

Running head: FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY LEVEL OF MIDDLE SCHOOL  
STUDENTS

**Foreign Language Anxiety Level of Middle School Students at a Specialized School  
for Gifted Children in the North of Kazakhstan**

Olga Plyushko

Submitted in partial fulfillment of requirement for the degree of

Master of Science

in

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to explore the level of foreign language anxiety that students at a specialized North Kazakhstan school for gifted students experienced in class. In addition, it attempted to find out the factors that influence language anxiety and how language anxiety then affects students' achievements.

One hundred and sixty middle school students, aged from 12 to 18 were participants of this cross-sectional survey quantitative research. Maximum variation sampling was used to ensure a more diverse data for the research. The data was collected using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), the Speaking Anxiety Scale (SAS), elaborated by extracting 13 questions associated with speaking from FLCAS, the Writing Anxiety Scale (WAS; Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999), the Reading Anxiety Scale (RAS; Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999), and the Listening Anxiety Scale (LAS; Kim, 2000).

Descriptive as well as T-test, ANOVA and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient were employed to analyze the data. The results revealed a moderate level of English language anxiety. Overall, all the types of language anxiety resulted in a strong positive correlation, which means that the rise of the level of one of the language anxiety types inevitably provokes an increase in the level of all the other types of language anxiety. Moreover, it was detected that high level of general language anxiety is associated with low levels of total achievement in English. Interestingly, findings revealed that female students tend to have statistically significant higher level of speaking anxiety than their male counterparts. Also, students who have been studying at school for 2-3 years generally feel more anxious at English lesson than students who have been studying 4-5 years. Interestingly, that concerning speaking, they felt more anxious than novice students, whose learning experience there constituted less than one year. However, no statistical difference

was identified on language anxiety between students in Kazakh or Russian languages mediums of instruction.

*Key words:* foreign language anxiety, middle school students, general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing anxiety, reading anxiety, listening anxiety.



### Аңдатпа

Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты - ағылшын тілін оқып-үйрену кезіндегі дарынды балаларға арналған Солтүстік Қазақстандық мамандандырылған мектеп оқушыларының тілдік беймазалық деңгейін зерттеу. Сондай-ақ, тілдік беймазалыққа әсер ететін факторларды және тілдік беймазалық оқушылардың үлгеріміне қалай әсер ететінін анықтау.

Кросс-секциялық, сандық зерттеулерге жалпы алғанда 12-18 жас аралығындағы 160 орта буын оқушылары қатысты. Толық деректерді алу үшін максималды вариациялық таңдау пайдаланылды. Зерттеуге арналған деректер шет тілі сабағында тілдік беймазалық деңгейін анықтау шкаласы (Хорвиц, Хорвиц, & Коуп, 1986); жоғарыдағы шкаладағы айтылымға қатысты 13 сұрақты шығару арқылы әзірленген «айтылым» дағдысына қатысты беймазалық деңгейін анықтау шкаласы; «жазылым» дағдысына қатысты беймазалық деңгейін анықтау шкаласы (Ченг, Хорвиц & Шэллерт, 1999); «оқылым» дағдысына қатысты беймазалық деңгейін анықтау шкаласы (Саито, Хорвиц & Гарза, 1999); «тыңдалым» дағдысына қатысты беймазалық деңгейін анықтау шкаласы (Ким, 2000) бойынша жиналды.

Деректерді талдау үшін сипаттамалы және де дисперсиялық талдау, Т-критерийі, сондай-ақ, Пирсонның корреляция коэффициенті пайдаланылды. Нәтижелер ағылшын тілінің беймазалық деңгейі бірқалыпты екенін көрсетті. Тұтастай алғанда, тілдік беймазалықтың барлық түрлері күшті оң корреляцияны көрсетті, бұл тілдік беймазалықтың біреуінің деңгейін жоғарылату сөзсіз басқа тілдік беймазалық түрлерінің деңгейін жоғарылатуына себепші болды. Бұдан басқа, жалпы тілдік беймазалықтың жоғары деңгейі жалпы ағылшын тіліндегі оқу жетістігінің төмен деңгейімен байланысты екендігі анықталды.

Статистикалық тұрғыдан ұлдарға қарағанда қыздардың айтылым дағдысына қатысты беймазалықтың айтарлықтай жоғары деңгейі бар екені анықталды. Бұдан басқа, мектепте 2-3 жыл оқыған оқушылар осы мектепте 4-5 жыл оқу тәжірибесі бар оқушыларға қарағанда ағылшын тілін үйренуге көбірек көңіл бөледі, сонымен қатар, олар ауызша сөйлеу үрдісінде осы мектепте бір жылдан аз уақыт бойы оқитын оқушылармен салыстырғанда беймазалықты жоғары деңгейде сезінеді. Дегенмен, орыс тілінде немесе қазақ тілінде оқыту арасында тілдік беймазалық бойынша статистикалық айырмашылық болған жоқ.

*Тірек сөздер:* шет тілін оқып-үйрену кезіндегі беймазалық, орта буын оқушылары, шет тілін оқып-үйрену кезіндегі жалпы беймазалық, «айтылым» дағдысына қатысты тілдік беймазалық, «жазылым» дағдысына қатысты тілдік беймазалық, «оқылым» дағдысына қатысты тілдік беймазалық, «тыңдалым» дағдысына қатысты тілдік беймазалық.

### Аннотация

Цель данного исследования изучить уровень языковой тревожности, который учащиеся специализированной Северо-Казахстанской школы для одаренных учащихся, испытывают при изучении английского языка. А также, определить факторы, влияющие на языковую тревожность, и то, как языковая тревожность влияет на успеваемость учащихся.

В общей сложности, 160 учащихся среднего звена в возрасте от 12 до 18 лет приняли участие в кросс-секционном количественном исследовании. Максимальный вариационный отбор использовался для получения более обширных данных. Данные для исследования были собраны при помощи шкалы для определения уровня языковой тревожности на уроке иностранного языка (Хорвиц, Хорвиц, & Коуп, 1986); шкалы по определению уровня тревожности относительно навыка "говорение", разработанного при помощи извлечения 13 вопросов, относительно говорения из вышеупомянутой шкалы; шкалы по определению уровня тревожности относительно навыка "письмо" (Ченг, Хорвиц & Шэллерт, 1999); шкалы по определению уровня тревожности относительно навыка "чтение" (Саито, Хорвиц & Гарза, 1999); шкалы по определению уровня тревожности относительно навыка "слушание" (Ким, 2000).

Для анализа данных использовались как описательный, так и дисперсионный анализ, Т-критерий, а также коэффициент корреляции Пирсона. Результаты показали умеренный уровень тревожности английского язык. В целом, все виды языковой тревожности показали сильную положительную корреляцию, что свидетельствовало о том, что повышение уровня одного из типов языковой тревожности неизбежно провоцирует повышение уровня всех остальных видов языковой тревожности.

Кроме того, было выявлено, что высокий уровень общей языковой тревожности ассоциируется с низким уровнем успеваемости по английскому языку в целом.

Как выяснилось, девочки имеют более высокий статистически значимый уровень тревожности относительно навыка говорения, чем мальчики. Кроме того, студенты, которые учатся в школе в течение 2-3 лет, как правило, чувствуют себя более обеспокоенными на уроке английского языка, чем студенты, которые имеют опыт обучения в данной школе 4-5 лет, более того, они испытывают более высокий уровень тревожности в процессе устной речи по сравнению с учащимися, которые учатся в данной школе менее года. Однако, статистического различия по языковой тревожности между учащимися с русским и казахским языком обучения выявлено не было.

*Ключевые слова:* тревожность при изучении иностранного языка, учащиеся среднего звена, общая тревожность при изучении иностранного языка, языковая тревожность относительно навыка «говорение», языковая тревожность относительно навыка «письмо», языковая тревожность относительно навыка «чтение», языковая тревожность относительно навыка «слушание».

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Introduction and Background Information of the Study**

Campbell and Ortiz (1991) revealed “alarming” level of language anxiety among two quarters of University students (p. 159). Horwitz and Young (1991) stated that the growing number of students experiencing language anxiety at the foreign language lesson was truly astounding. Foreign language anxiety is “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts...” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994. p. 284).

A significant number of people experience a psychological barrier when studying a second language in spite of the fact that these very people may perform confidently in different learning situations (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). What then makes people behave differently? The data of the study suggested that the ability to perform successfully in a foreign language class is inhibited by the level of language anxiety they experience.

In recent decades, the demand for English language learning, which is a foreign language in Kazakhstan, has become especially noticeable, since English language proficiency is considered to be an essential factor to enter the world arena in terms of Economics, Politics, Technology and Education. According to the target indicators of the State Programme of Development and Functioning of Languages 2011-2020 (2011), the proportion of Kazakhstani population who can freely operate English is to constitute 10% in 2014, 15% in 2017, and 20% in 2020. The President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, stated in his speech to the nation in the framework of trilingual policy that “...the English language should be taught as the language of Science and Innovative technologies” (Nazarbayev N., 2016). It can be concluded that high expectations of the Head of the country should be reinforced by the high quality of the English language instructions and positive learning environment in class.

Currently, in Kazakhstan, the English language expertise of students, plays a crucial role in the school education of the new generation since referring to the Conceptual approaches to updating the content of secondary education in the Republic of Kazakhstan (2014), a number of subjects are to be taught in English in High school. Moreover, school graduates have a chance to enter prestigious national Universities or any other higher educational institutions abroad provided that their level of English meets international standards. However, high expectations on students' foreign language competences can inevitably increase students' language anxiety (Tanveer, 2017).

A considerable amount of research conducted in the field of the foreign language anxiety argues that language anxiety significantly influences foreign language performance. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), foreign language anxiety is proposed to be "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p.128).

On the basis of the evidence provided by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), it seems fair to suggest that students when starting learning a foreign language do not experience any language anxiety at all. In case they do, it is more obvious to be state anxiety rather than language anxiety. Referring to the researchers, students commence experiencing language anxiety after a certain period of time when their attitude towards the language learning process is generated. Many studies (Dewaele, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994) showed that younger learners experienced less language anxiety in English classroom in contrast to older students. Aydin et al. (2017) found out that in terms of speaking and interacting with the teacher and peers, 7-year learners felt less anxious, than their older schoolmates did.

Little or even no research has been conducted to find out if Kazakhstani students experience foreign language anxiety in the English classroom. Therefore, it can be viewed as a new area for research in the Kazakhstani context. It is crucial to deliver the research in order to analyze the situation regarding the degree of anxiety students experience in the English language class so that to promote a better encouraging and comfortable learning environment in order to meet the expectations of the new educational reform.

### **Statement of Problem**

Many researches aimed to examine specific effects of language anxiety on a language learner. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that “the anxious foreign language learner ... experience apprehension, worry, even dread. They have difficulty to concentrate, become forgetful, sweat, and have palpitations. They exhibit avoidance behavior such as missing class and postponing homework” (p.126). In the study of Tanveer (2007) the participants reported that when being nervous at a foreign language lesson, they were sweating, “blushing, rubbing the palms”, their hands were clammy and cold, they felt reluctant to participate in activities, avoided eye contact and so on. (p.54).

This phenomenon of language anxiety is worthy studying in Kazakhstan since currently, the country is in anticipation of the updated system of education implementation that implies that the English language will start being taught in the first Grade (prior to that students started learning English in Grade 5), and later in 2019, English will be used as the language of instruction in Physics, Chemistry, Biology and ICT in Grades 10-11. Due to the fact that English language learners often undergo stressful and anxious situations during the process of foreign language acquisition (Tanveer, 2017), the educators should take into consideration the findings of the research and strive to prevent anxiety-provoking factors in order to create comfortable, stress-free and productive learning environment,

which will facilitate better language performance (Aydin, 2017; Riasati, 2011; Tanveer, 2007; Young, 1991).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the level of language anxiety of Middle School students at a specialized school for gifted children in the North of Kazakhstan and identify the major factors that provoke it in relation to their productive and receptive skills, such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening at the English language lesson.

For the purpose of the study, the following research questions are addressed:

- 1) What levels of foreign language anxiety do middle school students experience in English?
- 2) What factors influence language anxiety of students at English language lessons in the classroom?
- 3) How does foreign language anxiety influence speaking, writing, reading, and listening achievements in the English language?

### **Significance of the Study**

School students and teachers of the English language will potentially benefit from the study, because the research will identify the level of language anxiety the students deal with in foreign language class and factors that aggravate language anxiety and “will help language teachers in making the classroom environment less stressful” (Tanveer, 2017, p.8). Due to the awareness of the availability of a certain level of anxiety that students experience at the lesson and acknowledgement how threatening it could be for their language acquisition, teachers will realize how crucial it is to take effective actions to eliminate anxiety provocative factors and “offer concrete suggestions for attaining foreign language confidence” (Horwits, Horwits & Cope, 1986, p.9). Referring to a number of the previous researches conducted in the field, it can be stated that anxiety is an important

factor that affects foreign language acquisition (Horwitz et al., 1988). Still more research should be done to investigate new population in various settings in order to introduce fresh findings that could reinforce or oppose the prior ones (Creswell, 2014).

Having investigated the level of language anxiety and analyzed the effects of language anxiety on Kazakhstani Middle School students in relation to the four English language skills like speaking, writing, reading and listening, the findings of the study can help Kazakhstani foreign language teachers who work in specialized schools for gifted children avoid or decrease language anxiety in class, using appropriate pedagogical techniques due to awareness of factors that are highly likely increase the level of any type of foreign language anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) stated that people who are interested in effective learning and teaching should be equipped with easily recognizable characteristics and implications of foreign language anxiety. Consequently, educators will be able to enrich their awareness of language anxiety and comprehend how to produce anxiety-free learning environment and respond to the needs of especially anxious students.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction**

This chapter aims to critically analyze the literature on language anxiety in the context of a foreign language acquisition, its causes and effects. It will shed light on the level of language anxiety that students in high schools and universities experience throughout the world and in Kazakhstan in particular. The first section of the chapter will distinguish the general anxiety from language anxiety. Section two will present the range of research conducted regarding the phenomenon of language anxiety, whereas, section three will report on the correlation between language anxiety and language performance. The next section will detect the extent of gender and study years influence on the level of language anxiety. Finally, sections five will represent suggested techniques to deal with language anxiety in class.

### **Definition of general and language anxiety**

Hamilton (1969) defined anxiety as a phenomenon that causes biological changes, which consequently help an organism deal with stress. Anxiety should not be compared with fear since when reacting to danger, anxiety, in contrast to fear, is milder but lasts longer. When exploring the phenomenon of anxiety in psychology, Spielberger (1985) distinguished two types of anxiety: state and trait. Thus, when experiencing trait anxiety, people feel anxiety under nonthreatening circumstances, thus indicating a vulnerability to stress. Whereas, state anxiety is a reaction to a certain threat aggravated by tension, nervousness, or worry, which aids in adapting to a threatening situation.

However, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) agreed that language anxiety is a unique and distinct anxiety independent from other general types of anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986) characterized anxiety that people experience when learning in a foreign language environment as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors

related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p.128). Following from that, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) highlighted the significance of distinguishing language anxiety from any other types. They defined language anxiety as “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning” (p. 284).

### **Research on language anxiety**

Over the last decades, a considerable number of researchers have been interested in exploring the phenomenon of language anxiety that students experience in the process of a foreign language acquisition and its influence on language skills. The common claim that many scholars put forward was the suggestion that the most anxiety-provocative experience for students when learning a foreign language was speaking (Aydin, 2017; Horwitz et al., 1986; Lo, 2017; Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2013; Suleimenova, 2013; Young, 1991). The results of the interview with 19 university students interpreted by Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013) supported the assumption that foreign language speaking is a source of language anxiety in the language acquisition process. Thus, students reported that every time when they started speaking English, their heart began pounding fast and their appeared a fearful feeling of losing consciousness, which prevented them from developing any idea.

However, this viewpoint was not in line with the study of Riasati (2002) whose data suggested that speaking was the least anxious component, while, grammar and writing were the most anxiety producing activities.

Interestingly, that while foreign language speaking component is mostly regarded to be the most anxiety-provocative aspect, reading in a foreign language is found to be a less anxious skill (Rajaba, Zakariab, Rahmanc, Hosnid, & Hassanie,2012; Tallon, 2006). Thus, Rajab et al. (2012) revealed low-level reading anxiety that students in

Malaysia experienced. The study explained this trend by the fact that they “are not totally unfamiliar with English reading texts” due to the exposure to the English language approximately at the age of four, which provided them with basic vocabulary and structure of clauses. What is more it was considered as “a more private process” in comparison to other language components (p. 5). Similarly, Tallon (2006) developed the claim that for the majority of students, according to their self-reports, one of the less anxious language components was reading due to the fact that it is a receptive skill.

**Research on language anxiety of Kazakhstani students.** Literature analyses currently available witnessed that there has been only one research conducted to explore the language anxiety students experience in Kazakhstan. Suleimenova (2013) conducted a mixed-method research aimed at identifying the level of High School students’ speaking language anxiety and to focus on its influence and implications on speaking performance. The scholar utilized semi-structured interview questions and the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). Suleimenova (2013) concluded that students experienced a high-level of language anxiety regarding speaking. The data gathered in the study suggested that students felt anxious performing in front of the class or to be called to answer, which was displayed through their reaction to public speaking, with such manifestations as trembling, palpitation, sweating, failure to continue the dialogue. The findings of the research supported the hypotheses of MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) who assumed that weakness in teaching approaches could be a cause of language anxiety that students experience in class. As evidence to a cause of language anxiety, students stated their English language teachers seldom used English as a language of instruction, moreover, the teacher when speaking English was too fast for them to understand, in addition, their teacher rarely engaged them in group or pair activities.



Finally, their teacher's expectation concerning their English language speaking performance was too high.

### **Language anxiety and language performance**

Over a period of a few decades, numerous researches strived to examine the effect of language anxiety on second language performance, which was considered a controversial issue. Horowitz et al. (1986) found that foreign language anxiety has an influence on language acquisition to a certain extent. In order to better understand the impact of language anxiety on performance, Horowitz et al. (1986) distinguished the following three anxieties connected with language acquisition: 1) communication apprehension, which implies discomfort of conversing with people 2) test anxiety, which represents alarm or uneasiness to fail an assignment, a test or an exam; 3) fear of negative evaluation by peers of educators. Similar reasons were investigated by the follow-up researches conducted by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) and Young (1991). In her study, Young (1991) defined language anxiety as "a complex, multidimensional phenomenon" and stated that due to the fact that students are different in individuality, ethnicity, foreign language background knowledge and learning conditions it is challenging to detect the influence of language anxiety on students' foreign language learning (p. 434).

Currently, many scholars support the idea that there is a significant negative correlation between language anxiety and foreign language performance (Dalkilic, 2001; Horowitz et al., 1986; Kim, 2000; Liu, 2006; Lo, 2017; Riasati, 2002; Rajab et al., 2012). Therefore, Kim (2000) involved in her study 238 learners who studied English as a foreign language and discovered that listening anxiety was significantly correlated to students' listening performance due to the lack of assurance in their abilities. Dalkilic (2001) and Liu (2006) discovered a strong negative correlation between the level of foreign language speaking anxiety and language performance. Tallon (2006) argued that the increase of self-

reported proficiency in reading, listening and writing determined the reduction of language anxiety level.

However, the results of the study conducted by Aydin et al. (2017) in contrast discovered that foreign language expertise was not related to the level of speaking anxiety that students felt in class.

### **Sources of language anxiety**

The reasons that provoke anxious situations in a foreign language classroom have been explored by many scholars. Young (1991) highlighted six sources provoking foreign language anxiety: “1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3) instructor beliefs about language teaching; 4) instructor-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedures; and 6) language testing” (p.427).

Therefore, the first source of language anxiety is personal and interpersonal anxieties, which relate to the feeling of uneasiness when students compare themselves with others, which can cause a considerable decrease in their self-esteem unless they see themselves winning in this instinctive competition (Marcos-Llinas & Garau, 2009; Young, 1991).

Another source of language anxiety is students’ beliefs or convictions, which means that there are students who are convinced that they must not say anything in a foreign language until they are confident that they are grammatically correct (Horwitz et al., 1986). Additionally, Horwitz (1988) recognized such convictions as an ideal pronunciation to be a sign of high foreign language proficiency as well as innate language abilities that are natural not for everyone. Consequently, language anxiety appears in case their beliefs fail to align with their factual abilities.

Regarding the third source of language anxiety, Young (1991) indicated the educators, who employ teacher-centered approach in everyday foreign language teaching,

which suggests lack of students' collaboration and strict instructions (Khattak et al., 2011; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Suleimenova, 2013).

The fourth language anxiety provocative source is inappropriate relationship between the students and the teacher, which is highly likely to be provoked by lack of constructive feedback, rude comments from the practitioner regarding students' incorrect pronunciation, inaccuracies in grammar or spelling (Khattak et al., 2011; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Suleimenova, 2013; Tanveer, 2007).

Finally, fear of speaking in front of the class is aggravated by the format and content of tests (Khattak et al., 2011), especially when the content of the test or its format does not coincide with the long-term practice in class.

In addition, different studies conducted regarding foreign language anxiety have revealed another source of language anxiety that is likely to intensify language anxiety in a foreign language class, which is fear of peer assessment and negative judgment from peers or teachers (Lo, 2017; Riasati, 2011). Finally, fear to make mistakes was also identified as a source that makes a foreign language classroom a highly anxiety-evoking place (Khattak et al., 2011; Marcos-Llinas & Garau, 2009).

### **Factors influencing language anxiety**

**Gender.** A significant number of researches, which explored the level of language anxiety that students experience during their foreign language lessons, sought to examine whether the level of language anxiety is dependent on gender concerning all the four aspects of a foreign language. The literature reviewed seems to point out that female students tend to report higher levels of language anxiety than males, especially speaking anxiety. Thus, the results of the studies (Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2013; Aydin et al., 2017) demonstrated a significant difference between female students who showed a moderate level of anxiety and male students whose speaking anxiety level was found out to be low.

Explanation of a higher level of anxiety that girls experience in comparison to males when speaking English, could be supported by girls' assumptions that their peers are more effective in speaking, second, by the fear to make a mistake or to forget all they knew, third, by panic to speak without preparation (Capan & Karaca, 2013; Latif, 2015; Pramuktiyono & Wardhono, 2016; Tanveer, 2007).

Another study conducted by Karatas et al. (2016) also supported the claim that females felt more stressed than males not only while speaking in front of the class but when learning the English language as a foreign language in general. Similar results were reached in the study of Zgutowich (2009) who revealed that "female respondents demonstrated higher levels of language anxiety compared to male students" (p.95). Besides, Aydin et al. (2017) found out that the level of foreign language anxiety among the children of primary school varied significantly in compliance with gender. The researchers explained, "female students seem more sensitive to being laughed by other students and unprepared speaking in front of their friends" (p.17).

Nevertheless, these findings seemed to dispute the discoveries of Latif (2015) and Loo and Kitjaroonchai (2015) that gender does not cause any effect on the level of foreign language anxiety as the data collected suggested no or insignificant difference in gender concerning language anxiety.

**Study years.** A number of scholars have determined the dependence of the level of writing, speaking, listening and reading anxiety on the number of a foreign language study years. There is a growing support for the claim that the shorter students study a foreign language at school, the higher anxiety level they undergo (Aydin et al., 2017; Capan & Karaca, 2013; Latif, 2015).

In the research, Capan and Karaca (2013) explored the correlation between the length of studying and the level of foreign language anxiety and revealed that the longer

students learn the English language as a foreign language, the less stressful they felt. Likewise, Latif (2015) concluded that there was a significant relationship between language anxiety level and the number of years students have spent on English acquisition. Students of lower grades had a higher level of language anxiety than students from higher grades who became more experienced, mature and competent with years. Latif (2015) argued that with the increase of the number of years of learning English, the language anxiety level would witness a decrease, since the longer a student learned English as a foreign language, the more knowledgeable and competent they became regarding the foreign language instructions, requirements and language learning situations.

In contrast, this viewpoint was not supported by researchers (Dewaele, 2002; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Salthouse & Somberg, 1982) who argued that younger learners felt less anxious in English classroom in comparison to those who had a bigger learning a foreign language experience. Interestingly, that younger learners felt less anxious regarding oral communication and interaction with teachers and classmates, in comparison to senior learners who experienced more anxiety when being exposed to teachers' correcting their speaking inaccuracies (Aydin et al., 2017).

### **Suggested actions to reduce language anxiety**

A considerable number of scholars in the studies explored various techniques to decrease language anxiety in a foreign language class. Most of them are based on the necessity to develop positive leaning atmosphere (Aydin, 2017; Riasati, 2011; Tanveer, 2007; Young, 1991). Thus, Riasati (2011) stated that collaboration of students through pair and group work is more likely to promote comfortable learning environment. Along similar lines, Young (1991) stated that in order to promote language easiness in class it is crucial to create anxiety-free learning conditions through student oriented methods rather than prioritizing teacher- centered approaches. Referring to Tanveer (2007), development

of friendly and supportive classroom atmosphere could turn making mistakes into a natural phenomenon of a learning process where students feel more confident without fear of “looking or sounding inept” (p.63). Aydin (2017) stated that teachers in cooperation with students should elaborate a code of conduct to support the atmosphere of democracy and create effective learning environment.

Other researchers reported methods to handle speaking anxiety. For example, Tallon (2006) put forward the claim that native English teachers should be recruited to teach students. Thus, due to the fact that the only language students can communicate with them is the foreign language, it would considerably help students to improve speaking skills. Besides, in order to engage all students into speaking, teachers should organize special speaking activities in pairs or in small groups, aimed to keep the conversation going without focusing on any mistakes (Lo, 2017).

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter will present the methodology of the study employed to address the research questions, which aim to explore the level of language anxiety that Middle school students experience when learning a foreign language, identify the factors that have an influence on language anxiety and investigate the effect of language anxiety on students' achievements regarding all the four language components. The first section of the chapter will justify and explain the choice of a quantitative non-experimental correlational research design developed in the study. The next two sections will include the details of sampling, participants and the research site selecting. The fourth section will deal with the research tools selected to collect the data, while, section five will describe the process of the data collection and finally, analysis of the data and ethical considerations of the study will be outlined in sections six and seven correspondently.

#### **Research Design**

To examine the level of language anxiety the Middle school students experience, to identify factors that provoke it, and finally, examine the extent to which language anxiety influences speaking, writing, reading, and listening performance in English, this study used a quantitative non-experimental correlational design. According to Creswell (2014), a correlational research design “provides an opportunity ...to predict scores and explain relationship among variables ... using the correlation statistics...” (p. 364). This design is appropriate for delivering the study when seeking to correlate two or a number of dependent and independent variables and investigate if they affect each other (Creswell, 2014). In the study, the researcher examined the relationship between the dependent variable, which is language anxiety and a few other variables, such as speaking, writing, listening and reading performance, and factors potentially influencing foreign language

anxiety, such as age, gender and number of years of studying English at a specialized school for gifted students.

### Sample

Maximum variation sampling was used to ensure a more diverse data for the research. Thus, to form the maximum variation sample, equal number of students responding to the following characteristics as gender, language of instruction, both Russian and Kazakh, and grade were chosen. Referring to Patton (1990), when analyzing the data, this type of sampling promotes “two kinds of findings: high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness, and important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity” (p. 172).

The target population of the study was Middle School students at a specialized school for gifted students in the North of Kazakhstan.

*Table 1. Distribution of the study participants according to the proposed characteristics: gender, language of instruction and grade*

| Variable                | <i>n</i> | %    |
|-------------------------|----------|------|
| Gender                  |          |      |
| Male                    | 80       | 50   |
| Female                  | 80       | 50   |
| Grade                   |          |      |
| 7                       | 40       | 25   |
| 8                       | 39       | 24.4 |
| 9                       | 41       | 25.6 |
| 10                      | 40       | 25   |
| Language of instruction |          |      |
| Kazakh                  | 79       | 49.4 |
| Russian                 | 81       | 50.6 |
| Total                   | 160      | 100  |

The study was focused on Grade 7-10 students to track the level and development of language anxiety students experience before they enter High School, where they study a number of selective subjects, like Biology, Chemistry, ICT or Physics in English. One



hundred and sixty participants were involved in the research, about 40 students from each cohort. Maximum variation sampling was used to ensure a more diverse sample including approximately equal number of representatives regarding grade (Grade 7 – 40, Grade 8 – 39, Grade 9 – 41, Grade 10 – 40), gender (male – 80, female - 80), and language of class instruction (Kazakh – 79, Russian – 81).

### **Research site**

The research was conducted at a specialized school for gifted students in the North of Kazakhstan, where students study from Grade 7 to 10. Any student may have a possibility to study at this school only after successful going through the procedure of competitive selection to win the grand of the first President. According to the curriculum, in grades 7 to 10, the number of the English language lessons constitutes five academic hours a week. The school was a convenient research site since the researcher had been working there for six years and had an easy access to school stakeholders involved in the study.

### **Data collection instruments**

The instrument chosen for data collection was a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, which contained seven sections. The first section consisted of a number of general questions concerning students' age, gender, grade, and length of studying at the school (Appendix 1). The next five sections included a selection of items from five widely used scales to measure general language classroom anxiety and language anxiety on specific language competences, including reading, writing, listening and speaking. Those included: (1) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986), which constituted 20 questions specifically to measure the level of language anxiety students could experience in a foreign language class; (2) Speaking Anxiety Scale (SAS) with 13 questions (citation needed); (3) Writing Anxiety Scale (WAS; Cheng, Horwitz, &

Schallert, 1999) that comprised 20 questions; (4) Reading Anxiety Scale (RAS; Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999), which had 20 questions; and (5) Listening Anxiety Scale (LAS; Kim, 2000) with 20 questions included. The scales aimed to measure the level of students' speaking, writing, reading, and listening anxiety in the context of the foreign language, respectively. All the scales offered answers rating on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Agree" (1) to "Strongly Disagree" (5) statements. The final section of the questionnaire comprised five open-ended questions related to students' performance in speaking, writing, reading, listening and overall performance based on the results of their Term 2 summative assessment in English. In the sections below, all the five scales chosen for data collection will be thoroughly described.

**Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.** This section of the Questionnaire included Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) (see Appendix 2) created specifically to measure the level of language anxiety students can experience in a foreign language class. The original scale included 33 items, however 13 items regarding speaking anxiety were removed from the scale deliberately to develop a separate scale to measure the level of foreign language speaking anxiety that students undergo in class. The final scale consisted of 20 questions with answers rating on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Agree" (1) to "Strongly Disagree" (5) statements. Therefore, minimum points that a participant could get equaled 20, whereas maximum – 100. The higher the score, the higher the level of language anxiety. Based on the experience of Horwits and Schallert (1999) who conducted similar study in the Taiwanese context and changed slightly the statements in FLCAS after getting feedback from the participants of the pilot group, the original scale was adapted and translated to be more comprehensive for Middle School students as they study three languages at school: Kazakh, Russian and English. Therefore, the phrases like "the language spoken in class",

“foreign language”, “language” were substituted by “English”. For instance, the statement 26 was modified into “I feel more tense and nervous in my *English* class than in my other classes.” In the sample, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the FLCAS scores was .859.

**Speaking Anxiety Scale.** The scale to measure the level of students’ speaking anxiety was developed by means of extraction all the questions concerning speaking from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (see Appendix 3). It constituted 13 questions with five possible options rating from “Strongly Agree” (1) to “Strongly Disagree” (5). The following statement is an example retrieved from the SAS scale “I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class”. The number of score varied from minimum 13 to maximum 65, the higher the score, the higher the level of speaking anxiety is. The SAS was found to be highly reliable (13 items;  $\alpha = .927$ ).

**Writing Anxiety Scale.** The third section of the questionnaire was devoted to the Writing Anxiety Scale (WAS) created by Cheng, Horwitz and Schallert (1999) (see Appendix 4). The scale aimed to measure the level of students’ writing anxiety in the context of the foreign language and included 20 questions with five possible options rating from “Strongly Agree” (1) to “Strongly Disagree” (5), for example, “When writing in English, I often worry about making grammatical mistakes”.

The number of score varied from minimum 20 to maximum 100, the higher the score, the higher the level of reading anxiety is. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the WAS scores equaled .926.

**Reading Anxiety Scale.** The fourth section of the questionnaire was the Reading Anxiety Scale (RAS) elaborated by Saito, Horwitz and Garza (1999) (see Appendix 5). The scale aimed to measure the level of students’ reading anxiety and included 20 questions with five possible options rating from “Strongly Agree” (1) to “Strongly

Disagree” (5). The example of one of the items was as following “When reading English, I get nervous and confused when I don’t understand every word”. The RAS scores varied from minimum 20 to maximum 100, the higher the score, the higher the level of reading anxiety is. In the sample, Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the RAS scores was .891.

**Listening Anxiety Scale.** The fifth section of the questionnaire was devoted to the Listening Anxiety Scale (LAS) created by Kim (2000) (see Appendix 6). The scale aimed to measure the level of students’ listening anxiety when listening to the target language speech and included 20 questions with five possible options rating from “Strongly Agree” (1) to “Strongly Disagree” (5), for instance, LAS item six sounded like “I keep thinking that everyone else except me understands very well what an English speaker is saying”.

The number of score varied from minimum 20 to maximum 100, the higher the score, the higher the level of listening comprehension anxiety is. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the LAS scores in this sample was .931.

### **Data collection procedure**

After obtaining the approval from the Graduate School of Education Ethical Review Committee to conduct the research, an official letter was sent to the principal of the school, which informed the head teacher about the purpose of the research, participants, possible benefits and risks and asked for permission to conduct the quantitative study at the site. It had been planned that the researcher, with the permission of the class curators, would visit each grade during the curator hour (a special lesson scheduled to discuss every day school issues) to introduce the students to the research, its purpose, procedure, potential risks and benefits. However, due to the timetable clashes, very often the curator hour lessons were scheduled at the same time with the lessons taught by the researcher. To overcome the obstacle, a 3-minute video message concerning the key points of the research was recorder by the researcher and demonstrated for the students during the assigned

curator hours without the researcher's physical presence. The researcher offered the students to participate in the study on a voluntary basis with confidentiality and anonymity guaranteed and with the possibility to withdraw from it at any stage. As the sampling population consisted of underage students (7-10 grade students), in order to get a permission to involve their children in the research process, the consent forms were sent to the parents of the students (see Appendix 7). The students were asked to bring the informed consent forms signed by one of the parents by an agreed day. Having received the parental permission, the researcher visited each Grade again during a curator hour to offer the students who were interested in the study and were willing to take part in it to complete the questionnaire. Before completing the questionnaire, the students signed the informed consent form (Appendix 8). The whole procedure took them approximately 40 minutes.

### **Data analysis**

Quantitative data obtained through FLCAS, SAS, WAS, RAS, and LAS and background questionnaire were analyzed with the help of a common statistical data-analyses software package – SPSS. Descriptive analysis, ANOVA, T-test and bivariate correlation were utilized. Before conducting the statistical analysis, in order to prevent response bias (Pallant, 2010), negatively worded items 3, 6, 8, 9, 15, 18 in FLCAS, items 1, 2, 6 in SAS, 1, 6, 9, 12, 17, 18 in WAS, 2, 7, 13, 16 in RAS and 8, 18 in LAS were reversed.

### **Ethical considerations**

First, all the participants were informed about the voluntary nature of the study due to which they could withdraw from it any time. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the participants of the study the following actions were undertaken. Firstly, the study participants' identities were not revealed, since they completed the questionnaires

anonymously. No personal information that could reveal participant's identity, such as their names, was collected. To guarantee confidentiality, the researcher never mentioned exact name of the specialized school for gifted students in the North of Kazakhstan that was chosen for the study in the research report. Besides, all the participants were provided with the same blue ink ballpoint pens to prevent the possibility to be distinguished by means of the type or colour of the writing instrument. Thus, to prevent students' spending their personal time after lessons to answer the questions of the questionnaire, the participants were offered to complete the questionnaire during a scheduled curator hour. Moreover, to lessen the risk of encountering uncomfortable questions while completing the questionnaire, all the participants were informed about their right to skip the ones they found to be uncomfortable or sensitive.

Finally, after the data collection and analysis, all the paper questionnaires were stored in a locked drawer. Thus, none of the administration or teaching staff had an access to the collected data. After data treatment, all the questionnaires were destroyed. Digitalized quantitative data were stored in a password-protected personal computer and were accessible only for the researcher and the supervisor.

The research under consideration was considered to be a minimal risk research due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the study was conducted in traditional classroom setting. Secondly, the students were involved in a research that operated a survey to investigate students' perception of everyday situations that happened in English class. Thirdly, the questions of the survey had nothing about sensitive issues that could cause more discomfort than any typical exam or test (Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education, 2017).

## **Chapter 4: Results**

### **Introduction**

The study aims to explore the level of language anxiety that Middle school students undergo at the lessons of the English language and to examine the factors that have an effect on language anxiety. Moreover, it attempts to recognize the effect of language anxiety on speaking, writing, reading and listening achievements and identify how much the types of language anxiety are interrelated.

The current chapter will respond to the research questions by means of descriptive, inferential and bivariate analyses. In the first section, descriptive analysis will reveal the level of foreign language anxiety that students experience regarding all the language components and will present descriptive statistics for all the items of FLCAS, SAS, WAS, RAS and LAS, identifying the items with the highest and lowest scores. Section two will outline the bivariate correlation for all the types of language anxiety. Section three will display the results of Scheffe post-hoc tests, employed to examine statistical differences in general anxiety, speaking, writing, reading and listening language anxieties within groups of English studying years, gender, language of instruction and grades to identify the factors influencing English language anxiety. Bivariate correlation for all the types of language anxiety and self-reported achievements of students in speaking, writing, reading and listening will be presented in section four. Finally, the last section will summarize all the findings of the study.

### **Overview of students' English language anxiety**

In order to measure the level of general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing anxiety, reading and listening anxiety that middle school students experience during the English language lessons, the results of students' responses to the FLCAS, SAS, WAS, RAS, LAS items were processed and measures of central tendency (e.g., means) and

measures of spread (e.g., standard deviations) were calculated (see Table 2). Results revealed that students experience the highest levels of anxiety in listening ( $M=56.08$ ;  $SD=14.44$ ) and writing English ( $M=52.76$ ;  $SD=13.70$ ). Levels of anxiety in reading English seem to be slightly lower ( $M=47.68$ ;  $SD=11.53$ ), but the lowest levels of anxiety were clearly found in the area of speaking ( $M=34.71$ ;  $SD=10.98$ ).

*Table 2. Descriptive statistics for general, speaking, writing, reading & listening language anxiety*

| Variable                        | N   | M     | SD    |
|---------------------------------|-----|-------|-------|
| Listening anxiety               | 160 | 56.08 | 14.44 |
| Writing anxiety                 | 160 | 52.76 | 13.70 |
| Reading anxiety                 | 160 | 47.68 | 11.53 |
| Speaking anxiety                | 160 | 34.71 | 10.98 |
| <i>General language anxiety</i> | 160 | 50.11 | 12.18 |

**General English language anxiety levels.** Table 3 reports the results of the descriptive analysis for students' responds to the English language classroom anxiety scale items indicating the means, standard deviations and percentage for answers rating on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Results evidenced that the majority of students worry about the consequences of failing the English language class ( $M = 3.33$ ;  $SD = 12.55$ ) and the possibility that other students are better at English ( $M = 3.03$ ;  $SD = 1.15$ ). In addition, students consider leaning with native speakers less stressful ( $M = 3.16$ ;  $SD = 1.05$ ). Interestingly, that item regarding the teacher's constant correction of students' mistakes is the least scored ( $M = 2.24$ ;  $SD = 1.06$ ).

*Table 3. Descriptive analysis for the foreign language classroom anxiety scale items*

| # | FLCAS  | M    | SD   | 1   | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|---|--|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
| 7 | I worry about the consequences of failing my English language class. | 3.33 | 1.09 | 6.3 | 16.9 | 27.5 | 36.9 | 12.5 |



|    |  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 20 | I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the English language                   | 3.16 | 1.05 | 4.4  | 23.8 | 34.4 | 26.3 | 11.3 |
| 5  | I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.                           | 3.03 | 1.15 | 10.0 | 24.4 | 28.7 | 26.3 | 10.6 |
| 8  | I don't understand why some people get so upset over English language classes                      | 2.94 | 1.24 | 13.8 | 25.6 | 25.6 | 22.5 | 12.5 |
| 6  | I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.   | 2.85 | 1.20 | 14.4 | 28.7 | 23.1 | 25.0 | 8.8  |
| 3  | It would not bother me at all to take more English language classes.                               | 2.81 | 1.29 | 16.9 | 28.7 | 26.9 | 11.9 | 15.6 |
| 19 | I get nervous when I do not understand every word the English teacher says.                        | 2.78 | 1.17 | 15.0 | 30.0 | 23.8 | 24.4 | 6.9  |
| 9  | I would not be nervous speaking the English language with native speakers.                         | 2.74 | 1.16 | 17.5 | 25.6 | 28.7 | 21.9 | 6.3  |
| 4  | During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course. | 2.68 | 1.03 | 13.8 | 30.0 | 33.8 | 19.4 | 3.1  |
| 12 | I often feel like not going to my English class.   | 2.63 | 1.18 | 19.4 | 28.7 | 28.7 | 15.6 | 7.5  |
| 14 | The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.                                     | 2.54 | 2.59 | 25.6 | 34.4 | 21.9 | 13.8 | 3.8  |
| 16 | English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.                                  | 2.48 | 1.13 | 21.9 | 33.8 | 24.4 | 15.0 | 5.0  |

|    |  |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 2  | It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English language. | 2.48 | 1.23 | 28.1 | 26.9 | 18.1 | 22.5 | 4.4 |
| 18 | When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.                          | 2.46 | 1.08 | 18.8 | 39.4 | 24.4 | 12.5 | 5.0 |
| 10 | I get upset when I do not understand what the teacher is correcting.                         | 2.38 | 1.03 | 20.6 | 40.0 | 22.5 | 15.0 | 1.9 |
| 15 | I do not feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.                               | 2.33 | 1.07 | 25.0 | 36.9 | 21.3 | 14.4 | 2.5 |
| 1  | I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in English class.                      | 2.28 | 1.18 | 31.9 | 31.9 | 16.9 | 15.0 | 4.4 |
| 17 | I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.                  | 2.27 | 1.24 | 35.6 | 27.5 | 17.5 | 13.1 | 6.3 |
| 11 | Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.                       | 2.27 | 1.26 | 33.1 | 35.6 | 10.0 | 13.8 | 7.5 |
| 13 | I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.                | 2.24 | 1.06 | 30.0 | 31.3 | 25.6 | 11.3 | 1.9 |

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**Speaking levels of English language anxiety.** Table 4 illustrates the descriptive statistics for the items of SAS indicating the means, standard deviations and percentage for answers rating on a 5-point scale from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5). The results of the analysis revealed the highest scored items regarding speaking in English, which is a feeling that the other students are more proficient in speaking English ( $M = 3.09$ ;  $SD = 1.13$ ), also the feeling of being overwhelmed by the number of rules,

which are necessary to learn to speak English well ( $M = 3.09$ ;  $SD = 1.13$ ), and panicking when speaking spontaneously in class ( $M = 3.09$ ;  $SD = 1.13$ ). While, the least scored items concerned confusion and uneasiness to speak English in class ( $M = 2.43$ ;  $SD = 1.11$ ) and probability of being laughed at ( $M = 2.45$ ;  $SD = 1.21$ ).

*Table 4. Descriptive analysis for speaking anxiety scale items*

| #  | SAS  | M    | SD   | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 8  | I always feel that the other students speak the English language better than I do.         | 3.09 | 1.13 | 7.5  | 25.0 | 30.0 | 25.6 | 11.9 |
| 11 | I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak the English language. | 2.84 | 1.24 | 11.3 | 22.5 | 20.0 | 31.9 | 14.4 |
| 3  | I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.                | 2.81 | 1.19 | 13.1 | 31.9 | 26.9 | 17.5 | 10.6 |
| 5  | It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.                                | 2.77 | 1.16 | 15.6 | 27.5 | 28.1 | 21.9 | 6.9  |
| 4  | In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.                             | 2.72 | 1.30 | 20.0 | 31.9 | 14.4 | 23.1 | 10.6 |
| 2  | I do not worry about making mistakes when speaking in English class.                       | 2.71 | 1.09 | 8.1  | 46.3 | 20.0 | 18.1 | 7.5  |
| 6  | I feel confident when I speak in English language class.                                   | 2.66 | 1.01 | 10.6 | 38.8 | 27.5 | 20.0 | 3.1  |
| 1  | I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.         | 2.64 | .99  | 11.3 | 36.3 | 33.1 | 15.6 | 3.8  |
| 13 | I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance. | 2.58 | 1.14 | 20.0 | 30.0 | 26.9 | 18.1 | 5.0  |
| 7  | I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in English class.             | 2.54 | 1.17 | 19.4 | 38.1 | 18.1 | 18.1 | 6.3  |
| 9  | I feel very self-conscious about speaking the English language in front of other students. | 2.47 | 1.21 | 22.5 | 37.5 | 18.8 | 12.5 | 8.8  |

|    |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 12 | I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the English language. | 2.45 | 1.21 | 25.0 | 34.4 | 17.5 | 16.9 | 6.3 |
| 10 | I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.                      | 2.43 | 1.11 | 20.6 | 41.3 | 17.5 | 16.3 | 4.4 |

**Writing levels of English language anxiety.** Table 5 reports the results of the descriptive analysis for students' responds to writing anxiety scale items indicating the means, standard deviations and percentage for answers rating on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Referring to the analysis, students are most likely troubled about fear to make grammar mistakes ( $M = 3.31$ ;  $SD = 1.12$ ), though feel confident about spelling ( $M = 3.36$ ;  $SD = 1.00$ ) and consider people enjoy the content of their writing in English ( $M = 3.07$ ;  $SD = 0.96$ ). Whereas, the least scored items concern expressing ideas through writing in English to be a waste of time ( $M = 1.99$ ;  $SD = 0.85$ ) and regarding their writing work as poor when submitting it ( $M = 2.25$ ;  $SD = 0.99$ ).

*Table 5. Descriptive analysis for writing anxiety scale items*

| #  | WAS   | M    | SD   | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|----|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 12 | When writing in English, I am confident with my spelling and accents.               | 3.7  | 1.00 | 2.5  | 11.9 | 21.3 | 45.0 | 19.4 |
| 2  | When writing in English, I often worry about making grammatical mistakes.           | 3.31 | 1.12 | 5.6  | 22.5 | 19.4 | 40.0 | 12.5 |
| 18 | People seem to enjoy what I write in English.                                       | 3.07 | .96  | 6.3  | 18.8 | 42.5 | 26.9 | 5.6  |
| 3  | I do not think I write in English as well as most other people.                     | 3.01 | 1.15 | 9.4  | 28.1 | 24.4 | 28.8 | 9.4  |
| 6  | It is easy for me to write good English compositions.                               | 2.92 | 1.08 | 11.3 | 23.1 | 34.4 | 25.0 | 6.3  |
| 14 | I am not good at writing in English.  | 2.72 | 1.10 | 13.8 | 31.9 | 28.1 | 21.3 | 5.0  |
| 1  | I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas when writing in English. | 2.65 | 1.06 | 15.6 | 30.0 | 31.3 | 20.0 | 3.1  |
| 4  | I am nervous about writing in English.  | 2.63 | 1.13 | 16.9 | 35.0 | 20.0 | 24.4 | 3.8  |

|    |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 5  | My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on an English composition.                 | 2.62 | 1.12 | 16.3 | 34.4 | 25.6 | 18.1 | 5.6 |
| 20 | I avoid writing in English.   | 2.52 | 1.08 | 18.8 | 33.8 | 28.8 | 14.4 | 4.4 |
| 15 | I have no fear of my English writing being evaluated by people other than the teacher.    | 2.49 | 1.16 | 24.4 | 27.5 | 26.9 | 16.9 | 4.4 |
| 8  | When writing in English, I feel anxious if I cannot come up with anything to write about. | 2.45 | 1.11 | 18.1 | 44.4 | 17.5 | 14.4 | 5.6 |
| 7  | I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas in English.                        | 2.45 | 1.02 | 18.1 | 38.1 | 26.9 | 14.4 | 2.5 |
| 19 | I am afraid of writing essays in English when I know they will be evaluated.              | 2.45 | .97  | 16.3 | 38.1 | 33.1 | 9.4  | 3.1 |
| 17 | I enjoy writing in English.   | 2.45 | 1.00 | 16.3 | 40.0 | 30.6 | 8.8  | 4.4 |
| 13 | I expect to do poorly in English composition classes even before I enter them.            | 2.41 | 1.06 | 20.6 | 39.4 | 20.0 | 18.1 | 1.9 |
| 9  | I have no fear of my English writing being evaluated by the teacher.                      | 2.36 | 1.14 | 25.0 | 36.3 | 22.5 | 10.0 | 6.3 |
| 11 | Taking an English composition course is a very frightening thought.                       | 2.33 | .97  | 21.9 | 35.6 | 31.9 | 8.8  | 1.9 |
| 16 | When I hand in an English composition, I know I am going to do poorly.                    | 2.25 | .99  | 21.3 | 48.1 | 18.1 | 9.4  | 3.1 |
| 10 | Expressing ideas through writing in English seems to be a waste of time.                  | 1.99 | .85  | 29.4 | 48.1 | 16.9 | 5.0  | .6  |

**Reading levels of English language anxiety.** Table 5 represents the results of the descriptive analysis for students' responds to reading anxiety scale items. Descriptive analysis revealed the items with the highest score, which report that students get upset when they are not sure whether they understand what they are reading in English ( $M = 3.01$ ;  $SD = 1.16$ ) or come across the words they fail to pronounce correctly ( $M = 2.84$ ;  $SD = 1.17$ ) or have to read aloud in class ( $M = 2.71$ ;  $SD = 1.13$ ). On the contrary, the items with the lowest score suggest that the hardest part in English acquisition is learning to read

( $M = 2.06$ ;  $SD = .81$ ), however, reading becomes not so much challenging after much practice ( $M = 2.11$ ;  $SD = 1.12$ ).

*Table 6. Descriptive analysis for reading anxiety scale items*

| #  | RAS  | M    | SD   | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5   |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 20 | I get upset when I am not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English.                                    | 3.01 | 1.16 | 13.1 | 20.0 | 26.9 | 32.5 | 7.5 |
| 1  | It bothers me to encounter words I cannot pronounce while reading English.   | 2.84 | 1.17 | 15.6 | 26.3 | 21.3 | 32.5 | 4.4 |
| 14 | I do not mind reading to myself, but I feel very uncomfortable when I have to read English aloud.                    | 2.71 | 1.13 | 13.8 | 33.8 | 27.5 | 17.5 | 7.5 |
| 18 | By the time you get past the funny letters and symbols in English, it's hard to remember what you are reading about. | 2.69 | 1.05 | 13.8 | 30.6 | 31.9 | 20.0 | 3.8 |
| 4  | I usually end up translating word by word when I am reading English.   | 2.66 | 1.16 | 14.4 | 40.6 | 15.6 | 23.1 | 6.3 |
| 10 | When reading English, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.                                 | 2.65 | 1.12 | 13.8 | 38.8 | 22.5 | 18.8 | 6.3 |
| 2  | I am satisfied with the level of reading ability in English that I have achieved so far.                             | 2.63 | 1.10 | 13.8 | 38.8 | 24.4 | 16.9 | 6.3 |
| 5  | I get upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading English.   | 2.61 | 1.06 | 15.0 | 34.4 | 28.8 | 18.1 | 3.8 |
| 11 | I am nervous when I am reading a passage in English when I am not familiar with the topic.                           | 2.60 | 1.13 | 17.5 | 36.3 | 18.8 | 23.8 | 3.8 |
| 9  | When reading English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the author is saying.       | 2.56 | 1.10 | 16.9 | 37.5 | 22.5 | 18.8 | 4.4 |
| 13 | I feel confident when I am reading in English.   | 2.52 | .99  | 13.1 | 41.3 | 29.4 | 12.5 | 3.8 |

|    |  |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 3  | I would be happy just to learn to speak English rather than having to learn to read as well. | 2.48 | 1.20 | 23.8 | 34.4 | 17.5 | 18.8 | 5.6 |
| 8  | English culture and ideas seem very foreign to me.   | 2.44 | .94  | 16.9 | 35.6 | 35.0 | 11.3 | 1.3 |
| 19 | I feel intimidated whenever I see a whole page of English in front of me.                    | 2.42 | 1.12 | 21.9 | 37.5 | 23.1 | 11.9 | 5.6 |
| 7  | I enjoy reading English.   | 2.41 | 1.01 | 20.6 | 33.8 | 32.5 | 10.6 | 2.5 |
| 17 | I am worried about all the new symbols you have to learn in order to read English.           | 2.34 | 1.07 | 22.5 | 40.0 | 21.9 | 11.9 | 3.8 |
| 15 | When I am reading English, I get so confused I cannot remember what I am reading.            | 2.21 | 1.11 | 29.4 | 38.8 | 18.1 | 8.8  | 5.0 |
| 12 | You have to know so much about English history and culture in order to read English.         | 2.13 | .97  | 30.0 | 38.1 | 21.3 | 10.0 | .6  |
| 16 | Once you get used to it, reading English is not so difficult.                                | 2.11 | 1.12 | 31.9 | 44.4 | 10.6 | 6.9  | 6.3 |
| 6  | The hardest part of learning English is learning to read.                                    | 2.06 | .81  | 22.5 | 56.3 | 15.6 | 4.4  | 1.3 |

**Listening levels of English language anxiety.** Table 7 illustrates the results of the descriptive analysis for students' responds to listening anxiety scale items indicating the means, standard deviations and percentage for answers rating on a 5-point scale from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Items 15 and 7 got the highest scores, which mean that students consider more anxious situation when a person speaks English very fast, since it may cause misunderstanding ( $M = 3.43$ ;  $SD = 1.07$ ) or when they have little time to digest what they have heard ( $M = 3.16$ ;  $SD = 1.19$ ). In contrast, items 16 and 13, which say "I would rather not have to listen to people speak English at all" and "When listening to English, I usually end up translating word by word without understanding the

content” got the lowest scores ( $M = 2.01$ ;  $SD = 1.01$ ) and ( $M = 2.32$ ;  $SD = .99$ )

correspondently.

*Table 7. Descriptive analysis for listening anxiety scale items*

| #  | LAS  | M    | SD   | 1    | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
|----|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 15 | When a person speaks English very fast, I worry that I might not understand all of it.                       | 3.43 | 1.07 | 3.1  | 20.0 | 23.8 | 36.9 | 16.3 |
| 7  | I get worried when I have little time to think about what I hear in English.                                 | 3.16 | 1.19 | 11.3 | 18.8 | 24.4 | 33.8 | 11.9 |
| 2  | I get annoyed when I come across words that I do not understand while listening to English.                  | 3.14 | 1.12 | 4.4  | 32.5 | 18.8 | 33.1 | 11.3 |
| 20 | When listening to English, I tend to get stuck on one or two unknown words.                                  | 3.05 | 1.03 | 5.0  | 27.5 | 33.1 | 26.3 | 8.1  |
| 3  | I am uncomfortable when I hear other varieties of English that are not the same as the variety that I speak. | 3.01 | 1.21 | 13.8 | 21.9 | 24.4 | 30.0 | 10.0 |
| 14 | It is difficult for me to listen to English when there is even a little bit of background noise.             | 2.99 | 1.16 | 8.1  | 31.3 | 26.3 | 21.9 | 12.5 |
| 5  | When listening to English, it is difficult to differentiate the words from one another.                      | 2.93 | 1.19 | 12.5 | 28.8 | 20.0 | 30.6 | 8.1  |
| 9  | When someone pronounces words differently from the way I pronounce them, I find it difficult to understand.  | 2.90 | 1.01 | 6.9  | 31.9 | 29.4 | 28.1 | 3.8  |
| 11 | English listening tests, I get nervous and confused when I do not understand every word.                     | 2.84 | 1.16 | 11.9 | 33.8 | 20.6 | 26.3 | 7.5  |
| 19 | I am nervous when I am listening to English if I am not familiar with the topic.                             | 2.82 | 1.04 | 8.8  | 33.1 | 30.6 | 21.9 | 5.6  |
| 18 | I feel confident when I am listening in English.   | 2.81 | 1.04 | 10.6 | 27.5 | 38.1 | 17.5 | 6.3  |



|    |   |      |      |      |      |      |      |     |
|----|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|
| 17 | I fear I have inadequate background knowledge of some topics when listening in English.                           | 2.76 | 1.13 | 11.9 | 36.3 | 23.8 | 20.6 | 7.5 |
| 6  | I keep thinking that everyone else except me understands very well what an English speaker is saying.             | 2.74 | 1.19 | 16.9 | 28.1 | 26.9 | 20.0 | 8.1 |
| 12 | When listening to English, I often understand the words but still cannot quite understand what the speaker means. | 2.72 | 1.08 | 11.9 | 35.0 | 28.1 | 19.4 | 5.6 |
| 8  | English stress and intonation seem familiar to me.  | 2.68 | .97  | 8.1  | 40.0 | 32.5 | 15.0 | 4.4 |
| 10 | I feel uncomfortable in class when listening to English without the written text.                                 | 2.66 | 1.08 | 11.9 | 40.6 | 21.9 | 20.6 | 5.0 |
| 4  | It is hard to concentrate on what English speakers are saying unless I know them well.                            | 2.64 | 1.04 | 11.9 | 39.4 | 26.3 | 18.1 | 4.4 |
| 1  | I have difficulty understanding oral instruction given to me in English.  | 2.47 | 1.09 | 20.6 | 35.6 | 21.9 | 19.4 | 2.5 |
| 13 | When listening to English, I usually end up translating word by word without understanding the content.           | 2.32 | .99  | 20.0 | 43.8 | 23.1 | 10.6 | 2.5 |
| 16 | I would rather not have to listen to people speak English at all.   | 2.01 | 1.01 | 37.5 | 35.6 | 18.1 | 6.3  | 2.5 |

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### Relationship between different types of English language anxiety

Table 8 shows the bivariate correlation for all the types of language anxiety. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was utilized to investigate the relationship between general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing anxiety, reading anxiety and listening anxiety (as measured by FLCAS). Overall, all the types of language anxiety

resulted in a strong positive correlation. Though, the strongest interdependence was depicted between general language anxiety and speaking anxiety ( $r = 0.84, n = 160, p = 0.000$ ) as well as between reading anxiety and listening anxiety ( $r = 0.82, n = 160, p = 0.000$ ), all the other types of language anxiety related to each other significantly ( $r = 0.66, n = 160, p = 0.000$ ). All results considered, general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing anxiety, reading anxiety and listening anxiety are interrelated considerably and the rise of the level of one of the language anxiety types inevitably provokes an increase in the level of all the other types of language anxiety.

*Table 8. Bivariate correlation for all the types of language anxiety*

|                             | 1  | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     |
|-----------------------------|----|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. General language anxiety | -- | .84** | .72** | .71** | .66** |
| 2. Speaking anxiety         |    | --    | .76** | .74** | .66** |
| 3. Writing anxiety          |    |       | --    | .76** | .72** |
| 4. Reading anxiety          |    |       |       | --    | .82** |
| 5. Listening anxiety        |    |       |       |       | --    |

\*\*  $p < .01$

### **Factors influencing English language anxiety**

**Years of study.** A series of five One-way Between-subject variances (ANOVA) was run to establish if there is a statistical difference in general, speaking, writing, reading, and listening English language anxiety within groups of studying years. Participants were divided into three groups according to the number of years they have studied at the school: Group 1: (one year and less); Group 2 (2-3 years); Group 3 (more than 4 years). The independent variable of this cluster of analysis was years of study with three abovementioned values. As for the dependent variables, they were computed from total scores in general, speaking, writing, reading, and listening English language anxiety.

Results derived from these analyses prompt that an effect of years of study was evidenced on students' general language anxiety [ $F = 8.75, p = .001, df = 2, 160, \eta^2 = .100$ ],

speaking anxiety [ $F=6.81, p = .001, df =2,160, \eta^2= .080$ ], writing anxiety [ $F=5.26; p=.006, df=2,160, \eta^2=.063$ ], reading anxiety [ $F=6.91, p = .001, df =2,160, \eta^2= .081$ ] and listening anxiety [ $F= 11.87, p = .000, df =2,160, \eta^2= .131$ ] subscales.

A Scheffe post-hoc test results in this cluster of analysis evidenced that there was a significant difference ( $p < 0.05; d=0.54$ ) in terms of general language anxiety between the first group (one year and less) ( $M=51.84; SD=12.37$ ) and the third group (more than four years) ( $M=45.79; SD=9.64$ ), as well as between the second group (2-3 years) ( $M=54.86; SD=13.45$ ) and the third group (more than four years) ( $M=45.79; SD=9.64$ ). It means that, in general, students who have been studying at the school for gifted children for less than one year and up to three years experienced higher level of general language anxiety from those who have studied there for 4-5 years or more. Moreover, it can be concluded that students who have been studying at school for 2-3 years generally feel more anxious at the English lesson than those who studied less than one or more than three.

As for the speaking anxiety, results of the Scheffe post-hoc test in this cluster of analysis evidenced that the mean scores obtained by Group 1 ( $M = 36.52; SD = 12.32$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 38.18; SD = 11.96$ ) were significantly different from the mean scores for Group 3 ( $M = 31.14; SD = 7.98$ ). All the results considered, it means that, when speaking English, students who have been studying at this school for 2-3 years feel more anxious than those who are the newcomers. Whereas, the least anxious feel the students who study at the school longer than four years.

In terms of writing anxiety, the results of the Scheffe post-hoc test indicated that Group 1 ( $M = 56.88, SD = 14.50$ ) was significantly different from Group 3 ( $M = 48.95, SD = 10.93$ ). The results obtained reveal that students who have been studying at the school for gifted children for less than one year experienced more writing anxiety from those who have studied there for more than four years. Moreover, it is more likely that the less

students study at the school, the more anxious they feel when being involved in English writing.

Taking into consideration the results of the Scheffe post-hoc test concerning reading anxiety, Group 1 ( $M = 50.56$ ;  $SD = 12.17$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 50.34$ ;  $SD = 11.29$ ) were significantly different from Group 3 ( $M = 43.83$ ;  $SD = 10.15$ ). Overall, the results indicated that students during their first three years of studying at the school feel statistically more anxious when reading in English than those who study at the school longer than four years.

As for listening anxiety, the Scheffe post-hoc test revealed that the mean scores obtained by Group 1 ( $M = 61.26$ ;  $SD = 12.79$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 59.58$ ;  $SD = 15.69$ ) were significantly different from the mean scores for Group 3 ( $M = 49.98$ ;  $SD = 12.57$ ). Taken together, these results suggested that the less the students studied at school, the more anxious they felt when listening in English.

All in all, the less students study at the school, the more anxious they feel concerning listening, writing and reading. Whereas, regarding general language anxiety and speaking anxiety, their relationship with years of study adopts a U-shape curve with students studying 2-3 years at the school experiencing higher level of anxiety than the student from the other two groups (see Table 9).

*Table 9. Between-Subjects Effects for Language Anxiety by the Number of Years Studied at the School*

| Variables        | p    | F    | $\eta^2$ | Less than 1 |       | 2-3 years |       | 4-5 years |      |
|------------------|------|------|----------|-------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|------|
|                  |      |      |          | M           | SD    | M         | SD    | M         | SD   |
| General anxiety  | .001 | 8.75 | .10      | 51.84       | 12.37 | 54.86     | 13.45 | 45.79     | 9.64 |
| Speaking anxiety | .001 | 6.81 | .08      | 36.52       | 12.32 | 38.18     | 11.96 | 31.14     | 7.98 |
| Writing anxiety  | .006 | 5.26 | .06      | 56.88       | 14.50 | 53.90     | 15.26 | 48.95     | 10.9 |

|                   |      |      |     |       |       |       |       |       |      |
|-------------------|------|------|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Reading anxiety   | .001 | 6.91 | .08 | 50.56 | 12.17 | 50.34 | 11.29 | 43.83 | 10.1 |
| Listening anxiety | .000 | 11.8 | .13 | 61.26 | 12.79 | 59.58 | 15.69 | 49.98 | 12.5 |

**Gender.** A series of independent t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of the level of general, speaking, writing, reading, and listening anxiety at the English language lesson for males and females. There was not a significant difference in the mean scores for general language anxiety, writing anxiety, reading or listening anxiety between male and female students. However, the results indicated a significant difference in the mean scores for speaking anxiety between males ( $M= 32.8$ ;  $SD=11.52$ ) and females ( $M= 36.5$ ;  $SD=10.16$ );  $t(158) = -2.00$ ,  $p=.035$ ,  $d= -.22$ ). The effect of gender on speaking anxiety was modest. Overall, these results suggest that female students tend to have statistically significant higher level of speaking anxiety than their male counterparts (see Table 9).

Table 9. *Independent-samples t-test for language anxiety differentiated by gender*

| Variables         | p    | d    | Male (n = 80) |       | Female (n = 80) |       |
|-------------------|------|------|---------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
|                   |      |      | M             | SD    | M               | SD    |
| General anxiety   | .628 | -.07 | 49.65         | 12.98 | 50.58           | 11.39 |
| Speaking anxiety  | .035 | -.22 | 32.88         | 11.52 | 36.55           | 10.16 |
| Writing anxiety   | .340 | -.15 | 51.72         | 13.90 | 53.80           | 13.50 |
| Reading anxiety   | .428 | -.13 | 46.96         | 11.03 | 48.41           | 12.02 |
| Listening anxiety | .559 | -.09 | 55.49         | 14.47 | 56.83           | 14.47 |

**Language Instruction.** By means of an independent-samples t-test the mean scores of the levels of general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing anxiety, reading anxiety and listening anxiety were compared for two different groups of participants according to two languages of instruction at school. The results showed that the dependent variables detected no statistical difference regarding the Kazakh or Russian languages of instruction (see Table 10). To sum up, the results showed that general language anxiety,

speaking anxiety, writing, reading and listening anxiety that students undergo at the English language lessons, do not depend on the language of instruction other school subjects are delivered on.

*Table 10. Independent-samples t-test for language anxiety differentiated by the language of instruction*

|                   | p    | Kazakh (n = 79) |       | Russian (n = 81) |       |
|-------------------|------|-----------------|-------|------------------|-------|
|                   |      | M               | SD    | M                | SD    |
| General anxiety   | .973 | 50.15           | 11.94 | 50.08            | 12.49 |
| Speaking anxiety  | .670 | 34.34           | 10.46 | 35.08            | 11.52 |
| Writing anxiety   | .268 | 51.54           | 14.55 | 53.95            | 12.80 |
| Reading anxiety   | .515 | 48.29           | 12.12 | 47.09            | 10.96 |
| Listening anxiety | .898 | 56.32           | 14.28 | 56.02            | 14.69 |

**Grade.** A series of five One-way Between-subject variances (ANOVA) was run to establish if there is a statistical difference in general, speaking, writing, reading, and listening English language anxiety within groups of grades. Participants were divided into four groups: Group 1: (Grade 7); Group 2 (Grade 8); Group 3 (Grade 9); Group 4 (Grade 10). The independent variable of this cluster of analysis was grades with four abovementioned values. As for the dependent variables, they were computed from total scores in general, speaking, writing, reading, and listening English language anxiety.

Results derived from these analyses prompt that an effect of grades was noticeable on students' general language anxiety [ $F = 6.527, p = .000, df = 4.160, \eta^2 = .144$ ], speaking anxiety [ $F = 7.23, p = .000, df = 4.160, \eta^2 = .157$ ], and writing anxiety [ $F = 5.89; p = .000, df = 4.160, \eta^2 = .132$ ] subscales. Whereas, results showed no obvious effect of grades on reading anxiety [ $F = 1.72, p = .147, df = 4.160, \eta^2 = .043$ ] and listening anxiety [ $F = 3.68, p = .007, df = 4.160, \eta^2 = .087$ ] subscale.

A Scheffe post-hoc test results in this cluster of analysis evidenced that there was a modest difference ( $p < 0.05; d = 0.84$ ) in terms of general language anxiety between Group 4

( $M = 46.82$ ;  $SD = 10.19$ ) and Group 2 ( $M = 56.33$   $SD = 12.43$ ), as well as between Group 3 ( $M = 45.97$ ;  $SD = 11.35$ ) – and Group 2 ( $M = 56.33$ ;  $SD = 12.43$ ). Overall, these results suggest that students who have been studying at the school in Grades 9 and 10 experienced different level of general language anxiety from those who study in Grade 8. In other words, Grade 8 students feel more anxious at the English lesson.

As for the speaking anxiety, post hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean scores obtained by Group 1 ( $M = 33.95$ ;  $SD = 10.72$ ), Group 3 ( $M = 31.30$ ;  $SD = 11.15$ ) and Group 4 ( $M = 31.62$ ;  $SD = 8.52$ ) were significantly different from the mean scores for Group 2 ( $M = 41.30$ ;  $SD = 10.41$ ). All the results considered, it is more likely that when speaking English Grade 8 students feel more anxious than any other students.

In terms of writing anxiety, post-hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 ( $M = 59.10$ ;  $SD = 11.14$ ) and for Group 3 ( $M = 46.94$ ;  $SD = 12.55$ ) were significantly different from one another. Overall, these results suggest that students who have been studying at the school in Grades 8 and 9 experienced different level of writing anxiety. It is possible that Grade 8 students feel more anxious in English writing than those in Grade 9.

Taking into consideration the results of the Scheffe post-hoc test concerning reading and listening anxiety, post hoc comparisons using the Scheffe test indicated no significant difference between the means of the four groups on the level of reading and listening anxiety.

Overall, grade 9 -10 students feel less anxious in general. Whereas, the most anxious students are from Grade 8 regarding general language anxiety and speaking anxiety. In terms of listening or reading anxieties, they are not correlated with grades (see Table 11).

*Table 11. Between-Subjects Effects for language anxiety differentiated by grades*

| Variables                | p    | F    | $\eta^2$ | Grade 7  |       | Grade 8  |       | Grade 9  |       | Grade 10 |       |
|--------------------------|------|------|----------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|
|                          |      |      |          | (n = 40) |       | (n = 39) |       | (n = 41) |       | (n = 40) |       |
|                          |      |      |          | M        | SD    | M        | SD    | M        | SD    | M        | SD    |
| General language anxiety | .000 | 6.52 | .144     | 50.40    | 11.74 | 56.33    | 12.43 | 45.97    | 11.35 | 46.82    | 10.19 |
| Speaking anxiety         | .000 | 7.23 | .157     | 33.95    | 10.72 | 41.30    | 10.41 | 31.30    | 11.15 | 31.62    | 8.52  |
| Writing anxiety          | .000 | 5.89 | .132     | 54.80    | 14.03 | 59.00    | 14.11 | 46.94    | 12.55 | 51.35    | 10.93 |
| Reading anxiety          | .147 | 1.72 | .043     | 48.72    | 10.67 | 50.84    | 12.24 | 44.84    | 10.91 | 46.72    | 11.95 |
| Listening anxiety        | .006 | 3.68 | .089     | 59.42    | 12.00 | 59.51    | 16.30 | 53.20    | 14.14 | 53.57    | 13.27 |



### **The effect of English language anxiety on English language performance**

**Correlation analysis.** Table 12 displays the bivariate correlation for general language anxiety and anxiety students experience when speaking, writing, reading or listening and students' achievements in all the four language aspects. The relationship between general anxiety (as measured by FLCAS) and total self-reported achievement in the English language (as measured by Term 2 summative assessment) was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

First, all types of language anxiety are negatively correlated with speaking achievements. Results witnessed a modest negative relationship between students' self-reported speaking achievement and all the types of language anxiety (general, speaking, writing, reading and listening anxiety). More specifically, there was a modest, negative correlation between speaking achievement and general language anxiety ( $r = -.269$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = .004$ ), between speaking achievement and speaking anxiety ( $r = -.228$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = .004$ ), between speaking achievement and writing anxiety ( $r = -.294$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = .000$ ), between speaking achievement and reading anxiety ( $r = -.181$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = .022$ ) and between speaking achievement and listening anxiety ( $r = -.196$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = .013$ ). Overall, a modest negative correlation between English speaking achievement and all the types of the English language anxiety proves that speaking performance depends on the level of general language anxiety and the level of anxiety they feel when speaking, writing, reading or listening. Therefore, the more anxious students are when being involved in all the four aspects of the foreign language, the less successful they are in English speaking.

Second, interestingly that there is no correlation between other language anxieties and language achievements, with the exception of writing anxiety and writing performance. The data in Table 9 indicates a negative modest correlation between the writing achievement and writing anxiety,  $r = -.190$ ,  $n = 160$ ,  $p = 0.016$ . In contrast, there

was revealed zero correlation between English reading achievement and reading anxiety ( $r = -.109, n = 160, p = 0.170$ ) and between English listening achievement and listening anxiety ( $r = -.011, n = 160, p = 0.890$ ). To sum up, the increase in the level of writing anxiety has a negative influence on the quality of the writing performance, while students' performance in reading and listening is interrelated to the level of reading and listening anxiety correspondently.

Third, all types of anxiety are negatively correlated to total language achievement, with some coefficients being moderate. Table 12 indicated there was a modest, negative correlation between total achievement and general language anxiety ( $r = -.459, n = 160, p = .000$ ), between total achievement and speaking anxiety ( $r = -.338, n = 160, p = .000$ ), between total achievement and writing anxiety ( $r = -.389, n = 160, p = .000$ ), between total achievement and reading anxiety ( $r = -.328, n = 160, p = .000$ ) and between total achievement and listening anxiety ( $r = -.314, n = 160, p = .000$ ). All in all, students' total score for the summative assessment in Term 2 was related to general English language anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing, reading and listening anxiety.

*Table 12. Relationship between different types of language anxiety and students' language achievements*

|                       | General<br>Anxiety | Speaking<br>anxiety | Writing<br>Anxiety | Reading<br>anxiety | Listening<br>anxiety |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Speaking achievement  | -.26**             | -.22**              | -.29**             | -.18*              | -.19*                |
| Writing achievement   | -.13               | -.11                | -.19*              | -.11               | -.02                 |
| Reading achievement   | -.14               | -.14                | -.13               | -.10               | -.12                 |
| Listening achievement | -.08               | .01                 | .01                | .00                | .01                  |
| Total achievement     | -.45**             | -.33**              | -.38**             | -.32**             | -.31**               |

## **Summary of the findings**

### **English language anxiety level of middle school students**

The level of English language anxiety of students from the special school for gifted students in the North Kazakhstan is average. The level of listening and writing anxiety obtained the higher scores while the level of speaking anxiety was rated as the lowest.

### **Relationship between different types of English language anxiety**

The rise of the level of one of the language anxiety types inevitably relates to an increase in the level of all the other types of language anxiety.

### **Factors influencing English language anxiety**

**Years of study.** Generally, students who have been studying at school for 2-3 years feel more anxious at English lesson. Concerning speaking, they feel more anxious than those who are the newcomers. Whereas, the least anxious while speaking feel the students who study at the school longer than four years. Overall, the less students study at the school, the more anxious they feel when being involved in English writing, listening and reading.

**Gender.** Female students tend to have statistically significant higher level of speaking anxiety than their male counterparts.

**Language of instruction.** An independent-samples t-test results showed that the dependent variables detected no statistical difference regarding the Kazakh or Russian languages of instruction.

**Grade.** As a whole, Grade 8 students feel more anxious at the English lesson than Grade 9 and 10. In terms of writing, the 8<sup>th</sup> graders experience more anxiety than students from Grade 9, whereas, regarding speaking, Grade 8 students feel more anxious than any other students.

**The effect of English language anxiety on language achievements**

All types of language anxiety are negatively correlated with speaking achievement and total language achievement, with some coefficients being moderate. There is correlation between writing anxiety and writing performance, however, neither listening nor reading language anxieties are correlated with any language achievements.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### Introduction

The previous chapter exhibited the statistical analysis of the data collected and the obtained results. The present chapter will interpret and discuss the findings. The purpose of the study was to identify the level of foreign language anxiety that middle school students experience in English. Finally, the current study aimed to explore the factors that influence language anxiety of students at the English language lesson and what effect this anxiety has on students' speaking, writing, reading, and listening achievements in English.

A few research questions were posed at the beginning of the study. The first question inquired about the level of general language anxiety, speaking anxiety, reading anxiety, writing anxiety, and listening anxiety that middle school students at a special Kazakhstani school for gifted children experienced when learning English and was intended to examine the relationship between general foreign language anxiety, speaking anxiety, reading anxiety, writing anxiety, and listening anxiety. The second question was oriented to examine possible factors that influenced language anxiety of students in class. The third research question targeted to explore the impact of foreign language anxiety on students' English language achievements in speaking, writing, reading and listening.

A non-experimental explanatory survey design was utilized to answer the research questions. The maximum variation sample included 160 middle school students representing equal number of participants responding to such characteristics as gender, language of instruction, both Russian and Kazakh, and grade. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS statistical program and exhibited in Findings chapter. The chapter under consideration will provide responses to the research questions and give elucidation of findings, interfacing them to the theory in the research field.

### **Interpretation of the Major Findings and Connection to the Literature**

**Finding 1. English language anxiety level of middle school students is moderate.** The level of English language anxiety of students from the special school for gifted students in the North Kazakhstan can be considered moderate, with slightly higher levels of English language listening, writing, and reading anxiety in comparison to speaking anxiety.

The overall moderate level of anxiety experienced by the students of the school can be perhaps explained by the execution of the updated integrated program and alternative criteria-based assessment at the school, where all the approaches and methods used are student-centered. Therefore, students are treated as main figures of the learning process and independent learners who receive differentiated support from peers and teachers inside and outside the class. The benefit of this educational innovation is supported by Young (1991), whose research stated that educators who prioritize teacher-centered approach are regarded as a substantial cause of foreign language anxiety.

Another plausible explanation of moderate level of English language anxiety can be creation of supportive learning environment through involving students into pair and group work, which is a common practice in the research site where the data was collected. This explanation is consistent with Riasati (2011) who investigated that pair and group work mitigate language anxiety because students cooperate with peers with the same level of English language proficiency and do not feel anxious to make mistakes. Along similar lines, Young (1991) argued that conceivable approaches to alleviate language uneasiness in class is to advance comfortable anxiety-free learning conditions.

The study under consideration found out that students experience the lowest level of language anxiety when speaking English. The current finding is not supported by the majority of literature in the field (Horwitz et al., 1986; Pramuktiyono & Wardhono, 2016;

Ozturk & Gurbuz, 2013; Suleimenova, 2012; Young, 1991), which revealed that students recognized speaking as the most anxiety-provocative source. Low level of speaking anxiety in the current study might be explained by the school-wide implementation of communicative approach in teaching and learning English. Therefore, each lesson aims to develop students' speaking skills no matter what language skill is focused on. Thus, 'before and after' listening, reading and writing activities assume inevitable prediction, discussion, questioning and so on. Another explanation of the low level of speaking anxiety is likely to be recruitment of international teachers who are English native speakers that co-teach with an English local teacher. The presence of international teachers probably creates English language environment for communication both in and out of the classroom. Likewise, Tallon (2006) put forward the claim that native English teachers facilitated students to enhance speaking skills, as that was the only language they could communicate.

**Finding 2. Strong correlation between all the types of language anxiety.**

General language anxiety, speaking, writing, reading and listening anxieties are strongly interrelated, which means that increase in the level of one of the language anxiety types inevitably provokes an enhance in the level of all the other types of language anxiety. This finding is consistent with the research delivered by Tallon (2006) who found out a strong, positive correlation between all four anxiety dimensions included in this study. Capan and Karaca (2013) in their study also discovered a positive correlation between reading anxiety and listening anxiety at the English language lesson which assumed that the higher foreign language reading anxiety was the higher level of listening anxiety students underwent, explaining this tendency by the receptive nature of these language skills. Likewise, Tallon (2006) came up with the similar conclusion that students who felt anxious in listening, for example, were more likely to feel anxious in speaking or writing. This finding could be explained by the strong connection of all the skills when learning a foreign language. An

English lesson does not develop the language skills separately but in strong interconnection with each other. For example, before writing anything, students read, discuss, reflect, brainstorm and they always share ideas through communication and collaboration.

Therefore, in case a student feels anxious when reading, which is caused by misunderstanding of the content due to, for example, lack of vocabulary or complex grammar structures, they are highly likely to struggle to discuss it and therefore, they will certainly worry about failure in writing. The level of language anxiety increases because at a foreign language lesson, students are afraid to make mistakes, to fail assignments due to high expectations, to be negatively evaluated and get left behind the others (Khattak, 2017; Lo, 2017; Marcos-Llinas & Garau, 2009; Riasati, 2011). Tanveer (2007) also claimed that “evaluation by the teachers, peers, and by learners’ own ‘self’ accompanied by high expectations makes a foreign language classroom a highly anxiety-evoking place” (p. 69).

**Finding 3. The shorter the students’ experience of studying at this school, the higher anxiety level they undergo in terms of writing, reading and listening in English.** Regarding writing, reading and listening, the less the students study at the school, the more anxious they feel. These findings are consistent with the researches (Aydin et al., 2017; Capan & Karaca, 2013), which concluded that younger students experienced more language anxiety in contrast to Dewaele (2002), MacIntyre & Gardner (1994), Salthouse and Somberg (1982), who argued that younger learners felt less anxious in the English classroom.

This tendency could be explained by the English language learning experience of students, which means that students with longer language learning experience go through the routine learning circumstances, enhance their language expertise and adjust to teaching instructions and requirements in comparison to those for whom this learning journey has begun relatively recent (Capan & Karaca, 2013).



Regarding speaking English, results in this study evidence that students who have been in the school 2-3 years experience higher levels of the English language anxiety and feel even more anxious than newcomers when speaking. An explanation of this discovery could be the fact that newcomers during their first year at school are surrounded with much care and support from the teachers in order to guarantee the adaptation period to be as painless as possible, whereas, when they are 2-3-year students, they are expected to meet all the high requirements of the educational program.

**Finding 4. Females feel more anxious when speaking English language.** The study found out that while speaking English, female students experienced a higher level of language anxiety than their male peers ( Capan & Karaca, 2013; Latif, 2015; Pramuktiyono & Wardhono, 2016; Tanveer, 2007). The finding is aligned with the results of the previous studies conducted by Aydin et al. (2017) and Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013), which revealed that females felt more stressed in comparison to males when spoke in front of the class at their foreign language lesson. In addition, results of another study in this area delivered by Karatas et al., (2016) indicated that female students felt more stressed than male ones not only when speaking but when learning English as a foreign language in general.

Higher level of anxiety that girls experience when speaking English could be explained by a good possibility that girls are more studious, responsible and meticulous than boys in terms of studying and doing homework. Therefore, when they are asked to speak spontaneously or discuss the things they did not prepare, they feel stressed since this is not what they have expected, besides, unprepared speech could cause mistakes, which might worsen the grade. This explanation is in line with the findings of other researchers (Capan & Karaca, 2013; Latif, 2015; Pramuktiyono & Wardhono, 2016; Tanveer, 2007) who argued that when girls speak English they start being so much nervous that forget all

they knew, especially when they have to speak spontaneously, being afraid to make mistakes when speaking.

**Finding 5. Language of instruction does not influence foreign language anxiety.** Findings of the study suggest that, in classes with Kazakh or Russian language of instruction, which is their first language, the level of general language anxiety as well as the level of listening anxiety, speaking anxiety, writing and reading anxiety at the English language lessons did not vary or varied insignificantly. An independent-samples t-test results illuminated no statistical difference among the dependent variables concerning the Kazakh or Russian languages of instruction at all.

Lack of statistical difference on language anxiety between the languages of instruction could be potentially explained by the fact that, according to the requirements of the updated educational program, English is strongly recommended to be the only language of classroom communication starting from the very early introduction to the English language at school. Subsequently, there is a good possibility that students' first language does not have any influence on the level of foreign language anxiety because there is no reference to the native language at the lesson of the English language.

**Finding 6. Grade 8 students feel a higher level of foreign language anxiety.** Findings revealed that Grade 8 students are likely to feel more anxious at the English speaking lesson than Grades 7, 9 and 10 students. Also, students in 8th grades reported higher levels of English writing anxiety than 9<sup>th</sup> graders.

There is a possibility that students of lower grades have a higher level of language anxiety than students from higher grades since they become more experienced, mature and competent, though it is inconsistent with Grade 7. Karatas et al., (2016) stated that language anxiety of students may be influenced by their level of language proficiency,

clarifying that students with upper level of language competence experience higher level of language anxiety

However, an interesting phenomenon is that 8<sup>th</sup> graders feel more speaking uneasiness than 7<sup>th</sup> graders, which could be possibly explained by the fact that mainstream school students go through the procedure of competitive selection in order to receive the Grant of the first President and become the students of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at the special school for gifted children. Therefore, 7<sup>th</sup> graders are novice students and in order to make the adaptation period for these students as painless as possible, teachers are likely to play more games and make concessions in terms of strict learning requirements during the first year. While, in Grade 8, students are supposed to be already adapted to high requirements of the curriculum developed for students with a high level of language competence.

**Finding 7. There is moderate correlation between English language anxiety and students' language achievements.** Moderate relationship between language anxiety and self-reported achievement in the English language was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. The findings showed that higher levels of general language anxiety are statistically associated with low levels of total achievement in English. Horwitz et al. (1986), Riasati (2002) and Lo (2017) reached similar results in their studies indicating a big correlation between language anxiety and foreign language performance. Likewise, Tallon (2006) discovered that concerning all four language components, with the increase of students' self-assessed proficiency, their levels of anxiety reduced.

An interesting finding from this study indicated that English language speaking achievement seems to be negatively correlated with higher levels of all types of English language anxiety. This seems to be aligned with the findings of Dalkilic (2001) and Liu (2006), who found that the level of foreign language speaking anxiety went down when

language competence level rose. Though Aydin et al. (2017) conversely found out that language level did not have any influence on students' levels of foreign language speaking anxiety at all.

Moderate relation of all anxieties to speaking performance might be due to the communicative approach being implemented in class when speaking is involved into development of all the four aspects of the language by means of pronouncing, predicting, expressing opinion, questioning and so on. Therefore, in case students lack confidence in any of the language components, it will likely negatively influence speaking performance and vice versa.

One more finding elucidated that the increase in the level of writing anxiety probably has a negative influence on the quality of the writing performance or vice versa, decrease of level of writing anxiety caused increase in writing achievement (Tallon, 2006). However, surprisingly, neither reading nor listening self-reported achievements correlated with the relevant anxieties. In contrast to Tallon (2006) who discovered in his study correlation between self-assessed listening proficiency and level of listening anxiety. Similarly, Kim (2000) involved in her study 238 learners who studied English as a foreign language and discovered that listening anxiety was significantly correlated to students' listening performance due to the lack of assurance in their abilities.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

The focus of the chapter will revolve around the implications for the major stakeholders, limitations of the study and recommendations for the further research. The study under consideration was an endeavor to exhibit the picture of foreign language anxiety that students at a special North Kazakhstan school for gifted students experienced in class. Finally, it also strived to find out the factors that influenced language anxiety and how language anxiety then affected students' achievements.

This chapter will represent a few parts, including the answers for research questions, the implications for teachers and school psychologists as well as a list of limitations of the study and recommendations for further research concerning the issue of foreign language anxiety.

### **Answers for Research Questions**

RQ1 was expected to explore the level of language anxiety that middle school students experienced at the English language lesson, which was a foreign language for them. The answer to the question was obtained due to the descriptive analysis, which suggested that the level of English language anxiety of students from the special school for gifted students in the North Kazakhstan was more likely moderate, rating level of listening anxiety as the highest while, speaking anxiety as the lowest. Taking into consideration the interpretation of Finding 1, the reason for the moderate level of language anxiety could be elucidated by the student-centered approach ensured by the updated educational program and supportive learning environment. Whereas, low level of speaking anxiety was grounded in such specific for this school contextual factors as the school-wide implementation of communicative approach in teaching and learning English and recruitment of international teachers who were English native speakers. Also, RQ1 was

focused on interrelationship of general foreign language anxiety, speaking anxiety, reading anxiety, writing anxiety, and listening anxiety. The information in terms of the question was discussed in Finding 2. Therefore, strong interrelationship between general language anxiety, speaking, writing, reading and listening anxieties was investigated which meant that an increase in the level of one of the language anxiety types inevitably provoked an enhance in the level of all the other types of language anxiety. Overall, the finding suggested that students who felt anxious in one language component, for example, were certain to feel anxious in the other three.

RQ2 concerned the factors that influenced language anxiety of students at the English language lesson. Findings 3-6 suggested the answers to this research question. Thus, there was a possibility that language of instruction, either Kazakh or Russian did not affect or affected very insignificantly the level of language anxiety of students, which could be explained by the strict requirement to use English as the only language of instruction in class without any reference to the students' native language.

Nevertheless, one of the factors that had an influence on language anxiety might be length of study. It was mentioned in Finding 3, which lent support to the claim that the longer the students study at this school, the lower anxiety level in writing, reading and listening they underwent due to the probability that higher graders became more experienced, mature and competent concerning the foreign language proficiency. However, in terms of speaking English, results in this study evidenced that students who had been in the school 2-3 years, experienced higher levels of the English language anxiety and felt more anxious than newcomers when speaking, compared to those who had studied one year or less or more than four years.

Another factor was gender. Finding 4 suggested that females were more vulnerable regarding the level of speaking anxiety. They were more likely to believe that other

classmates were better in speaking English, moreover, an increase of anxiety that they felt when speaking spontaneously was aggravated by unexpected memory failure and fear to make mistakes.

One more factor that may influence the level of language anxiety was the grade. Interesting phenomenon that 8<sup>th</sup> graders felt more speaking and writing uneasiness than 7<sup>th</sup> graders could be possibly explained by the fact that novice 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were treated with greater leniency regarding their productive language skills. While, 8<sup>th</sup> graders were expected to be already adapted to high requirements of the curriculum.

RQ3 revolved around the influence of foreign language anxiety on students' self-reported speaking, writing, reading, and listening achievements in the English language. The respond to this question was presented in Finding 7 where the correlation analysis explored that there was moderate correlation between English language anxiety and students' language achievements that assumed that the high level of general language anxiety was possibly associated with low levels of total achievement in English. It was also found out that the more anxious students were when being involved in all the four aspects of the foreign language, the less successful they were in English speaking and conversely, the better achievements they had in speaking, the less anxious they felt concerning the other three language aspects. The possible reason of this tendency could be explained by the spread of communicative approach at school.

Interestingly, that the increase in the level of writing anxiety probably had a negative influence on the quality of the writing performance or vice versa, whereas, neither reading nor listening self-reported achievements correlated with the relevant anxieties.

### **Implications for theory and practice**

The discoveries of the research should be considered to draw implications for the school stakeholders. Though the students of the middle school experienced a moderate

level of anxiety, the foreign language anxiety still existed. Therefore, teachers should always bear in mind to develop anxiety-free classroom atmosphere to alleviate the level of language anxiety at the English language lessons to the minimum. All the teachers should prioritize student-centered approach and maximally involve students into pair and group work. Moreover, teachers should be aware that condescending correction of errors of an individual student before the whole class negatively affects the psychological inner state of the student. Thus, it should be recommended to the teachers to provide students with positive, constructive feedback discussing typical mistakes and organize individual consultations for those who are in academic need in a psychologically comfortable environment and a friendly, supportive manner.

School psychologists should keep under control and take into consideration the students who experience high level of language anxiety in any aspect of language production either speaking, writing, listening or reading. Thus, they should cooperate closely with the English language teachers to identify such students and provide them with timely psychological support, for example, supply them with anti-stress techniques or organize workshops aiming to increase their self-esteem and self-confidence.

### **Limitations and further research recommendations**

The present study suffer from a number of limitations, which should be taken into account for further research. First, the data collection for the current study was received through the only research tool, which was a questionnaire as it was a quantitative research. For further research it might be more beneficial to conduct a mixture of quantitative and qualitative approaches and to employ such techniques as face-to face interview or experiment to gain a more in-depth data.

Another limitation of the study was connected with the length of the questionnaire, which included 100 questions to cover all the four aspects of a language: speaking, writing,



reading and listening. Responding to the questions procedure took students the whole curator hour that lasted for 40 minutes. Subsequently, it could lead to inaccuracies and unreliability of students' answers caused by the fatigue from monotonous routine.

Therefore, to obtain a more overarching picture of such a complicated issue as language anxiety, it could be advisable to either shorten the questionnaire or split the questionnaire into portions to be responded at different time or explore the level of language anxiety regarding separate components of a language.

Primary research indicated the results obtained from the students who studied at a special school for gifted students, therefore the findings could be generalized to the schools with the similar educational context. Whereas, dissimilar results might be received within the context of state mainstream schools, where students were provided with different educational conditions, curriculum and teaching faculty. Accordingly, to generalize the results for the whole population of middle school students in Kazakhstani schools it was reasonable to deliver a similar study with regards to standard secondary school educational background.

Finally, for further research it could be recommended to explore the level of foreign language anxiety that students experienced in primary school in order to detect it at an early stage and counteract properly.

### **Outcomes**

Overall, this study explored that the level of foreign language anxiety that Middle school students experienced was moderate with lower level of speaking anxiety and slightly higher levels of other types of language anxieties.

Statistical analysis revealed such factors as gender, grade and English language studying years to be influential on the level of language anxiety. The descriptive analysis

of the measuring scales' items identified the highest and lowest scored items regarding general anxiety, speaking, writing, reading and listening anxieties.

A strong positive correlation was detected between all the types of language anxiety. In addition, all types of language anxiety were negatively correlated with speaking achievement and total language achievement. There was also correlation between writing anxiety and writing performance, however, neither listening nor reading language anxieties were correlated with any language achievements.

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**Appendices****Appendix 1**

**THE FIRST SECTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE  
CONCERNING PERSONAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS  
Foreign Language Anxiety Level of Middle School Students**

**Please check the box that best describes you in each section**

**How old are you?**

11     12     13     14     15     16     17     18

**Gender**

• Male                      • Female

**In what Grade do you study?**

Grades 7               Grades 8               Grades 9               Grades 10

**How many years have you studied at this school?**

less than 1 year     1 year     2 years     3 years     4 years     5 years  
 more than 5 years

**What is the language of your classroom instruction?**

• Kazakh                      • Russian

**Appendix 2****FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE**

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements in relation to the English language experience using a range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Please circle only one response choice per question. Please answer every question.

1. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

2. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English language.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

3. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English language classes.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

4. During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

5. I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

6. I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.



Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

7. I worry about the consequences of failing my English language class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

8. I don't understand why some people get so upset over English language classes.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

9. I would not be nervous speaking the English language with native speakers.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

10. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

11. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

12. I often feel like not going to my English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

13. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

14. The more I study for a English test, the more confused I get.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

15. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

16. English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree  
17. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree  
18. When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree  
19. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree  
20. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the English language.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**Appendix 3****SPEAKING ANXIETY SCALE**

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements in relation to your speaking experience in English using a range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Please circle only one response choice per question. Please answer every question.

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

2. I don't worry about making mistakes when speaking in English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

3. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

4. In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

5. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

6. I feel confident when I speak in English language class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

7. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

8. I always feel that the other students speak the English language better than I do.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

9. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the English language in front of other students.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

10. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

11. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak the English language.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

12. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the English language.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

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

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**Appendix 4****WRITING ANXIETY SCALE**

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements in relation to your writing experience in English using a range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Please circle only one response choice per question. Please answer every question.

1. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas when writing in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

2. When writing in English, I often worry about making grammatical mistakes.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

3. I don't think I write in English as well as most other people.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

4. I am nervous about writing in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

5. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a English composition.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

6. It's easy for me to write good English compositions.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

7. I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

8. When writing in English, I feel anxious if I cannot come up with anything to write about.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

9. I have no fear of my English writing being evaluated by the teacher.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

10. Expressing ideas through writing in English seems to be a waste of time.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

11. Taking an English composition course is a very frightening thought.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

12. When writing in English, I am confident with my spelling and accents.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

13. I expect to do poorly in English composition classes even before I enter them.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

14. I'm not good at writing in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

15. I have no fear of my English writing being evaluated by people other than the teacher.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

16. When I hand in a English composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

17. I enjoy writing in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

18. People seem to enjoy what I write in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

19. I am afraid of writing essays in English when I know they will be evaluated.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

20. I avoid writing in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**Appendix 5****READING ANXIETY SCALE**

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements in relation to your reading experience in English using a range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Please circle only one response choice per question. Please answer every question.

1. It bothers me to encounter words I can't pronounce while reading English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

2. I am satisfied with the level of reading ability in English that I have achieved so far.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

3. I would be happy just to learn to speak English rather than having to learn to read as well.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

4. I usually end up translating word by word when I'm reading English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

5. I get upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

6. The hardest part of learning English is learning to read.



Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

7. I enjoy reading English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

8. English culture and ideas seem very foreign to me.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

9. When reading English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the author is saying.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

10. When reading English, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

11. I am nervous when I am reading a passage in English when I am not familiar with the topic.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

12. You have to know so much about English history and culture in order to read English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

13. I feel confident when I am reading in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

14. I don't mind reading to myself, but I feel very uncomfortable when I have to read English aloud.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

15. When I'm reading English, I get so confused I can't remember what I'm reading.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

16. Once you get used to it, reading English is not so difficult.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

17. I am worried about all the new symbols you have to learn in order to read English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

18. By the time you get past the funny letters and symbols in English, it's hard to remember what you're reading about.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

19. I feel intimidated whenever I see a whole page of English in front of me.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

20. I get upset when I'm not sure whether I understand what I am reading in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**Appendix 6****LISTENING ANXIETY SCALE**

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement to the following statements in relation to your listening experience in English using a range from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Please circle only one response choice per question. Please answer every question.

1. I have difficulty understanding oral instruction given to me in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

2. I get annoyed when I come across words that I don't understand while listening to English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

3. I am uncomfortable when I hear other varieties of English that are not the same as the variety that I speak.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

4. It is hard to concentrate on what English speakers are saying unless I know them well.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

5. When listening to English, it is difficult to differentiate the words from one another.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

6. I keep thinking that everyone else except me understands very well what a English

speaker is saying.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

7. I get worried when I have little time to think about what I hear in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

8. English stress and intonation seem familiar to me.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

9. When someone pronounces words differently from the way I pronounce them, I find it difficult to understand.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

10. I feel uncomfortable in class when listening to English without the written text.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

English listening tests, I get nervous and confused when I don't understand every word.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

12. When listening to English, I often understand the words but still can't quite understand what the speaker means.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

13. When listening to English, I usually end up translating word by word without understanding the content.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

14. It's difficult for me to listen to English when there is even a little bit of background noise.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

15. When a person speaks English very fast, I worry that I might not understand all of it.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

16. I would rather not have to listen to people speak English at all.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

17. I fear I have inadequate background knowledge of some topics when listening in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

18. I feel confident when I am listening in English.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

19. I am nervous when I am listening to English if I am not familiar with the topic.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

20. When listening to English, I tend to get stuck on one or two unknown words.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree nor disagree    Disagree    Strongly disagree

**PERFORMANCE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

Please indicate your performance in speaking, writing, reading, listening and overall performance based on the results of your Term 2 summative assessment in English.

Please complete all the sections.

1. Speaking \_\_\_\_\_
2. Writing \_\_\_\_\_
3. Reading \_\_\_\_\_
4. Listening \_\_\_\_\_
5. Total \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix 7****PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM  
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING CHILDREN****Foreign Language Anxiety Level of Middle School Students**

Your child is invited to participate in a research study on investigating the level of language anxiety of NIS middle school students in North Kazakhstan and identifying the major factors that provoke it in relation to their productive and receptive skills, such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening at the English language lesson.

Your child will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire about his/her background information and about his/her learning experience related to speaking, writing, reading and listening in English and his/her English language performance. His/her name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous. His/her participation is voluntary and your child may withdraw from the study at any stage. In case they find any question uncomfortable to answer, he/she may skip it. After data analysis, all the paper questionnaires will be destroyed.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. One of the minor risks is spending personal time on completing the questionnaire. However, your child will be offered to complete the questionnaire during a scheduled curator hour. In case your child is afraid to be identified, please be aware that he/she will complete the questionnaire anonymously and remain confidential as the name of the school will not be revealed either. Finally, when encountering uncomfortable questions your child has the right to skip the ones they find to be sensitive.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are educational. Your child may benefit from the study because this study will help English language teachers to enrich their awareness of foreign language anxiety in the context of Nazarbayev

Intellectual school and understand how to reduce the anxiety-provoking situations and meet the needs of especially anxious students. Consequently, it will promote better foreign language environment and comfort in English class and probably improve your child's language performance.

Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate in this study will not affect your child's grades or participation in school.

Your child's participation in this study will take approximately 40 minutes.

If you have read this form and have decided to allow your child/student to participate in this study, please understand your child's participation is voluntary and your child has the right to withdraw his/her consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled. Your child has the right to refuse to answer particular questions. Your child's individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, you should ask the Master's thesis Supervisor, (Daniel Hernandez Torrano, *daniel.torrano@nu.edu.kz*)

If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at *gse\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz*

I (we) have read the information above and hereby consent to have my (our) child participate in this study by signing below.



---

---

Signature(s) of Parent(s) or Guardian

Date

**The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.**

## **Appendix 8**

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

#### **Foreign Language Anxiety Level of Middle School Students**

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of the study is to investigate the level of language anxiety of NIS middle school students in North Kazakhstan and identify the major factors that provoke it in relation to their productive and receptive skills, such as speaking, writing, reading, and listening at the English language lesson.

You will be asked to complete a survey questionnaire about your background information, your learning experience related to speaking, writing, reading and listening in English and your English language performance. Your name and other identifying information will be kept anonymous. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any stage. In case you find any question uncomfortable to answer, you may skip it. After data analysis, all the paper questionnaires will be destroyed.

Your participation will take approximately 40 minutes.

The risks associated with this study are minimal. One of the minor risks is spending your personal time on completing the questionnaire. However, you will be offered to complete the questionnaire during a scheduled curator hour. In case you are afraid to be identified, please be aware that you will complete the questionnaire anonymously (no personal information that can identify you will be collected) and remain confidential as the name of the school will not be revealed either. Finally, when encountering uncomfortable questions you have the right to skip the ones you find to be sensitive.

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are educational. You may benefit from the study because this study will help English language teachers to enrich their awareness of foreign language anxiety in the context of Nazarbayev Intellectual School and understand how to reduce the anxiety-provoking situations and

meet the needs of especially anxious students. Consequently, it will promote better foreign language environment and comfort in English class and probably improve your language performance.

Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your grades in school.

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, (Daniel Hernandez Torrano, [daniel.torrano@nu.edu.kz](mailto:daniel.torrano@nu.edu.kz))

***Independent Contact:*** If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at [gse\\_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz](mailto:gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz)

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;

- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.

According to the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan an individual under the age of 18 is considered a child. Any participant falling into that category should be given the Parental Consent Form and have it signed by at least one of his/her parent(s) or guard.