

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion and Conclusions**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In the preceding chapter, we discussed the findings of the pre-intervention, intervention, and post-intervention stages of our research. The present chapter deals with the discussion of these findings with an attempt to answer the research questions posed in the first chapter.

The chapter begins with a cross-sectional discussion by considering the findings obtained from the six research instruments: the FLCAS (Foreign Language Classroom Speaking Anxiety), the learner questionnaire, classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, post-class interactions with the learners and the reflective journal. Then, it attempts to compare the findings of the study with the available literature in the field. Subsequently, it elaborates on the various contributions that the study has made in the ESL context and provides several implications of the study. Further, it describes the limitations of the study and offers recommendations for further possible research in the field. And finally, it concludes with the summary of the thesis and conclusion.

#### **5.1 Answers to the research questions**

The main purpose of the study was to explore ESL learners' language speaking anxiety by addressing the four research questions mentioned in section 1.7 of the first chapter. In other words, the present study proposed to explore the levels of language speaking anxiety reported by the young adult ESL learners, various factors that strongly

contributed to their language speaking anxiety, the classroom activities that created language speaking anxiety in them, and the possible measures to help the learners to overcome their language speaking anxiety. Thus, on the basis of the findings reported in chapter four, the research questions can now be answered with a cross-sectional discussion of the findings obtained with the research instruments used in this study.

#### 5.1.1 Research question 1 – To what extent do the young adult ESL learners’ experience language speaking anxiety in the classroom?

According to the findings obtained from the FLCAS, the learners’ scores on the scale ranged from 48 to 156. In this score range, the highest score was 156 and the lowest score was 48. As per the scoring criteria (see section -3.4.1.1), statistical measures of frequency distribution and class interval, it was observed that 62.5% young adult ESL learners obtained scores between 121 and 156, 15% learners obtained scores from 85 to 120, and 22.5% learners obtained scores between 48 and 84. As per the Horwitz (1986) principle of language anxiety – the higher the score the higher the anxiety level - 62.5% ESL learners experienced high language speaking anxiety, 15 % ESL learners experienced moderate anxiety, and 22.5% ESL learners experienced low language speaking anxiety in their language classroom.

This suggests that young adult ESL learners experienced language speaking anxiety at three levels – high, moderate, and low. However, a close observation of the learners in each category indicated that the majority of the learners experienced high language speaking anxiety in their classroom. This implies that to a greater extent the young adult ESL learners experienced language speaking anxiety in the classroom and that’s why

they were unable to do well in the classroom speaking activities. The findings obtained from the FLCAS were also further substantiated by the findings obtained from classroom observations and learner interviews.

The findings of the classroom observations indicated that majority of the high anxious learners were not participating in the class. They were mainly exhibiting avoidance behaviour. They never made eye contact with their teacher. Furthermore, they were shivering, sweating, and cracking their finger-joints while speaking. Apart from that, most of the high anxious learners were using a lot of pauses and pause fillers while speaking in English. Although similar features were found in the moderate anxious learners but they were comparatively very less. In the case of low anxious learners, none of these features were observed. Another finding that supported the findings of the FLCAS was that everybody from the high anxious category was found speaking in broken English, and further their voice was very low. None of these observations were found in the moderate and low anxious learners. This suggests that the high anxious learners' classroom participation was much hampered by their language speaking anxiety than the moderate and low anxious learners.

The findings obtained from the high anxious learners' semi-structured interviews also supported the findings obtained from the FLCAS. For instance, all the high anxious learners stated that they felt very anxious while speaking in the English class and as a result they used to forget what they planned to say and often struggle to recall it.

Thus, the findings obtained from the FLCAS, the classroom observations, and the learner semi- structured interviews suggest that ESL learners experienced language speaking

anxiety at three levels – high, moderate, and low. However, what was surprising in these findings was the percentage of the learners in each category. The higher percentage of the learners i.e. 62.5% in the high anxious category suggests that a very large number of learners experienced high language speaking anxiety while speaking English in the class.

5.1.2 Research question 2 – Which factors of language anxiety have a strong influence

on the young adult ESL learners' classroom speaking anxiety?

One of the main purposes of the study was to discern the factors that cause high level of speaking anxiety in the learners. The data from the FLCAS and the learner questionnaire revealed that the following eight factors (in descending order) had strong influence on the learners' language speaking anxiety.

1. Learners irrational beliefs about speaking English
2. Insufficient teacher support
3. Anxiety-provoking classroom environment
4. Test anxiety
5. Fear of negative evaluation
6. Communication apprehension
7. Inadequate learner involvement
8. Learners' pessimistic previous language learning experience

The findings revealed that the first seven factors had above 83 % supportive rate from the high anxious learners and the last had 74.20 % supportive rate from the learners. Further to validate these findings, they were again probed by collecting data from the classroom observations and learner semi-structured interviews. The following discussion depicts the findings obtained from the classroom observations and learners semi-structured interviews.

The findings obtained from the classroom observation and learners' semi-structured interviews revealed that learners gave excessive importance to 'pronunciation' and use of error-free English while speaking in the class and as they could not speak without making mistakes, they believed that speaking in English was a very difficult task for them. Therefore learners' irrational beliefs like these had strongly influenced language speaking anxiety in the learners.

The second factor was insufficient teacher support given to the high anxious learners. These learners needed a lot of support - both psychological and linguistic. The textbook did not offer much help to these learners. The teacher made them do the activities without preparing them for the activities. This was coupled with teacher's lack of interest in helping the high anxious learners overcome their anxiety. As a result, the HALs' did not show much interest in the English class. This implies that high anxious learners received very less teacher support and encouragement from the teacher. The learners became psychologically weak and they sat in the class just for the sake of attendance without participating in the activities. Thus, consciously or unconsciously the teacher by not providing them the required support also contributed to their anxiety.

The third factor is a consequence of the second factor. As the classroom atmosphere was not very friendly but anxiety-provoking, it impeded the HALs' learning of English in general and spoken English in particular. Thus, anxiety-provoking classroom environment was the third most influential factor that caused language speaking anxiety in the learners.

The high anxious learners seemed worried about the frequent testing and examinations in their classroom. Basically, they were worried about their results. During their tests, their minds were preoccupied with fear of failure and they forgot what they were supposed to say which contributed to their poor performance in their oral examinations. Thus, test anxiety was the fourth powerful factor that influenced language speaking anxiety in the learners.

The fifth factor that was further delved into and got supported by the findings obtained from the classroom observations and learner interviews was fear of negative evaluation. The findings obtained from both the tools revealed that learners were worried about their mistakes and self-worth in the classroom. Further, the teacher's attitude also played a major role. Instead of offering help to these learners when they faced problems, he ridiculed them for their mistakes. Their teacher identified all their mistakes and scolded them in front of everyone. Their classmates laughed on their performance and made fun of their English outside the class. These disappointing incidents stimulated so much language anxiety among the high anxious learners that most of the time they preferred to stay quiet in the language class. Thus, the poor performance and negative reactions reinforced the expectations of anxiety and failure. This suggests that disheartening experiences of negative evaluation in the class triggered language speaking anxiety

among the high anxious learners. The above discussion indicates that fear of negative evaluation is the fifth influential factor that contributed to the high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety in the class.

The sixth influential factor was communication apprehension. They lacked knowledge of vocabulary and sentence construction. As the high anxious learners were not sure of their language, they exhibited many physical symptoms of anxiety such as shivering and sweat on their face. While speaking, they got stuck and repeated the same sentences. Further, they spoke in a very low voice and used a lot of pause fillers. These indicate that the high anxious learners were unable to express their ideas and views confidently in the language class. Thus, lack of vocabulary and knowledge of sentence construction created language speaking anxiety in the learners. The communication apprehension is the sixth important influential factor that causes language speaking anxiety in the high anxious learners.

The seventh factor was inadequate learner involvement. High anxious learners were rarely involved in classroom activities. They were rarely asked to take part in the classroom activities and those who were asked were discouraged by the negative feedback. Therefore, most of the high anxious learners showed avoidance behaviour. This implies that the inadequate high anxious learner involvement and the negative feedback given to the learners stimulated negative emotional reactions in the learners and aggravated their problem of language speaking anxiety. Thus, the above discussion suggests that inadequate learner involvement was another factor that strongly caused language speaking anxiety in the learners.

The eighth factor was learners' previous language learning experience. The findings obtained from both the tools revealed that the high anxious learners' previous language learning experience was very pessimistic. Their previous language teachers used to correct all their errors and punish them for their mistakes. Even their parents used to scold them for their low marks in English. Their classmates used to make fun of their English both inside and outside the classroom. Thus, these findings suggested that such kinds of language learning experiences got deep rooted in the minds of learners and manifested in the form of language speaking anxiety in the learners' mind and prevented them from taking necessary risks for learning the language. Hence, the above discussion reveals that learners' pessimistic previous language learning experience is the eighth influential factor that causes language speaking anxiety in the high anxious learners.

The above cross-sectional discussion of the findings obtained from the FLCAS, classroom observations, and learner semi-structured interviews suggests that learners beliefs about speaking English, insufficient teacher support, anxiety-provoking classroom environment, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, inadequate learner involvement and, pessimistic previous language learning experience are the most influential factors that affect and cause high level of language speaking anxiety in the young adult ESL learners.

### 5.1.3 Research question 3 – Which classroom activities create high language speaking anxiety in the young adult ESL learners?

The inquiry into the classroom activities that created high language anxiety in the learners was primarily investigated through the findings obtained from classroom

observations, learners' post-class interactions, and learners' semi-structured interviews. The findings of the classroom observations revealed that teacher mainly conducted activities like asking questions on the lessons, asking learners to tell the meaning of a paragraph or a stanza of the poem, and give oral presentations in the classroom. The learners' verbal, non-verbal reactions to these activities revealed that the learners' were very nervous while participating in these activities. The findings of the classroom observations also revealed that while participating in these classroom activities the high anxious learners were shivering, cracking their finger-joints etc. While speaking they were using a lot of pauses and pause fillers, and they were speaking in broken English and after a while, they were getting stuck and forgetting what they wanted to say. Learners' reaction and participation in these activities indicate that the language speaking anxiety had a debilitating impact on their speaking performance.

To substantiate the findings obtained from the classroom observations, they were further investigated through the findings obtained from the post-class interactions and learner interviews. The findings obtained from the post-class interactions revealed that learners felt nervous while participating in the above-mentioned activities. Further, they confirmed that these activities created a lot of language speaking anxiety in them and as a result they became very nervous and tried to avoid participating in their classrooms. This suggests that the findings obtained from the post-class interactions strongly support the findings of the classroom observation data.

Further, to substantiate the findings obtained from the classroom observation and post-class interactions, they were further investigated through the findings obtained from the learner interviews. The findings of the learner interviews revealed that answering

teacher's lesson related questions in the class, asking learners to tell the meaning of a paragraph or a stanza of the poem, and making oral presentations in the class were the activities that mostly created high anxiety in them.

Thus, the cross-sectional investigation of the activities that create high language speaking anxiety clearly suggests that answering teacher's lesson related questions, asking learners to tell the meaning of a paragraph or a stanza of the poem, and making oral presentations in the class were the activities that created high anxiety in the learners.

#### 5.1.4 Research question 4 – What measures can be taken by the teacher to help these learners' overcome their language speaking anxiety?

The effectiveness of the intervention strategies that helped learners' to overcome language speaking anxiety was mainly investigated through the observations recorded in the reflective journal, teacher semi-structured interview, and learner semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that the use of the following intervention strategies helped high anxious learners in eradicating their language speaking anxiety.

1. Making ground rules for English class
2. Making learners aware of the futility of worrying about negative evaluation
3. Helping them dispel their myths about language learning
4. Providing comprehensible language inputs to the learners
5. Giving them systematic practice in using language
6. Use of charts, posters, music, videos, and language games
7. Offering learner friendly feedback to the learner

8. Creating positive and learner friendly atmosphere in the class
9. Providing learners' linguistic and psychological support
10. Teaching techniques of deep breathing and positive self-talk

The findings obtained from the reflective journal revealed that during the intervention the above mentioned ten intervention strategies succeeded in reducing the high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety and created a positive and learner-friendly atmosphere in the classroom. The ground rules stopped learners from teasing each other. The comprehensible language input and systematic language practice boosted their confidence and improved their language speaking performance. The use of charts, posters, music videos, and language games generated motivation and inspiration for learning and speaking English in the class. Moreover, awareness creating strategies not only cleared their irrational beliefs about English speaking but also created their awareness in ignoring the negative evaluation from others.

Further, to cross-check the findings obtained from the reflective journal, they were further investigated through the findings obtained from the learner semi-structured interviews and teacher interview. The findings of the learner interviews confirmed that the intervention and the above-mentioned intervention strategies helped the high anxious learners in reducing their language speaking anxiety and assisted them in improving their oral proficiency in English. The findings showed that due to the intervention strategies the high anxious learners became confident in using English in the class. They received enough language inputs and practice in using English in the class. The interview findings also indicated that the awareness creating sessions about their irrational beliefs and

negative evaluation assisted them in constructing positive attitude towards speaking English and helped them in reducing their language speaking anxiety.

To authenticate the findings obtained from the reflective journal, and learner semi-structured interviews, they were further scrutinized through the findings obtained from the teacher interview. The findings obtained from the teacher interview revealed that the intervention strategies had a positive effect on the learners' language speaking anxiety and they were useful in reducing the learners' language speaking anxiety. Further, it was also found that due to the positive effect of the strategies the observer-teacher himself started applying these strategies in his other classes. This suggests that the strategies used in the intervention were useful in reducing the learners' language speaking anxiety.

Thus, the cross-sectional exploration of the usefulness of the ten intervention strategies indicates that they played a positive role in reducing the high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety. The intervention strategies boosted learners' confidence in using English in the class. The language inputs and the psychological support that they received during the intervention assisted them in developing their confidence in speaking English. The ground rules and the systematic practice gradually enhanced their performance and trimmed down their feeling of fear. The use of charts, posters, music videos, and language games not only created learner friendly atmosphere in the class but also helped them get rid of fear of speaking in front of others. Further, these intervention strategies helped them in becoming aware of their irrelevant beliefs about speaking English and removing their fear of negative evaluation. The deep breathing technique and positive self-talk provided learners' self-control on their language speaking anxiety. Thus, the

intervention strategies used in this study assisted the high anxious learners' in decreasing their language speaking anxieties.

## **5.2 Comparison of the findings with the available literature**

As there are few studies in this area in the ESL context, it is difficult to compare the findings of the present study with the available literature in the second language context. However, the findings of the study can be compared with the findings in the EFL context.

While comparing the influential factors found in the present study with the factors identified in the foreign language context, it has been found that around five factors were similar in both the contexts i.e. ESL and EFL. For instance, while investigating the factors of language speaking anxiety in the foreign language context, Horwitz, (1986) and Tsiplakides and Keramida, (2009), found communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation as the strong influential factors of language speaking anxiety in the classroom. During the study, we also found that these three factors had a strong influence on the learners' language speaking anxiety.

Along with the above mentioned three factors Young (1992), found insufficient teacher support, and anxiety-provoking classroom environment as the other two strongly influential factors contributing to language speaking anxiety in the learners. Those factors also have been found in this study.

Thus, we can say communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, inadequate teacher support, and anxiety-provoking classroom environment were the

common influential factors that generated language speaking anxiety in the ESL learners as well as EFL learners.

### **5.3 Contribution of this study**

In addition to the above mentioned factors, the findings of the present research study have made three noteworthy contributions to the broad area of affect in second language learning and language speaking anxiety in particular.

The first most significant contribution that the research has made is the identification of three new influential anxiety-provoking factors of language speaking anxiety. They are: learner beliefs of speaking English, learner previous language learning experience and the inadequate learner involvement in the classroom activities. These are in addition to the five factors which are common to all the studies.

The second important contribution is the identification of the ten intervention strategies which are empirically proven and very effective in reducing high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety. These strategies have been tested in the ESL classrooms and have been found to be very effective. This is perhaps one of the first few empirical studies on speaking anxiety in the ESL context.

The use of mixed methods research design is the third significant contribution. The use of both quantitative and qualitative research design in the study helped us in trusting and validating the findings of the study and it also has enabled us in carrying out an in-depth investigation of the complex phenomenon. Therefore the future researcher studies should utilize such research design for their study.

## **5.4 Implications of the study**

The findings of the study have several implications for the researchers, teachers, teacher educators, and materials designers. The present section of the chapter aims to discuss the implications under three broad categories. It begins with the theoretical implications. Then, it discusses the methodological implications, and finally, it elaborates on the pedagogical implications.

### **5.4.1. Theoretical implications**

As one of the primary research study that was carried out with 23 young adult high anxious learners in the rural ESL context of Maharashtra, it has significant theoretical justification for supporting the existence of language speaking anxiety, its influential factors, negative impact on the high anxious learners' classroom speaking performance and for providing deeper contextual understanding of the concept i.e language speaking anxiety with possible solutions for it. The study provided interesting evidence for supporting the existence of the theoretical concept of language speaking anxiety in the rural ESL context of Maharashtra.

The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the learners experienced high level of language speaking anxiety in their language classroom. Further, the results revealed that it had a debilitating impact on the high anxious learners' speaking performance. However, the findings of the earlier studies found mixed results of the impact because their sample was not uniform like the present study (only high anxious learners). This suggests that to get a better understanding of the problem, it is necessary to have a homogeneous sample. The intervention strategies used in the intervention

provided very good results in reducing the high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety. Thus, the intervention strategies found in the study can provide a good theoretical framework for other research studies focused on reducing the rural ESL learners' language speaking anxiety.

#### **5.4.2. Methodological implications**

The most important methodological implication of the study is the use of the mixed methods research design. The use of both quantitative and qualitative instruments not only provided data for triangulation but also assisted in exploring the phenomenon fully.

Firstly, the adaption of the FLCAS and the design modification of the learner's questionnaire based on the findings of the pilot study enabled us to locate the gaps in the instruments and carry out some changes to suit the purpose of the study. This again helped us to maintain the validity and reliability of both the quantitative instruments. Through these two quantitative instruments, we captured the learners' levels of language speaking anxiety and the factors that caused such anxiety.

In addition, two qualitative instruments, classroom observations, and interviews enabled us to investigate the phenomenon in depth. As it was a longitudinal study, it helped the teacher-researcher to observe learners both verbal and non-verbal behaviours in detail in the classroom and outside the classroom and account for such behaviour. The mixed mode design and all the research tools helped us in investigating in detail the activities that created language speaking anxiety in the learners' and the impact of those on the learners speaking performance.

Finally, the data obtained from each tool was triangulated with the remaining two tools and the validity and reliability of the data was ensured. The findings obtained from the pre-intervention phase were used for planning and implementing the intervention. The use of reflective journal and post-class interactions with the learners in the intervention phase assisted in understanding the learners' progress. The re-administration of FLCAS and the use of teacher and learner semi-structured interviews after the intervention helped in determining the usefulness of the intervention for the learners. Thus, the use of mixed methods research design was found to be effective in studying the problem from different perspectives based on an analysis of valid and reliable data.

#### **5.4.3. Pedagogical implications**

Like other research studies, the present study also has some pedagogical implications for language teachers, teacher educators, and textbook designers. The following discussion provides the detailed description of these three pedagogical implications.

##### **5.4.3.1 Implications for language teachers**

The present study has immense pedagogical implications for ESL classrooms. For instance, the investigation between language anxiety and speaking performance of ESL learners will not only help teachers in understanding the significance of language anxiety in teaching - learning process but it will also help the learners to become aware of their emotional state of mind. Further investigation into the factors and activities that create language speaking anxiety will help ESL teachers in enhancing their knowledge about language anxiety, which in turn consciously or unconsciously will be applied to the classroom teaching-learning process.

The first pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is make ground rules for the English class. The findings of the study suggested that the ground rules made with the help of learners actually made learners aware of the negative feelings that one can experience due to their teasing. Thus, such awareness finally prevented learners from teasing each other and created positive and learning effective atmosphere in the class.

The second pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to create learners' awareness about their irrational beliefs about speaking English. The findings of the research study suggested that creating learners awareness about learners irrational beliefs that they hold about the speaking actually enables them in eradicating their irrational beliefs and lowers their high expectations about learning to speak English. Thus, such awareness results in developing learners' positive approach towards learning.

The third pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to create the learners' awareness in avoiding negative evaluation. The findings of the study revealed that learners' awareness in their fear of negative evaluation assisted them in gaining control over their language anxiety and made them confident for their language learning process. Thus, through this awareness they understood the fact that mistakes are the part of learning, and without mistakes, nobody can actually learn.

The fourth pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to provide comprehensive language learning inputs to the learners. During the study, it was found that the comprehensive language inputs that were provided in the form of worksheets, handouts charts, and posters assisted learners in learning the new language vocabulary and the language structures. The constant exposure to such inputs also assisted them in

storing and retrieving the language inputs whenever it required. As a result of such language inputs the learners became much confident in using the English in the class and their language speaking anxiety lowered down.

The fifth pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to create a non-threatening environment in the class. The findings of the study have suggested that creating a non-threatening environment in the class helps in alleviating learners' feelings of language speaking anxiety. To do so teachers can make use of various strategies suggested in this research study, for instance, the use of charts, music, language games, pair work, group work, and keeping the learner friendly atmosphere. Thus, it should be noted that a warm and friendly teacher who is genuinely interested in learners' problems may be the key to obtaining positive learning effects.

The sixth pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to provide positive and learner friendly feedback to the high anxious learners. The findings obtained from the study indicated that negative feedback (pointing out learners' errors in front of the class) actually disheartens learners and prevents them from participating in classroom activities. However, the positive and learner friendly feedback actually makes them happy and encourages them to take part in the classroom activities.

The seventh pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is to provide linguistic and psychological support to the high anxious learners. The findings of the study revealed that the linguistic support actually enables them to complete the task or activity in the hand and provides them the satisfaction of completing it. The psychological support given to them prepares them to take necessary risks for using

English in the classroom. Therefore both linguistic and psychological support assists in reducing high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety, and encourage them to use English in their classroom.

The eighth pedagogical implication that the study offers to the teachers is of teaching learners techniques of deep breathing and positive self-talk. The findings of the study suggested that the techniques like deep breathing and positive self-talk make learners' calm and focused in their learning and a result of which high anxious learners feel confident about themselves.

#### **5.4.3.2 Implications for teacher educators**

The findings of the study have many implications for teacher trainers. The first implication that the study has for the teacher trainers is to create awareness among both pre-service and in-service teachers' about the language anxiety. In other words, the teachers should recognize the learner feelings of language anxiety as legitimate and natural in the classroom. The second implication that the study tenders is to train them in incorporating the intervention strategies used in this study into their daily classroom activities to lessen their learners' language anxiety. And the third implication that the study offers for the teacher trainers is to train the teachers in designing additional supportive and comprehensible materials for the anxious learners. Thus, training both pre-service and in-service teachers in these three aspects would not only make them self-reliant in their profession but also offer them the sense of professional satisfaction of assisting learners in overcoming speaking anxiety.

### **5.4.3.3 Implications for textbook designers**

The present study offers quite a few implications for the textbook designers. The first implication that the study offers to the textbook designers is the use of colourful pictures and images in the textbook. During the study, it was observed that the use colorful pictures and images in the ESL material not only supported learners' comprehension but also invented the spark of interest and motivation among them. Thus, this implies that the textbook designers should make use of colorful pictures and images while designing the ESL materials for highly anxious learners. Another implication that the study offers to the textbook designers is to design a number of guided practice activities for the anxious learners. The findings of the study revealed that the guided practice activities provided immense support and practice to the learners in using language in the class. Gradually, these activities also developed a sense of achievement in the learners and assisted them in gaining confidence in speaking English in the class. Therefore, textbook designers should always consider designing additional guided practice activities for the high anxious learners.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

Although the study has achieved its aims by investigating the young adult ESL learners' language speaking anxiety by means of identifying their levels, the influencing factors of language speaking anxiety and the intervention strategies to manage their language speaking anxiety, however, regardless of these reasonably strong findings and contributions, the study has several limitations.

First important limitation of the study is as the time being the constraint; the study was conducted only at one junior college. Other analogous colleges were not considered for the study. Second, due to lack of time, this study made an attempt to investigate only high anxious learners' language speaking anxiety. The moderate and low anxious learners were not included in the study. Third, the study was conducted with the young adult ESL learners. The findings obtained from the study cannot possibly have implications for the young or adult ESL learners. However, the study can be replicated with these groups of ESL learners to see the success of results.

### **5.6 Recommendations for further research**

As like other studies, this study also suggests several avenues for further research. First of all, the present research study has provided several insights into the influential factors of language speaking anxiety and its intervention strategies for the young adult ESL learners, but since there is the scarcity of research in the ESL context, there is a strong need for replicating such study. The replication of the study in the ESL context would cross-validate the findings and will not only make the findings more concrete but also assists other researchers in investigating the complex construct of language speaking anxiety.

Secondly, the present research study was mainly conducted with the young adult ESL learners. Therefore the subsequent research studies may be conducted with the young ESL learners and adult ESL learners to see whether or not these intervention strategies can be put into practice at these levels.

Thirdly, the present study was carried out with the regular young adult ESL learners; however, when it comes to distance education learners, they seem to face a greater problem of this kind. They are from heterogeneous backgrounds and with different levels of proficiency. Further, in a distance education class, there are learners in different age groups. Therefore research studies of this nature are required to help them overcome language speaking anxiety.

Fourthly, our study has investigated young adult ESL learners' language speaking anxiety in the rural setting; however, the same problem can also be found in the learners studying in urban settings. Therefore, subsequent studies can be undertaken in the urban setting.

### **5.7 Summarizing thesis**

The importance given to the speaking skill, existing proficiency-oriented approaches, and the competitive nature of oral examination system not just stimulates high classroom speaking anxiety in the ESL learners but profoundly hampers their language learning process. As a result of which, the problem of language speaking anxiety should be the primary concern for every second language teacher. Thus, considering the value of the problem, the present research study has focused on the exploration of the construct and identification of successful intervention strategies to address such problem.

So as to explore the various influential anxiety-provoking factors in the second language classroom and to identify the coping strategies for it, the present study utilized a mixed methods research design. However, to gain the in-depth understanding of the construct, we gave more emphasis on the qualitative data collection. On the one hand, the FLCAS

assisted us in measuring the learners' levels of language speaking anxiety and enabled us in determining the influence of three factors, namely, communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation on the learners' language speaking anxiety. On the other hand, the learner questionnaire enabled us in determining the influence of other five factors (teacher support, learner involvement, classroom environment, learners' previous language learning experience and learner beliefs about English speaking) on the learners' language speaking anxiety. The use of classroom observations, post-class interactions, learner and teacher semi-structured interviews and the researcher reflective journal allowed us to probe further into the influential factors of language speaking anxiety, anxiety-provoking activities, and the useful intervention strategies to reduce the learners' language speaking anxiety. Similarly, they also enable us in cross-validating the findings of each tool.

The findings of the research study revealed that there were eight strongly influential factors that caused high language speaking anxiety in the learners. They were like learners beliefs about speaking English, insufficient teacher support, anxiety-provoking classroom environment, text anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, inadequate learner involvement in the class, and learners' pessimistic previous language learning experience. The findings of the intervention strategies revealed that there were mainly 10 intervention strategies (making ground rules for English class, providing comprehensible language inputs to the learners, giving systematic practice in using language, use of charts, posters, music videos and language games, offering learner friendly feedback to the learners, creating learners awareness in avoiding negative evaluation, creating positive and learner friendly atmosphere in the

class, providing learners linguistic and psychological support, creating learners awareness about their irrational beliefs about speaking English, teaching techniques of deep breathing and positive self-talk) that successfully assisted learners in alleviating their language speaking anxiety. Although the findings of influential factors of language speaking anxiety and the intervention strategies suggested in this study are empirically documented, however, there is a need of research to propose more concrete suggestions for alleviating the debilitating impact of language speaking anxiety. Thus, we are optimistic that the knowledge gained through this study may have the potential to enhance the ESL/ EFL learners' language learning experience.

## **5.8 Conclusion**

To conclude, in this chapter, we first discussed the results of the study and answered the research questions posed in the first chapter. Then, to see the significance of the study, we compared the results of the study with the available literature. After that, we shed light on the contributions of the study. Later we provided the implications of the study. Finally, we discussed the limitations and provided suggestions for further research.