



Traduction et Langues Volume 24 Numéro 02/2025

Journal of Translation Languages

مجلة الترجمة واللغات

ISSN (Print): 1112-3974

EISSN (Online): 2600-6235



Non-English Majored Students' Perspectives on Self-Regulatory Strategies for Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety

Artur Urbaniak 

Adam Mickiewicz University-Poland

artur.urbaniak@amu.edu.pl

Umar Fauzan 

Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda-Indonesia

umar.fauzan@uinsi.ac.id

Nakagawa Yuya 

Mie University-Japan

nakagawa@edu.mie-u.ac.jp

Huu Chanh Nguyen 

University of Health Sciences, Viet Nam National University Ho Chi Minh City-Viet Nam

nhchanh@uhsvnu.edu.vn

To cite this paper:

Urbaniak, A., Fauzan, U., Nakagawa, Y., Nguyen, H. C. (2025). Non-English Majored Students' Perspectives on Self-Regulatory Strategies for Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *Traduction et Langues*, 24(2), 241-273.

Received: 18/04/2025; **Accepted:** 11/08/2025, **Published:** 31/12/2025

Keywords

Self-Regulatory
Strategies;
Foreign
Language
Classroom
Anxiety;
Vietnamese
Students; Learner
perspectives;
Metacognitive
Awareness;
Affective Regulation

Abstract

Recognizing the pervasive influence of foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) on the trajectory of language learning, this comprehensive study delves into the specific self-regulatory strategies (SRSs) employed by non-English majored students in Vietnam. The investigation adopts the theoretical lens articulated by Guo et al. (2018) to frame the understanding of how these students navigate and manage their anxiety within the English language classroom context. The study utilized a mixed-methods research. The quantitative phase involved administering questionnaires to a large sample of 400 students, yielding statistical data on the frequency and perceived effectiveness of various self-regulatory strategies. Complementing this, the qualitative phase gathered rich, nuanced insights through semi-structured interviews with a subset of 20 students, allowing for a deeper exploration of their personal experiences and coping mechanisms. The findings reveal that students primarily rely on avoidance and affective strategies, such as emotional regulation and distraction, to cope with anxiety, while metacognitive strategies, like planning and self-monitoring, and social strategies, including seeking peer or teacher support, are less frequently utilized. This indicates potential areas for improvement, particularly in helping students develop stronger task management skills and more effective peer interactions to better regulate their learning processes. The results underscore the importance of encouraging learners to engage in metacognitive reflection and fostering a classroom environment that supports open communication and collaboration. Such an environment empowers students to identify the sources of their anxiety, adjust their study methods, and seek assistance when needed, thereby enhancing their self-awareness and self-regulatory capacity. By promoting these strategies, educators can help students reduce anxiety, increase learner autonomy, and improve overall language acquisition outcomes. This study thus offers a valuable contribution to the broader field of affective factors in second language learning and provides direct, practical implications for teaching practices in the Vietnamese EFL context and other similar global educational settings where FLCA significantly impacts learner engagement and performance.



Từ khóa

Chiến lược tự điều chỉnh, Sự lo lắng trong lớp học ngoại ngữ, Sinh viên Việt Nam, Quan điểm của người học, Nhận thức về siêu nhận thức, Điều tiết cảm xúc

Tóm tắt

Nhận thấy lo lắng trong lớp học ngoại ngữ là rào cản lớn ảnh hưởng đến quá trình học tập, nghiên cứu này tập trung tìm hiểu các chiến lược tự điều chỉnh mà sinh viên không chuyên ngành tiếng Anh tại Việt Nam sử dụng để quản lý sự lo lắng trong lớp học tiếng Anh theo khung lý thuyết của Guo và cộng sự (2018). Bằng cách áp dụng phương pháp nghiên cứu hỗn hợp kết hợp, dữ liệu định lượng được thu thập trên 400 sinh viên và dữ liệu định tính qua phỏng vấn sinh viên với 20 sinh viên. Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy sinh viên chủ yếu dựa vào các chiến lược tránh né và điều chỉnh cảm xúc, chẳng hạn như điều chỉnh cảm xúc và đánh lạc hướng, để đối phó với lo âu, trong khi các chiến lược siêu nhận thức như lập kế hoạch và tự giám sát, cũng như các chiến lược xã hội như tìm kiếm sự hỗ trợ từ bạn bè hoặc giáo viên, lại được sử dụng ít hơn. Điều này cho thấy những lĩnh vực tiềm năng cần cải thiện, đặc biệt là trong việc giúp học sinh phát triển kỹ năng quản lý nhiệm vụ tốt hơn và tương tác hiệu quả hơn với bạn bè để điều chỉnh quá trình học tập của mình. Kết quả nhấn mạnh tầm quan trọng của việc khuyến khích người học tham gia vào quá trình phản tư siêu nhận thức và xây dựng một môi trường lớp học hỗ trợ giao tiếp cởi mở và hợp tác. Một môi trường như vậy giúp học sinh xác định nguồn gốc gây lo âu, điều chỉnh phương pháp học tập và tìm kiếm sự hỗ trợ khi cần thiết, từ đó nâng cao nhận thức bản thân và khả năng tự điều chỉnh. Bằng cách thúc đẩy những chiến lược này, giáo viên có thể giúp học sinh giảm lo âu, tăng tính tự chủ trong học tập và cải thiện kết quả tiếp thu ngôn ngữ. Nghiên cứu này đóng góp vào lĩnh vực rộng hơn về các yếu tố cảm xúc trong học ngoại ngữ thứ hai và đưa ra những gợi ý thực tiễn cho phương pháp giảng dạy trong bối cảnh tại Việt Nam cũng như các môi trường giáo dục tương tự, nơi lo âu ảnh hưởng đến mức độ tham gia và hiệu quả học tập của người học.

1. Introduction

Language learning, especially in foreign language classrooms, often presents students with a range of emotional challenges (Felcida & Parameswaran, 2024; De Jesus-Reyes, 2024; Ouahmiche & Bouguebs, 2025a; Ouahmiche & Bouguebs, 2025b). One of the most pervasive of these challenges is language anxiety, a condition that can significantly hinder both students' learning progress and their overall language acquisition experience (Al-Tamimi & Bin-Hady, 2025; Nwagbara, 2025; Urbaniak & Chanh, 2025). In particular, Vietnamese students, especially those who are not majoring in English, may face distinct challenges when engaging with English as a foreign language (Tran et al., 2013). The anxiety students experience often stems from the fear of making mistakes, being judged by their peers and instructors, and struggling to understand or communicate in a language that is unfamiliar to them (Akkakoson, 2016).

Over the past decade, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) has received significant scholarly attention across diverse educational contexts. Studies have identified its core dimensions, including communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety, and highlighted a wide range of learner-related variables associated with



FLCA (Akkakoson, 2016; Guo et al., 2018; Kruk, 2018; He et al., 2021; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2021). Self-regulation, or self-management, has long been recognized as a key factor in overcoming these emotional barriers (Hauck & Hurd, 2005; Guo et al., 2018; Kruk, 2018). Self-regulatory strategies, such as goal-setting, self-reflection, and stress-management techniques, enable learners to better manage their emotions, focus on the task at hand, and improve their overall performance (He et al., 2021; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2021). In the context of language learning, these strategies are critical in helping students cope with the anxiety they may experience in the classroom.

This research aims to investigate the perspectives of Vietnamese non-English-major students regarding the self-regulatory strategies they employ to manage FLCA. By examining students' perceptions of these strategies, this study not only identifies which techniques are viewed as most effective but also uncovers the underlying cultural, personal, and educational factors that shape these perceptions. In doing so, the study contributes to the broader literature on FLCA by providing context-specific, learner-centered insights from a geographically underrepresented population, while also extending the conceptual focus on self-regulatory coping mechanisms in foreign language learning.

Understanding these perceptions is crucial not only for improving the well-being and academic success of language learners but also for informing teaching practices (Bnesaad & Ouahmiche, 2020; He et al., 2021; Toyama & Yamazaki, 2021; Abah et al., 2024; Oso, 2024). Educators can play a pivotal role in fostering an environment that supports the development of self-regulation skills and helps reduce anxiety among students. This research will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between language anxiety, self-regulation, and learner success, particularly in the Vietnamese educational context, and will provide valuable insights for educators seeking to improve classroom dynamics and learning outcomes for their students. The study aims to answer the two research questions:

1. What are the Vietnamese students' perceptions of self-management strategies for foreign language classroom anxiety?
2. What are underlying reasons for the Vietnamese students' perceptions of self-management strategies for foreign language classroom anxiety?

2. Literature Review

The body of the literature review represents the theoretical framework of the paper. FLCA is a widely studied affective factor that influences students' language learning experiences across various cultural and educational contexts. Anxiety in language classrooms has been found to be linked to a variety of challenges, including test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and communication apprehension, which can significantly hinder learners' language acquisition and self-confidence. This literature review explores previous studies on FLCA, with particular focus on the use of self-regulatory strategies for managing anxiety in language learning contexts. The review synthesizes findings from



a range of studies examining language learners' experiences with FLCA and the role of self-regulation and self-management strategies in alleviating anxiety.

2.1 FLCA and Its Impact

Foreign language anxiety is a significant issue that impacts students' ability to participate and succeed in language classes. Resnik, Dewaele, and Knechtelsdorfer (2023) conducted a mixed-methods study to compare FLCA in in-person and online English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study revealed that although students reported a slight decrease in overall FLCA in online settings, anxiety levels were influenced by different factors in both formats. Online learners, for instance, experienced less physical anxiety and were less concerned about being outperformed by peers. However, they reported higher levels of embarrassment when volunteering answers, which pointed to the different anxiety sources in online learning environments. This underscores the importance of context in understanding and managing FLCA.

Similarly, Akkakoson (2016) explored speaking anxiety among Thai EFL students in conversation classes. His findings revealed that students experienced moderate levels of anxiety, particularly concerning test anxiety (TA) and fear of negative evaluation (FNE). Students also identified a limited vocabulary as a significant source of speaking anxiety. These findings align with the notion that language learners' anxiety is often tied to the fear of making errors or being judged by others.

In a broader context, Tran et al. (2013) explored Vietnamese non-English-major students' awareness of FLCA and its impact on language learning. Their study found that a large proportion of students experienced FLCA, yet teachers were largely unaware of its prevalence or its significance in the learning process. This highlights the gap between learners' emotional experiences and teachers' understanding, which can hinder the development of appropriate strategies to manage anxiety.

2.2 Self-Regulation and Anxiety Management in Language Learning

The concept of self-regulation is crucial in managing language anxiety, as it empowers learners to take control of their emotional and cognitive responses to anxiety-provoking situations. Guo et al. (2018) examined the use of self-regulatory strategies among Chinese EFL learners. Their study identified six categories of strategies, including cognitive, metacognitive, and affective strategies, with cognitive and metacognitive strategies being the most commonly used. These strategies helped learners manage their anxiety and engage more effectively in language learning. The study also highlighted that students with higher anxiety levels tended to use avoidance and affective strategies more frequently, suggesting that self-regulatory strategies are influenced by the intensity of the learner's anxiety.

The role of self-regulation in alleviating anxiety is further supported by Hauck and Hurd (2005), who explored the link between language anxiety and learner self-



management in open language learning contexts. Their study found that learners who were more self-directed and used metacognitive strategies, such as self-reflection and planning, were better able to manage their anxiety. This finding emphasizes the importance of fostering self-regulation in language learners, particularly in contexts where they are required to engage in self-directed or independent learning.

A similar pattern was observed in the study by Kruk (2018), which examined changes in FLCA over the course of a semester. The study found that students' anxiety levels fluctuated throughout the semester, with certain factors such as lesson activities and teacher feedback influencing these changes. The dynamic nature of FLCA suggests that self-regulatory strategies may be particularly effective when tailored to the specific contexts in which anxiety arises, reinforcing the need for individualized anxiety management strategies.

2.3 Classroom Interventions and Their Impact on Anxiety

Several studies have explored the role of classroom interventions in reducing FLCA, emphasizing the importance of teacher-student and student-student interactions in alleviating anxiety. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) conducted a systematic review of classroom interventions aimed at reducing FLCA. They identified self-management as one of the key intervention categories, highlighting the importance of strategies that enable students to regulate their emotional responses. The review emphasized that self-regulatory strategies, such as goal-setting, self-monitoring, and relaxation techniques, have been found to be effective in reducing anxiety in language learners.

The findings from the study by He et al. (2021) also support the role of self-regulation in managing anxiety. They found that external factors, such as the type of classroom activity and teacher feedback, as well as internal factors, such as self-efficacy and gender differences, played a significant role in triggering and managing FLCA. These results suggest that self-regulation strategies can be particularly effective when learners are aware of the factors that influence their anxiety and can adjust their strategies accordingly.

Despite the growing body of research on FLCA and the role of self-regulatory strategies in managing it, several key research gaps remain. First, while much of the existing literature focuses on the general impact of FLCA in various cultural contexts, there is limited research specifically exploring how non-English-major students in Vietnam perceive and apply self-regulatory strategies to manage language anxiety. Most studies, such as those by Guo et al. (2018) and Tran et al. (2013), examine learners from China and other regions, leaving a gap in understanding the cultural and contextual factors that influence Vietnamese students' self-management practices. Second, while many studies highlight the role of cognitive and metacognitive strategies, less attention has been given to affective strategies, particularly how emotions like fear and embarrassment affect language learners' use of self-regulation. Finally, there is a need for more in-depth qualitative studies, such as interviews or case studies, to capture the nuanced,



individualized ways in which students' anxiety manifests and how they develop and implement personal strategies to manage it. These gaps suggest that further exploration of the specific perceptions and practices of Vietnamese non-English major students is crucial for developing targeted interventions in foreign language education.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques to investigate Vietnamese non-English major students' perceptions of self-regulatory strategies for managing FLCA. Specifically, the research integrated a questionnaire based on the self-regulatory strategies framework developed by Guo et al. (2018), alongside semi-structured interviews to explore the underlying reasons behind the students' perceptions and use of these strategies.

3.2 Research Participants

Of the initial 418 students invited to participate, 18 either failed to complete the questionnaire, or withdrew from the study and were therefore excluded from the final sample. Only the 400 fully completed responses were included in the study. The participants were non-English major undergraduate students from different universities in Vietnam. The participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a diverse representation of students across different levels of FLCA. This included students with low, moderate, and high levels of anxiety, as identified through their responses to the questionnaire. Participants were provided with informed consent forms, and participation was voluntary.

The study adhered to ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring confidentiality, and allowing participants to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The research also followed ethical guidelines for conducting research with human participants, ensuring that all data was anonymized and securely stored. Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential, and interview data was only used for the purpose of this study.

3.3 Data collection and Analysis

For the data collection, questionnaire adapted from Guo et al. (2018) was used to assess students' use of self-regulatory strategies to manage FLCA. The questionnaire consisted of 31 items, grouped into six categories of strategies: Cognitive Strategy, Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy, Affective Strategy, Avoidance Strategy, Social Strategy, and External Strategy. These categories were drawn from Guo et al.'s framework, which was developed based on a combination of self-regulated learning theory and cognitive therapy approaches. Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Never, 5 = Always), allowing for an assessment of the frequency with which students used each type of strategy. The questionnaire was distributed electronically to ensure a



broad reach across multiple universities.

In addition to the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants who represented a range of FLCA levels. These participants were selected from the initial pool based on their questionnaire responses to ensure a diverse sample. The interviews focused on exploring students' experiences with FLCA, their perceptions of the effectiveness of various self-regulatory strategies, and the underlying reasons for their choices of strategies. Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' consent. Interviews were conducted in Vietnamese and later transcribed for analysis. Each interviewee was assigned a unique identification code (e.g., "S1," "S4," "S20"). The letter "S" stands for "Student," followed by a number that was assigned arbitrarily and does not reflect any ranking, order of participation, or personal information.

For the data analysis, the quantitative data from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify the overall frequency and distribution of the self-regulatory strategies employed by students. SPSS software was used to report the results in strategy use based on the level of anxiety. Moreover, the qualitative data from the semi-structured interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis. The transcripts were coded inductively to identify recurring themes and patterns related to the students' perceptions and experiences of managing FLCA. Key themes were cross-referenced with the questionnaire results to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between self-regulation strategies and anxiety management. The researchers independently coded the transcripts, discussed discrepancies, and reached consensus to ensure consistency in theme identification.

The qualitative findings also highlighted the contextual and cultural factors that influenced students' perceptions and use of strategies in the Vietnamese language classroom.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Results

4.1.1 Overall usage for the different self-regulatory strategies employed by students

The findings indicate that the avoidance strategy is widely used by students, particularly through disengaging from tasks, avoiding participation, and physically distancing themselves in the classroom to prevent anxiety-provoking situations, as reported in Table 1.

Table 1.

Overall usage for the different self-regulatory strategies

No.	Items	Mean	SD
1	Avoidance Strategy	3.86	0.90



2	Metacognitive (Management) Strategy	2.80	0.95
3	Affective Strategy	3.74	0.96
4	Social Strategy	2.89	0.95
5	Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy	3.25	0.91

The data analysis reveals varying levels of usage for the different self-regulatory strategies employed by students in managing FLCA. The Avoidance Strategy emerged as the most frequently used, with a mean score of 3.86 (SD = 0.90). This suggests that students tend to avoid situations that may induce anxiety in the language classroom, which may reflect an attempt to manage feelings of discomfort by steering clear of challenging tasks or speaking opportunities.

In contrast, the Metacognitive (Management) Strategy was the least frequently employed, with a mean score of 2.80 (SD = 0.95). This lower score indicates that students may not rely as much on strategies that involve managing or controlling their language learning process. These strategies could include organizing study time, setting goals, or regulating task completion, all of which seem to be less prominent in this sample.

The Affective Strategy received a relatively high mean score of 3.74 (SD = 0.96), signifying that students actively engage in strategies to control their emotional responses to language learning, such as managing anxiety or boosting motivation. This suggests that students recognize the importance of regulating their emotional state to mitigate the effects of anxiety on their language performance.

Similarly, the Social Strategy, with a mean score of 2.89 (SD = 0.95), indicates that students somewhat frequently engage in seeking social support or interacting with peers to manage language learning stress. However, the frequency of this strategy is lower compared to affective strategies, pointing to a possible preference for internal coping mechanisms rather than seeking help from others.

Finally, the Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy scored a mean of 3.25 (SD = 0.91), which shows that students engage moderately in evaluating their language learning progress and reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses. This suggests that students do try to monitor their own learning processes but may not do so as frequently or consistently as with other strategies.

In summary, students appear to utilize a range of self-regulatory strategies, with avoidance and affective strategies being the most prominent. However, strategies related to managing learning tasks and seeking social support seem to be less commonly employed. This distribution of strategy use offers insight into the coping mechanisms that students rely on to manage anxiety in foreign language classrooms.

4.1.2 Usage for the Avoidance Strategy employed by students

The data on the Avoidance Strategy items reveals that students exhibit a strong tendency to avoid anxiety-inducing situations related to English learning, particularly speaking and classroom participation. Students report significant nervousness and



frustration, leading them to disengage from learning materials and avoid participation in activities, with some even taking measures to avoid teacher attention, reflecting a high level of anxiety in these situations, as reported in Table 2.

Table 2.

Usage for the Avoidance Strategy employed by students

No.	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
	Avoidance Strategy			3.86	0.90
1	It makes me nervous to speak English, so I try to avoid those occasions on which I have to speak the language.	1	5	3.15	.93
2	English learning makes me frustrated, so I just put English learning materials away, anyway, out of way, out of mind.	1	5	4.67	.85
3	English learning irritates me and I tell myself that it doesn't matter whether I learn it well or not since it won't be of use in my future work.	1	5	2.99	.89
4	I try to avoid as much as I can any participation in English (learning) activities so that I won't feel anxious.	1	5	3.90	.87
5	When the teacher calls on me to answer a question, I will say "Sorry, I don't know" so as not to arouse anxious feelings due to the possibility of making mistakes.	2	5	3.55	.94
6	I sit where the teacher won't notice me so that I can avoid being asked questions by the teacher when in class.	1	5	4.87	.92

The data for the Avoidance Strategy items reveal varying degrees of student tendencies to avoid English learning situations that provoke anxiety. The item "It makes me nervous to speak English, so I try to avoid those occasions on which I have to speak the language" had a mean score of 3.15 (SD = 0.93), suggesting a moderate level of nervousness and avoidance among students when faced with speaking English. On the other hand, the item "English learning makes me frustrated, so I just put English learning materials away, anyway, out of way, out of mind" had the highest mean score of 4.67 (SD = 0.85), indicating that a significant number of students avoid dealing with their frustration by disengaging from English learning materials. This points to a strong tendency to avoid confronting anxiety-inducing learning tasks. S14 shared:



"I often feel nervous when I have to speak in English, so I try to avoid situations where I might need to speak. Sometimes, when I get frustrated with studying, I just put my books away and forget about them. It's easier to avoid the problem, even though I know it doesn't help in the long run."

The item "English learning irritates me and I tell myself that it doesn't matter whether I learn it well or not since it won't be of use in my future work" showed a lower mean score of 2.99 (SD = 0.89), suggesting that while some students may experience irritability, they do not generally adopt an attitude of indifference toward learning English in relation to their future career prospects. S4 mentioned:

"I sometimes get irritated with learning English, but I don't usually think that it won't matter for my future job. Most of the time, I try to push through, even if I feel frustrated."

In terms of classroom participation, the item "I try to avoid as much as I can any participation in English (learning) activities so that I won't feel anxious" had a mean score of 3.90 (SD = 0.87), reflecting that students often engage in avoidance behaviors to reduce anxiety, particularly when they are expected to participate in learning activities. Similarly, the item "When the teacher calls on me to answer a question, I will say 'Sorry, I don't know' so as not to arouse anxious feelings due to the possibility of making mistakes" had a mean score of 3.55 (SD = 0.94), indicating a tendency to avoid speaking by using excuses in order to avoid the discomfort of making mistakes in front of peers. S2 pointed out:

"I try to avoid speaking in English activities because it makes me nervous. If the teacher asks me a question, I sometimes say I don't know to avoid feeling anxious about making mistakes in front of others."

Lastly, the item "I sit where the teacher won't notice me so that I can avoid being asked questions by the teacher when in class" scored the highest in this category, with a mean score of 4.87 (SD = 0.92). This suggests that some students take considerable measures to avoid attention from the teacher, further demonstrating a high level of anxiety and a strong tendency to avoid situations where they might be put on the spot. S7 mentioned:

"I can relate to this. Sometimes, I sit where the teacher can't see me to avoid being asked questions. It's not that I don't want to participate, but I get nervous about making mistakes in front of everyone. It feels safer when I'm not the center of attention."



4.1.3 Usage for the Metacognitive (Management) Strategy employed by students

The data on the Metacognitive (Management) Strategy items indicates that students use some strategies to manage their anxiety, but their overall usage is moderate. While a portion of students adjust their learning objectives and follow study plans, strategies like daily planning and regular previewing/reviewing are less commonly used, suggesting that students may benefit from further guidance on effectively employing these strategies to reduce anxiety, as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3.

Usage for the Metacognitive (Management) Strategy employed by students

No.	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I make specific plans about each day's learning tasks so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	2.00	.88
2	I stick to my study plans so as to combat anxiety with practical efforts.	1	5	3.06	.93
3	I do regular previews and reviews to get well-prepared for the English classes to reduce anxiety in class.	1	5	2.57	.98
4	I check and adjust my learning objectives to prevent the arousal of anxiety on account of setting too high objectives.	2	5	3.58	1.01

The data for the Metacognitive (Management) Strategy items suggest that students employ some strategies to manage their anxiety, though their usage is generally moderate. The item "I make specific plans about each day's learning tasks so as to reduce anxiety" had a relatively low mean score of 2.00 (SD = 0.88), indicating that few students actively plan their daily learning tasks with the goal of reducing anxiety. This suggests that planning may not be a widely adopted strategy for managing anxiety among the participants. S3 highlighted:

"I don't really plan my tasks every day to reduce anxiety. It feels like there's so much to do, and I usually just try to get through it all without thinking too much about planning. Maybe planning could help, but I haven't really tried it much."

The item "I stick to my study plans so as to combat anxiety with practical efforts" had a mean score of 3.06 (SD = 0.93), showing that while some students do follow their study plans to mitigate anxiety, it is not a universally applied approach. This indicates that sticking to a study schedule may help manage anxiety for some, but it may not be a primary



or consistent strategy for all learners. S7 mentioned:

"I try to follow my study plan, but it's not always easy. Some students find it helpful to stick to a plan to reduce anxiety, but not everyone does. For me, it helps when I follow it, but sometimes I don't and that makes me more stressed."

For the item "I do regular previews and reviews to get well-prepared for the English classes to reduce anxiety in class", the mean score of 2.57 (SD = 0.98) suggests that students generally do not engage in regular previewing and reviewing practices to prepare for class. This indicates that many students may not use these proactive learning strategies as a means of alleviating anxiety, potentially due to time constraints, lack of awareness of their benefits, or other factors. S6 shared:

"I don't often review or prepare before class. It seems like many students don't do this to reduce anxiety. Maybe it's because we don't have enough time or don't realize it could help. I usually just focus on the class and don't think about preparing."

The item "I check and adjust my learning objectives to prevent the arousal of anxiety on account of setting too high objectives" had a mean score of 3.58 (SD = 1.01), which is the highest within this strategy category. This suggests that a more considerable portion of students do adjust their learning objectives to avoid the anxiety that may arise from setting unrealistic goals. This indicates that some students are mindful of managing their expectations and modifying them to reduce anxiety. S12 stated:

"I sometimes check and change my learning goals to avoid feeling too stressed. The score shows that many students do this to keep their goals realistic and reduce anxiety. I think it helps me not to set goals that are too hard, which makes me feel less nervous."

In summary, the findings indicate that while some students make efforts to manage their anxiety through metacognitive strategies, such as adjusting their learning objectives and sticking to study plans, the overall use of metacognitive (management) strategies appears to be somewhat limited. The data suggest that students may benefit from more targeted guidance on how to use these strategies effectively to reduce anxiety.

4.1.4 Usage for the Affective Strategy employed by students

The results indicate that students tend to rely more on personal and enjoyable activities, such as listening to music or watching comedies, to manage their anxiety in English learning. However, the use of social strategies, such as connecting with peers to reduce anxiety, appears to be less common. These findings highlight the importance of



incorporating enjoyable, affective strategies into anxiety-reduction interventions while also recognizing that peer support might be an area for further development and encouragement among students, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4.

Usage for the Affective Strategy employed by students

N°	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	When feeling anxious in English learning, I listen to music to divert my attention.	1	5	4.78	.88
2	When feeling anxious in English learning, I read humorous stories or watch comedies or enjoy funny jokes to relax myself.	1	5	4.00	.96
3	When feeling anxious in English learning, I reward myself with something I like so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	3.72	.89
4	I get to know about other students' English learning situation and remind myself that I am not alone in English learning so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	2.45	1.11

The data for the Affective Strategy items suggest that students tend to use emotional regulation techniques to alleviate anxiety, with some strategies being more commonly employed than others. The item "When feeling anxious in English learning, I listen to music to divert my attention" received the highest mean score of 4.78 (SD = 0.88), indicating that many students rely on music as an effective way to reduce anxiety. This suggests that listening to music is a widely adopted strategy among students for emotional regulation during stressful moments in language learning. S5 emphasized:

"When I feel anxious in English class, I like to listen to music to help me feel better. The score shows that many students do the same. Music helps me relax and forget about the stress for a while, so I can focus better."

Similarly, the item "When feeling anxious in English learning, I read humorous stories or watch comedies or enjoy funny jokes to relax myself" had a mean score of 4.00 (SD = 0.96), further supporting the idea that students prefer using entertaining and light-hearted activities, like watching comedies or reading jokes, to help alleviate stress. This indicates that students are inclined to engage in activities that allow them to momentarily escape the tension and unwind, thus reducing anxiety during English learning. S4 shared:



"When I feel stressed in English class, I like to read funny stories or watch comedies. The score shows that many students do this too. It helps me laugh and forget about the anxiety for a bit, so I can feel more relaxed and ready to focus."

For the item "When feeling anxious in English learning, I reward myself with something I like so as to reduce anxiety", the mean score of 3.72 (SD = 0.89) suggests that some students use self-reward as a strategy to cope with anxiety. While this strategy is somewhat commonly used, it is not as prevalent as music or humor-based approaches. This indicates that students recognize the value of rewarding themselves, but it may not be their primary method for managing anxiety. S15 highlighted:

"I sometimes reward myself when I feel anxious, but I don't do it all the time. The score shows that some students use this, but it's not as common as listening to music or watching funny things. It helps me feel better, but I usually use other ways to relax."

The item "I get to know about other students' English learning situation and remind myself that I am not alone in English learning so as to reduce anxiety" had a lower mean score of 2.45 (SD = 1.11), indicating that fewer students actively seek social comparison or peer support to reduce their anxiety. This suggests that, for many students, the idea of finding comfort in knowing others face similar struggles is not as effective or widely used as other self-regulatory strategies. S1 said:

"I don't often think about how other students are learning English. The score shows that not many people use this to feel less anxious. I don't really find it helps to know others are also having problems. I usually focus on my own work and use other ways to relax."

4.1.5 Usage for the Social Strategy employed by students

The findings for the Social Strategy items suggest that while some students do seek social interactions to help with anxiety, these strategies are used less frequently compared to other approaches, such as those focused on personal or emotional regulation. Students seem more inclined to engage in peer discussions about their feelings and difficulties than to seek teacher support or collaborate in study groups. This points to a potential area for improvement, where fostering a more supportive and open environment for student-teacher interactions and collaborative study could help students better manage their anxiety, as reported in Table 5.



Table 5.*Usage for the Social Strategy employed by students*

No.	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I take the initiative to talk with classmates about the feelings and difficulties in English learning so as to reduce anxiety.	2	5	3.67	1.05
2	I take the initiative to talk with the teacher about my learning difficulties so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	2.50	.92
3	I take the initiative to invite classmates to study English together and collaborate so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	2.51	.88

The data for the Social Strategy items reveal that students do engage in social interactions to manage their anxiety, although the strategies used are not highly prevalent. The item "I take the initiative to talk with classmates about the feelings and difficulties in English learning so as to reduce anxiety" has a mean score of 3.67 (SD = 1.05), indicating that a moderate number of students are willing to open up to their peers about their struggles with English learning. This suggests that peer support through conversation may help reduce anxiety, although it is not a dominant strategy across all students. S13 mentioned:

"I sometimes talk to my classmates about how I feel and the difficulties I have with learning English. The score shows that some students do this to reduce anxiety, but not everyone does. Talking to others helps me feel better, but it's not something I do all the time."

The item "I take the initiative to talk with the teacher about my learning difficulties so as to reduce anxiety" received a lower mean score of 2.50 (SD = 0.92), suggesting that fewer students are comfortable initiating conversations with teachers about their struggles. This could indicate a reluctance or discomfort in discussing academic challenges with instructors, possibly due to feelings of vulnerability or fear of judgment, which may hinder the effective use of this strategy in anxiety reduction. S12 shared:

"I don't usually talk to the teacher about my learning problems. The score shows that not many students do this. I think it's because I feel a bit nervous or scared to ask for help. I worry the teacher might think I'm not good enough, so I prefer to try to solve the problems on my own."



Lastly, the item "I take the initiative to invite classmates to study English together and collaborate so as to reduce anxiety" showed a similar trend with a mean score of 2.51 (SD = 0.88), suggesting that while some students may collaborate with peers in a study context to alleviate anxiety, this is not a widespread practice. The relatively low score here indicates that group study or collaborative learning is not commonly used as a strategy for managing anxiety among these students. S10 pointed out:

"I don't usually invite classmates to study together. The score shows that not many students do this to reduce anxiety. I think it's because I feel more comfortable studying on my own. I don't always feel like working with others helps me feel less stressed."

4.1.6 Usage for the Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy employed by students

The data indicates that while some students demonstrate strong metacognitive awareness, particularly in recognizing and reframing negative thoughts, there is room for improvement in other areas such as identifying the root causes of anxiety and actively adjusting study methods. Encouraging students to engage more deeply in self-reflection and to adapt their learning strategies could further enhance their ability to manage anxiety effectively, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6.

Usage for the Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy employed by students

No.	Items	Min	Max	Mean	SD
1	I analyze the reasons behind my anxiety and cope with them respectively.	1	5	1.99	.91
2	I tell myself that what really makes me anxious is the passive and negative thoughts I have about myself and English learning.	1	5	4.23	.98
3	I talk to myself that it's not because I'm stupid or lazy that I can't learn English well and the problem may lie in study methods.	1	5	4.00	.88
4	I adjust my study methods and improve efficiency of learning so as to reduce anxiety.	1	5	2.78	.86

The data for the Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategy items reveals varying levels of engagement in self-reflection and adjustment of cognitive processes to manage anxiety. The item "I analyze the reasons behind my anxiety and cope with them respectively" received the lowest mean score of 1.99 (SD = 0.91), suggesting that most students do not engage in deep reflection to identify and address the specific causes of their anxiety. This



indicates that metacognitive awareness, specifically related to identifying anxiety triggers, may be underdeveloped among these students, pointing to a potential area for intervention or improvement in self-regulatory strategies. S17 said:

"I don't usually think deeply about why I feel anxious in English class. The score shows that most students don't do this. I think it's hard to figure out exactly why I feel anxious, so I just try to get through it without thinking too much about the reasons behind it."

On the other hand, the item "I tell myself that what really makes me anxious is the passive and negative thoughts I have about myself and English learning" had a higher mean score of 4.23 (SD = 0.98). This suggests that many students are aware that their anxiety is driven by negative thoughts about themselves or their ability to learn English, and they recognize the role these thoughts play in their emotional state. This awareness of cognitive patterns could be seen as a positive step towards anxiety reduction, as it indicates that some students are actively identifying and understanding the cognitive factors influencing their anxiety. S14 shared:

"I realize that my anxiety comes from negative thoughts about myself and my English skills. The score shows that many students think the same way. Knowing this helps me understand why I feel anxious, and I try to change my thoughts to feel better and less stressed."

Similarly, the item "I talk to myself that it's not because I'm stupid or lazy that I can't learn English well and the problem may lie in study methods" also had a high mean score of 4.00 (SD = 0.88). This indicates that students use self-affirmation and cognitive reframing to combat negative self-perceptions and recognize that the issue may lie in their study methods rather than their intrinsic abilities. This strategy aligns with metacognitive reflection, where students actively challenge negative beliefs and seek more constructive approaches to learning. S20 mentioned:

"I remind myself that it's not because I'm lazy or stupid that I'm not good at English. The score shows that many students think this way too. I try to tell myself that maybe my study methods are the problem, not me, and this helps me feel less anxious and more positive about learning."

Finally, the item "I adjust my study methods and improve the efficiency of learning so as to reduce anxiety" had a mean score of 2.78 (SD = 0.86), suggesting that fewer students actively modify their study strategies to manage anxiety. While some may acknowledge the need for improved study methods, the relatively low score implies that this metacognitive strategy is not widely applied by all students, possibly due to a lack of awareness or the difficulty of implementing such changes. S19 highlighted:



"I don't often change my study methods to reduce anxiety. The score shows that not many students do this. I know I could improve my study habits, but sometimes it's hard to know where to start or how to make it work better for me."

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Avoidance Strategy in Reducing Foreign Language Anxiety

The Results section presents the study's findings displayed via numbers, tables, and figures (e.g., charts and graphs). The information presented and conveyed to the reader in this section should be clear and concise. This study investigated the use of avoidance strategies by students to manage anxiety in English language learning. The results reveal that avoidance behaviors are common among students, with varying degrees of disengagement from anxiety-inducing situations. These findings are consistent with existing literature, which highlights the prevalence of avoidance as a coping mechanism in foreign language learning. The study offers important insights into how avoidance strategies impact language learning and provides implications for educational practices aimed at reducing anxiety.

4.2.1.1 High Tendency for Disengagement from Learning Materials

A major finding in this study is the significant tendency for students to disengage from English learning materials when feeling frustrated. Specifically, the data indicated that many students avoid confronting their frustration by putting away learning materials, reflecting a common coping mechanism in the face of stress. This is in line with the research by Guo et al. (2018), who identified that learners often use avoidance strategies to manage anxiety when faced with overwhelming emotions. Avoiding learning tasks in moments of frustration may prevent students from addressing the root causes of their anxiety and can hinder their long-term language development. Resnik, Dewaele, and Knechtelsdorfer (2023) also found that avoidance behaviors were prevalent during the pandemic, with students engaging in withdrawal as a response to both the stress of online learning and the anxiety of speaking in a foreign language.

Avoiding English learning materials might offer temporary relief, but it can also perpetuate a cycle of non-engagement and a lack of progress. Teachers should consider providing targeted interventions to help students confront these challenges. For instance, small, manageable learning tasks or opportunities to express feelings of frustration in a supportive classroom environment could help reduce the need for avoidance behaviors. Hauck and Hurd (2005) emphasize that fostering self-regulation and emotional management is key to minimizing anxiety and encouraging consistent engagement with learning tasks.



4.2.1.2 Avoidance in Speaking Situations and Classroom Participation

The study also highlighted the significant anxiety students experience in speaking situations, with many engaging in avoidance behaviors such as not participating in classroom activities or using excuses when called upon. These findings are consistent with Akkakoson (2016), who identified speaking anxiety as one of the most significant sources of stress in language learning, particularly in conversation classes. Tran, Baldauf Jr., and Moni (2013) further explored how such anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviors, as students fear negative evaluation from peers or teachers. The avoidance of speaking tasks reflects a deep-seated fear of making mistakes and being judged, both of which are central to speaking anxiety.

The findings from this study echo those of Bárkányi (2021), who noted that learners often avoid speaking activities to protect themselves from the perceived threat of failure. The high levels of speaking anxiety observed in this study underscore the need for instructors to provide a more supportive learning environment. Teachers can implement techniques such as peer collaboration, low-stakes speaking opportunities, and positive reinforcement to create a safe space for students to practice speaking without the fear of judgment. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) suggest that incorporating regular classroom interventions that focus on emotional support and creating a non-threatening environment can significantly reduce speaking anxiety.

4.2.1.3 Avoidance in the Physical Classroom Environment

One of the most striking results in this study was the tendency of students to physically distance themselves from situations where they could be called upon by the teacher. The high mean score for students sitting in locations where they are less likely to be noticed indicates a strong desire to avoid speaking situations that may provoke anxiety. This physical avoidance is not uncommon in foreign language classrooms and is consistent with findings from Kruk (2018), who explored how students with high anxiety often resort to sitting in the back of the classroom to minimize exposure to potentially anxiety-provoking situations. This strategy provides temporary relief from the pressure of being called on but ultimately limits students' opportunities to engage and improve their language skills.

Zhang and Lai (2024) also identified that out-of-class anxiety can manifest in behaviors that limit engagement, such as avoiding direct interaction with the teacher. Physical distancing is often an unconscious strategy to cope with the fear of making mistakes. Teachers can mitigate this by gradually encouraging students to engage in low-pressure interactions and ensuring that classroom participation is framed as a learning opportunity rather than an evaluative one. He, Zhou, and Zhang (2021) argue that understanding and addressing the underlying causes of such anxiety through empathy and supportive pedagogical practices can help reduce the need for physical avoidance behaviors.



4.2.1.4 Implications for Teaching Practice

The widespread use of avoidance strategies among students indicates a significant issue in foreign language learning environments. While avoidance strategies may provide short-term relief from anxiety, they limit students' engagement with learning and prevent them from developing the language skills necessary for academic success. This reinforces the findings of Al-Shboul et al. (2013), who noted that anxiety-related avoidance behaviors can significantly hinder language development, particularly in reading and speaking tasks.

To address these issues, educators need to create supportive environments that reduce the pressure students feel and promote gradual exposure to anxiety-inducing situations. Agudo and de Dios (2013) emphasized the importance of building students' self-efficacy and motivation, both of which are crucial for overcoming anxiety. Encouraging positive classroom dynamics, where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities rather than failures, can help reduce the fear of speaking and other anxiety-inducing behaviors. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) suggest incorporating mindfulness and relaxation techniques into the curriculum, which can help students manage their emotional responses and reduce their tendency to avoid challenging situations.

Furthermore, the integration of self-regulatory strategies, such as goal-setting and reflection, could help students feel more in control of their learning process. As Guo et al. (2018) pointed out, fostering self-regulation is essential in helping students develop more adaptive strategies for coping with anxiety. Teachers can encourage students to reflect on their progress and develop strategies for managing their emotional responses, which could reduce reliance on avoidance as a coping mechanism.

4.2.2 Usage of Metacognitive (Management) Strategies in Reducing Anxiety

The findings from this study suggest that students employ some metacognitive (management) strategies to manage their anxiety in English learning, but the overall use of such strategies appears to be moderate. While some students make efforts to plan, stick to study schedules, and adjust their learning objectives to reduce anxiety, the general usage of these strategies is limited. These results provide important insights into the ways students manage anxiety, and how they could benefit from more targeted guidance on using metacognitive strategies effectively.

4.2.2.1 Limited Use of Planning as a Strategy to Reduce Anxiety

The finding that the item "I make specific plans about each day's learning tasks so as to reduce anxiety" had a low mean score of 2.00 suggests that planning is not a widely adopted strategy for managing anxiety among the participants. This aligns with previous research indicating that students may not always recognize the potential benefits of structured planning in alleviating anxiety. Bárkányi (2021) found that students who plan their language learning activities tend to experience less anxiety, as they feel more in control of their learning process. However, the participants in this study may not have



fully integrated planning into their routine, possibly due to time constraints or a lack of awareness about how effective planning can reduce anxiety.

As one participant noted, the overwhelming volume of tasks may discourage active planning. This reflects the broader challenge of balancing various academic responsibilities and the perception that planning may be an additional burden rather than a helpful strategy. Hauck and Hurd (2005) suggested that a lack of awareness about the positive impact of planning on reducing anxiety might explain the low engagement with this strategy. Encouraging students to see planning as a tool for managing their workload and anxiety could help them adopt this strategy more regularly.

4.2.2.2 Moderate Use of Study Plans and Previews

The item "I stick to my study plans so as to combat anxiety with practical efforts" had a higher mean score of 3.06, indicating that some students do follow their study plans, but this strategy is not consistently applied across the entire student population. This suggests that sticking to a study plan is a useful but underutilized strategy for managing anxiety. Guo et al. (2018) found that students who regularly adhere to study plans tend to feel more in control and less anxious about their learning. However, students in this study appeared to struggle with maintaining consistent adherence to study plans, which could be due to the difficulty of balancing academic pressures with effective time management skills.

Moreover, the item on regular previews and reviews for class preparation (mean score = 2.57) also indicates that many students do not engage in these proactive learning behaviors. Previews and reviews are strategies that have been shown to reduce anxiety by increasing familiarity with class content, thus minimizing feelings of uncertainty and stress. However, it appears that time constraints, a lack of motivation, or an underestimation of the benefits of such activities may hinder students from engaging with these strategies. Zhang and Lai (2024) observed similar tendencies among university students, where time pressures and competing priorities limited their engagement with preparatory tasks. By incorporating regular previews and reviews into students' routines, teachers might help students feel more prepared and confident in the classroom, reducing their anxiety.

4.2.2.3 Adjusting Learning Objectives to Manage Anxiety

The highest mean score in this category was found for the item "I check and adjust my learning objectives to prevent the arousal of anxiety on account of setting too high objectives" (mean score = 3.58). This suggests that a significant number of students actively monitor and adjust their goals to avoid the anxiety that arises from setting unrealistic expectations. This is a positive indicator of metacognitive awareness, as students seem to be mindful of the need to set achievable goals to reduce unnecessary stress. Resnik, Dewaele, and Knechtelsdorfer (2023) highlighted the importance of managing expectations in the context of language learning, noting that students who set



realistic goals are less likely to experience heightened anxiety.

However, despite this relatively higher score, adjusting learning objectives does not seem to be a universally applied strategy. This could reflect a lack of deeper understanding of how to set appropriate goals and the role these goals play in managing anxiety. As Kruk (2018) emphasized, students may not always have the tools or guidance to effectively adjust their objectives, leading them to set overly ambitious goals that result in frustration. Educators could help by providing clearer guidance on goal-setting, emphasizing the importance of realistic and incremental goals to foster a sense of achievement and reduce anxiety.

4.2.2.4 Implications for Practice

The findings suggest that while some students do use metacognitive strategies to manage anxiety, such as adjusting their learning objectives and attempting to follow study plans, the overall use of these strategies is moderate. This points to a gap in students' ability to consistently apply metacognitive strategies, which could be addressed through targeted educational interventions. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) suggested that language instructors can play a crucial role in guiding students to adopt metacognitive strategies effectively by incorporating explicit instruction on planning, reviewing, and goal-setting into the curriculum.

In addition, promoting self-reflection on learning strategies and anxiety management could encourage students to become more aware of how their behaviors and strategies impact their anxiety levels. Providing students with opportunities to regularly evaluate and adjust their learning goals could also help them build greater confidence in managing their anxiety. Agudo and de Dios (2013) emphasized that self-regulatory practices such as monitoring one's own learning progress are essential in reducing anxiety, as they allow students to take control of their learning experience.

4.2.3 Usage of Affective Strategies in Reducing Anxiety

The findings from this study suggest that students primarily rely on emotional regulation techniques to manage anxiety in their English learning, with particular emphasis on personal and enjoyable strategies. The results show that strategies such as listening to music and engaging in humorous or light-hearted activities are commonly used to alleviate stress. However, the use of social strategies, like seeking peer support or comparing learning experiences, was notably less common. These findings provide valuable insights into the emotional strategies students employ to cope with anxiety and suggest areas where interventions might be targeted to further support students.

4.2.3.1 Popularity of Music and Humor in Alleviating Anxiety

The data revealed that listening to music is the most widely used affective strategy, with a mean score of 4.78. This finding supports previous research, which has shown that music can serve as an effective tool for emotional regulation. Music has been recognized



for its ability to promote relaxation and improve mood, which in turn helps to alleviate feelings of anxiety. For many students in this study, music provided a temporary escape from the stresses associated with English learning, allowing them to refocus and feel more relaxed. This aligns with findings from Akkakoson (2016), who suggested that music functions as a mood-regulating tool in language classrooms, helping to ease feelings of nervousness and tension.

Similarly, humor-based strategies, such as reading funny stories or watching comedies, were also frequently used, with a mean score of 4.00. Humor has long been associated with stress reduction and emotional well-being, and it is evident that many students in this study prefer using humor as a means to relax and alleviate anxiety. Engaging with humorous content provides students with a break from the demands of learning and offers a momentary distraction from their worries. The findings support earlier research by He et al. (2021), who highlighted the effectiveness of humor in reducing anxiety, noting that laughter and lightheartedness can shift students' emotional states, making them feel more at ease in their learning environments.

4.2.3.2 Self-Rewards as an Anxiety-Reduction Strategy

The item "When feeling anxious in English learning, I reward myself with something I like so as to reduce anxiety" yielded a mean score of 3.72, indicating that some students do use self-reward as an anxiety-management strategy, though not as frequently as music or humor. Self-reward strategies have been shown to promote positive reinforcement, helping to motivate students and reduce feelings of anxiety by providing a sense of accomplishment and control over their learning environment. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) noted that self-reward mechanisms are effective in maintaining motivation and reducing negative emotional states in language learning contexts. However, the relatively moderate use of this strategy in the current study suggests that students may not immediately associate rewards with anxiety reduction, or they may prioritize other strategies they perceive as more immediately effective, such as music or humor.

4.2.3.3 Limited Use of Social Strategies for Anxiety Management

In contrast to the more personal strategies, the item "I get to know about other students' English learning situation and remind myself that I am not alone in English learning" had a lower mean score of 2.45. This indicates that fewer students seek comfort in social comparison or peer support as a method for managing anxiety. Despite the potential benefits of social support in reducing anxiety—such as fostering a sense of belonging or reassurance that others are facing similar challenges—students in this study were less likely to actively engage in these strategies. This finding contrasts with the results of Tran et al. (2013), who suggested that social comparison and peer support can alleviate anxiety by providing emotional validation. The relatively low engagement with social strategies in this study could be due to cultural differences, as students may



prioritize individual coping mechanisms or may not feel comfortable discussing their struggles with peers.

Additionally, it is possible that students simply do not view peer support as a viable option for anxiety reduction, possibly because of a focus on personal and immediate coping methods. As Guo et al. (2018) suggested, while peer support can be beneficial, it may require more explicit encouragement and guidance from instructors to ensure that students feel comfortable seeking social support when needed.

4.2.3.4 Implications for Interventions

The findings suggest that while music and humor are effective and widely used strategies for managing anxiety, there is room for development in promoting social strategies, such as peer support and group discussions. Given the popularity of personal coping mechanisms, instructors might consider incorporating activities that involve music, humor, or other enjoyable forms of emotional regulation into their teaching practices. This could include offering opportunities for students to share humorous stories or incorporating music into classroom activities as a way to ease anxiety before or after intense language learning sessions.

Moreover, given the moderate use of self-reward strategies, there may be an opportunity to guide students in recognizing the benefits of rewarding themselves for their learning achievements, which could improve motivation and further reduce anxiety. Teaching students to use self-reward techniques could be incorporated into the curriculum, especially in contexts where students experience persistent anxiety, such as during speaking activities or language tests.

Finally, there is a need to explore ways to make social strategies more accessible and comfortable for students. Encouraging collaboration, group work, or peer discussions about shared language learning challenges might help students realize that they are not alone in their struggles. This could be especially useful in fostering a supportive classroom environment where students feel more comfortable discussing their anxieties and seeking help from peers.

4.2.4 Usage of Social Strategies for Anxiety Management

The findings from this study reveal that while some students do engage in social strategies to manage their anxiety, these approaches are not as widely used as other anxiety-reduction techniques, such as emotional regulation strategies. Specifically, students appear to be more inclined to discuss their difficulties with peers than with teachers or through collaborative study groups. This suggests that while social strategies can be beneficial in reducing anxiety, there are barriers to their more widespread use, and there is room for growth in how these strategies are fostered within the classroom environment.



4.2.4.1 Peer Support as a Moderate Strategy

The item "I take the initiative to talk with classmates about the feelings and difficulties in English learning so as to reduce anxiety" had a mean score of 3.67, indicating that a moderate number of students utilize peer conversations as a way to manage anxiety. Peer support has long been recognized as an effective strategy for reducing feelings of isolation and anxiety in language learning contexts. Resnik, Dewaele, and Knechtelsdorfer (2023) found that peer discussions can help students normalize their struggles and feel more connected to their learning community, which in turn reduces feelings of anxiety. The current study's findings suggest that many students find comfort in talking with their peers about language learning challenges, as these conversations can offer reassurance and foster a sense of shared experience. However, the moderate mean score indicates that while this strategy is used by some, it is not universally adopted, and there may be a need for further encouragement or structures to facilitate peer interactions.

4.2.4.2 Reluctance to Seek Teacher Support

In contrast to peer discussions, the data showed a lower mean score for the item "I take the initiative to talk with the teacher about my learning difficulties so as to reduce anxiety," with a mean of 2.50. This suggests that fewer students feel comfortable reaching out to their teachers for support with their language learning challenges. Several factors could contribute to this reluctance, including fear of judgment, perceived incompetence, or a lack of confidence in the teacher-student relationship. Tran, Baldauf, and Moni (2013) noted that students often feel vulnerable when discussing their struggles with instructors, which can deter them from seeking help. The lower score in this study reflects the hesitance students may feel when approaching teachers, suggesting that there may be a need for educators to create a more supportive, non-judgmental environment where students feel encouraged to share their difficulties openly. Teachers could play a crucial role in normalizing these discussions by actively fostering an atmosphere of trust and openness, thus reducing students' anxiety about seeking help.

4.2.4.3 Limited Use of Collaborative Study Groups

The item "I take the initiative to invite classmates to study English together and collaborate so as to reduce anxiety" also had a relatively low mean score of 2.51, indicating that collaborative study is not a common strategy among students for managing anxiety. Collaborative learning has been shown to promote mutual support and reduce feelings of anxiety, as it allows students to learn from each other and share knowledge in a low-stakes, social setting. However, the findings of this study suggest that students may feel more comfortable studying individually, possibly due to personal preferences or concerns about the effectiveness of group work. Kruk (2018) suggested that while collaborative learning has the potential to alleviate anxiety, students may need explicit guidance on how to engage in productive group study sessions, as well as the confidence to feel that working with others will be beneficial. It is possible that students do not yet fully recognize the



benefits of group study in alleviating anxiety, or they may simply prefer working alone.

4.2.4.4 Potential for Improving Social Strategies in the Classroom

The findings indicate that while social strategies such as peer support and collaborative study have the potential to reduce anxiety, they are not yet widely utilized by students in this study. This highlights an area of opportunity for educators to promote and facilitate more effective use of social strategies. Encouraging peer interactions through structured activities, such as group discussions or peer feedback sessions, could help students feel more comfortable seeking support from their peers. Additionally, creating opportunities for collaborative learning in a way that aligns with students' needs and preferences could make group study a more attractive and effective option for anxiety reduction.

Furthermore, fostering a more supportive teacher-student relationship is crucial for helping students feel comfortable approaching their teachers with concerns. Teachers could actively model open communication and demonstrate that seeking help is a normal part of the learning process. This could involve creating office hours or informal check-ins where students feel safe to express their difficulties and receive support without fear of judgment.

4.2.5 Usage of Metacognitive (Appraisal) Strategies for Anxiety Management

The findings from this study highlight the varied levels of engagement that students demonstrate in using metacognitive (appraisal) strategies to manage anxiety. While some students show an awareness of the cognitive processes underlying their anxiety and attempt to reframe negative thoughts, others appear to struggle with deeper self-reflection and actively adjusting their study strategies. These results suggest that metacognitive strategies, particularly those involving self-reflection and cognitive adjustment, can be a useful tool for anxiety management, but there are significant gaps in their usage that could be addressed through targeted interventions.

4.2.5.1 Self-Reflection and Identification of Anxiety Triggers

The item "I analyze the reasons behind my anxiety and cope with them respectively" had the lowest mean score of 1.99, indicating that the majority of students do not engage in deep reflection to identify the specific causes of their anxiety. This suggests that metacognitive awareness, specifically related to recognizing the sources of anxiety, is underdeveloped among these students. As Bárkányi (2021) and Guo et al. (2018) have noted, the ability to recognize the causes of anxiety is an essential first step in managing it effectively. Without understanding the root causes of their anxiety, students may struggle to implement appropriate coping strategies. The low engagement with this strategy points to a potential area for improvement in terms of fostering greater self-awareness and self-reflection in the classroom. Encouraging students to actively engage in identifying their anxiety triggers could be a crucial intervention in helping them better



manage their emotions.

Students in the study often reported feeling overwhelmed by anxiety without being able to pinpoint specific reasons for it. This is consistent with findings from He et al. (2021), who noted that students may have difficulty articulating the sources of their anxiety due to its complex and multifaceted nature. This challenge suggests that students may need more structured guidance or support in developing the skills for self-reflection and identifying specific anxiety triggers. Tools such as journals, reflection exercises, or mindfulness practices might be useful in promoting metacognitive reflection and helping students uncover the underlying causes of their anxiety.

4.2.5.2 Awareness of Negative Thought Patterns

In contrast to the lack of self-reflection, students showed a higher level of engagement with metacognitive strategies aimed at identifying and addressing negative thought patterns. The item "I tell myself that what really makes me anxious is the passive and negative thoughts I have about myself and English learning" had a mean score of 4.23, indicating that many students recognize the role of negative cognitive patterns in their anxiety. This suggests a positive step toward anxiety reduction, as cognitive-behavioral approaches, such as recognizing and challenging negative thoughts, have been shown to be effective in reducing anxiety in educational settings (Akkakoson, 2016). Students' awareness that their anxiety stems from negative thoughts about themselves or their abilities is an essential step in managing these emotions.

This self-awareness allows students to adopt a more proactive approach in addressing their anxiety, as evidenced by their recognition that their anxiety is often linked to self-doubt and a lack of confidence in their English learning abilities. This finding aligns with research by Zhang and Lai (2024), who found that students who could identify and reframe negative thoughts about their abilities were better equipped to manage anxiety in language learning. By becoming more aware of the role their thoughts play in their emotional state, students can begin to employ strategies such as cognitive reframing to reduce anxiety and build a more positive mindset.

4.2.5.3 Cognitive Reframing and Self-Affirmation

Alongside recognizing negative thoughts, students also engaged in cognitive reframing and self-affirmation strategies to counteract feelings of inadequacy. The item "I talk to myself that it's not because I'm stupid or lazy that I can't learn English well and the problem may lie in study methods" had a mean score of 4.00, reflecting that many students use self-affirmation to challenge negative self-perceptions. This strategy is particularly significant, as it highlights students' ability to adjust their cognitive framework around learning. Toyama and Yamazaki (2021) emphasize the importance of self-affirmation in reducing language anxiety, as it helps students build resilience and maintain a more positive outlook on their abilities. By shifting the focus from internalized blame to an external cause, such as ineffective study methods, students can reduce feelings of



helplessness and gain a sense of agency in improving their learning experiences.

Self-affirmation and cognitive reframing are powerful tools for anxiety management. However, the relatively high scores on these items also suggest that while students are aware of their negative thoughts, they may not always take the necessary steps to address them systematically. Further training in metacognitive strategies could help students better integrate these approaches into their daily learning practices.

4.2.5.4 Adjusting Study Methods

The item "I adjust my study methods and improve the efficiency of learning to reduce anxiety" had a mean score of 2.78, indicating that fewer students actively modify their study strategies to manage anxiety. This lower score suggests that while students recognize the importance of study methods in reducing anxiety, fewer are able or willing to implement changes in their learning habits. Guo et al. (2018) found that students who engage in adaptive learning strategies, such as adjusting study techniques, are better equipped to manage their anxiety. However, the data in this study suggest that for many students, the process of adjusting study methods may feel overwhelming or unclear. This lack of active adjustment could stem from several factors, including a lack of awareness about how to make such changes or uncertainty about which strategies would be most effective for their individual needs.

To improve the use of this metacognitive strategy, educators could provide more structured guidance on how to adjust study methods, such as introducing different learning techniques or promoting reflective practices to help students evaluate the effectiveness of their current methods. This could help students feel more confident in making adjustments that could ultimately reduce anxiety.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored the use of various strategies by students to manage anxiety in English learning, specifically focusing on metacognitive, affective, social, and appraisal strategies. The findings revealed that students mainly rely on avoidance and emotional strategies to cope with anxiety, with less frequent use of metacognitive and social strategies. There is a need to promote more effective use of learning strategies and encourage greater peer and teacher support to help students better manage their anxiety. These results highlight the importance of promoting a broader and more consistent use of diverse strategies to manage anxiety.

The implications of these findings are significant for educators aiming to support students in overcoming language learning anxiety. There is a clear need for targeted interventions that teach students how to identify the sources of their anxiety, engage in metacognitive reflection, and adjust study methods. Additionally, fostering a supportive classroom environment where students feel comfortable seeking help from peers and teachers could enhance the use of social strategies. Integrating these strategies into instructional practices could empower students to become more self-aware and self-



regulated in their learning, ultimately improving their language learning experiences.

However, this study has some limitations, including the reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or inaccuracies in students' perceptions of their behaviors. Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to conclude the long-term effects of these strategies on anxiety. Future research could investigate the effectiveness of targeted interventions aimed at enhancing metacognitive and social strategies, potentially through longitudinal studies or experimental designs. Investigating how these strategies are used across different learning contexts and cultures would also provide valuable insights into their generalizability and adaptability.

References

- [1] Abah , J. A., Kadiri , G. C., & Ngonebu, L. C. (2024). Contrastive Study of The Pragmatic and Socio-cultural Implications of Greeting Patterns of the English and Orokam People of Benue State. *International Journal of Multilingualism and Languages for Specific Purposes*, 6(01), 50-72. <https://doi.org/10.52919/ijmlsp.v6i01.47>
- [2] Agudo, M., & de Dios, J. (2013). An investigation into Spanish EFL learners' anxiety. *Revista Brasileira de Linguística Aplicada*, 13, 829-851.
- [3] Ahmad, I. S., Al-Shboul, M. M., Nordin, M. S., Rahman, Z. A., Burhan, M., & Madarsha, K. B. (2013). The potential sources of foreign language reading anxiety in a Jordanian EFL context: a theoretical framework. *English Language Teaching*, 6(11), 89-110. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n11p89>
- [4] Akkakoson, S. (2016). Speaking anxiety in English conversation classrooms among Thai students. *Malaysian Journal of Learning and Instruction*, 13(1), 63-82.
- [5] Al-Tamimi, A. S., & Bin-Hady, W. R. A. (2025). Test Anxiety and Gender: Insights from English Major Students at Hadhramout University. *Traduction et Langues*, 24(01), 150-169. <https://doi.org/10.52919/translang.v24i01.1029>
- [6] Al-Shboul, M. M., Ahmad, I. S., Nordin, M. S., & Rahman, Z. A. (2013). Foreign Language Reading Anxiety in a Jordanian EFL Context: A Qualitative Study. *English Language Teaching*, 6(6), 38-56. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n6p38>
- [7] Bárkányi, Z. (2021). Motivation, self-efficacy beliefs, and speaking anxiety in language MOOCs. *ReCALL*, 33(2), 143-160. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344021000033>
- [8] Bnesaad, S., & Ouahmiche, G. (2020). An examination of reading strategies awareness among Algerian ESP students at the National Higher School for Hydraulics. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 16(4), 1784–1802. <https://doi.org/10.17263/jlls.851001>
- [9] De Jesus-Reyes, J. (2024). A Critical Pedagogy Analysis of Literature Teachers' Perspectives on the Integration of Multicultural Literature in Higher Education. *Traduction et Langues*, 23(1), 62-87. <https://doi.org/10.52919/translang.v23i1.970>



- [10] Felcida, F. J. G., & Parameswaran, D. (2024). An Analytical Study on Developing Language Skills among L2 Learners Through Digital Teaching and Learning. *Traduction et Langues*, 23(1), 88-107. <https://doi.org/10.52919/translang.v23i1.971>
- [11] Hauck, M., & Hurd, S. (2005). Exploring the link between language anxiety and learner self-management in open language learning contexts. *European Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning*, 2005(2), 1-22. <http://oro.open.ac.uk/3542/1/Hurdeurodl.pdf>
- [12] He, X., Zhou, D., & Zhang, X. (2021). An empirical study on Chinese university students' English language classroom anxiety with the idiodynamic approach. *Sage Open*, 11(3), 21582440211037676. <https://doi.org/10.1177/21582440211037676>
- [13] Guo, Y., Xu, J., & Liu, X. (2018). English language learners' use of self-regulatory strategies for foreign language anxiety in China. *System*, 76, 49-61. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2018.05.001>
- [14] Kruk, M. (2018). Changes in foreign language anxiety: A classroom perspective. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 28(1), 31-57. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijal.12182>
- [15] Nwagbara, B. C. (2025). Blurring Boundaries: The Impact of Digital Communication on Academic Discourse and Student Motivation. *International Journal of Multilingualism and Languages for Specific Purposes*, 7(1), 41-61. <https://doi.org/10.52919/ijmlsp.v7i01.96>
- [16] Oso, M. T. (2024). Aesthetic Features of Code-Alternated Expressions in Nigerian Radio and YouTube Advertisement Jingles. *International Journal of Multilingualism and Languages for Specific Purposes*, 6(02), 76-104. <https://doi.org/10.52919/ijmlsp.v6i02.54>
- [17] Hamdani, I., & Ouahmiche, G. (2022). Identifying the English language needs of hydraulics engineers: Bridging the gap between ESP academic studies and professional needs. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, 9(2), 677-689.
- [18] Ouahmiche, G., & Bouguebs, R. (2025b). Preface: Bridges and Borders: Reframing English Language Education in a Digital Age. *International Journal of Multilingualism and Languages for Specific Purposes*, 7(01), 9-14. <https://doi.org/10.52919/ijmlsp.v7i01.94>
- [19] Tran, T. T. T., Baldauf Jr, R. B., & Moni, K. (2013). Foreign language anxiety: Understanding its status and insiders' awareness and attitudes. *TESOL Quarterly*, 47(2), 216-243. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.85>
- [20] Resnik, P., Dewaele, J. M., & Knechtelsdorfer, E. (2023). Differences in the intensity and the nature of foreign language anxiety in in-person and online EFL classes during the pandemic: A mixed-methods study. *TESOL Quarterly*, 57(2), 618-642. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3177>



- [21] Toyama, M., & Yamazaki, Y. (2021). Classroom interventions and foreign language anxiety: A systematic review with narrative approach. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 614184. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.614184>
- [22] Urbaniak, A., & Chanh, N. H. (2025). Vietnamese Teachers' Perceptions of Blooket for Enhancing IT Technical Vocabulary: Insights and Influencing Factors. *International Journal of Multilingualism and Languages for Specific Purposes*, 7(01), 15-40. <https://doi.org/10.52919/ijmlsp.v7i01.95>
- [23] Zhang, S., & Lai, C. (2024). Out-of-class English learning anxiety and its relation to motivation among Chinese university English majors. *System*, 124, 103384. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2024.103384>

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the anonymous reviewers for their valuable feedback and insightful comments, which significantly improved the quality of this manuscript.

Authors' Biodata

Artur Urbaniak holds a PhD in applied linguistics from the Department of Modern Languages and Literature at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland. Dr. Urbaniak has been professionally active since 2004, working in and collaborating with numerous academic institutions. Since 2015 he has been an English teacher and a lecturer in Interpersonal Communication at Poznań University of Technology. His main research interests include political communication and developing communicative competence in the professional niche. Due to his profound experience in language teaching and developing interpersonal skills, he is also regarded as an academic developer and researcher with expertise in teaching a foreign language to adults and implementing the latest technological trends in language instruction.

Umar Fauzan is Associate Professor of English at the Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Aji Muhammad Idris Samarinda, Indonesia. He received his doctorate in Language and Linguistics Studies from the University of Sebelas Maret Surakarta, Indonesia. His main research agenda focuses on discourse studies (discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, discourse teaching); and teaching English as a Foreign Language.

Nakagawa Yuya, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at Mie University, Tsu, Japan. He specializes in Cognitive Linguistics, educational technology, and Second Language Acquisition. He has over 15 years of experience in a variety of English teaching contexts, including junior and senior high schools, universities, cram schools, and companies.



Huu Chanh Nguyen, commonly known as a researcher, a book reviewer, proofreader, an editorial board member, a reviewing editor in Scopus and Web-of-Science-indexed journals, is currently working at the University of Health Sciences, Viet Nam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam. He earned his PhD in English Language Studies from Suranaree University of Technology, Thailand. He was the nominee of the Hessen State Scholarship in Germany. Nguyen's research interests encompass various topics, including genre analysis, literary devices, morphology, translation, and English teaching skills in the EAP/ESP/ English for Dentistry Purposes (EDP) teaching, learning, and research practice. He is a member of AELFE (European Association of Languages for Specific Purposes), Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE), Popular Culture Association (PCA), and Asia-Pacific LSP & Professional Communication Association (LSPPC).

Authors' Contributions

Artur Urbaniak contributed to the study by conducting formal analysis, methodology, and visualization, as well as preparing the original draft and participating in the writing and review process. *Umar Fauzan* played a key role in the conceptualization, methodology, and validation of the research, in addition to reviewing and editing the manuscript. *Nakagawa Yuya* was involved in the investigation, overseeing data curation, software use, and contributing to the writing and review of the article. Similarly, *Huu Chanh Nguyen* was in charge of the investigation, data curation, and software integration, and also contributed to the writing and review of the manuscript.

Disclaimer status on the use of Generative AI

The authors used OpenAI to assist with grammar and sentence structure during the process of preparing this manuscript. The content was subsequently reviewed and edited by the authors, who take full responsibility for the final publication.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The author (s) declared no conflicts of interest to the article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

