



Influence of Socio-Economic Status on English Speaking and Writing Anxiety: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Anxiety is an emotion, which is characterized by Intense, excessive and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Anxiety is an important variable directly related to success in language learning. Many second language students experience a certain level of language anxiety that emerges from being involved with L2. Such feelings are challenging because they negatively affect learners' engagement and involvement in language learning. There are many factors that create English learning anxiety among students and socio-economic-status is one of these factors that contributes to learners' ELA in classrooms. The aim of this study is to explore the impact of SES on English language learners' speaking and writing anxiety. This study used comprehensive literature review method to explore the influence of SES on English speaking and writing anxiety among the students. The findings of most of the researches included in this review indicate that English speaking and writing anxiety is significantly influenced by the socio-economic status of the students. Students who belong to high SES show less level of anxiety while speaking and Writing English because they have better access to quality educational resources and increased parental involvement. On the other hand, students who belong to lower SES experience high level of English speaking and writing anxiety because they have attended less privileged schools and received less familial attention. These factors shatter the confidence level of students and proficiency in English, further increasing their English speaking and writing anxiety. Featured programs and policies targeted at enhancing the educational resources and parental involvement are needed to address these disparities so that support can be provided to the students who belong to lower SES backgrounds.

Keywords: "English speaking anxiety, English writing anxiety, Socio-economic status (SES), Academic performance, Language learning".

Introduction

Regular, constant concern about the future and its consequences defines the human feeling known as anxiety. Apart from the psychological manifestation of worry, uneasiness, fear, and panic may all be used to depict anxiety. It could also lead to some physiological reactions including fast breathing, elevated heart rate, sweating, shaking, and other connected symptoms. (Macdonald et al., 2021).

According to Lou and Noels (2020), Students at colleges and universities where the language of teaching is not their mother tongue may experience nervousness when speaking a language, they are not familiar with. This an show up in their daily interactions with others, making it harder for them to change intellectually and socially. In terms of learning a new language, it means how important it is to study anxiety.

There are a lot of different languages spoken in Pakistan (Khan, 2020) where people speak 57 main languages and more than 300 accents. Punjabi and Pushto are the languages that most people speak. About 16% of people speak Pushto and about 40% of people speak Punjabi. This isn't the official or state language of Pakistan, though. Mahboob, (2002) says that most people think English and Urdu are the two main languages spoken in Pakistan. However, it is surprising to learn that only 5% of the people in the state speak English as a second language and 10% speak Urdu as their first language.

Many students in Pakistan come from traditional or rural places, which makes it hard for them to speak and understand English well. In Pakistan, several students belong to traditional or remote areas, thereby exhibiting problems with respect to proficiency in the English language. Regarding schooling, there are two forms of anxiety: Trait anxiety and state anxiety (Gherhes et al., 2021). The state of anxiety in the context of education is the transient emotional condition of the learner that varies with time (Wu et al., 2019).

Anxiety compromises health, personality, and intellectual ability. Being the world language, English is really significant. Since Pakistan's educational system does not substantially support English, several pupils there lack a firm grounding in the language. Consequently, studying a foreign language causes worry among the students when they get to the university level. Consequently, when pupils get to the university level, studying a foreign language causes worry. Low self-esteem arising from the anxiousness to learn the English language in Pakistan generates the fear of failure and has been the main reason of the difficulties (Riaz and Riaz, 2022).

Asians are known to have always been burdened to have the ability to speak English, therefore preparing oneself for a good career and social life. (Malik et al., 2020). The ability to communicate effectively in English has become increasingly vital in our globalized world, affecting academic success, career opportunities, and social integration but anxiety in speaking and writing English is experienced by a significant number of individuals. This anxiety shatters the proficiency and confidence of the individuals. Extensive study has been done on English language anxiety in different contexts of education (Horwitz, 2010). Socio-economic status has been highlighted by the researchers as being a critical factor that creates language anxiety among individuals. Many factors such as wealth, schooling and the rank of the job are some of the factors that are part of socio-economic status. These factors affect the ability of a person to access the chances and resources (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002).

Generally, students from higher socio-economic backgrounds enjoy better educational resources. They have more access to quality schools, experienced teachers, and supplementary learning materials, which create a supportive learning environment for them. Higher SES helps developing language and reduce anxiety (Coleman, 1988). Language anxiety is also affected by the backing and participation of the parents for the studies of their children. It is more likely that the parents. They have the ability to provide guidance and support to their children for learning language. They also encourage their children to participate in extracurricular activities so that the language skills of children get enhanced and the anxiety among children about speaking and writing foreign language disappeared (Lareau and Weininger, 2003).

Contrary to this, students who belong to lower socio-economic status often go to the less privileged schools that have large class sizes and less opportunities for individualized instruction. Because of these limitations, students may feel less confident in their language abilities hence accelerating the language anxiety among them (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996). Moreover, the parents of the children coming from lower SES may face limited time and financial constraints. Lower educational attainment of the parents belonging from SES can also restrict their ability to support the language development of their children effectively (Davis-Kean, 2005). There are significant psychological impacts of socio-economic status on the language anxiety. The students who belong to lower SES encounter economic instability and limited access to the resources related to mental health face a higher level of stress and anxiety (Evans & Kim, 2007). This anxiety and stress can damage the learning abilities of the student further increasing anxiety of language learning. A feeling of inferiority is also created among the pupils as a result of the complex of belonging to a lower socioeconomic status, which makes them more prone to experiencing language anxiety (Ross & Mirowsky, 2006). Additionally, kids who come from families with greater socioeconomic status often have better mental health and suffer fewer levels of stress. These surroundings help to ease English speaking and writing related nervousness.

Socio-economic status can also influence the cultural capital available to students, which can significantly affect the language learning experiences of the students. Cultural capital is the non-financial social assets like linguistic ability, cultural understanding, and educational qualifications that support social mobility (Bourdieu, 1986). Students belonging to higher SES possess greater cultural capital. They are more exposed to English speaking environment and have more opportunities to practice English writing skills than that of the students who belong to lower level of SES. The language proficiency of these students gets increased and they become less anxious about practicing English language skills because of the increased level of exposure and practice. But students from lower SES backgrounds may have limited cultural capital and they get fewer opportunities

to practice and improve their English language skills. So, their anxiety about practicing these language skills get increased (Peirce, 1995).

Based on above mentioned debate, it may be inferred that socioeconomic level of the English learners plays very important role in shaping English speaking and writing anxiety. Parental support, differences in educational resources, psychological well-being, and cultural capital contribute to English language anxiety. It is crucial to understanding these factors so that targeted policies may be developed that can support students from lower SES backgrounds in overcoming language anxiety and achieving linguistic proficiency.

By examining prior research that was undertaken on the interaction between these factors, the current study investigates the role that socio-economic statuses have in the development of anxiety over speaking and writing in the English language among students who are learning the language. In subcontinent, the English language is regarded as the badge of prestige due to the fact that English people have governed over this region for a considerable amount of time. This paper highlights the differences and problems that are faced by the people belonging from different socioeconomic status. These differences affect the acquisition and proficiency of language.

Previous Studies on the Relationship between SES and English Speaking and Writing Anxiety

The relationship between speaking anxiety and socio-economic among the students of Saudi Arabia was investigated by Oteir and Otaibi (2022) in a study entitled "The relationship between the socio-economic status and students' speaking anxiety: A study of Saudi EFL students". The researcher used multiple regression in the analysis to analyze the data received through survey research. A questionnaire was used to gather data from the respondents. Sample of the study comprised of 118 students, studying at Betterjee Medical College situated in Jeddah. A negative relationship was found between speaking anxiety of the students and their socio-economic status. According to the results of the study, the students who belong to the higher socio-economic status have to face less level of anxiety while speaking English language.

Ali et al., (2021) investigated how academic performance and English-speaking anxiety of lower socioeconomic level of pupils affected each other. The investigation was carried out on 705 easily accessible university students. About their socioeconomic level, English-speaking worries, and academic success, respondents answered an online questionnaire. The study's findings exposed a negligible direct influence on pupils' academic performance from their lower socioeconomic level. The findings indicate that poor English performance moderates the influence of lower socioeconomic level of pupils on their grades. Furthermore, among the students living in metropolitan regions, the effect of English-speaking anxiety on their performance was really noteworthy.

The study conducted by Sabri and Hamid (2023) in which an effort was made to ascertain the existence of a substantial correlation between students' speaking abilities and their socioeconomic classes. The study was conducted on the students of the second semester of the English Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Descriptive quantitative research was implemented in the investigation. The socioeconomic status of students was determined through surveys, and the speaking scores of students were obtained from the lecturer's documents. In the Academic Year 2021/2022, the researcher employed random sampling procedures to select a sample of 30 individuals from a total population of 61 students. The data was analyzed in SPSS using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. It was discovered through the data analysis that socioeconomic level did not have a substantial impact on pupils' speaking competence. There was found no English-speaking anxiety among students on the basis of socio-economic status. This study proposed that irrespective of socioeconomic background, instructors should consistently offer students with desire to learn and inspire them about the advantages of possessing speaking abilities, such as securing lucrative employment, disseminating information to others, and exploring other countries.

Taking a quantitative approach by Shurovi et al., (2022), a survey design was used to gather data from 78 EFL undergraduate students in order to assess the socio-economic characteristics that might predict EFL students' writing anxiety in the setting of Bangladesh. The data analysis used multiple regression. The research findings indicated that a majority of the participants had writing anxiety. This research revealed that students hailing from a more educated and affluent familial background had lower levels of anxiousness in relation to academic writing.

The study by Huwari and Aziz (2011) looked at writing anxiety among Jordanian postgraduate students attending University Utara Malaysia (UUM). The approach of this study was survey research. One hundred and three Jordanian postgraduate students at UUM constituted the sample for this research. The research employed Daly and Miller's (1975) designed Writing Apprehension Test (WAT) as measuring tool so that writing anxiety could be quantified. The results of the research showed that majority of the participants felt nervous when writing English. Writing anxiety was clearly correlated with age and socioeconomic level. Most of the respondents in a qualitative research open ended question claimed they are more concerned about writing thesis in English than about completing assignments or journals.

Baroi et al., (2020) also studied the elements causing concern about speaking foreign languages among Dhaka, Bangladesh, undergraduate students. Finding out whether residential location, socioeconomic level, parental education and employment influences the different degree of foreign language speaking anxiety or not was the major goal of doing this research. Research findings unequivocally show that students with lower SES have foreign language anxiety in great part because of their socioeconomic level.

The study conducted by Zia and Safi (2020) examined the impact of SES on the anxiety experienced by students in foreign language classes. One hundred first year EFL students from Nangarhar University in Afghanistan make up the study's subjects. According to the findings, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds showed more FLA in their foreign language classes. According to the research, students from low-income households often attend institutions with less financing levels, and this condition lowers learners' motivation which affects their LL and performance both inside and outside of the classroom.

Ariani and Ghafournia (2015) also looked at how Iranian language students' views of language learning interacted with their socioeconomic level. 350 postgraduate students registered in English courses at the Islamic Azad University of Neyshabur took part in this study in order to reach this aim. The socioeconomic status of the respondents helped to classify the respondents. A questionnaire was given to the respondents to gauge their viewpoint on leaning language in many circumstances. The results of the study revealed that the socioeconomic status of the students significantly influence the linguistic abilities of the respondents and create anxiety about learning language skills.

Khattak et al. (2011) conducted a study to identify the causes of classroom anxiety among students. Subjects included English majors and minors from Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan in Pakistan. Anxieties in the classroom were assessed using the FLCAS, which stands for Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale. This scale was given to 62 pupils. Ten students who volunteered to take part in the survey were additionally interviewed using a semi-structured interview. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds reported higher levels of anxiety when asked to use a foreign language in class, according to the study's results.

Rahmayani et al. (2022) discovered a significant correlation between the English achievement of students and their socio-economic status. According to them, the greater the social and economic status of the parents, the more fulfilled the learning facilities at home will be for the children, and the students will be more motivated to engage in the learning process, resulting in better learning outcomes. A number of factors contribute to the academic performance of students, including their parents' socioeconomic status.

The prime focus of the study conducted by Zahid and Ashfaq (2022) was to investigate many dynamics of the society and the relevance of the English language given to the English language in the society, we explore the effect of parents' wealth on English language learning competency of the pupils. The data is gathered from a variety of institutes in order to obtain dependable results, and the study is founded on quantitative research. This research will expand new horizons, such as the investigation of the impact of the income of the parents on the language learning proficiency of the learners and the comprehension of the government's responsibility to take appropriate measures to increase the income of the parents in order to improve the learning capacity of the learners.

The study conducted by Bialystok and Shorbagi, (2021) differed from previous research that focused on comparing distinct groups to understand the influence of bilingualism and socioeconomic status (SES) on personal growth. Instead, this study explored the combined effects of subtle variations in these experiences on the performance of an executive function (EF) test and a verbal fluency test. The research included a sample of 234 children, all of whom were 6 years old. The children were evaluated for their nonverbal intelligence and English vocabulary skills. In addition, parents were asked to complete a questionnaire that gathered demographic information and information regarding their children's language experiences. Children's socioeconomic status (SES) was determined by assigning them continuous scores based on their parents' level of education. Bilingualism was assessed by considering their familiarity with languages other than English. Both continuous scores had a normal distribution. While students from more affluent backgrounds did better on tests of phonological fluency, equally well in continuous and between-group studies, semantic fluency showed no group variations. While there was a positive correlation between EF and bilingualism across the board in the whole sample, bilingual students in the higher socioeconomic status group showed an interaction that allowed them to outperform their peers.

Additionally, Raihan, (2023) conducted a study on the students of eighth and ninth grades from the Rajshahi region to investigate the relationship between socioeconomic level of the students and competency in English language. Mixed-method approach was applied to measure this relationship. A semi-structured interview with parents, teachers and students was conducted. Additionally, tests of English language competency were also performed to measure the relationship between the variables. According to the results of this study many

factors such as less attention of the parents towards their children's' language learning skills and less availability of the resources affect the language competency among their children. Resultantly, the language learning anxiety among the students increases.

Huang et al., (2018) conducted a study entitled "Examining the effects of socio-economic status and language input on adolescent English learners' speech production outcomes". The researcher set out to discover the nature of the connection between input as determinants of English language anxiety and the socio-economic status of the learners. This study was performed on 97 Taipei, Taiwanese students. The students of tenth and eleventh grades participated in the study. Every participant in the study was given a story-telling task. Additionally, a survey was also carried out so that the information can be collected about the language exposure of the respondents. The parents of respondent students also participated in the study and completed a survey. This survey included details about their family history and the children's opinions from preschool through elementary school. The research found that SES and input affected adolescent learners' speech output. Complexity, fluency, and correctness of speech all had different impacts. The results of second language speech production were shown to be influenced by both input and socioeconomic status (SES), however there was a substantial association between the two.

The study entitled "Evaluating the effect of socioeconomic status on students' English language learning at the secondary level" Conducted by Zafar et al., (2022) found the many socioeconomic elements influencing secondary level student's English language acquisition in Rahim Yar Khan. Using a survey approach, the study was descriptive in nature. A mix of qualitative and quantitative techniques were used. The study's population included principals, English SSTs, and secondary school students from every intermediate and secondary school in the Rahim Yar Khan region. The gender ratio of the participants was the same as that of the urban rulers. The researcher embraced a straightforward random sampling method. The study's sample was comprised of 320 students, 64 SSTs, and 32 principals. The respondents intended the observation sheet and questionnaire as means of data collecting instruments. Open-ended questions sprang from challenges and recommendations expressed by the responders. According to most of the responders, the SES of secondary level pupils greatly influences English learning. Most of the respondents believed that the speaking and writing abilities of the kids are much influenced by the residential location, interactions with parents, friends, and instructors as well as by the usage of digital and online resources.

The significance of socioeconomic status on the learning of English as a foreign language has been largely overlooked in research conducted by Zare-ee (2010). The results of his study, which were derived from variance analyses, suggest that Students from affluent families did better on the proficiency tests and in academic writing assignments that required them to argue a point. The findings of the study indicated that learners bring the lasting effects of their socioeconomic status to English classes at the undergraduate level.

Conclusion

Research has showed that socio economic status is a crucial factor in creating English speaking and writing anxiety among students. The proficiency of English speaking and writing is also greatly influenced the socioeconomic level of the students. Kids from the high socio-economic status mostly go to the schools that are better funded and have more experienced teachers. There are a smaller number of students in the classes and every student can get better attention of the teachers. This good learning setting helps growing the language proficiency of the students and lowering the level of their anxiety. On the other hand, kids belonging to lower socio-economic status usually attend the less privileged schools that have a greater number of students in a class. They cannot get one-on-one help from their teachers. English speaking and writing skills are not groomed in these schools and language anxiety is aggravate in these circumstances.

Parental help and their attention toward the education of the children also plays very important role in increasing or decreasing their English speaking and writing anxiety. Educated parents who come from better financial backgrounds can help their kids learn a language by providing them suitable environment at home. Contrary to this, parents from lower SES backgrounds have to do more attempts to meet their finances, so they get less time and limited resources to support and involve with their children to improve their language learning skills.

The review of the above studies shows that English speaking and writing skills are influenced by the socio-economic status. These results can play an important role to bring changes in policy and practice of education. These results may help developing policies for the students to reduce English speaking and writing anxiety by enhancing resources for the under privileged, getting parents involvement through community outreach programs, and giving mental health help to reduce stress and worry.

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