Nepali Students' Anxiety in the EFL Classroom: Recognizing its Reasons, Reactions, and Coping Strategies

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Abstract

English as foreign language (EFL) classrooms are generally prone to anxiety-arousal, making foreign language learning a challenging experience for many students. Most learners often encounter anxiety in the EFL settings. This quantitative survey study aimed to identify the causes of anxiety experienced by Nepali students in the EFL classroom, their reactions during anxious situations, and the strategies they adopted to cope. Using three different sets of questionnaires, data were collected from ninety randomly selected B.Ed. and BBS students from two community campuses in the Morang district. The findings revealed that the key common anxiety-causing factors included fear of failing the class, incomprehensible input or difficulty in understanding the teacher's language/instruction, and lack of preparation; students' reactions to anxiety incorporated faster heart beating, changes in facial expression, mind going blank, difficulties in concentration, and changes in breathing; and students mainly relied on preparation and relaxation strategies to cope with their anxiety. This study provides valuable insights for policymakers, curriculum designers, teachers, and students on the causes of foreign language anxiety, students' reactions to it, and its coping strategies.

Keywords: *Anxiety, anxiety-free environment, EFL classroom, foreign language anxiety*

Introduction

Academic institutions are often perceived as providing an anxiety-free language learning environment, where students can learn language and many other things in a relaxed manner. However, ground reality shows that second or foreign language learning situations are still anxiety-provoking for many learners. Studies show that some level of anxiety is experienced by more than 50% of foreign language learners (Worde, 1998, cited in Marwan, 2007). Supporting this, Horwitz (2001) reported

that approximately 33% of learners face some degree of language anxiety in their learning. In a study conducted in Nepal, Paudel (2020) found that 18.75% of English teachers teaching in basic schools (Grade 1-8) observed high anxiety levels among students towards the English language. Such findings highlight the challenges posed by the language anxiety for language learners (Kondo & Ling, 2004). Research by Andrade and Williams (2009) further revealed that nearly 75% of the students are weakly to strongly affected by anxiety to some degree. Consequently, foreign language anxiety has garnered significant attention in recent years.

Anxiety is a key affective variable that influences second or foreign language learning. It is simply defined as a psychological construct (Horwitz, 2001) and feeling of apprehension, uneasiness, agitation, and fear (Smith, 2004). While Gass and Selinker (2009) note that anxiety is influenced by personality traits, situational factors, or a combination of both, its exact nature is unclear. More specifically, language anxiety is "a distinctive complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). Foreign language anxiety was first conceptualized as a separate or distinct phenomenon by Horwitz and his colleagues. Furthermore, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) described language anxiety as the apprehension and tension learners experience in the foreign language classroom. This anxiety is widely regarded as a significant obstacle to EFL learning and achievement. A huge number of educators assert that language anxiety can influence negatively on students' performance or language learning (Humpries, 2011; Kondo & Ling, 2004; Wong, 2012). Language anxiety undermines motivation and acts as a mental barrier, disrupting the processing of linguistic input. Gardner and MacIntyre (1998) hypothesized that anxiety influences three step learning process – input, processing, and output. They further added that anxiety is connected with poor listening comprehension, reduced word production, impaired vocabulary acquisition, disengagement, breaking of eye contact, and low grades in language courses (Ellis, 2002). Despite these challenges, anxiety is not always a negative factor in learning, as it has a curvilinear effect on performance: low levels of anxiety can be beneficial, whereas high levels can be detrimental (Gass & Selinker, 2009).

Andrade and Williams (2009) highlighted that early researchers such as Brown (1973), Chastain (1975), and Scovel (1978) first recognized anxiety as a significant and distinct factor influencing foreign language learning. However, during the 1970s, research on foreign language anxiety was limited and yielded inconsistent results. Further development in this field appeared in the 1980s, with Horwitz et al. (1986) being the first to distinguish foreign language anxiety from other types of anxiety. This marked a turning point, leading to a significant expansion of research in foreign language anxiety. However, limited research has been conducted on the issues of anxiety in the EFL classroom in Nepal. This study seeks to investigate the factors that cause anxiety among Nepali students in the EFL classroom, identify their responses when they are anxious, and find out strategies adopted by them to cope with their anxiety.

Review of Literature

This section reviews existing literature, focusing on the different types and causes of anxiety, students' reactions during anxious situations, and the strategies they employ to cope with it.

Types of Anxiety

Research studies on anxiety are typically conducted from three perspectives: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety (Chan & Wu, 2004; Ellis, 2002). Trait anxiety is a relatively stable tendency to be anxious (Ellis, 2002). This anxiety is a relatively permanent and steady personality feature. It is a person's tendency to be anxious in any situation. People whose trait anxiety is higher tend to be anxious or nervous in various contexts. In contrast, state anxiety is defined as the apprehension experienced by students at a specific moment, such as before exams (Yahya, 2013); a combination of trait and situation-specific anxiety (Ellis, 2002). It is temporary and altered in time. Situation-specific anxiety, on the other hand, arises in response to particular types of situations or events, such as public speaking, examinations, or class participants (Ellis, 2002). In language learning contexts, this form of anxiety is referred to as foreign language anxiety, as identified by Horwitz et al. (1986). These distinctions help clarify the various ways anxiety influences learners' behaviour and performance.

Anxiety in language learning can also be classified into two types: facilitative (beneficial) and inhibitory (debilitating) anxiety (Bailey, 1983, cited in Ellis, 1985; Dörnyei, 2005). Facilitative anxiety has a positive force in learning, as it motivates learners to put more efforts into improving their second language skills through their competitive feelings with peers. This heightened effort can lead to improved learning outcomes. In contrast, inhibitory anxiety negatively affects learning, causing learners to reduce or abandon learning efforts. MacIntyre (1998, as cited in Riasati, 2011) lists five inhibitory roles of anxiety on second/foreign language learning and performance: Academically, highly anxious learners will achieve low in second/foreign language learning; socially, highly anxious learners avoid engaging in interaction with others; cognitively, anxiety acts as a mental block that hinders input from reaching the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), thereby impeding natural language acquisition; communicatively, higher anxiety can impede the quality of learners' communicative performance; and personally, language learning experience might, in certain situations, be traumatic, which may dramatically disturb learners' self-confidence or self-esteem. Therefore, the considerations in the EFL classroom should be towards the factors causing anxiety in the students which influence foreign language learning, students' responses in anxious situations, and their strategies to cope with their anxiety.

Causes of Anxiety

In the EFL classroom, anxiety is caused by various factors. Horwitz et al. (1986) and Yahya (2013) maintained that foreign language anxiety is caused by communication apprehension, text anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is defined as "a fear of getting into real communication with others" (Yahya, 2013, p. 230), which occurs in situations where learners lack mature communication skills. Speaking activities often provoke anxiety in foreign language contexts. Many learners experience anxiety while speaking a foreign language before their teacher and classmates (Chan & Wu, 2004). Test anxiety, on the other hand, involves "phenomenological, physiological, and behavioural responses that accompany concern about possible failure" (Sieber, 1980, cited in Phillips, 2005, p. 21). It is a kind of performance anxiety rooted in a fear of failing in tests (Horwitz et al., 1986) and a worry towards academic evaluation or a fear of failure in exams (Yahya, 2013), which may be caused by the students' poor performance in the previous tests. The

highly evaluative situations also contribute to language anxiety among students. Those who feel test anxiety experience the fear of failure and cannot perform well in a test. They regard the foreign language learning process and particularly oral performance, as an intimidating context (Horwitz et al, 1986). Fear of negative evaluation, the third component, refers to the fear of how others view the speaker (Tallon, 2014) and apprehension about being evaluated, avoiding evaluative settings, and the belief that they would be negatively evaluated by others (Horwitz et al., 1986). This fear is linked with communication apprehension since when learners are uncertain about their speech, fear of negative evaluation tends to emerge, and they question their ability to leave a positive impression (Chan & Wu, 2004). Consequently, they may adopt avoidance strategies to cope with their fear.

Many empirical studies have been conducted, placing anxiety at the centre of investigation. Young (1990) found that students' anxiety was primarily caused by speaking English in front of the class, fear of negative evaluation, low self-esteem, overt or explicit error correction, and lack of class preparation. In their study on elementary school EFL students, Chan and Wu (2004) investigated five main sources of anxiety: fear of negative evaluation, low proficiency, pressure from students themselves and their parents, anxious personality, and competition of games. They also identified speaking in front of others, tests, spelling, speaking to native speakers, and incomprehensible input as the anxiety-provoking situations. Furthermore, Khaidzir (2015) identified that Thai learners predominantly experienced language anxiety in their EFL classroom. The key sources of their language anxiety included lack of preparation, fear of failing the class, and making mistakes. Similarly, Priya (2024) reported that students experienced public speaking anxiety due to lack of presentation skills, inadequate preparation, communication apprehension, lack of practice, fear of making mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, and cultural and linguistic barriers.

Reactions during Anxiety

Students show different physical, emotional, expressive, and verbal reactions when they are anxious. They experience feelings of apprehension, self-belittling, and even bodily responses such as a faster heartbeat (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). Anxious students struggle to speak in the class and concentrate, become forgetful, have sweet and faster heartbeat, and show avoidance behavior, including postponing homework and missing class (Horwitz et al., 1986). Additionally, they show reduced word production, deficits in listening comprehension, and impaired vocabulary learning (Kondo & Ling, 2004).

Language theorists and researchers have long emphasized the need for teachers to pay specific attention to their students' affective responses (Rivers, 1964). Over time, researches on students' reactions to anxiety were conducted. Cohen and Norst (1989) identified that students articulated their anxiety and fears emotionally through the use of words such as embarrassment, trauma, frightening, unnerving, anger, frustration, victim, paranoia, and guilt, and physically through trembling hands, blushing, palpitation, coronary, and headache. Andrade and Williams (2009) examined the Japanese university students' reactions to anxiety-inducing settings in EFL classes. Their study revealed that physically, students commonly experienced palpitations, burning cheeks or feeling hot, perspiration, and a lump in the throat; emotionally, they commonly experienced mental blankness, and inability to concentrate; verbally, they commonly experienced speech disturbances (hesitation, mispronunciation), limiting comments to one or two sentences, speaking in brief phrases, and silence; and the most

frequently reported expressive reactions included changes in the voice and smiling or laughing. In general, their study reveals that 75% of the learners experience some degree of anxiety, while 11% of them are strongly affected by its debilitating aspects.

Coping with Anxiety

In the EFL classroom, both teachers and students can employ different strategies to cope with anxiety. Teachers can help reduce students' anxiety through offering advice on effective language learning techniques, relaxation activities, journal keeping, and behavioural contracting (Horwitz et al., 1986). They can reduce or eliminate students' anxiety through behavioural (e.g., relaxation training, modeling, covert positive reinforcement), cognitive (e.g., group counseling), and cognitive-behavioural (e.g., attentional training, insight therapy, anxiety management training) treatments (Hembree, 1988). When students are anxious, they use different strategies to cope with their anxiety. In their study on 209 Japanese EFL students, Kondo and Ling (2004) found 70 fundamental strategies, which were cohered into five groups: relaxation, preparation, peer seeking, resignation, and positive thinking. In his study on the university students of lower and upper intermediate levels in Indonesia, Marwan (2007) identified that the students usually used four tactics, such as relaxation, preparation, peer seeking, and positive thinking in coping with their FL anxiety. In a similar vein, Khaidzir (2015) reported that Thai learners employed preparation and positive thinking followed by peer seeking, relaxation, and resignation as the strategies to overcome their language anxiety.

Although there are some empirical studies on language anxiety in other countries, studies on learner anxiety in the Nepali EFL context are very limited. Following Tsai and Chang (2013), the impact of anxiety on foreign language learning process has been somewhat ignored in the English teaching and learning environments of Nepal; little empirical data is available for researchers to explore the affective domains of Nepali English learners. Similarly, the beliefs toward language learning, the attitudes, expectations, and backgrounds of Nepali students might be different from those of other countries, the classroom situations, teachers' treatment, their beliefs about language instruction, their attitudes, their ways of teaching English, and many other anxiety-causing factors might be different. Zheng (2008) also accepts that anxiety might be culture- or context-specific and states that "the emotional state relating to learning a second/foreign language also largely relies on high-stake contexts of that particular language in the society" (p. 7). Therefore, this research is certainly one of the new ventures in the field of the affective domain of Nepali EFL learners.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative survey design, which is used to "describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2017, p. 376). This design helped the researcher identify the attitudes of sampled students towards anxiety-causing factors, their reactions in anxious situations, and anxiety coping strategies. Using a simple random sampling procedure, the researcher selected 90 B.Ed. and BBS first year students from two community campuses in Morang district. Quantitative data were collected using three sets of closed-ended questionnaires as the research tools. The researcher used the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), which included 33 items about anxiety. He adapted and slightly modified some FLCAS items on the three-point Likert scale that ranges from 1(agree) to 3 (disagree).

In the questionnaire, the 33 FLCAS items were first categorized based on the strategies and factors they aimed to assess. This categorization was carried out through hierarchical cluster analysis, which identified seven groups of strategies and factors. These categories were adapted with slight modifications from Marwan (2007) and Khodadady and Khojavy (2013). After considering the common themes or contents of items, seven labels or names were designated for each strategy and factor.

   The second set of questionnaires included 15 items on the three – point Likert scale, adapted from Marwan (2007). Another questionnaire for students' reactions in anxiety-provoking situations was adapted from Andrade and Williams (2009). The collected data were coded, tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted descriptively using graphical and statistical tools.

Results and Discussion

   This section presents the results in line with the research objectives and discusses them in relation to existing theories and empirical studies.

Factors Causing Anxiety

   The study aims to identify the factors that cause anxiety on Nepali students learning English. The researcher identified seven factors contributing to their anxiety. The average mean score (M = 2.32) indicates that fear of failing the class, incomprehensible input or difficulty in understanding teachers' language/instruction, and lack of preparation are the three main anxiety-causing factors.

Table 1

Common Causes of Anxiety

Ranking	Thematic grouping of anxiety factors	Mean
1	Fear of failing the class	2.81
2	Incomprehensible input (difficulty in understanding teacher's language/instruction)	2.54
3	Lack of preparation	2.46
4	Inferiority mindset/negative attitude	2.31
5	Low self-confidence/self-esteem	2.17
6	Lack of comfortableness with English class	2.09
7	Fear of negative evaluation/making mistakes	1.86
	Average Mean (M)	**2.32**

   Among the seven anxiety-causing factors experienced by Nepali students in the EFL classroom, fear of failing the class was found to be the most anxiety causing factor (M: 2.81). This factor is concerned with test anxiety, a key factor contributing to negative motivation in the learning process. Students experience heightened anxiety because of fear of failing the class, largely influenced by Nepal's pass-fail examination system. They face pressure from their parents, teachers, or themselves to pass a particular class or level. To reduce the anxiety caused by the fear of failing the class, the Liberal Promotion System and Continuous Assessment System (CAS) have been implemented in the school levels. However, such systems are not widely adopted in higher education in Nepal. This

finding endorses Ohta (2005) that students were afraid of appearing in the tests since such contexts provoke anxiety about the negative consequences of receiving poor grades (cited in Lucas et al., 2011) and Khaidzir (2015) that fear of failing the class was the primary factor contributing to language anxiety. However, Marwan's (2007) study ranked it as only the third most significant factor. Students experience test-related anxiety primarily due to their belief that poor performance on the test harms their social prestige and career prospects, coupled with the high expectations placed on them by their parents and teachers (Dawadi, 2022).

In the present study, the second common anxiety causing factor was incomprehensible input or difficulty in understanding the teacher's language/instruction (M: 2.54). This finding aligns with Khaidzir's (2015) study but contrasts with Marwan's (2007) research, where it was identified as the least anxiety-causing factor. The finding also supports Krashen's input hypothesis since second languages are acquired by receiving comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). Anxiety also contributes to an affective filter (Krashen, 1982), making individuals unreceptive or less responsive to language input (Horwitz et al., 1986; Yahya, 2013).

Students also responded that they were more anxious when they were not well-prepared in the English class (M: 2.46). Lack of preparation, akin to Khaidzir's (2015) finding, was the third important factor contributing to language anxiety, but it was the primary factor contributing to language anxiety in the study conducted by Marwan (2007). This finding endorses a Saudi male learner's remark, "we could practice English only in the class, out of the class, no practice; lack of chances or practice… trouble when you find a chance to speak" (Tseng, 2012, p. 78). This explanation highlights why EFL learners often feel anxious while speaking English. The fourth anxiety-causing factor was students' inferiority mindset or negative attitude towards the English class and themselves compared to others (M: 2.31). This issue is common in the mixed-ability classes. To address this, students should be involved in cooperative or collaborative learning activities that "enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and create a positive affective classroom climate" (Richards & Rodgers, 2002, p. 193). Such activities can help students build confidence and engage more actively in learning.

The fifth anxiety- causing factor was low self-confidence or self-esteem (M: 2.17), which endorsed Krashen's affective filter hypothesis that assumes lack of self-confidence as one of the affective or attitudinal variables in second language acquisition (Ellis, 1985). This finding contrasts with Boukranaa et al. (2024), Marwan (2007), and Khaidzir (2015), in which lack of self-confidence is the major factor, the second significant factor, and the least factor behind students' anxiety, respectively. To Foss and Reitzel (1991, cited in Subasi, 2010), self-perception plays a crucial role in language learning anxiety since anxious learners often have low self-esteem, regard others more worthy than themselves, and perceive their peers' communication as more effective than their own. The students were also found to be anxious because of the lack of comfortableness with English class (M: 2.09) followed by fear of negative evaluation or making mistakes (M: 1.86). This finding aligns with Horwitz et al. (1986), who argued that anxious learners fear making mistakes in a foreign language, feeling less competent than their peers or being negatively evaluated. 'Fear of making mistakes' was the second strongest anxiety-causing factor in Khaidzir (2015) and Boukranaa et al. (2024), whereas Marwan (2007) ranked it among the least anxiety causing factors. Such fear obstructs the development of language skills and the cultivation of positive attitudes towards learning English (Boukranaa et

al., 2024). To address this, teachers should help students view mistakes as learning opportunities by providing constructive examples.

Students' Responses in Anxious Situations

When students were anxious, they showed different kinds of reactions such as bodily/ physical, emotional, expressive and verbal reactions. The most common reactions the students made when they were anxious are presented in table 2:

Table 2

Common Reactions during Anxiety

Rank	Reactions	Respondents	Percent	Type of reactions
1	Heart beating faster	82	91.11	Bodily/physical
2	Other changes in facial expression	75	83.33	Expressive
3	Mind went blank	68	75.55	Emotional
4	Could not concentrate	60	66.66	Emotional
5	Change in breathing	58	64.44	Bodily/physical
6	Feeling hot, cheeks burning	55	61.11	Bodily/physical
7	Other changes in voice	52	57.77	Expressive
8	Speech disturbances/ Speech tempo changes	45	50	Verbal
9	Silence	39	43.33	Verbal
10	Short utterances	38	42.22	Verbal

Concerning the students' reactions, the study showed that the most common reaction in the anxious situation was faster heart beating. Among the 90 participants, the majority (91.11%) reported that they had faster heart beating when they were anxious. This finding endorses the study by Andrade and Williams (2009). The most common expressive reactions were changes in facial expression (83.33%), followed by voice changes (57.77%). As a whole, changes in facial expression were the second most common students' reaction in the anxious situations. However, Andrade and Williams (2009) found that smiling or laughing and changes in the voice were the most common expressive reactions. In terms of emotional reactions, the most frequent reactions included the mind going blank (75.55%) and inability to concentrate (66.66%), which aligns with the findings of Andrade and Williams (2009). The second most common bodily/ physical responses to anxiety were changes in breating and feeling hot, cheeks burning. Majority of students (64.44%) reported changes in their breathing, while 61.11% students felt hot or experienced cheeks burning. The study by Andrade and Williams (2009) found cheeks burning or feeling hot, perspiration, and a lump in the throat as other common physical reactions after faster heartbeat which partially contrasts with the present findings.

The most common verbal reactions to anxiety were speech disturbances and speech tempo changes (50 %), followed by silence (43.33%) and short utterances (42.22%). When students experienced a blank mind and an inability to concentrate due to anxiety, these reactions interfere with their performance and foreign language learning. This study produced results similar to those of Andrade and Williams (2009), who found that the most common verbal reactions were speech disturbances, producing brief phrases, reduced comments in one or two sentences, and remaining

silent.

Anxiety Coping Strategies

      This study identified some strategies adopted by students to cope with their anxiety. Following Marwan (2007), the 15 items measuring anxiety have been grouped into five anxiety coping strategies for clarity and ease in table 3:

Table 3

Strategies Adopted by Students to Cope with their Anxiety

Ranking	Anxiety coping strategies	Mean score
1.	Preparation	2.67
2.	Relaxation	2.36
3.	Positive thinking	2.24
4.	Peer seeking	2.2
5.	Resignation/Avoidance	1.99
	Average mean	2.3

      The study examined five anxiety-coping strategies, namely preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, resignation and peer seeking. Among these, preparation (M: 2.67) was rated as the most commonly used tactic to reduce language anxiety. This finding further aligns with Kondo and Ling's (2004) study but contrasts with the findings of Khaidzir (2015) and Marwan (2007), where preparation was the second and the third common anxiety coping strategy, respectively. Preparing the subject matter in advance and practicing it helps students cope with anxiety (Priya, 2024). Similarly, relaxation strategy (M: 2.36) was adopted by the most of students in their effort to cope with their language anxiety, which supports Marwan's (2007) study. Brown and Lee (2015) also noted that "relaxed states of consciousness create low anxiety" (p. 36). However, this strategy was less common in the study by Kondo and Ling (2004). Overall, preparation and relaxation were the most frequently used anxiety-coping strategies in the present study, both scoring above the average mean.

      In this study, relaxation strategy was followed by the three other strategies, namely peer seeking (M: 2.24), resignation or avoidance (M: 2.20) and positive thinking (M: 1.99), all of which scored below the average mean. In the study by Kondo and Ling, preparation was followed by resignation, positive thinking, relaxation, and peer seeking at the end. Similarly, in the study by Bailey et al. (1999), learners who experienced language anxiety often employed avoidance (or resignation) strategy while learning a foreign language. Pappamihiel's (2002) study showed that ESL students in America used avoidance as the most common strategy to reduce language anxiety (cited in Khaidzir, 2015). These findings contrast with the present study, where resignation or avoidance was one of the less commonly used strategies by students. Similarly, in Marwan's (2007) study, peer seeking was the most frequently used anxiety-coping strategy, while positive thinking was the most common strategy in Khaidzir's (2015) study. In Marwan's study, learners avoided only resignation as an anxiety-reducing strategy in their FL learning. Regarding the avoidance strategy, Kondo and Ling (2004) suggest that avoidance is not generally a practical option in most language classrooms, and students are therefore expected to adopt alternative strategies for reducing their anxiety.

Conclusion and Implications

This study underscores the causes of anxiety in the EFL classrooms, the students' responses to anxious situations, and the strategies employed by them to reduce anxiety. The study reveals that students primarily experience anxiety due to the fear of failing the class, incomprehensible input or difficulty in understanding the teacher's language/instruction, and lack of preparation. Teachers' awareness of these sources enables them to create conducive learning environment, design appropriate curriculum, syllabus, and textbooks that accommodates students' diverse needs, adapt teaching strategies, and build good rapport with the students.

Given that EFL anxiety impedes students' engagement and academic achievement, teachers can mitigate its effects by fostering more student-friendly, low anxiety learning environments through motivation, cooperative, and collaborative activities, flexible assessments, and academic support. Moreover, acknowledging students' feelings of isolation and helplessness, offering practical suggestions, and employing foreign language learning approaches like suggestopedia and community language learning (Horwitz et al., 1986) can further reduce language anxiety. Similarly, by actively participating in different cognitive and meta-cognitive activities (Nepal, 2015), students contribute to a more relaxed and enjoyable environment. Only when the EFL classroom can be transformed into supportive, anxiety-free zone can students from diverse backgrounds feel a sense of belonging, take risks, interact confidently with teachers and peers, build self-efficacy, and achieve greater academic success.

This study further indicates that a faster heart beating, changes in facial expressions, mind going blank, difficulties in concentration, and changes in breathing are common reactions exhibited by students in anxious situations, which hinder their learning and performance. The teachers should be aware of these reactions in order to prevent conflicts and misunderstandings, improve pedagogical practices, and promote students' overall well being. While this study does not confirm whether or not anxiety affects Nepali students' ability to acquire a foreign language, or the extent to which it influences the input, intake, and output processing of Nepali students learning English, it provides valuable insights for future research on these topics.

Eventually, this study underscores the need for effective strategies, such as preparation and relaxation, to cope with anxiety, help students learn foreign language more easily, and create EFL classroom as a comfort zone. By fostering a psychologically safe learning space, teachers can encourage students to participate in different activities in a relaxed manner, which can lead to improved academic performance. Since this study was a small scale quantitative survey research based on data collected from 90 participants, future researchers could study the effect of foreign language anxiety on students' academic achievement, examine foreign language anxiety in Nepali teacher training programs, and explore the challenges faced by teachers and students due to foreign language anxiety in English as medium of instruction (EMI) classrooms in Nepal.

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