer evaluation, being the only man in a group, teaching styles and resources, and cultural and religious factors. Anxiety for the women in my study was caused by communication apprehension, teacher's personality and traits, negative evaluation of teachers and peers, favouritism, mixed-sex classroom, lack of teacher's support and practice and cultural and religious factors related to interactions between men and women. In the next section, I will discuss these factors according to their frequency in the data and their relationship with other personal factors and do so by clarifying the relationship of these factors with anxiety. A number of variables identified might be related to FLA, such as learners' attitudes towards ELL, beliefs, motivation, self-confidence, and communication apprehension and I now turn to this last phenomenon.

7.3.1 Communication apprehension

As the data analysis showed in Chapter Six, Communication Apprehension (CA) was identified as the main cause of FLA for the majority of the students in my study, and this was confirmed by both students and teachers. Nearly all participant teachers, as revealed in section 4.9, thought that students became anxious when asked to speak. T4, for example stated:

161

The most common anxiety circumstance occurs once I ask them to speak in English… They show a considerable amount of uneasy feelings. Thus, I could assure you that the main reason is the fear of committing mistakes.

The participant teachers also suggested that the students' CA may result from the fear of negative evaluation by peers, low proficiency in English, making language errors, lack of preparation, and being regarded as a poor student, so confirming Littlewood's (2004) work.

Although there were 22 student participants in my study, only three of them (M8, M11, W11) talked of their confidence both in Arabic and English when communicating in any situation. By contrast, fifteen students asserted that CA is the main factor for their anxiety although they attribute CA to different and particular contexts and circumstances. Twelve students (M3, M6, M9, M10, W2, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, W10) said that they experience CA when they speak either Arabic or English in mixed-sex classrooms and when they speak with the opposite sex even outside the classroom setting. Conversely, this group expressed their comfort when communicating with the same sex, both in Arabic and English. So I can suggest that in this study and with this group their CA is associated more with gender attitudes and the sex of their interlocutors than the FL setting. Some students revealed explicitly that their feeling of CA was the result of negative evaluation by the opposite sex. W6 stated, *"Men make bad comments which make you feel stupid, and giggle if a woman says something wrong"* and W2 and W6 reported, *"It all depends on the sex"*. One interpretation of this apprehension is that it results from gendered religious and cultural norms regarding communication between the sexes. For example, W5 explained, *"… but I would be anxious with men. You know our culture - we aren't used to communicating with men unless necessary"*. Similarly, M3 said, *"No, I can't talk to men, we aren't used to talking together - it is our culture and religion"* and this factor will be discussed more extensively with respect to Q3 below. The modern approach to CA, as Blume et al. (2010) and Roby (2009) suggest, takes into account a broad perspective, viewing CA as vital to understanding numerous communication environments and experiences. Barraclough et al. (1988) argue that engagement, patterns of talk and the amount of talk depend partly on the individual's cultural orientation. Hence, I believe my data and experience make it reasonable to suggest that some CA experienced and shared by this group of learners and reflected in their communicative behaviour is likely rooted in the Libyan culture in which these learners have been raised and in which they live.

A second group (M1, M2, M7, and W1) experienced situational CA, meaning that they said they experienced CA only when they speak English in mixed-sex classrooms or to the

opposite sex even outside the classroom. It seems reasonable to suggest that this kind of CA is related to gender issues and associated more with situations that require speaking in a FL because students fear being embarrassed by their teachers in front of the class and they are fearful of negative evaluations and comments from the opposite sex. Piechurska-Kuciel (2012) states that:

> … studying an FL, especially in the context of formal education, requires the development of skills and abilities necessary for performing in a new code quite quickly. Not surprisingly, these performance demands constitute a basic threat to the learner's ego, as loss of face becomes a likely occurrence in situations where this new code has not yet been mastered (p.231).

All the reasons mentioned by the participant students and teachers will be discussed in detail in the following sections because other factors also seemed, from my data, to be causes of FLA.

Register et al. (1991) found that CA can occur when students view communication as a test rather than as an opportunity to communicate, and in that case they exhibit test anxiety with the specific reactions of worry, emotionality, and task-generated interference. In my data there is some evidence that the student participants felt anxiety when they were being tested and evaluated in oral interactions even those not in exams and the next section shows how some teachers' behaviours can be a factor generating anxiety. M3 for example describes her feeling while speaking English in the classroom saying, "*I feel I am in an exam when I speak English, I feel everyone evaluates my English when I speak and that really increases my anxiety and makes me loses my concentration*". W10 also said, "E*very time I speak English I feel very anxious exactly as I feel during exams because in both situations there is someone who evaluates me*".

7.3.2 Teacher as anxiety provoker

In my data it was classroom issues that were talked about by the students as the main factors generating communication apprehension in particular, and anxiety in general, although a few struggled with personal problems that are probably additional to classroom factors. Based on the data analysis, the most reported cause of FLA reported was the teacher as will be explained below.

7.3.2.a Teachers' negative evaluations

Most student participants, a total of thirteen (M1, M2, M5, M8, M11, W1, W3, W4, W6, W7, W9, W10, W11), clearly expressed their concerns regarding their teacher's negative evaluation and negative comments, including blaming the students when giving feedback

163

about their performance in learning in general and in speaking specifically. The students claim that teachers' negative evaluation on their performance is the main cause of their anxiety. M5, for instance, said:

I would feel anxious when a teacher said 'you are a third year student, how could you make a terrible error like this?'. I hate to hear such kind of criticism from teachers.

A woman student (W3) also commented:

Some of them criticize us in front of students and make bad comments when a student makes a language error. They make us feel that we are stupid, and punish us for our weak background knowledge.

Students' claims were supported by one of the teacher participants (T1) in the interview when he declared that he often uses '*strong*' words as a punishment when any of his students makes an error. T1 said that he applies this strategy in order to help students to remember their mistakes and never repeat them in the future. But T1 was the only teacher who stated that he negatively evaluates his students when making language errors, while others said in the interviews that they apply academic strategies to reduce their students' anxiety. However, one of the unexpected difficulties of data collection, as I explained in Chapter Five, was that some teachers seemed not to have any idea about what FLA was or how it might manifest itself. It is interesting, though, that most of the teachers talked of having experienced FLA themselves. But some seemed to have forgotten this or, at least, not to recall it with respect to their students or to relate it to their own teaching practices. A possible explanation for this might be that teachers who do have knowledge about FLA, and strategies to reduce it, are not able to put their knowledge into practice or to think about their own experiences as learners. Also some teachers may have tried to give replies that suggested they were ideal teachers in order to give a positive impression about themselves to me. The other possibility is that some teachers, used to being 'in charge' and to being authority figures in their classrooms, are frightened of losing classroom control if they change their behaviour. Teaching foreign languages in Libya, as in anywhere in the world, and as I indicated in Chapter Two, is influenced by cultural issues and by previous experiences. In Libya, teachers mostly utilize the same style and follow the same method, the Grammar-Translation Method, in which they are the only active person in the class and the students are mostly sitting and listening. It seems quite likely that some teachers think that changing from this method and its associated pedagogy would lead to chaos in the classroom. Additionally, and as my data suggests, some teachers might unconsciously cause anxiety for their students because they may really not know about and might have never thought about FLA and the effects their pedagogy might have. Additionally, and

164

perhaps as a result of this, some teachers, including in this study, apparently sometimes respond inappropriately in some situations and so cause anxiety for their students. But some teachers also talked of their own anxiety and it could easily be that some of my eight teacher participants experienced stress. Lewis and Riley state:

> Teacher stress is caused by a range of factors but classroom management difficulties nearly always appear in the top three. Other commonly cited stressors include lack of administrative and collegial support, personal problems, health issues, sleep difficulties, or compound causes. Lewis and Riley (2009, p. 422)

As noted earlier, in the literature of foreign language learning and teaching, students' fear of negative evaluation and comments from teachers about their language errors have been shown to be a significant source of FLA in many studies, for example in the work of Horwitz et al. (1986) as summarised in Chapter Four. Since the learning process is an emotional process, as Feng and Chen (2009) suggest, and success in FLL depends on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom, as Stevick (1980) proposes, students reporting that they feel anxious when they receive a bad comment or a negative evaluation from their teachers can have a negative effect on their self-image as English Language Learners. Importantly, too, making errors is a critical part of the learning process, as educators such as Hendrickson (1978) assert. However, some teachers seem either not to appreciate this or not to be able to alter their practice to accommodate and build from student errors. It is well known that error treatment in language learning context is a very complicated issue and it may be that FL teachers should be given access to more theoretically and empirically informed development opportunities in order to modify their pedagogy as recommended by Amara (2015) and I return to this in the final Chapter.

The result of a teacher's negative evaluation, as my data indicates, can have a dangerously negative impact on the student's concept of 'self'. Teachers such as T1 in this study seem unaware of the critical issues of error correction and making negative comments which embarrass learners and generates anxiety and possibly fear of participating in activities in the classroom. Students possibly receive teacher evaluation in terms of praise or blame but teachers, as Harmer (2007) advises, should surely respond swiftly while evaluating students' work and encourage learners by using positive phrases such as 'good', 'that was really good', or by nodding and smiling approvingly to indicate a positive evaluation in an encouraging way. Of course, acknowledgement is needed when a student makes an error but, for example, the teacher could say 'that is not quite right' and still acknowledge the students' effort, first by encouraging him/her to keep trying and then, as necessary,

proposing further action and correction. Hendrickson (1978) also lists five fundamental questions that an FL teacher should consider when correcting. These are:

> Should the error be corrected?
> If so, when should the error be corrected?
> Which learner errors should be corrected?
> How should learner errors be corrected?
> Who should correct learner errors? Hendrickson (1978, cited in Amara (2015, p. 61)

These are difficult questions but answers to them can be informed by Second Language Acquisition Theory as Amara (2015) explained. However, for this research study, question four of the questions above is the only one I will consider, in any detail, not because others are less important but because they are beyond the scope of this discussion.

James (1998) was one of those who attempted to answer Hendrickson's (1978) questions outlined above, suggesting that teachers should follow three principles in error correction. These principles are: (a) error correction should involve techniques that can enhance learners' accuracy in expression (b) learners' affective responses should be respected and taken into account and correction should not be embarrassing to them, and (c) teachers' indirect correction can be highly effective, that is the teacher can encourage learners to self-correct using heuristic methods or by presenting them with the correct form to help learners feel relaxed and to decrease their anxiety (cited in Amara, 2015, p. 60). Importantly, blaming or chastising students for their language errors is widely regarded as ineffective in the learning process (Williams and Burden, 1997). A focus on affective factors, as James (1998) points out, supports Stevick's (1980) perspective discussed earlier and Arnold (2011) agrees with Stevick that the inside and between refer to the variety of emotions a learner feels inside the self such as anxiety, and the between is about feelings towards teachers and peers. Thus, the way teachers correct errors and evaluate learners might well determine the nature of the emotions and relationships between teachers and learners in terms of likes and dislikes and responses in my data support this. For example, W7 said:

Some of them are very good, and some others cause me anxiety. Their feedback is not that good. They embarrassed us when we make errors. That makes me hate them and their subjects.

Teachers' ways of evaluating learners as seen from the responses seem closely related to different personalities of teachers in the views of the participants in my study and so I turn now to this.

166

7.3.2.b   Teacher's personality

Throughout the students' interviews the personality of the teacher emerges as a key point which can influence anxiety. My data suggests that teachers' ways of evaluating and commenting on students to some extent reflects the personality of the person, or at least that is how it is perceived by students. Ten student participants (M4, M5, M8, W1, W2, W4, W5, W6, W10, W11) expressed their concerns regarding their teachers' personality and characteristics and they offered clear descriptions of their teachers' behaviours, expressing their feelings and thoughts quite openly. Students articulated feelings of comfort, relaxation, enjoyment, and high self-confidence with 'friendly' teachers, saying they felt secure and involved in the atmosphere of the class. By contrast, they described their bad experiences with teachers they considered strict and harsh. During the interviews students explained they had experienced a cluster of negative states and emotions including anxiety. They expressed their feelings of fear, frustration, anger, even hate and depression, which they said had resulted from teachers' behaviours as seen in Chapter Six.

It seems, from my data, that perceptions of personality, with personality referred to by McCrea and John (1992) as 'relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours' (cited in Buttner et al. 2015, p.463), plays a major role in the quality of the relationship between teachers and students. While characteristics of good teachers often include the capacity to demonstrate content knowledge and proficiency in employing varieties of teaching strategies and different communication styles, it has been found that personality could be an additional and important factor underpinning teacher excellence (Smits, 2006). A good teacher, as stated in the literature, is one who is trustworthy, respectful, patient, sensitive, committed, empathetic, supportive, and organized (Buttner et al. 2015). My data supports that view with some students saying that their anxiety resulted from teachers' lack of sensitivity and respect, manifested in embarrassing them in front of classmates due to their language errors or in them using "strong words" as a way of punishing them, as T1 reported. This kind of responding to students' errors has been labeled 'teacher misbehaviour' by Lewis and Riley (2009, p. 421). Teachers' lack of respect for and appreciation of students' emotions can, my study suggests, have a powerful negative impact on the quality of the relationship between teachers and students and it can lead to a kind of dislike or rejection on both sides. Some students, as the data analysis showed, may come to dislike subjects, here the English language itself, because they dislike the teacher. One of the student participants, for example, expressed clearly her negative emotions towards the English language because of her dislike of some teachers, saying:

167

Sometimes I feel that I enjoy learning English and sometimes I do not. It actually depends on the teacher who teaches the subject. Some teachers make me enjoy learning English but others do not. Some teachers do not explain the lessons as they should and don't respect us, this makes me hate the teachers and the language. Sometimes I regret that I chose to study English.

It became clear from the data that if teachers are perceived by learners not to respect them then this might negatively influence and even change their attitudes towards the subject studied, here English Language. So, too, this might discourage them. The importance of respecting and valuing students is clearly demonstrated by research studies in education (Grabau, 1999, cited in Devlin, 2012). If learners feel respected and valued then they are likely to have a greater sense of belonging and a positive concept of the self (Newman et al, 2007). An important element of valuing students and facilitating student learning requires knowing them (including knowing their names, backgrounds, needs, previous experience, and circumstances), understanding the ways in which they learn, their attitudes and beliefs towards the subject, challenges facing them while studying, and providing supplementary support to encourage and reinforce their learning (Devlin et al., 2012) and, again, I return to this in the final Chapter.

Another form of disrespect was mentioned by W10 and M5 in Chapter Six regarding the 'toughness' of some teachers which, they felt, made interacting difficult and consequently learning unsuccessful. Students' responses illustrate that a teacher's lack of respect for them can come about from neglecting students' communication and not responding to their questions and enquiries. This behaviour may reflect teachers' insensitivity towards, or even a misunderstanding of, learners' emotions and this might ultimately have negative effects on learners' self-concepts. Horwitz et al. (1986) argue that success and failure in language learning can also result from other issues related to the learner's sense of self and Heyde (1983) suggests that a learner's self-knowledge, self-esteem, and self-confidence are important indicators of success in learning a language. The relationship between these self-concepts and anxiety in general, and in learning foreign languages specifically, is close. Evidence emerged in my data to suggest that teachers' negative traits and lack of perceived efficacy in teaching influences a student's sense of self. W1, for instance, mentioned a bad experience with one of her teachers, saying:

Last semester one of the teachers started to ask difficult questions and I couldn't understand some of them. I tried to ask him to explain more to be able to answer the questions. Suddenly he started saying that we are stupid students, and we would never learn English. It wasn't only me who didn't understand the questions and made language errors in the class, all the students do. I was in a very bad state and I started crying. At home I don't feel anxious when I speak English with my mum because she always

encourages me to speak and she corrects my errors nicely. The problem is that I cannot repeat what I practised at home in the class. If I was asked these questions at home I'm sure I could answer them. I am always thinking of that teacher and his subject - I don't like them since that time.

The responses of W1 and M5 above demonstrate the ways in which teachers can harm their students' self-concept and indicates how students may come to think about themselves when they are negatively evaluated or feel disrespected or neglected. These forms of teacher misbehaviours, as Lewis and Riley (2009) describe them, are judgments which might be interpreted in the learners' brain as negative stimuli that cause anxiety and hence lower their self confidence in their abilities and skills (Krashen,1985). With frequent negative evaluations, the learner's beliefs about him/herself and even the target language being studied can change and a student can start to believe that he/she is stupid, unimportant, not accepted, useless, or that it is fruitless to try to learn. When a learner like W1 is evaluated as '*stupid*', or when M5 thinks of himself as '*trivial and not valuable*', the possible result is a failure to learn. However, and by contrast, teacher favouritism was another source of anxiety for some students.

7.3.2.d Teachers' favouritism

Teacher misbehaviour is any teacher behaviour that impedes students learning and it includes showing favouritism, grading unfairly, giving boring lectures, being absent, and using sarcasm, according to Kearney et al. (1991). In their article entitled 'College Teacher Misbehaviour: What Students Don't Like About Teachers Say and Do', Kearney et al. (1991) identified 28 different categories of teacher misbehaviour and classified them into three dimensions. The first dimension is teacher incompetence which indicates a lack of fundamental teaching skills and includes confusing instructions, excessive work and rushing through material, giving boring lectures, and an inability or unwillingness to help learners succeed. The second dimension is offensive teaching, which refers to a teacher's tendency to abuse learners verbally, such as insulting students, and humiliating or embarrassing students in front of the class. Offensive teachers may also make sexual comments and flirt with learners. Offensive teachers, in addition, may seem to behave in irrational or arbitrary ways. Indolence in teaching, on the other hand, the third dimension, includes arriving late or missing classes, giving unfair tests or making classes and tests too easy, or dismissing students early. Indolent teachers' behaviour might not be considered as negative for some students, while others will recognize that indolence can impede their learning.

169

Favouritism was a reported cause of FLA, particularly identified by six men (M1, M2, M5, M7, M8, M10) who said that some teachers favoured women students rather than men. M1, for example, stated:

Some of them really make me anxious and nervous during the class because they care about women more than us, sometimes we feel that we are invisible in the class, they don't care about our learning and practising, and when we share activities and make language errors, they evaluate us badly and that is so embarrassing, so we left many classes during the semester.

Another comment comes from M7:

... most of them prefer women more than us men, they don't give us chances to participate in activities. They pay all the attention to women. In every class I feel anxiety and angry because of this. I really get angry because we are often ignored, and sometimes teachers don't even respond to our questions. I feel that they come to the class only for teaching those women, they explain the lesson only to them, discuss only with them, respond only to their questions, and we are entirely not seen in the class.

Favouritism in this context manifested itself in giving more time and more attention to some women students in different classroom activities, including explaining, discussing, caring, and responding to their needs and wants. Besides negative evaluation, men also complained of feeling neglected and excluded from participating in classroom activities and they said they did not have as many opportunities to practise English as the women. It is important to try to understand why some men students felt invisible in the classroom and some offered reasons. M2, for example, explained:

... most teachers clearly prefer women more than men ...because women in general are better than men in English, and their number is bigger than us, so they dominate the classroom. They communicate, talk, discuss with the teachers more than we do, and ask many questions and teachers respond to them without problems.

The men students attribute their teachers' favouritism to reasons such as the large number of women in each group compared to men, and also the women's greater competence in English. In addition, W5 added that favouritism existed even among women. In other words, he believed fluent women students to be favoured by teachers more than less fluent women. A number of research studies (Mohammed, 2015; Horwitz et al.2010; Al-Saraj, 2014; Turula, 2006) suggest that showing favouritism is an anxiety provoker and favouritism is also considered a form of 'teacher misbehaviour' by Banfield, Richmond, and McCrosky (2006). Banfield et al. (2006) conducted a study in order to explore the influence of teacher misbehaviour on student affect and teacher credibility at a large United States University. An 'Affect Toward Teacher Scale' and 'Source Credibility Scale' were used as instruments for data collection and completed by 288 undergraduate

170

students enrolled in communication courses. The findings showed that each misbehaviour dimension had an impact on student emotions and therefore performance, but the offensive teacher was found to have the highest impact. There were additional teacher-related comments in my data and I discuss those below.

7.3.2.e   Teachers' not providing opportunities to practice

This study indicated that this group of students perceived only minimal or insufficient language practice in classrooms to cause anxiety. As the data analysis in Chapter Six revealed students talked of experience anxiety if they felt they do not have opportunities to practise and take part in classroom activities. W3, for example, said, "… *Teachers give theoretical side of lessons only, and we sit and listen. We rarely practise*". This example, besides W7 and W11's comments, previously provided in Chapter Six, suggests that the focus and priority of teaching in this English Department may be on competence (input), with less priority given to the performance (output) which, I suggest, is more important for communication and, ultimately, should be the purpose of learning foreign languages. Neglecting the practical communicative side of teaching English is likely quite common in Libya, and this may be attributed to different reasons. One of the most important reasons is classroom size as I discussed in Chapter Two (2.5.3). The number of universities in the country is small compared to the population of undergraduate students and Elabbar (2011) reports that Libya has fewer than ten national universities and only three are located in the east of the country. Consequently, most classes have large numbers of students that may reach up to 150 students in a group, so teachers find it hard, probably impossible, to give time to each learner to practise language. As a consequence, most teachers consider classroom practising too time consuming. Harmer (2007) shows that large classes disadvantage both teachers and learners and the process of teaching and learning. Large classes make contact between teachers and students, particularly those sitting at the back, difficult and maybe impossible. So it is difficult for students to receive individual attention, and it is often impossible to arrange creative teaching and learning sessions. Strevens (1979) also believes that an overcrowded class is one of the obstacles that impacts on teaching/learning effectiveness because it reduces teachers' attention per student and creates real physical discomfort and distraction. Similarly, Yu (2004) suggests that students' individual differences are ignored in large classes and the classroom environment causes anxiety. She also concluded that students have limited chances to

practise English and that definitely hinders their oral English improvement. Wang and Zhang, in addition, argue that:

> … for teaching large classes, it is difficult for teachers,1) to discipline the class…; 2) to satisfy all the needs of students who have different interests, personalities and capabilities; 3) to organize efficient class activities due to the constraints of time and space; 4) to provide equal chances for the students to participate and practice; 5) to give timely and effective feedback and evaluation. Wang and Zhang (2011,p. 3).

These are important points that suggest we should not, necessarily, 'blame' teachers for their lack of practice opportunities or consider it this as 'misbehaviour' in this study and, perhaps, in Libya and any comparable nation with such large foreign language learning classes.

A lack of opportunity to practise in teaching and learning English in the Libyan context is also influenced, as already noted, by the teaching methodologies applied. As noted above, teacher-centred methods are the dominant method extensively applied across all levels of the Libyan educational system. Many teachers prefer this method because they are familiar with it and think it is the most appropriate in the Libyan context with big class sizes. It also allows the teacher to have the authority and full control of the classroom and its activities. So, a common scenario in the English language classes described in this study, from my own experience as a learner and teacher and from talking with other Libyan teachers, is one dominated by teacher talk and explanations with the students listening and not speaking. Similarly, during activities, most teachers prefer students to work alone with collaboration discouraged in order to avoid chaos and noise. This scenario is described by some of my research participants such as M11 as indicated previously and W10 who said:

Teachers don't support us to learn. They come to class just to deliver lessons, they don't care if we understand or not. We only sit and listen, we rarely practise speaking, reading aloud, listening or writing at all. They only give us the rules but they ignore practising them.

Saleh (2002) investigated high school Libyan students' behaviour in different parts of the west of Libya and looked at the scope of the teachers' control over their students' behaviours. The outcomes of this study revealed that Libyan teachers in secondary schools and universities thought they best controlled their classrooms only when they applied teacher-centred models in which everything is managed and done by the teacher. The conclusions of that study also pointed to the difficulty of applying student-centred methods in teaching English in the Libyan context confirming that beliefs about the process of teaching English in Libya are culturally and experientially influenced. I have noted that the

172

Grammar-Translation method is extensively applied in all levels of the educational system and most teachers convert 'dialogues' designed as speaking lessons into grammar lessons in which they present the grammatical rules contained and ignore the original speaking aim of the lesson. Latiwish (2003) claims that Libyan instructors and learners are influenced by a particular belief/culture of learning, and states that:

> In the traditional Libyan classroom, teachers have more control over students' interaction and contribution in the classroom, teachers just provide instructions and directions on how to work on tasks, and the students follow them exactly without even analysing whether they are right or wrong. Also, most teachers in the Libyan setting believe that the best way to teach and learn English is to master its grammatical structure, and vocabulary, and they believe the grammar translation method is the best way to teach English. Latiwish (2003, p.37-38).

In addition, Elabbar (2011) concludes that:

> Libyan beliefs and culture have a strong impact as many teachers find it hard to apply different ideas, methods, and methodologies to their EFL teaching, and some teachers try to teach by the same way they learned (p.176).

In the concluding Chapter, I return to this as it has implications for reducing anxiety in the classroom with respect to teacher education but I do not under-estimate the challenges of changing the teaching methodologies of Libyan teachers. Besides teachers' negative evaluation, personality, favouritism and lack of providing opportunities to practise, the next section will discuss further factors reported in my data and associated with teachers.

7.3.2.f   Teachers not providing support

Student data, as analysed in Chapter Six, indicated their perceptions of the importance of the teacher's role in the classroom as a 'supporter' and 'encourager' but five students claimed that some of their teachers did not encourage them. Responses of students such as M2 and M3 suggested that teachers did not motivate their students to learn or to participate in classroom activities. Again, this perceived lack of teachers' support could be a result of the nature of the classes in which the aim of teachers is to deliver lessons and content without paying attention to the students' needs or willingness to learn. But some students' interviews also suggested that if the teachers were not efficient and well-qualified, they would not be able to encourage the students and might only be satisfied with delivering lessons, ignoring teacher roles such as that of a prompter.

According to Alhmali (2007), obtaining high scores and passing exams is the main purpose of Libyan education and that, of course, is not unique to Libya. Creativity and understanding the nature of learners and their wants and needs may be neglected if EFL teachers see their main role to transmit information to their learners as efficiently and effectively as possible. Additionally, and as noted above, most Libyan teachers lack knowledge about the best strategies to develop not only the cognitive but also behavioural and emotional aspects of learners (Abidin et al. 2012). At the same time, and as I discussed earlier, the large class sizes might prevent teachers from playing the supporter role as supporting students demands teacher effort and time and many teachers find this challenging if not impossible.

However, social support from both teachers and classmates is an important factor that may decrease anxiety and hence affect learners' academic achievement. When learners perceive that they are emotionally supported by their teachers, they tend to be motivated and to have positive attitudes towards learning and so become more engaged make greater effort in their academic work. Hallinan (2008) concluded that students enjoy learning when they felt supported, respected, and praised from their teachers and Horwitz (2008) argues that teachers' support raises students' self-confidence and hence reduces levels of anxiety. Similarly, data from this study suggests that student perceptions of teachers' lack of support does, to some extent, decrease their self-confidence and increase their levels of anxiety. So, too mixed-sex classrooms increased anxiety and so I now discuss this.

7.3.2.g Mixed-sex classrooms

As the data analysis showed, mixed-sex classrooms and gendered behaviors were talked about by the students and teachers in this study as a significant source of anxiety. Twelve students (M1, M2, M3, M6, M7, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, W10) declared in the interviews that opposite sex students in the classroom made them feel anxious while men and women students reported some different reasons for their anxiety. Here I will discuss the reasons for each sex separately to give a clear picture about what my data suggested about gender issues.

Mixed- sex Classrooms for Men

Students such as M1, M2, M3, M9, and M10, as reported in Chapter Six, said that a high number of women in classrooms made speaking difficult and embarrassing. Most participant teachers also recognised that having only a relatively small number of men in each group made those men more subject to anxiety than the women. From their

174

experience, teachers believe that a relatively small group of one sex, either men or women, in a mixed-classroom might provoke anxiety. T1, for example, thinks "*I think if the number of men is bigger than women, women would experience more anxiety, and men's academic level would increase*". Similarly, T8 asserted that:

In my opinion men experience more anxiety than women in our school because the number of men is small in each group, so when a man speaks in front of a big number of women he would feel under a spot light and this normally makes him feel under stress and anxious. But if the context differs, I think women will experience more anxiety. I think the small number of any sex makes them experience more anxiety than the other sex.

The underpinning causes and explanations for this source of anxiety deserve exploration. Interviews with men revealed that some men, such as M6, M8 who are usually the only men in their groups, and others who are in groups with only a few other men, may feel less confident and more uncomfortable in the classroom because of the absence of the group membership that I discussed in Chapter Three. Group membership and belonging requires a basic similarity between people as Keltner and Haidt suggest (1999). While all students in teaching groups share norms and all are similar in the sense that all are 'learners', in the Libyan context one's sex and the influence of gender has a significant influence on one's sense of belonging. Hence it is most likely difficult for just one or a small group of men students to initiate a comfortable working relationship with women members in their groups. T2, as seen in Chapter Six, explained that the gendered Libyan culture influences learning and interaction. This means that Libyan norms and Islamic culture do not encourage communication and face to face interaction between the sexes but instead respects what is often thought of as the privacy of the different genders in all domains, even in family relationships (Metz et al., 1987). Moreover, many Arab teachers and students of EFL are significantly influenced by traditional beliefs about gender and, not surprisingly, these beliefs impact their practice, development, expectations and actions (Tsui, 2003). Consequently, men students in my study may have no or only limited social support from peers, especially from the opposite sex. Huang et al. (2010) states that peer support should be taken into account for language learners because students spend a long time learning together and encounter similar language learning challenges. Peer support might overcome such challenges and facilitate learning and Wentzel (1994) also confirms that reciprocal peer support can be useful because peers share the same status in the class. Arnold (2011, p. 17), looking at affect in language learning, asserts that the model with five components of self-esteem developed by Reasoner (1992) of Security (knowing that I am safe, physically and emotionally), Identity (knowing who I am), Belonging (knowing others accept me), Purpose (knowing what I want to do and achieve) and Competence

(knowing I can), is important for each language learner. Arnold (2011) advises teachers to focus on these components in the classroom to enhance students' self-esteem and hence lower their anxiety and fear. However, and as noted earlier, while teachers of English language in this study might be advised to focus on these components in order to help their students' self-confidence and esteem, this presents challenges some of which are culturally determined and so advice to teachers surely needs to be considered in the light of particular contexts. Ultimately, using pair or group activities in mixed-sex classrooms in the Libyan context is greatly limited either by students themselves, who mostly refuse to work with the opposite sex, or by university regulations and/or by teachers' beliefs about gender. Consequently, excluded and social isolated students, here some of the men studying English, may experience a variety of negative emotions including anxiety, depression, anger, and shame due to their emotional insecurities (MacDonald and Leary, 2005) and, in this study, because of the mixed-sex classrooms in which men are in the minority.

Women's relatively high competence in English is a further cause of anxiety for some men students. Some men students who are the minority in their group, such as M2, M5, M9, and M10, compare their performance to women who are in the majority and perceived as better learners of English. Men students' interviews do indicate a comparison with women. I explained in Chapter Three that social comparison plays an important role in typical emotional concerns and social comparison can occur when women are confronted with information about how women are, what women can and cannot do, or what women have attained and have failed to attain, and they relate this information to themselves. The same, of course, applies to men. Festinger (1954), who initially proposed Social Comparison Theory, explained that people compare their own characteristics, fortunes, and weaknesses to those of others in order to know how they themselves are or what they themselves can and cannot do. What is important for me here is to consider the purpose and the results of gender and men's comparison to women. Corcoran et al. (2011) collected different researchers' arguments to clarify the purpose of social comparison, concluding that, 'The classic answer to why people compare themselves to others is based on motivational considerations' (p.121). Some people need social comparison for self-evaluations to be accurate (Festinger, 1954), others need it to create and maintain a positive self-image as Wills (1981) suggests, and others have the need to self-improve (Taylor and Lobel, 1989). The men's purpose for engaging in social comparison might vary with the results being positive, such as self enhancement, or negative, such as a possible source of personal instability regarding self-esteem, envy, jealousy, anxiety. This result will depend on the person's personal and contextual circumstances (Argo et al., 2006; Smith, 2000).

176

However, in the gendered context of this study, it seems that the men's social comparison to the women leads some to feel potentially damaging and destructive emotions like anxiety.

As men students (M2, M5, M9, M10) and teachers (T2, T3, T5, T6, T7, and T8) confirmed, there are more women students than men, and the women generally have higher proficiency in English than men. These two factors tend to mean that women dominate the classroom. M10 described that setting of the classroom, saying:

Women are much better than men in the class … women often volunteer answering the questions and helping us doing the exercises. They sit in the front rows. They enjoy lessons more than we do. They work actively with teachers. They actually dominate the class maybe because their number is bigger than ours. In contrast most men sit passively, they whisper and gossip at the back of the class and that is why I think teachers don't pay us any attention.

Some six teachers' perspectives were also evidence that power in the EL classroom lies with the women. T7 explained:

The majority of English language students in this school are women, and the number of men is small in each stage. In stage 2, for example, there are two men and 22 women who are very active and work very hard in the class. Men most often keep silent and refuse to speak in English because they avoid being embarrassed.

While it is common that men dominate classrooms (as the literature on co-education showed in Chapter Four), in ELL in the Libyan context, particularly in this School of Education, this is reversed. Classroom dominance, as the data analysis revealed, is revealed in students' perceptions that women learners are more actively engaged and have more positive attitudes towards ELL than the men. The behaviours of women also includes mention of greater participation in classroom activities and more positive engagement in discussion, asking and answering questions, volunteering answers, cooperation, taking risks, being willing to practise new language, and so forth.

This study's findings support many research studies suggesting that FLL is gendered. Zammit (1992) and Piller (2002) have suggested that languages are seen as women's subjects. Men who study languages, whether by their choice or under pressure, are also reported to respond badly to the language activities which appear to work well with women. Norton (2000) concluded that sociological factors have more influence on language learning than biological factors, and that is why women are more successful in learning foreign languages. Božinović and Sindik (2011) suggest a relationship between gender, language learning strategies and language achievement and, in their work, women

were considerably more successful than men because they more frequently used learning strategies, particularly social strategies based on using the target language for communication.

The teacher's sex also emerged as a factor for some men students' and for one teacher (M2, M5, T2). The men students express their enjoyment with men teachers and said that they feel more relaxed in their classes compared to those of women teachers. M2, for example, reported "*most teachers are women; we actually need men teachers to enjoy learning. We need a chance to learn better than this*". T2 also believes that some learners feel uncomfortable if the teacher is of the opposite sex, saying, "*The other factor is the teacher's sex. Most students prefer their teacher from the same sex to feel less stress*". So this study supports Barton's (2002) study, from a very different cultural context, which found that language learners in five mixed comprehensive schools in England prefer same sex teachers. Men felt men teachers would engage their interest and Barton (2002) suggested women valued women teachers for their ability to empathise with them. I turn now to women's reactions to mixed-sex classrooms in my study, in this Libyan context.

Mixed-sex classrooms for women

Just as teachers' perceptions in this study suggested that men students experience more anxiety than women for the reasons above, women also provided comments suggesting that, for them too, mixed-sex classrooms could cause anxiety. Some of the women in my study (W1, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, W10) complained about their male peers' negative evaluation and poor behaviour in the classroom, suggesting this caused some anxiety. Such negative evaluations and behaviours did not only influence women who seemed low in self-confidence, it also disturbed even the apparently confident and proficient women.

Interestingly, 'poor behavior' by men was not mentioned by any of the teachers. Perhaps this was because I did not directly ask about this or perhaps it is because men usually sit at the back of the classrooms where they can easily become unnoticeable, unseen, or even neglected. The women students, however, and as indicated above, referred to men's misbehaviour which included laughing, teasing, exchanging facial expressions, signs and so forth when the women students were talking. This behaviour is likely to have a particularly negative effect on the FLL speaking performance of women with low self-confidence and they may feel a high sense of anxiety and avoid speaking and so practising
178

language or taking risks speaking in the target language. It is noteworthy, too, that teachers' comments suggested that more men than women experienced anxiety, but teachers said men utilized certain strategies such as talking, laughing, and making negative comments about women work to hide or decrease their feelings. This fits with the findings of Strange et al. (2003) which suggested the disruptive classroom behaviours of some men resulted from their fear and anxiety and that some men cover up their fear and anxiety by disruptive behaviours.

Having summarized and discussed these anxiety provoking factors, I can now start to answer the third question in my study about the effects of foreign language anxiety as understood and reported by my participants.

7.4 Research question 3: What is the effect of FLA?

The effects of FLA in this study reveal a cluster of effects which can be classified into cognitive, personal, social and academic, as MacIntyre (1999) suggested. The cognitive effect can be seen clearly in the reports of the students such as M3 who described feeling extremely anxious to the point when he forgets what to say when required to speak in mixed-sex classrooms. W5 also said, '… *it makes me very anxious and I cannot remember what I have studied, even the vocabulary gets lost from my memory as I get confused when I answer the questions*". W9, in addition, described feeling anxious and talked about the way in which anxiety affects her learning, saying that when she gets anxious she cannot focus on the lesson, cannot hear the teacher properly or see the board clearly. Some of the participant teachers were aware of the negative influence of FLA and said they could recognise the symptoms of elevated anxiety in students. T3 also described the anxious learners as those who lack self-confidence, experiencing mental blocks during speaking activities and he said they might skip class, forget previously learned material, and be unwilling to participate in classroom activities.

FLA, as the previous comments and descriptions suggest, seems to influence all three stages of language learning (Input, Processing, and Output) suggested in Tobias' model (1986). The Input stage is meant to demonstrate the student's first experiences with a given stimulus at a certain time and is concerned with the initial representation of items in memory. At this stage, external stimuli are encountered and internal representations are made with attention, concentration, and encoding occurring. Because fewer items may be available for processing or later retrieval, anxiety-arousal at this stage has an impact on all subsequent stages, unless the missing input can be recovered. For example, in second
179

language learning, difficulties may arise if the language is spoken too quickly or if written material appears in the form of complex sentences. Anxious students may ask for sentences to be repeated more often or may have to re-read a text several times to compensate for missing input (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994b, p. 286). However, some students said they were too anxious to ask for repeats or clarification and others, as noted, said teachers refused to answer their questions or seemed not to notice that they were struggling. As I indicated in Chapter Six, some teachers stated that anxiety can affect the input stage. Students who feel anxiety at this stage were described by teachers as suffering from mental blocks, being unable to focus during the lesson, and asking to repeat what had been said more than once. It may be that some teachers felt irritated when asked to repeat or to re-explain but some students declared that when they become anxious they could not hear what was being said, and others stated that they could not see what had been written on the board when feeling anxious.

Bishop et al. (2004) found that anxiety causes high distractedness and increased responsiveness to possible threats, clarifying the influence of anxiety on the processing stage when organization, storage, and assimilation of material should be occurring. For instance, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) found that anxious students learn a list of vocabulary more slowly than less anxious students and they encounter difficulties in memorizing and recalling the words. In addition, MacIntyre (1995) explained that anxiety can interrupt the cognitive processes of language learning which involve storage through encoding and processing for retrieval. Eysenck (1979) suggested a reconceptualization of anxiety in terms of cognitive interference, arguing that:

> … anxiety-arousal is associated with distracting, self-related cognition such as excessive self-evaluation, worry over potential failure, and concern over the opinions of others; therefore, the anxious person has his own attention divided between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient. This theory is able to explain the negative effects observed for language anxiety (Eysenck, 1979 cited in MacIntyre and Gardner 1994b, p.285).

As the data suggested in Chapter Six, and as in the discussion of communication apprehension at the beginning of this Chapter, the majority of the student participants in this study complain about a lack of oral performance practice and, indeed, a lack of any activity that requires language production. Researchers (Horwitz et al., 1986; Tobias,1986; Pekrun, 1992; MacIntyre, 1999) have suggested that output is manifested in the production of previously learned material. Production (the output stage) is heavily reliant on previous stages (input and processing), in terms of the organization of the output and the speed with

which items are recalled from memory. It is at this stage that language learners are required to demonstrate their ability to use the target with performance at the Output stage often measured by test scores, verbal production, and the qualities of free speech (MacIntyre and Gardner 1994b, p.287). Ultimately, performance, as the above researchers assert, involves 'tests' and, as my data confirms, test anxiety can inhibit performance.

T5 recognised that the effects of anxiety occurred during exams and she commented:

Certainly anxiety has negative effects on students particularly during examinations. We noticed that some very good students don't perform well with exams because they get anxious and frightened from observers and exam papers so they forget what they have already studied, but when they finish their exams and leave the examination room, they remember information.

T5's comments would be supported by Horwitz et al. (1986) who stated that students report "freezing" in exams, asserting that they have learned the material but that their performance in exams does not reflect that learning, a typical example of interference at the Output stage.

The personal individual effects of FLA, as Piechurska-Kuciel (2012) states, may "consist of self-deprecating and worrisome thoughts, or overwhelming fear" (p.233). Some of the students in this study spoke of such anxiety, talking of repeated feelings of discomfort. W5, for instance, revealed that her anxiety occurred regardless of the person to whom she is speaking if she is speaking in English. Personal effects are identical with the effects of CA as Piechurska-Kuciel (2012) stated. W6's responses (see Chapter Six) showed that she may experience trait CA as she says she avoids speaking to strangers and keeps thinking she may hear bad news when answering the 'phone. W9 similarly said she always feels that she is in dangerous situations. Gkonou (2014) agrees with MacIntyre et al., (2002) that students who suffer repeated negative thoughts towards communication tend to have a higher level of apprehension.

There is also a social effect, referred to by MacIntyre (2007, p.564) as the "unwillingness to communicate". Some participant teachers (T1, T2, T3, T7) identified the social effect of FLA, with T2, for example, saying:

… the most anxious students, especially men who afraid of speaking, either sit silently and refuse to participate at the back of the classroom or escape the class completely to avoid embarrassment in front of their classmates.

In addition, social consequences can be reflected in the nature of the relationship between men and women in the Libyan context. Heerey and Kring (2007) found out that the degree

to which one is able to enjoy and benefit from communication influences the development of personal relationships. The academic effects of FLA, on the other hand, refer to the detrimental impact of anxiety on learning and performance (Hewitt and Stephenson, 2011) and Woodrow (2006) confirms that FLA is a significant predictor of failure in the language classroom. T1 similarly suggests that students who suffer FLA may attain less academic success than others. That fits with Chen's (2008) claim that there is a negative correlation between FLA and course scores, proficiency tests, and communicative competence. W9, who said that anxiety influences her performance and academic achievement, declared, *"I am normally anxious, and I feel others are better than me. I feel that low self-confidence and anxiety is the cause of my low academic level and if I were not like this I would be better than many of the students in my class"*. To sum up, FLA is likely to negatively influence students' enjoyment and, in the worst cases, may discourage students and change or destroy their interest in learning a FL.

However, while FLA can have such negative consequences, it can also have a positive influence on FLL with respect to what is known as 'appropriate anxiety' (introduced in Chapter Four). The teachers' interviews showed that three participant teachers (T1, T5, T8) believe that anxiety had no positive effects and always harmed students. T5, as I explained in Chapter Six, appears to be confused and insisted that anxiety is not related to fear of failure, but says, *"No. I don't think that anxiety has any positive effects, but I think fear of failure does. When students are frightened from failure they more possibly study harder"*. Both T1, T8 and T5's statements might indicate a lack of educational learning and psychological knowledge as well as a reluctance to recall how they felt as learners. As I noted in Chapter Five, some teachers in my study seem to have no knowledge about anxiety or, arguably, about psychological and affective aspects of the FLL process, and I return to this in the final Chapter. Nevertheless, some teachers in my study did believe that some anxiety could be of advantage to students in terms of pushing them to study harder in order to succeed. T2 and T7 were obviously aware of an appropriate amount of anxiety, and understood that when anxiety increases then at some point it could change to inappropriate anxiety that negatively affects learning. T7, for example, explained that the influence of anxiety depends on its intensity, that is to say that if anxiety ranges from low to moderate its effect is positive but if it was high its effect could become negative. Scovel (1978) confirmed that anxiety in some ways facilitates learning because it keeps students alert and Horwitz (2000) argued that anxiety can be helpful for simple but not complicated tasks. T6, in addition, pointed to positive anxiety in the form of fear of failure that encourages students to study. Tobias (1986) concluded that anxious students are capable of

182

showing high levels of attainment, given sufficient time to study. Furthermore, Trang et al. (2013) conducted a study in Vietnam on FLA with English language learners and found that:

> … almost all of the students reported benefiting to some degree from FLA. FLA was positive in pushing students to learn more, creating in students a higher determination to study English, in helping students be aware of their weaknesses, in making students pay more attention to English subjects, and in making students endeavour to prove themselves (Trang et al., 2013, p.113).

So anxiety can have positive effects on students and these effects can be classified as cognitive, personal, social and academic but, as discussed in the literature summary of foreign language learning anxiety, there are some strategies suggested by educators in the field that can reduce the intensity of students' anxiety to ensure it does not shift from appropriate with positive effects to inappropriate with negative effects. In the next section I will discuss what strategies teachers in this study said they applied in order to reduce their students' anxiety.

7.5 Research question 4

What strategies, if any, do teachers use to increase and reduce FLA?

As the data showed, the participant teachers in this study said they applied different strategies although some of these, such as swearing at students, are almost certainly undesirable and more likely to increase rather decrease anxiety. However, seven teachers did report the use of more positive strategies to reduce their students' anxiety. These strategies included preparing lessons carefully before the next class, moving between desks, using role-play activities, using audio devices for English conversation with radio-style audio clips and podcasts, and using the students' first language when appropriate. Teachers also said, as examples of anxiety reducing strategies, they continually encouraged students by saying things like "Take it easy" quietly, doing a rehearsal before presentations, asking students to work in pairs or small groups, and using a variety of activities such as language games or drama. These all fit the sort of strategies suggested by Abebe and Deneke (2015) who recommended that encouraging and building up students' self-confidence by facilitating interactive group activities or calling on students in a non-threatening manner could reduce their anxiety. However, Arnold (2011) suggests:

> … it should be made clear, however, that it is not a question of merely telling students "you can do it!". Quite the contrary, work with self-esteem and other affective issues is done to provide a supportive atmosphere in which we can

better encourage learners to work hard to reach their learning potential. It is, of course, important to deal with any negative self-beliefs learners may have acquired, as these can severely inhibit their progress, and to encourage realistically positive views of oneself. However, experiencing real achievement in using the target language in meaningful communication is the surest route to self-esteem (Arnold, 2011, p.2).

Some of the participant teachers (T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7) seemed to be very aware of the need to enable their students to experience 'real achievement' and to want to work positively on the affective domain of their students in contrast to T1 and T8. They talked of some techniques to make students feel less tension in the class. These techniques included not forcing students to speak unless they want to do so, listening to students' problems and trying to understand their sources of anxiety. T2, for example, affirmed that building personal relationships and giving more time to listen to students' problems helped make students feel more relaxed and secure, and it is worth repeating this extract from his interview.

Well, one of the strategies which I believe is very effective is telling my students ' I will never select one of you to give an answer unless you put your hand up', and ' you must speak English inside the classroom but you still can use Arabic when needed or your conversations can't continue in English. In addition, keeping in touch with your students and giving them time to express what makes them anxious more possibly makes them feel relaxed. I think these strategies work well with my students, they trust me and they feel secure in my class. I noticed that they start feeling more confident about themselves and feel encouraged to speak.

T6 and T7, moreover, added that the teacher's personality, an informal relationship with students, and avoiding embarrassing students will help them to feel less anxious.

The applied strategies reported by the teachers as shown here and in Chapter Six have been suggested by many researchers in the field. For example, Abebe and Deneke (2015) suggest that teachers can help students to cope with their anxiety by utilizing techniques such as pair and group work, and then moving gradually towards activities that require speaking individually such as giving a presentation in front of class. In addition, these researchers also advise teachers:

> … not to show annoyance at the learners' reticence, as this will only aggravate the situation and will cause more anxiety. If learners get to know the teacher is getting annoyed at their reticence, they feel insecure and apprehensive (Abebe and Deneke , 2015, p.86).

T5 seemed to be following that view, saying, *"I personality try to be more friendly with students who are anxious by sitting near to their desks and telling a joke or teasing them in order to make them calm down and feel relaxed…"*. Christophel (1990) recommends

creating a friendly environment by using humour from time to time in order to reduce the tension of the class and would agree with T2, T6 and T7 who suggest that establishing a positive relationship with anxious students can help them reduce the intensity of their anxiety.

Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) argue that reducing students' anxiety entails three steps. The first step is also suggested by Young (1990) and this is to have students participate in speaking tasks in the form of working in small groups, so project work can be very helpful as it gives both anxious and non-anxious students good opportunities to use together in ways that are not threatening. A potential problem arises here, however, in mixed-sex classes. The second step is the creation of a friendly classroom atmosphere. A supportive atmosphere, as Arnold (2011) suggests, is important because language learning should ideally take place in a relatively low-anxiety and relaxing atmosphere. The third step is to consider language errors as natural in the process of language acquisition. I discussed this earlier in this Chapter but it is worth returning to it here. This point is also supported by Harmer (2007) and Gregersen (2003) who point out that over-correction can make students forget about communication and focus instead on form and accuracy. Furthermore, Young (1990) suggests that:

> … one way to provide correction input without much anxiety is to model students' responses, that is, simply repeat the correct version of what the students are attempting to say. In a modeling approach to error correction, students are not spotlighted in front of their peers and corrected, but correct feedback is provided for those language learners who feel they need it. If modeling is to work, however, students must learn to listen carefully and strategically. For extremely anxious learners, teachers can suggest some form of supplemental instruction or support group, e.g., work with a tutor, join a language club, do relaxation exercises and/or practice self-talk. Self-talk can be particularly useful for coping with state anxiety (Young, 1990, p.551-552).

Liu and Jackson (2008) recommend a further strategy for dealing with passive and reticent learners. This strategy might suit the male students in this study who talk of communication apprehension. Teachers are advised to give more opportunity to passive learners to speak in a positive, caring atmosphere. Liu and Jackson presume that seeing the concern and care of the teacher might gradually encourage the reticent students to speak. In addition, Riasati (2011) suggests that teachers could hold private meetings with the most anxious students in the class in order to find out about their sources of their anxiety. This strategy is applied by T2, T6 and T7 when they report that they approach students by initiating personal relatisexonships and listen to students but challenges with such big

185

classes often make it difficult for teachers in this study's context to initiate such relationships with students.

Although teachers in this study reveal that they use different strategies to reduce their students' anxiety, my data suggests that the teachers in my institution , and perhaps in most Libyan schools and universities, still need more and better teacher education and training and I will discuss this further in next final Chapter but here I move to issues around cultural norms.

7.6 Research question 5

Do Libyan norms in terms of communication between men and women have any influence on creating FLA in the classroom? If yes, how?

Language learning situations are prone to be liable to some affective-arousal factors perceived by FL learners in varying degrees according to their personalities, norms, previous experiences, cultures and so forth. I have no doubt, and have already stated, that Libyan norms have a significant influence on FLL. As discussed in Chapter Two, Libya is an Arab Islamic country and the impact of the Libyan culture, norms, traditions and religion is perhaps most obvious with respect to mixed-sex classrooms with gender effects, as noted already, one of the important factors students and teachers suggested caused anxiety and negatively affecting learning English and speaking in classes. As the interviews revealed, students found it difficult to cope and interact with the opposite sex freely in and outside the classroom because of the religious and cultural gender barriers that do not encourage different sex communication. I too, as the researcher, and as noted in Chapter Five, also encountered this difficulty during the data collection procedure when interviewing men participants.

Since culture and language are thoroughly interrelated, debates about affective variables such as foreign language anxiety should surely involve ethno-cultural and ecological aspects of teaching contexts as Lee (2003) suggests:

> Teachers and practitioners should be aware that the classroom is not a neat, self-contained mini-society isolated from the outside world but an integral part of the larger society where the reproduction of many forms of domination and resistance based on sex, ethnicity, class, race, religion is a daily event (Lee, 2003,p.9).

A number of Islamic countries, Libya included, might be considered as the most conservative communities in the world. According to the cultural norms, traditions and
186

religious principles, in Libya communication between the sexes should not occur unless necessary. Most Arabic countries, except Saudi Arabia which has single-sex classes only, have both single-sex and mixed-sex classes in which boys and girls learn and communicate together but with strict gender roles and rules. In some of these countries, including Libya, boys and girls are not normally allowed to socialize with one another although they may learn together in the same class. There is a shortage of research studies that have investigated the positive and negative effects of gender in mixed and single-sex classes in Islamic nations and in Libya particularly and I return to this in my final Chapter. Because Islamic culture and the country's traditions are taught in schools from primary to high school then inevitably the Libyan culture and norms are reflected and can be felt in the atmosphere of the classroom where a sense of belonging and of being relaxed tends to be absent in mixed classrooms. It seems peculiar that studies examining the influence of gender and mixed-sex classes on learning generally and foreign language learning in Arabic and Muslim countries specifically are so relatively rare. The Iranian educational researcher Mahmoodzadeh recently attempted to explore the role of gender in causing FLA in the Iranian context (2013) and suggests:

> … to the author's knowledge, no research study has been conducted to investigate particularly the impacts of sex-based EFL classrooms, namely, matched-sex versus mixed-gender classrooms on the state of learners' foreign language anxiety among Arab countries or Asian Islamic countries like Iran in which gender may have a crucial role in accounting for affective variables such as foreign language anxiety which is perceived by EFL learners. (Mahmoodzadeh, 2013,p.63).

Mahmoodzadeh's investigation of the effect of gender on foreign language anxiety in Iran was aimed at determining the extent to which Iranian EFL students experienced FLA in single-sex and mixed-sex classrooms. The Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), designed by Horwitz (1986), was used as the instrument for data collection. The results of Mahmoodzadeh's study suggest that students in mixed-sex classrooms lack self-confidence because of the existence of the opposite sex and so they suffer more anxiety than those in single-sex classrooms.

7.7 Chapter Summary

This Chapter began by returning to the main research questions in the light of the data from this study alongside key theoretical and empirical work related to anxiety. It sought discuss

and try to clarify the effects of anxiety on students' cognitive, personal, social and academic learning. In addition, it revealed the strategies applied by teachers in the school and, finally, considered the influence of the Islamic context and Libyan norms and culture on English language learning with the role of gender in generating anxiety. In the next Chapter I will present the final conclusions that I have drawn from this study, make some recommendations and provide my final thoughts.

Chapter 8: Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

Emotions are psychological affective states of consciousness in which love, fear, anger and joy, and more, are experienced in everyday life. The different emotions we feel can be accompanied by psychological and bodily changes resulting from our responses to psychological and environmental stimuli that can occur everywhere and in different situations. Classrooms are full of social situations that can trigger positive and negative emotions for both students and teachers throughout the teaching and learning process. As I have shown in this thesis, the group of student participants in this study, all students of the English language, experience one of the most common emotions felt by foreign language students, namely anxiety. The kind of anxieties that are described by the English language students and teachers in this study are probably experienced by most if not all language learners but they occur in specific situations while all can be called foreign language anxiety.

In this final Chapter, I provide a summary of my thesis and return to its framework and the research questions. I shall start with a synthesis of the study, and then I move to discuss the challenges and limitations of the research, suggestions for further research and the implications and contribution of this study. I shall also discuss the influence that researching and writing the thesis has had on my own professional and personal self and make some tentative suggestions that might improve the strategies to reduce the anxiety experienced by foreign languages students such as those in my study. I am not suggesting that my findings and experiences necessarily relate to all of Libya although I think they may do so. On the other hand, I am not suggesting that these findings and experiences are necessarily only applicable to Libya as it seems possible that insights from this study might be at least tested even if not applied in other contexts in which English Language learners and teachers are coping with the effects of anxiety on learning in general, and on speaking the target language in particular. Finally, I shall close the thesis with some concluding reflections.

8.2 Summary of the research aim and main questions

This research aimed to explore the factors causing foreign language learning anxiety (FLA experienced by a group of Libyan English language students studying in a School of

Education in one of the Libyan universities in the east of the country and the study focused specifically but not exclusively on speaking. It sought to better understand the FLA experienced by students and also to explore teachers' perceptions of FLA. This research committed to five main research questions that allowed me to explore classroom and personal sources of FLA, its positive and negative effects on ELL, strategies applied by teachers to increase and decrease anxiety, and the influence of the context and its Islamic religion and the associated Libyan culture and norms on FLL in general and generating anxiety in the context of gender issues in mixed-sex classrooms in particular. As noted in Chapter One, these research questions were the main research focus and largely supplied the structure of the thesis.

To answer the research questions, I interviewed 30 participants, 22 students and eight teachers (see Chapter Five). The semi-structured interviews, which lasted between 18 and 30 minutes, provided me with a privileged opportunity to understand the context in which my participant students learn English as a foreign language and to explore their experiences of emotions, particularly anxiety. As I noted early, I started the students' interviews with a simple question, "Do you enjoy learning English?", and then I asked questions regarding variables such as motivations, beliefs and attitudes, self-confidence, and self-esteem. I then moved to ask about the emotion of 'anxiety' in general and, after that, to investigate the type of anxiety (trait, state, or situational) my participants experienced. I also asked questions related to the main theme of this thesis - foreign language anxiety – including, "In general, in the English Language classroom, do you feel: a) confident, b) anxious, c) it depends? … What makes you feel that way in the classroom?". In the next phase, I focused my questions on situations regarding single or mixed-sex classrooms to see if gender issues caused anxiety and then I sought to uncover any additional possible causes of anxiety related, for example, to particular language skills and speaking with native and non-native speakers of English. Throughout the interviews, I asked about the students' assessment of their levels in English, their preferences for a mixed or single-sex classroom and, finally, I asked about the effect of other aspects of learning and teaching which could or might not be causes of anxiety in the classroom, Here I asked, "Which, if any, of these factors might make you feel relaxed, confident or anxious - atmosphere, types of tasks, teachers, teaching styles, learning resources, mixed-sex classroom, or another situation?".

When I analysed the data, I classified the factors of FLA depending on the most frequently mentioned causes talked about by the students and teachers and I then classified other

factors under the main factors of the two subthemes: teachers and mixed-sex, classrooms. As my study included a second set of interviews to explore teachers' perspectives on their students' anxiety, I asked the same starter question as with the students, asking the teachers about their motivation to teach English and their attitude towards teaching. Then I moved to ask them about their experience of FLA when they were students. After this, my focus was on the teachers' views about the sources of their students' anxiety, and its effects on their learning English and, by the end of the interview, I had explored teachers' views of positive and negative anxiety and its influence on learning English, ending the interviews with teachers' views and the strategies they applied to reduce the anxiety felt by their students. I will return to these responses later when I suggest possible recommendations based on what might be learned from this study, but before this, I will summarise my main findings with some tentative suggestions about their implications.

8.3 Summary of the main research findings and implications

The main research findings came from interviews with both students and teachers, which were presented in Chapter Six and further interpreted in Chapter Seven. Here, I will summarise some of the overall research findings with regard to students of English language studying at this particular School of Education in Libya. Most of the students I interviewed talked of similar experiences with the emotion of anxiety and learning the English Language in their classrooms. It is widely accepted that anxiety is a common emotion experienced by the majority of foreign language students. Learning a foreign language is a unique learning process, it is emotional and it may be more influenced by psychological issues such as self-concept, confidence, esteem, image, and identity, than some other subjects. Foreign language learners, as I explained in the literature of FLA (Chapter Four) and as my data suggests, may be more sensitive than learners in other subjects because they are susceptible to linguistic errors in the classroom which do not occur when using their mother-tongue in learning. These errors occur in front of teachers and classmates, so many students feel embarrassed or anxious in such situations particularly those that require speaking in English as a foreign language. Unfortunately, as I understood from some of the teachers, such as T1, during the interviews and also from the students who described some of their teachers as 'tough' and using harsh manner, emotions do not seem to be much considered in the teaching and learning process by some

teachers. Some teachers seem to lack an understanding that cognition is inseparable from emotions and they do not appreciate that developing students' learning requires working on their emotions and lowering negative emotions such as anxiety and fear. From my own experience as an English learner and then a teacher in Libyan schools and now the university, I was not surprised that some students in my study talked about the harsh manner of some teachers which manifested in negative evaluation in front of the class, favouritism and embarrassing students if they made language errors. These behaviours were the main source of anxiety for a large number of the students who I interviewed, and have been labeled 'teacher misbehaviour' by Lewis and Riley (2009), as I explained in Chapter Seven. Of course, it is very possible that not all of the teachers in my study told me everything about their behaviours in the classroom, but T1 clearly declared that he intended to embarrass his students in order to stop them making the same error next time. Such behaviour can reflect a lack of an understanding and knowledge of the effects of psychological issues related to learning and teaching a foreign language and, particularly to speaking in that language with respect to self-confidence, motivation, and attitudes and their relationship with foreign language anxiety and influence on foreign language learning. There is evidence in my data that students thought communication apprehension, a lack of willingness to speak in the English Language in the classroom, could be a direct result of teacher behaviours.

Student interview data also indicated that perceptions of a teacher's personality affected students' attitudes towards the language learning and teaching process. The students here associated their teachers personalities with the type of the activities and tasks practised in the classroom as shown in Chapter Six. W2, for example, stated that she enjoyed an activity with teacher A but not with teacher B. So, I can conclude that students' perceptions of teachers' personalities and traits, reflected in their behaviours, can exert an influence on relationship and the type of emotions between the teacher and the student. This is in line with Stevick's (1980) view, explained in Chapter One, that success does not depend only on aspects of the learning and teaching process such as materials, teaching methods, and linguistics analysis, but will also be strongly affected by what goes inside and between people. These responses in my data also reflect what Arnold (2011) refers to as the cluster of emotions, such as fear, anxiety, admiration and jealousy, that students will feel towards their teachers, each other, and the material being studied.

I can now suggest that the teacher's personality, at least as that is perceived by and revealed to students, plays a major role in terms of initiating and maintaining a good

positive relationship with respect to mutual respect between teachers and learners, and that lead the students in this study to like or dislike language learning and to experiencing, or not experiencing, anxiety. Through the interviews the students also attributed their teachers' support to their personality and traits as summed up by W2 who said, "*Some of them make me very anxious and sometimes scared ... they tell us that we are careless. This really makes me depressed*". So, I conclude, from this study, that it is the teacher, in most cases, who is responsible for generating different kinds of emotions, both positive and negative, with his/her students. In addition, the role of teachers, as I indicated in Chapter Seven, is not restricted to delivering information to learners, but surely needs to include motivating and supporting students emotionally in order to increase their self-confidence and esteem and to lower the intensity of their negative emotions, such as anxiety, in order for learners to be able to flourish. Libyan teachers of foreign languages, as I pointed out before, cannot be completely blamed for their way of teaching because they lack opportunities to attend high quality training and development courses and I shall return to this later in this Chapter.

However, the foreign language anxiety (FLA) experienced by the students of my study was not only a result of the teacher's personality and traits or a lack of teachers' support. My data suggests that FLA is a result of a complicated mixture of factors. The classroom setting, as my data has shown, is a significant source of anxiety. I have noted that in all universities and many schools in Libya boys and girls, men and women study in the same classes. However, my participant students are English language learners who grew up in a culture where communication between men and women is often regarded as undesirable. Therefore, mixed-sex classrooms in the context of the Libyan culture and gendered norms can be seen here to present an obstacle to learning due to the student stress and anxiety created by gender issues. In turn this can affect the quality of learning and discussion if students feel embarrassed in presenting their ideas, thoughts, viewpoints, asking questions or receiving any type of feedback. The influence of mixed-sex classrooms was clear in my data. The small number of one sex, here men, were affected by anxiety because learners such as M6, M8, who are usually the only men in their groups, and others who are in groups with only a few other men, may feel more anxiety, less confident and more uncomfortable in the classroom because they do not feel they belong to their group. They seem to be experiencing the absence of the group membership that I discussed in Chapter Three. Group membership and belonging, as Keltner and Haidt (1999) argue, requires a basic similarity between people but in the context of this study it is differences between men and women and cultural gendered norms that mean basic similarities are not as

193

important as differences. Moreover, mixed-sex classrooms did not suit the women well in this study. Most women students said they would prefer single-sex classrooms in order to feel more comfortable and less anxious. Women students such as W1, W3, W4, W5, W6, W7, W9, and W10, as shown in Chapter Six, claimed that men caused anxiety because they make negative comments when the women speak. My findings indicate that learning a foreign language in this gendered context, in which communication between the sexes is restricted and often considered undesirable, may be more successful in single-sex classrooms. Sex-segregated education seems to be favoured by the majority of the students and teachers in this study. This might be because foreign languages students are more prone to, and need to, make errors to learn, more so than in other disciplines. Making errors and receiving negative feedback from teachers might affect students' self-image and esteem less than in a single-sex setting. In addition, my data suggests that a sense of belonging to a group of the same gender can make classes less stressful and more enjoyable and supportive.

The teacher's personality and traits, negative evaluation, favouritism, lack of support, mixed-sex classrooms in the Libyan context of this study, as I showed, were all suggested by students and teachers as cause for anxiety and communication apprehension in the English language classes. They were identified by students and teachers as causes of an uncomfortable and stressful atmosphere with these factors, besides the big class sizes, making it difficult for the students to practise speaking in a comfortable environment. When I put all of these factors together, I do not want to criticize or blame the teachers for their lack of support or offering enough opportunity for each student to practise. But it does seem likely from the data, and also supported by my own experience, that most teachers focus only on the presentation stage of the lesson and ignore practice and production which are vital in language classes as Harmer (2007) advises. The challenge here is that the very large class sizes possibly determine the teaching methods and attitudes applied in classrooms. Teachers might feel that a transmissive style of teaching using the Grammar-Translation method is the only way of teaching possible. If I add to this Libyan teachers' beliefs and cultural influences then these will also have a strong influence on the teaching methodologies applied in the English Language classroom, and with particular respect to speaking. Also, and understandably, some teachers will teach in the same way they were taught in their school and university learning. Libyan teachers, as I will suggest later, might benefit from development opportunities with respect to their teaching methods from initial teacher training to continuing professional development including critical reflection on and alternatives to their own experiences of learning and being taught.

194

8.4 Research final thoughts: contribution to knowledge

Before undertaking this study, my expectation was that low proficiency in speaking in English was mainly the result of a lack of knowledge of grammatical rules, a shortage of vocabulary, or difficulty with listening comprehension, and that these factors were the main cause of FLA. However, and as I have shown, in the literature on foreign language learning anxiety it is communication apprehension, negative evaluation, and test anxiety that are the most common factors. My research contributes to the field by highlighting factors that include but that also go beyond this. Very little research has been conducted in this area and in Islamic countries, and this means that this research adds to our knowledge of foreign language anxiety in a context like Libya. Perhaps the most important original contribution is that mixed-sex classrooms can exert significant influence in generating gender related FLA in this context. I have suggested the negative influence of mixed-sex classrooms in my study but this could well extend to other comparable countries in which the gendered culture, traditions and the norms of the country tend to determine the processes of learning and teaching foreign languages in particular. This is because learning a foreign language requires interactions with other students, usually including those of the opposite sex. An additional contribution of this study is with respect to the teacher's personality and traits and the influence of the teacher on generating or reducing anxiety. But the study does have limitations and the next section will outline these.

8.5 Limitations

In this section I will discuss the limitations and challenges of this study. Firstly, the research study investigates the factors causing foreign language anxiety as experienced by a particular and quite small group of Libyan students. So the first limitation is that I explored FLA only with a small group of students who are enrolled in an English Language Department in only one of the Schools of Education in Libyan universities. This means that I neither want to nor can claim generalisability from my study although I believe that it could be replicated across and beyond Libya to see if similar data and trends are revealed. Because of the instability in the current situation in Libya it was extremely difficult for me to interview other students from different Schools of Education at other universities and I could only interview only a small number of students and teachers. However, their responses do offer a useful picture of their experience of learning English

195

and of FLA. Data collection was a difficult and stressful procedure because of the lack of security in the city as a result of the revolution of February 2011 and the resulting and continuing instability and violence. For my study this meant, for instance, that I had to rearrange meetings many times and that led me to take more time which affected my submission later.

Interpreting the interviews was another challenge that might be seen as a limitation. Some participants used Libyan cultural expressions which have no equivalent in English to express their experiences of anxiety and so I attempted to translate their emotions, thoughts and feelings trying not to jeopardise the meaning. But this means that I cannot be absolutely certain that I have, on every occasion and as noted earlier, translated accurately their feelings. Another limitation was interviewing men. Men teachers tried to speak less with me and gave me shorter and more concise answers than women students and teachers. As a Libyan woman and a researcher, in one sense this is no surprise because of the prevalent Libyan cultural norms which restrict the communication between women and men. Male students, as I pointed out in Chapter Six, talked more briefly at the beginning of the conversations compared to women students who talked more extensively about their experiences of learning English in the university school where I conducted my study and in their previous schools. I had wanted to follow-up the conversations when I translated the interviews but unfortunately, not least because of security and safety issues in my region and the country in general, this was not possible.

8.6 Suggestions and recommendations

Following this study, I would recommend that Libyan schools of foreign languages in general and teachers at the School of Education in particular, consider the possibility of enhancing their initial teacher education and teacher continuing professional development (CPD) for foreign language teachers and that these changes pay attention to the affective factors and FLA in language learning and teaching. I suggests that FL teachers in Libya need to attend special courses, including during initial teacher training and CPD, that allow them to study and consider the roles of language teachers, teaching methods and pedagogy, and, importantly, psychological and affective issues in FL teaching and learning. This would include working with students who experience learning problems but also working with all FL learners to be able to develop their self-confidence and esteem to overcome their communication apprehension. Harmer (2007) advised teachers to attend courses in teaching foreign languages to develop their teaching skills, techniques and methodologies

196

and I would, as a result of this study, recommend that these courses attend explicitly to the affective aspects of FL learning and teaching. I explained in Chapter Two that the Libyan educational system regarding foreign language learning has lacked the training and development courses required for teachers since Gaddafi's rule. Moreover, our negative relationship with the west affected attitudes towards and practices in teaching foreign languages, particularly English. Since the 2011 revolution changes have occurred with regard to teaching and learning foreign languages particularly in the large cities such as Tripoli and Benghazi and the climate is more positive although there remain many challenges and I am not under-estimating these in my recommendations for change.

If teacher education and training can be enhanced, then I would recommend courses that show how important it is that teachers think about and pay attention to their students' emotions. They need to understand that, with respect to this study, anxiety can be generated by a number of different situations and factors in the classroom and they should try to avoid stimulating negative emotions. Additionally, they should try to reduce the intensity of anxiety if noticed, both verbally through spoken words and non-verbally through body movements, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice as Hwang and Matsumoto (2014) suggest. An emotion, as Wollheim (1999) claimed, and as I noted in Chapter Three, is something powerful which can colour or darken our world depending on what we feel. So, when a student feels anxious, fearful, depressed, or angry as a result of one of the factors discussed here then the learner's cognition can be affected. Cognitive effects will be manifested in thinking, remembering, processing and connecting information, imagining, solving problems, and making the decisions necessary for learning will be affected and interrupted by anxiety as well as other emotions. I believe teachers should attempt to listen to the anxious students, to understand their needs and circumstances and to support them by creating a warm friendly atmosphere in which students feel emotionally secure. That sort of atmosphere will best help them to be able to speak in the target language, and to motivate them to change their negative attitudes and beliefs (if those are present) to achieve progress. Arnold (2011) states 'whatever we focus most on in our particular context, be it general English, morphosyntax, phonetics, literature, English for academic writing or any other special area, attention to affect will make our teaching more effective'(p.11). Similarly, Barajas (2014) argues that positive emotions, such as happiness and joy, can promote thinking and that negative emotions can inhibit cognition and my data goes some way to supporting these claims.

I would also recommend that teachers are encouraged to explain to and talk about the language learning process with students and, for example, to explain that a feeling of anxiety while speaking is normal in FLL, and making errors is part of learning process because anxious students may fear that errors in speaking activities will destroy their image as able students. Supporting students and increasing their self-confidence and esteem, as Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) suggest, is necessary to lower the level of anxiety. In addition, I would recommend teachers avoid 'misbehaviours' (Kearney et al., 1991) such as negative evaluation and favouritism that leads students to dislike the teacher and the class in ways that add to anxiety. Finally with respect to teacher education, I would recommend that decision makers in the Libyan Education Ministry consider introducing both more and better teacher education and CPD, with particular attention to the affective aspects of learning and teaching.

I also suggest more research to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of mixed-sex classrooms in Libya as single-sex classrooms may be more useful and effective for both sexes in such a complex gendered context. As I noted earlier, in this study I had limited time and access to students and so I could not include some important topics in this study, and so now I suggest some additional future research that could address some of the limitations in my study and also that could extend that study.

8.7 Suggested topics for future research

This research study investigated foreign language anxiety experienced by a group of Libyan students with particular attention to ways in which this anxiety can lead students to be unwilling or even unable to speak English and it explored the phenomenon from students' and teachers' perspectives. To investigate the topic from other points of view I would suggest future research could explore the gender phenomenon in single-sex and mixed-sex classrooms in other parts of Libya and other Islamic countries and possibly beyond. Another significant and undeveloped research area is to investigate other emotions experienced by FL students in the Libyan context and to explore their effects on learning with particular attention to gendered cultural beliefs about teaching and learning English in Libya, the tendency to prefer teachers of the same sex, the declining numbers of men who study foreign languages in Libya, and teachers' anxiety.

Another important area to research is with regards to cases of students who experience trait anxiety. Those students, as I understood from the interviews here, may struggle more than others who experience situational anxiety. Finally, on a larger scale, research might
198

explore similar research questions to those in this study with more participants from different cities in Libya, taking into consideration the cultural differences between cities with particular regard to the minority language speakers who speak other languages besides Arabic as I pointed out in Chapter Two.

8.8 Personal reflections

This research has been a great experience which has influenced me personally and professionally. As a researcher I have learned a lot about other cultures through the people who I met in the UK and I have reflected on my own culture, experiences and professional role in Libya. I have learned, too, how demanding it is to ask questions and that asking questions gives some answers but even more next questions. This long journey taught me how to organize my work and manage my time. It also taught me patience, perseverance and determination to finish my study in Libya where I have encountered difficult circumstances of political and security instability. But the most important thing I have learned from my study is to try to understand and to respect other people's emotions, both in everyday life and at work as a teacher. I tried to do this before but this study gave me a wider and deeper understanding of emotions and how they can affect us. Now, as a teacher, I am better able to understand why my students feel anxious, frightened, angry, jealous or joyful. I also can better understand why they are unwilling to speak in English in front of their classmates and I can appreciate their behaviour and better anticipate their reactions. This study, moreover, provided me with a wide knowledge that proficiency in a foreign language depends on affective and psychological factors and that fostering positive emotions and reducing negative anxiety is an important part of my job as a teacher of the English Language.

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211

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229

Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet: Students' Interview

University | School of
of Glasgow | Education

Plain Language Statement

1. Study title and Researcher Details

Foreign Language Anxiety: Libyan Students Speaking in English.

Rabab Aldarasi, PhD Research Student at Glasgow University.

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study about the foreign language anxiety that Libyan Universities experiences while learning English as a foreign language. This research will investigate the factors and the effects of the phenomenon on language learning in the Libyan context. Before you decide whether to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear, or you would like more information on. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.
Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?
This study is being undertaken as part of a PhD programme at Glasgow University. The aim of the research is to explore the sources causing anxiety in English language learning.

4. Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen because you are learning English as a Foreign Language. Your experiences of learning the language will inform the research.

5. Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm this. You will still be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect you in any way, or jeopardise your relationship with me or any member of staff with whom you work.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?
Once you agree to take part in this research project you will be asked to respond to the interview question and this will take approximately 30 minutes. In the interview we will speak about the causes that generate your anxiety while learning and their effects on your learning. The interview

230

will be audio-taped. I will ask you to speak in Arabic, but you may prefer to speak in English, so it is your choice.

7. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?
All information collected during the course of the research project will be kept strictly confidential. You will be identified by an ID number and any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?
The findings of the interviews will be used to inform my research, and will be written up in English as part of the requirements for completion of a PhD in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow. The material may subsequently be used in conference presentations, publications arising from my research and to inform teaching and learning approaches. No participants will be identified in the findings of any presentation or publication resulting from the research. The final PhD thesis will be openly available from the University of Glasgow.

9. Who is organising and funding the research? (If relevant)
The research is fully sponsored and funded by the Libyan government. The Libyan Government will not have an access to any identifiable information you will provide.

10. Who has reviewed the study?
The study has been reviewed and is being supervised by Prof. Nicki Hedge (Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk), School of Education, University of Glasgow and by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, University of Glasgow.

11. Contact for Further Information
Rabab Aldarasi, Email: r.aldarasi.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Nicki Hedge, Email: Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk
If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you may contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Valentina Bold Valentina.Bold@glasgow.ac.uk.

231

Appendix 2   Consent Form: Students' Interview

University of Glasgow

College of Social Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project: Foreign Language Anxiety: Libyan Students Speaking in English.

Name of Researcher: r.aldarasi.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Principal Supervisor: Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet about the interview for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions about what is involved.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I consent / do not consent to take part in the scenarios.

I acknowledge that participants will be identified by pseudonym in any publications arising from the research.

I understand that the data collected from this research will be stored securely with my personal details removed and agree for it to be held as set out in the Plain Language Statement.

Name of Participant: ………………………   Signature:………………………………
Date:…………………………………..
Name of Researcher: ………………………   Signature:………………………………
Date: ……………………………………

Appendix 3   Students' Interview Questions Form

Q1: Do you enjoy learning English?
Q2: Why are you learning English? What are your motivations?
Q3: In general, would you describe yourself as person who is:
   a) confident
   b) anxious
   c) it depends?
Q4: Depending on the answer above, in which situations are you confident or anxious?
Q5: Do you feel confident about English language learning? Could you explain why?
Q6: In general, in the English Language classroom, do you feel:
   a) confident
   b) anxious
   c) it depends?
   What makes you feel that way in the classroom?
Q7: Which, if any, of the following situations would make you anxious? Could you explain why?
   • When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a mixed-sex group of people.
   • When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a group of friends who are men.
   • When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a group of friends who are women.
   • When you have to speak aloud in English to a mixed-sex group of friends.
   • When you have to speak aloud in English to a group of friends who are men.
   • When you have to speak aloud in English to a group of friends who are women.
   • When you volunteer to answer a question in class in Arabic.
   • When you volunteer to answer a question in class in English.
   • When you speak to strangers in Arabic.
   • When you speak to strangers in English.
   • When you speak English only to the teacher.
   • When you speak English to someone outside the class.
Q8: Does listening, reading, writing, speaking make you feel anxious? Can you explain why? (any skill more or less than another?)
Q9: How do you feel when you communicate in English with:
   • A native speaker of English (British, American, etc.)
   • An Arab speaking English (Libyan, Iraqi, etc.)
   • A non-native speaker of neither English nor Arabic (Pakistani, Indian, etc.)?
Q10: Would you assess your English language skills as
   a) very good
   b) good
   c) average
   d) below average?
(please explain how you are making your assessment)
Q11: Would you prefer to be in a class with
   a) women only
   b) men only
   c) or in a mixed class? Could you explain why?
Q12: Which, if any, of these factors might make you feel relaxed, confident or anxious?
   • Atmosphere
   • Types of tasks
   • Teachers
   • Teaching styles
   • Learning resources
   • Mixed sex classroom

233

- Another situation

Could you explain why?

Appendix 4   Students' Interview: Male 1

Coded name	Student's age	Academic level	Years of experience in ELL
M 1	19	2nd	8

Researcher: Do you enjoy learning English? (ATTITUDE)[NB these were in coloured highlights but colour has been removed (left in yellow for all) for printing here]

M1 "Yes I enjoy learning English although there are many problems".

Researcher: Why are you learning English? What are your motivations? (BELIEFS AND MOTIVATION)

M1 "I learn it because English is the first language in the world and I will get a job when I graduate and get the certificate".

Researcher: In general, would you describe yourself as person who is: (SELF-CONFIDENCE)

    a) confident

    b) anxious

    c) it depends

M1 "It depends on the situation".

Researcher: Depending on your answer, in which situations are you confident or anxious? (TYPES OF ANXIETY)

M1 "I often feel anxious when think of my study and my future, but I am confident in situations where I think I am doing the right thing"

Researcher: **Do you feel confident about English language learning? Could you explain why?** (foreign language anxiety)

M1 "No I'm not confident. Speaking in front of the class is the worst thing, I don't like it".

Researcher: In general, in the English Language classroom, do you feel:

    a) confident

    b) anxious

    c) it depends?

M1 "It depends".

Researcher: What are makes you feel that way in the classroom? (SOURCES OF FLA)

(Negative evaluation of teachers, teachers' personality and traits, teachers' lack of practice, lack of teachers' support, teachers' gender favouritism, the sex of the teachers).

M1 "I feel anxiety when a teacher asks me to speak English in the front of the class, the number of women is much bigger than boys in my classroom, and it is so embarrassing when I make errors while speaking, you know some words are very difficult to pronounce and that is why I avoid participating in speaking activities".

Researcher: Which, if any, of the following situations would make you anxious, or relaxed? Could you explain why? (COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION, MIXED SEX CLASSROOM, SPEAKING IN FRONT OF LARGE GROUPS OF WOMEN, PEERS' NEGATIVE EVALUATION)

When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a mixed -sex group of people.

When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a group of friends who are men.

When you have to speak aloud in Arabic to a group of friends who are women.

When you have to speak aloud in English to a mixed -sex group of friends.

When you have to speak aloud in English to a group of friends who are men.

When you have to speak aloud in English to a group of friends who are women.

When you volunteer to answer a question in class in Arabic.

When you volunteer to answer a question in class in English.

When you speak to strangers in Arabic.

When you speak to strangers in English.

When you speak English only to the teacher.

When you speak English to someone outside the class.

M1 "I would feel confident when I speak Arabic in all the different situations you mentioned, but I wouldn't feel the same when I speak English. I am certain that I would feel more relaxed when I speak English to boys only even if they are strangers".

235

Researcher: Do listening, reading, writing, speaking make you feel anxious? Can you explain why? (any skill more or less than another?) *(LANGUAGE SKILLS AND FLA, TEST ANXIETY)*

M1"Writing and reading are my favourite skills and I feel relaxed when I practice them, but I really feel anxious in speaking and listening, they are difficult, when I listened and I couldn't understand, it became difficult for me to continue the conversation, I got stuck".

Researcher: How do you feel when you communicate in English with: (DIFFICULTY WITH ACCENTS)

A native speaker of English (British, American, etc.)

An Arab speaking English (Libyan, Iraqi, etc.)

A non-native speaker of neither English nor Arabic (Pakistani, Indian, etc.)?

M1"I never talk to a native speaker to tell you about my experience, but I guess I would be frightened. For others, it depends on the speaker's accent. If his/her language was clear I think I would be less anxious".

Researcher: Would you assess your English language skills as: (SOCIAL COMPARISON)

    a) very good

    b) good

    c) average

    d) below average?

(please explain how you are making your assessment)

M1 "Good at writing and reading, and below average in speaking and listening. I know from my results and comparing to my classmates".

Researcher: Would you prefer to be in a class with: (CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS FACTORS, BEING THE ONLY MAN IN THE GROUP)

    a) women only

    b) men only

    c) or in a mixed class? Could you explain why?

M1 "men only, of course. To have chance to practice our English, and to have more attention by teachers who pay all their attention to women".

Researcher: Which, if any, of these factors might make you feel relaxed, confident or anxious? (STRATEGIES OF REDUCING FLA)

Atmosphere

M1 "Sometimes relaxed and sometimes anxious, but all depends on the teachers".

Types of tasks

M1 "I feel relaxed and confident in tasks of writing and reading but anxious in tasks that require listening and speaking but if teachers asked us to prepare at home it would easier especially in listening".

Teachers

M1 "Some of them really make me anxious and nervous during the class because they care about women more than us, sometimes we feel that we are invisible in the class, they don't care about our learning and practicing, and when we share activities and make language mistakes, they evaluate us badly and that so embarrassing, so we left many classes during the semester"

Teaching styles

M1 "Teachers who use little bit of Arabic make leaning easy especially when the lesson contains terms such as in Syntax and Morphology".

Learning resources

M1 "learning English would become interesting and enjoyable if teachers used pictures, videos or something lively, and speak loudly and clearly"

Mixed sex classroom

M1 "cause me anxiety because if the group was all men, we would have all teachers' attention and have more time to practice, and I 'm sure my English will be improved".

Another situation

M1 "No".

Researcher: Thanks for your participation

Appendix 5   Participant Information Sheet: Teachers' Interview

University of Glasgow | School of Education

Plain Language Statement

1. Study title and Researcher Details

Foreign Language Anxiety: Libyan Students Speaking in English.

Rabab Aldarasi, PhD Research Student at Glasgow University.

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study about the foreign language anxiety that Libyan Universities experiences while learning English as a foreign language. This research will investigate the factors and the effects of the phenomenon on language learning in the Libyan context. Before you decide whether to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear, or you would like more information on. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

This study is being undertaken as part of a PhD programme at Glasgow University. The aim of the research is to explore the sources causing anxiety in English language learning.

4. Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you are teaching English as a Foreign Language. Your experience of learning and teaching the language will inform the research.

5. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm this. You will still be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect you in any way, or jeopardise your relationship with me or any member of staff with whom you work.

6. What will happen to me if I take part?

Once you agree to take part in this research project you will be asked to respond to the interview question and this will take approximately 30 minutes. In the interview we will speak about the causes that you think they generate anxiety to your students while learning and their effects on

your learning. The interview will be audio-taped. I will ask you to speak in Arabic, but you may prefer to speak in English, so it is your choice.

7. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?
All information collected during the course of the research project will be kept strictly confidential. You will be identified by an ID number and any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it.

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?
The findings of the interviews will be used to inform my research, and will be written up in English as part of the requirements for completion of a PhD in the School of Education at the University of Glasgow. The material may subsequently be used in conference presentations, publications arising from my research and to inform teaching and learning approaches. No participants will be identified in the findings of any presentation or publication resulting from the research. The final PhD thesis will be openly available from the University of Glasgow.

9. Who is organising and funding the research? (If relevant)
The research is fully sponsored and funded by the Libyan government. The Libyan Government will not have an access to any identifiable information you will provide.

10. Who has reviewed the study?
The study has been reviewed and is being supervised by Prof. Nicki Hedge (Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk), School of Education, University of Glasgow and by the College of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, University of Glasgow.

11. Contact for Further Information
Rabab Aldarasi, Email: r.aldarasi.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Nicki Hedge, Email: Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk
If you have any concerns regarding the conduct of the research project you may contact the College of Social Sciences Ethics Officer, Dr Valentina Bold Valentina.Bold@glasgow.ac.uk.

Appendix 6   Consent Form: Teachers' Interview

College of Social
Sciences

Consent Form

Title of Project: Foreign Language Anxiety: Libyan Students Speaking in English.

Name of Researcher: r.aldarasi.1@research.gla.ac.uk
Principal Supervisor: Nicki.Hedge@glasgow.ac.uk

I confirm that I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet about the interview for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions about what is involved.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

I consent / do not consent to take part in the scenarios.

I acknowledge that participants will be identified by pseudonym in any publications arising from the research.

I understand that the data collected from this research will be stored securely with my personal details removed and agree for it to be held as set out in the Plain Language Statement.

Name of Participant: ……………………… Signature:………………………………
Date:…………………………………….
Name of Researcher: ………………………   Signature:…………………………………
Date: …………………………………….

Appendix 7   Teachers' Interview Questions Form

Q1:   What were your motivations to teach English?

Q2:   Is there anything you particularly enjoy/do not enjoy about teaching English?

Q3:   Could you please tell me something about your own experience as a language learner and about your own anxieties, if any, that you had then or have now?

Q4:   Do you think that some of your students experience foreign language anxiety? Could you explain in what circumstances? For what reasons?

Q5:   From your experience of teaching, what are the effects of anxiety on language learners?

Q6:   In what situations (activities, tasks, or circumstances) do you think your students become more anxious in the class?

Q7:   Do you think that some foreign language anxiety may play a positive role in language learning? Could you explain in what way?

Q8:   Are there any strategies you apply to make your students feel less anxious in the class?

Q9:   Who do you think experiences foreign language anxiety more - men or women? Does that differ according to context/circumstances? What are the reasons for the differences in your opinion?

Appendix 8   Interview with Teacher 1

Coded name	Teacher's sex	Degree and place	Years of experience
T1	M	MA. Malaysia	12

Researcher: What were your motivations to teach English? (motivation) [NB all now in yellow for printing purposes]

T1 "Frankly I love English language, and learning English offers great jobs here in Libya".

Researcher: Is there anything you particularly enjoy/do not enjoy about teaching English? (beliefs and attitudes)

T1 "Well, I like teaching in general but I don't like teaching some subjects like phonetics and when I faced this problem as when I was teaching Headway Course, I sent an –email to some expert people in Cambridge University, and after two days they responded to my email saying you can neglect the theoretical side of phonetics and make students listen to how native speakers pronounce the words by using CDs".

Researcher: Could you please tell me something about your own experience as a language learner and about your own anxieties, if any, that you had then or have now? (teachers' experience and views of FLA)

T1 "When I was a student I loved learning English and experienced a bit of anxieties when some lectures focused on the theoretical and neglect the practical one on the pretext on the shortage of the time. At that time I had to work and study by myself and that really raised my anxiety up because I was not sure of my way of learning. As a teacher, it's rarely feel anxiety".

Researcher: Do you think that some of your students experience foreign language anxiety? Could you explain in what circumstances? For what reasons? (teachers' perspectives on their students FLA)

T1 "Yes, Sometimes I feel they are in listening and speaking in particular because they may feel shy or they know if they make errors in pronunciation or grammar in front of the class they will be laughed at or hear bad comments from their peers. And there are some women who start crying in the speaking exams before I ask the questions".

Researcher: Could you please tell me why do you think so? (factors causing anxiety)

T1 "I don't know exactly but I think because they are scared of the exams because they have not prepared well".

Researcher: From your experience of teaching, what are the effects of anxiety on language learners? (effects of FLA on learners)

T1"I think students who experience anxiety are less active in the class and get less academic achievement than others".

Researcher: Do you think that anxiety sometimes makes students pay greater efforts than before? (positive anxiety, teachers' knowledge about anxiety)

T1"No, I do think so".

Researcher: In what situations (activities, tasks, or circumstances) do you think your students become more anxious in the class? (situations causing anxiety)

T1 "Usually I start my lecture with some starter questions, and sometimes I feel some of the students become anxious even before I ask. And they also probably experience anxiety at exams".

Researcher: Do you think the kind of the questions you ask needs some preparation?

T1 "No, No, Even if you ask them simple question such as 'How old are you?' they get anxious".

Researcher: Do you think that some students might become anxious when they listen to you or a CD and not understand what the speaker says?

T1 "No, Most of them when cannot understand they can ask me to repeat again, so there is no reason for their anxiety".

Researcher: Do you think that some foreign language anxiety may play a positive role in language learning? Could you explain in what way? (positive anxiety)

T1 "No, When they practice they feel ok because they are familiar with each other".

Researcher: Do you think that they might become anxious because of negative comments made either by you or their peers?" (negative evaluations made by teachers and learners)

T1 "Yes, Sometimes they do".

Researcher: Are there any strategies you apply to make your students feel less anxious in the class? (strategies for reducing FLA)

T1 "Yes, I usually ask my students to prepare before the next class; this strategy makes them feel more self-confident of themselves. But if any student makes a mistake I often use strong words as punishment. I also through practice I prefer not to stand on the stage of the class, I go between desks to make them feel relaxed. Participation in conversations and taking role also make students familiar with each other and less frightened from speaking".

Researcher: Do not you think that strong words and harsh manner do not make your students feel anxious and would not have negative effects on their performance and achievement?" (teachers' personality and traits, and teachers' negative evaluation)

T1 "No, No, I use this strategy in order to make them think twice before they pronounce the word. My students will thank me in the future because I taught them well".

Researcher: Who do you think experiences foreign language anxiety more - men or women? Does that differ according to context/circumstances? What are the reasons for the differences in your opinion? (teachers' perspectives towards mixed-sex classroom)

T1 "I think men experience more anxiety because they care about women's comments. They don't like to look stupid in front of them; I used to do that when I was a student".

Researcher: Do you think the shortage size of men make them more anxious? (classroom size)

T1 "That is possible. Yes. That is right. I think if the number of men is bigger than women, women would experience more anxiety, and men's academic level would increase".

Researcher: Thanks for your participation.