Language Anxiety among Gifted Learners in Malaysia

Mohd Hasrul Kamarulzaman[1], Noraniza Ibrahim[1], Melor Md Yunus[1] & Noriah Mohd Ishak[1]

[1] PERMATApintar National Gifted Center, National University of Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia

Correspondence: Mohd Hasrul Kamarulzaman, PERMATApintar National Gifted Center, National University of Malaysia, 43650 Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia. Tel: 601-3388-7809. E-mail: hasrulkamarul@ukm.my

Abstract

Language anxiety has significantly sparked great concern in the second and foreign language learning world. Researches have found negative correlation between language anxiety and academic achievement of English language learners; and, most of the studies focus on average school students and tertiary level students. This paper, however, explores gifted learners' English language anxiety in ESL setting, by surveying 119 gifted learners of PERMATApintar National Gifted Center (PpNGC), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia. The result shows that gifted learners have certain level of language anxiety in English language setting; that language anxiety negatively correlates withgifted learnes' English language performance; and that female gifted learners indicate higher language anxiety than males. Finally, this paper provides some insights towards minimizing gifted learners' language anxiety in English language environment.

Keywords: language anxiety, gifted learners, English teaching and learning, PERMATApintar National Gifted Center Malaysia (PpNGCM)

1. Introduction

To most students, excellent academic results are what matter the most. Examination results reveal certain levels of mastery of a particular field. This condition is apparent especially in English language classrooms. There are, however, circumstances where marks do not reflect students' actual acquisition level in that area, specifically speaking. There are occasions where students were found to be reserved in classroom, or mumbling, stuttering or struggling to speak. These feelings, generally described as anxiety, apprehension, or even nervousness are displayed by language leaners, can be seen in any language classroom. These can contribute to a rather detrimental effect on the communicative achievement of the target language. This can be observed among the gifted students of PERMATApintar National Gifted Center (PpNGC). Most of the gifted students at the center showed excellence in the English language tests; however, their communication did not display the same proficiency as the latter. Thus, it was believed that the gifted students of PpNGC experienced certain level of language anxiety despite their good performance in tests. This is intriguing since most studies on language anxiety revealed its debilitating effect on academic achievement. The presence of such daunting feelings may hinder not only normal children, but also gifted learners, from acquiring the targeted language's level of proficiency. Hence, this study is just an initial step prior to in-depth exploration into English speaking ability of PpNGC gifted students.

As such, probing into learners' language anxiety is vital not only in achieving a targeted syllabus objective or a particular teaching goal, but also in improving learners' speaking proficiency. This condition, which refers to language anxiety, has been greatly dealt with since 1960s to Scovel's era to Chastain and Kleinmann's era to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's era (Horwitz, 2001). These early researches exploring the relationship between anxiety and the teaching and learning of language have revealed inconsistent results. Some found negative relationship, few other studies found no relationship, and several others found positive relationship between anxiety and language learning. Some researcheshave attempted to tackle this area more specifically, with more consistent results (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; P. D. MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Young, 1991) in revealing the relationship between anxiety and English language learning which demonstrate the presence of foreign language anxiety among learners. Most of such researches which focus on average learners such as school and college students, however, revealed consistent moderate negative correlation between language and language learning specifically the achievement (Horwitz, 2001). Assouline, Nicpon and Whiteman (2010) found that gifted students rely strongly on their astounding verbal ability. This might be the reason for the slight

difference found between achievement and of being gifted (ability) (Assouline et al., 2010). Hence, this study aims to examine the relationship between language anxiety and English language achievement, focusing specifically on gifted learners, whichrequires extensive research contribution. As such, this research will be conducted among the gifted learners of PpNGC.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Language Anxiety

Debilitative and facilitative anxiety explain the relationship between anxiety and language achievement (Alpert, 1957). Anxiety can be facilitating; however, in most circumstances, as most researches have shown, a negative relationship between anxiety and language performance has been found among most studies, defining its role as debilitator in language learning. Therefore, learners tend to have difficulty in language classroom due to anxiety (Horwitz, 1986; P. D. MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). This is because as Krashen's affective filter hypothesis explains, input is impeded with the presence of anxiety, hence affects language acquisition (Krashen, 1985).

Language anxiety has been considered as one of the most important aspects in language learning as well as teaching ever since the psychological theory of second language learning stretched its expansion in the research field. And, it has been deemed important in any second language acquisition models. Krashen's Monitor Model, as explained above, along with his Affective Filter Hypothesis (Krashen, 1981) for example, emphasizes that the learning process is not without the presence of anxiety variable. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's construct has been widely used ever since they introduced a situation-specific construct called Foreign Language Anxiety. Together, they developed a likert scale of five points, which consisted of 33 items in the effort to explore anxiety variables related to foreign language learning environment. It is called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (See Appendix 1).

In their early recognition, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) argued that the absence of anxiety measures related to foreign language learning contributed to somewhat hazy relationship between anxiety and foreign language achievement (Tran, 2012). Horwitz et al. (1986) defined foreign language anxiety (FLA) as "a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process". Here, they pioneered the three interrelated factors that occur during any foreign language classroom, which are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension refers to the fear about communication involving other people whereas test anxiety reflects the fear of failing in any given language tests.

Language anxiety, therefore, is somewhat unique to the language learning experience yet interesting; because foreign language anxiety is specific to foreign language learning (Tran, 2012). In his review of the theory of foreign language anxiety, Tran (2012) stated that in supplement to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's foreign language anxiety theory, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) conducted factor analysis of nine anxiety scales, and correlational analysis between the anxiety scales and achievement measures, which revealed that foreign language anxiety is separable from other anxiety, and that there is a relationship between foreign language anxiety and its proficiency. This is due to the nature of language learning settings itself in which learners are constantly expected to interact in a language activity by using the target language, and this circumstance already creates inferiority complex within the learners. In relation to this, learners at the same time are always self-conscious in the attempt to portray themselves as a good speaker, and this state in itself contributes to anxiety; self-consciousness in language anxiety reveals that learners are worried if they cannot pose themselves as verbally competent (Hilleson, 1996; Schumann, 1978; Tsui, 1996). These unique circumstances, that require the learners to respond to others interactively, have been the true nature of language learning context, causing learners to be more anxious as compared to other learning contexts. And, it has been confirmed that communicating orally in foreign language causes anxiety more than other learning of language skills (Horwitz et al., 1986; Koch & Terrel, 1991; P. D. MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1992).

2.2 Anxiety in Foreign Language Classroom

Many studies have indicated that anxiety plays a rather prominent role in the real language classroom contexts. Most of the studies revealed the findings which are very much related to (Horwitz et al., 1986)'s indicating negative correlation between language anxiety and overall language performance. Most of the findings however were found among school or college level students. Aida (1994) and Saito & Samimy (1996) found a significant negative correlation between language anxiety and academic performance among American second-year Japanese students. In a French class, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) found significant negative correlations between language anxiety (French) and vocabulary performance. Kim (1998) also found significant negative correlations between language anxiety and academic achievement in a traditional reading-focused and

conversation classes. It is also important to note that, as highlighted byHorwitz (2001), several studies not only revealed negative correlations between language anxiety and academic achievement, but also indicated inconsistent levels of language anxiety when examined in terms of different cultural groups, as found by Truitt (1995) among Korean EFL learners, and Kunt (1997) among Turkish/Cypriot learners.

2.3 Language Anxiety and Gender

In-depth studies have found different levels of language anxiety between male and female learners. Hussain, Shahid, & Zaman (2011) revealed that girls showed less anxiety in English language class, because they had more positive attitude towards English and, in addition, found that rural students had high anxiety in English. Similarly, Awan, Azher, Anwar, and Naz (2010) found that female students were less anxious in English classroom as compared to males with a significant t test of mean difference (t=2.520, p= .013). Their study revealed that female undergraduates were better in dealing with language encounters. However, Koul, Roy, Kaewkuekool and Ploisawaschai (2009) indicated in their study that female vocational college students had significantly higher levels of foreign language anxiety than the males. Interestingly, unlike others, Matsuda and Gobel (2004) found no significant effect of gender as an independent variable on learners' anxiety.

In a study examining mental disorders among gifted and non-gifted youth, Martin, Burns, and Schonlau (2010) found that males showed a slight difference in anxiety levels across the giftedness spectrum, while female gifted learners were found to be more prone to anxiety. The study also found that gifted students have a higher self-efficacy than their non-gifted peers when faced with difficult challenges. The study suggests that the anxiety or lack of confidence in solving difficult task takes up working memory and reduces concentration levels, thus impairing the cognitive performance of average students when the task is sufficiently demanding. From a different perspective however, lower GPA scores can be seen as a catalyst for building anxiety. In addition, the results of the relationship between the academic self-concept and test anxiety of gifted students in homogenous against heterogeneous classes showed a moderate effect of average peer performance on emotionality component of test anxiety. Gifted students in heterogeneous classes exhibited lower test anxiety scores than those in homogeneous classes in context of worry, emotionality and academic self-conception. The higher average peer academic performance raises the level of test anxiety in gifted students.

2.4 Language Anxiety in the English Classroom

The researches in language anxiety, in general, have been related to speaking encounters, hence suggesting it as the possible causes of language anxiety. In a study of anxiety among Chinese undergraduate of non-English majors, Liu (2006) found that students felt anxious when speaking English in class. In relation to this, the study revealed that the more proficient students reflect lower anxiety level, and interestingly, anxiety increases as students responded to teacher or were pointed out to speak. The study also points out that increasing exposure to oral English reduces the students' anxiety levels. Similarly, Khattak et. al. (2011) - in a study conducted on AWKUM students - revealed that students were anxious about producing mistakes as well as being corrected by teachers; and, in addition, the students also felt nervous about failing exams.

Horwitz (1996) has highlighted the most important notion of language learning;teaching and learning of language depend on the level of emotional readiness of the learners' cognitive abilities.Teachers should treat the learners' needs prior to teaching and learning. Giving attention to details such as learners' preference and classroom environment may help reduce anxiety and grow confidence in the learners. Aida(1994) and Horwitz (1986) have urged on the importance of teacher-student relationship which also plays a major role in determining the level of language anxiety among language learners. This seems to highlight the spot where researchers, as well as teachers, should focus on in enhancing learners' language learnability. Possible related areas, as indicated by Young (1991) are personal & interpersonal issues, instructor-learner instructions, classroom procedures, language testing, and instructor & learner beliefs about language learning. Matsuda and Gobel (2004)suggest that teachers should be able to approach learners positively i.e. to be able to optimize anxiety and simultaneously increase self-confidence in a comfortable classroom environment.

2.5 Anxiety and Gifted Learners

"*When gifted individuals learn to use anxiety to advantage and to respond to conflict with problem solving and relaxation strategies, they are able to integrate their uniqueness into home and school environments.*"

(Dirkes, 2010)

Giftedness is described as the possession and use of untrained and spontaneously expressed superior natural abilities (called aptitudes or gifts) in at least one ability domain, to a degree that places an individual at least among the top 10% of his or her agee peers(Gagne, 2002).

A gifted student is defined generally as a learner who has an exceptional ability to learn, and capable of uncommonly high performance. Gifted students, however, differ from one another. They may possess exceptionally high abilities in terms of one or more aspects such as academic achievement, intellect, creativity, personality traits, and specific academic fields. Some may be able to read early with better comprehension even before entering school. But fundamentally, gifted learners who exhibit intrinsic motivation could easily absorb all the basic skills either faster, or better. Also, they mostly indicate inclination towards independent rather than team or group activities. Due to their intrinsically motivated nature, only tasks that they perceive as interesting and challenging would be appealing (Redding, 1989); so, this is where the role of educators alike becomes interesting and challenging. Gifted students however are not necessarily well-versed in all fields; and it should be noted that they have hidden learning disabilities that may go unnoticed due to their compensation ability, which in the end, can cause depression and behaviour problems. Moreover, most people believe that gifted students do not need any support from their environment because "they are smart enough to succeed on their own", in which this is actually degrading for themselves because after all, we all live in a society. Environment plays a vital role in its own way, in providing assistance, encouragement with optimum learning experiences in order for them to develop successfully. Hence, gifted learners require special attention, which means, academically, different educational programs that could reach their full potential.

Researches have identified social environmental and social support as the focal points in academic outcomes for gifted learners. As such, family and peers play important roles in contributing to positive outcomes for gifted learners' academic performance. In a study emploring the patterns of support in the families of talented teenagers, Csikszentmihalyi, Rahtunde, and Whalen (1993) concluded that the combination of family support and autonomy contribute to positive outcomes for gifted learners.

The effect of anxiety on cognitive measures such as academic success has been widely studied in recent years. Even though it is clear anxiety may affect cognitive performance, considerably less is known about the effect of anxiety on creative thinking in general or the moderating effect anxiety may have on attempts to improve creative thinking. Past researches seem to support the idea that those who score low on anxiety have higher verbal creative thinking scores (Fleischer & Cohen, 1965; Grimm & Nachmias, 1977; White, 1968). However, not all of the data support this idea (Feldhusen, Denny, & Condon, 1965; Strauss, Hadar, Shavit, & Itskowitz, 1981).

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

119 PpNGCM gifted learners participated in this study. They are Form 4 students of PpNGCM. Averaging in between 15 to 16 years of age, the students have at least 9 years of English language learning at school.

3.2 Instruments

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz et. Al. (1986) were used. It is a 33-item in four components; however, items 2, 5, 11, 14, 22 were to be score-reversed.

- Communication Anxiety (item 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32)
- Fear of Negative Evaluation (item 3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33)
- Test Anxiety (item 2, 8, 10, 19, 21)
- Anxiety of English Classes (item 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 28, 30)

This instrument is a self-report measurement tool, scored on a five-point Likert Scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). It has been extensively used and found to be a highly reliable measure (Aida, 1994; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Price, 1988; Schlesinger, 1995). The items' overall internal consistency revealed by Cronbach's Alpha in the current study was .819. In order to assess the participants' English achievement, the English language First Semester Final Examination results were applied. PpNGC's English Language First Semester Final Examination is an English proficiency test developed based on the format of Malaysia Certificate of Education examination paper.

3.3 Data Collection

The study was conducted on a total of 125 students of PpNGC. However, only 119 were valid for the analysis of the study. The English language First Semester Final Examination results were gathered from the PpNGC's Data Officer.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered was analysed through SPSS 20. In order to gauge the overall situation of gifted learners' in English language learning settings, the means and standard deviations for all items and types of anxiety were analysed through descriptive analysis. Then, t-tests were employed to reveal whether or not there are any differences in language anxiety between male and female participants. Finally, correlational analysis and t-tests were conducted in determining the influence of anxiety on English achievement.

4. Results and Findings

Reliability of the FLCAS. The current study, utilising 119PpNGC gifted students, yielded internal consistency of .94.02 (mean score=96 and s.d.=13) using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table 1 shows the reliability, mean, standard deviation, and range generated from the current study were similar to previous studies done by Horwitz and Aida. The mean of the present study however was slightly higher compared to that of Horwitz's study; but, almost similar to Aida's, X = 96.02. The standard deviation of the present study was 13 as compared to Aida's and Horwitz's. This is understandable because all of the thirty-three items were included.

Table 1.

	Present study	Aida, 1994	Horwitz et al., 1991
Sample size	119	96	108
Language	English	Japanese	Spanish
Cronbach's alpha	.819	.94	.93
Mean	96.02	96.7	94.5
Standard Deviation	13	22.1	21.4

Gifted Learners' Anxiety in English Language Learning Settings

Table 2 shows the existing gifted learners' language anxiety. 33 male gifted students (62.3%) scored anxiety level below 3.00, and 34 female gifted students (51.5%) scored anxiety level below 3.00. Gifted students who scored anxiety level above 3.00 were 20 males (37.7%) and 32 females (48.5%). From the total of 119 subjects, 52 gifted students (43.7%) scored anxiety level 3.00 and above. Therefore, this result indicates that the gifted students are not generally anxious in English language learning environment.

Table 2. Gifted students' English language anxiety

Gifted students' anxiety levels< 3.00 and > 3.00		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
< 3.00	Count	33	34	67
	Expected Count	29.8	37.2	67.0
	% within group	49.3%	50.7%	100.0%
	% within gender	62.3%	51.5%	56.3%
	% of Total	27.7%	28.6%	56.3%
> 3.00	Count	20	32	52
	Expected Count	23.2	28.8	52.0
	% within group	38.5%	61.5%	100.0%
	% within gender	37.7%	48.5%	43.7%
	% of Total	16.8%	26.9%	43.7%
Total	Count	53	66	119
	Expected Count	53.0	66.0	119.0
	% within group	44.5%	55.5%	100.0%
	% within gender	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	44.5%	55.5%	100.0%

Descriptive analysis reveals that gifted students' language anxiety mean score was 2.8. As shown in Table 3, the mean scores for the anxiety componential variables were also below 3.00. The mean scores for communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English classes were 2.9, 2.8, 2.6, and 2.7 respectively. Although all of the variables were below 3.00; however, observation on all of the items revealed that 9 items were scored above 3.00. Table 4 shows two items with mean scores above 3.00 in the communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation components, two items in the anxiety of English classes component, and one item in test anxiety. Thus far, researches of similar interest have concurred that average <3.00 should be the mean score for not anxious; average ±3.00 for slightly anxious; and average ±4.00 and above for fairly anxious (Horwitz et al., 1986). Although the results from the present study revealed that the language anxiety componential

variables were below 3.00, however, some of the individual items were above 3.00. Therefore, the subjects of the present study were considered to be not generally anxious.

Table 3. Overall Gifted Learners' English Language Anxiety

Componental Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Communication Apprehension	2.9595	.53014
Fear of Negative Evaluation	2.8637	.84637
Test Anxiety	2.6454	.64226
Anxiety of English Classroom	2.7639	.49587
Language Anxiety (overall)	2.8223	.55115

Table 4. Mean Scores of Items > 3.00

Componental Variables	Item No.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Communication Apprehension	14	3.10	1.02
	24	3.02	.82
	32	3.23	.83
Fear of Negative Evaluation	7	3.56	1.16
	23	3.52	1.08
	27	3.15	1.05
Test Anxiety	10	3.21	1.22
Anxiety of English Classes	16	3.25	1.09
	28	3.60	.90

Male and Female Gifted Learners' English Language Anxiety

The comparison in terms of gender also revealed a slight difference betweenmale and female gifted learners. Table 5 reveals that female subjects were slightlymore anxious than the males in terms of the overall English language anxiety. However, the result of the t-test as shown in Table 6 explains that there were no significant differences between the males and females subjects.

Table 5. Male and Female Gifted Students' English Language Anxiety

Componental Variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Communication Apprehension	Male	53	2.9380	.48157
	Female	66	2.9767	.56921
Fear of Negative Evaluation	Male	53	2.7421	.86225
	Female	66	2.9613	.82701
Test Anxiety	Male	53	2.6075	.70051
	Female	66	2.6758	.59512
Anxiety of English Classes	Male	53	2.7226	.47501
	Female	66	2.7970	.51320
Language Anxiety (overall)	Male	53	2.7640	.52481
	Female	66	2.8692	.57105

The result of the t-test indicated that there is no significant difference between male and female subjects as shown by the overall significant value (t=-1.035, P=0.303>0.05). Similarly, as shown in Table 5, the t-test values for communication apprehension (t=-0.395, P=0.695>0.05), test anxiety (t=-1410, P=0.161>0.05), fear of negative evaluation (t=-0.574, P=0.567>0.05) and anxiety of English class (t=-0.812, P=0.419>0.05) variables indicated that the difference between male and female gifted students was not significant. Though the mean scores for all of the anxiety componental variables for female subjects were greater than the males (please refer to Table 4), no significant difference is seen between male and female gifted students of PpNGC.

Table 6. Significance of Male and Female Gifted Students' Language Anxiety

Componential Variables	t-value	Significance of t-value (p< 0.05)
Communication Apprehension	-.395	.694
Fear of Negative Evaluation	-1.410	.161
Test Anxiety	-.574	.567
Anxiety of English Classes	-.812	.419
Language Anxiety (overall)	-1.035	.303

Gifted Learners' Language Anxiety and English Language Achievement

Table 7 shows the relationship between the subjects' language anxiety and English language achievement that was negatively correlated (r=-0.295, p<0.01) explaining that as the level of anxiety increases, the English language achievement decreases. The correlation coefficient for each anxiety componential variable shows similar findings i.e. (r=-0.303, p<0.01) for test anxiety, (r=-0.238, p<0.01) forfear of negative evaluation, (r=-0.294, p<0.01) for anxiety of English classroom; except for communication apprehension (r=-0.227*, p<0.05). Thus, this finding reveals significant negative correlation between English language anxiety and English language achievement.

Table 7. Correlation of Language Anxiety and English Language Achievement

Componential Variables	Correlation coefficients	p-value (<0.01)
Communication Apprehension	-0.227[*]	.013
Fear of Negative Evaluation	-0.238[**]	.009
Test Anxiety	-0.303[**]	.001
Anxiety of English Classes	-0.294[**]	.001
Language Anxiety (overall)	-0.295[**]	.001

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).[*]

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).[**]

5. Discussion

The present study found that gifted students of PpNGC had certain level of English language anxiety. However, the result of the study indicated that the overall mean score for the gifted students' English language anxiety levelwas lower (<3.00) as compared to previous studies on non-gifted subjects. This study gauged similar finding by Chan and Wu (2004) who, in their study, found that the mean score for their study's subjects was 2.96. Gifted students normally display lesser anxiety level, especially in test anxiety. Ziedner (2007) found that gifted students with lower anxiety scores were correlated with higher academic performance.The result of the present study nevertheless indicated that gifted students experienced more anxiety in communication apprehension. Characteristics of gifted children explain that they prefer to spend most of the time on their own, which resembles autonomous learning (2001), hence this might contribute to less amount of communication.

This study revealed that there was no significant gender difference in English language anxiety demonstrated by the gifted students of PpNGC. Although it was not significant, nevertheless female gifted students were slightly more anxious as compared to the male counterparts. This indicates consistency with other findings of language learning researches which explain female language learners as experiencing more anxiety compared to the males (Cheng, 2002; Wilson, 2006; (Mesri, 2012)).

Finally, similar to previous studies (Yukie Aida, 1994; D. Y.-c. Chan & Wu, 2004; Riasati, 2011) the present study revealed a debilitative role of anxiety in language learning. The coefficient correlation between the gifted students' English language anxiety and English language achievement generated negative correlation. Some other findings of language learning studies have noted similar result (Horwitz, 1986: Woodrow, 2006; Na, 2007; Worku, 2008). It is noted that negative correlation means the higher the level of language anxiety of an individual, the lower the academic performance will be. The gifted students of PpNGC, however, did not indicate critical problem with their English language achievement, yet interestingly their communication ability, as experienced by the researcher, revealed different phenomenon. Learners with language anxiety may

experience some resistance not only in classroom but also upon mentioning the particular subject (English) itself; hence indicator of some kind of apprehension. And it was proven by the result of this study that the subjects scored higher on communication apprehension. Assouline et al. (2010) explained in a study that gifted students' verbal abilities were extremely well-developed and advanced than their non-verbal abilities eventhough they were diagnosed with a disability that is verbally-based. They further elaborated that eventhough the gifted students' verbal and non-verbal abilities were generally above their age-level expectations, however, their working memory and processing speed abilities were similar to normal children. This explains possible existence of communication apprehension among PpNGC's gifted students, as supported by Woodrow (2006) who found a negative relationship between anxiety and oral performance.Thus, the present study shows that English language anxiety has a negative impact on the subjects English language achievement, and hence, reiterates the debilitating effect of anxiety on achievement. The subjects of this study might have experienced inappropriate pedagogical approach or unsuitable English language environment. It is therefore very important to understand the need of gifted students especially their learning preference.

6. Conclusion

While previous researches of foreign language anxiety focused on students either from primary, secondary, or tertiary level, the present study however focused specifically on gifted students of PpNGC and found that the gifted students were not generally anxious in English language learning. Although this was reflected in their achievement in examination, however, it was not reflected in their communication. The speaking ability among most of the gifted students has yet to achieve the center's standards. This was understood when close observation on the mean scores of every individual item of FLAS revealed that some items in at least two componential variables were scored above 3.00 i.e. communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. Thus, this indicates the areas in which teachers, school authorities as well as future researches need to probe into in tailoring their pedagogy, and most importantly, principles in developing gifted students' English language communication, or English speaking ability. And, above all, an analysis between ability and achievement is crucial in clarifying whether learning disability or learning style is the reason for gifted students' academic struggles. It is very important to have a syllabus or program or activity which guides teachers in identifying students who do possess high verbal abilities but might be hidden due to disability (Assouline et al., 2010). Therefore, it is also vital for all authorities to address the issue of whether or not the students really are academically gifted; whether or not these students have a learning disability; and whether or not a particular gifted program applies the right pedagogical approach. It would be very ideal to examine the gifted students' learning style, specifically language. Important aspects of learning styles should be considered in preparing for a particular language lesson. Understanding learners' learning styles and accomodating to their learning preference prior to the actual classroom action would result in greater learning satisfaction especially on the gifted learners' part. Gifted learners have the potential to develop their language proficiency in an appropriate language learning condition, which is tailored according to their preference mode of learning i.e. independent study, but simultaneously allows supervision for teachers in guiding throughout the program. This is because in such condition will they become persistent, responsible, and self-motivated.

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