



Japanese Learner Anxiety
*Case Study of Language Anxiety in an Indonesian-Japanese
Intercultural Discussion Forum*

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the language anxiety of Japanese learners participating in an Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum. When communicating using a foreign language, learners experience anxiety caused by various factors. The purpose of this study is to find out what anxiety the participants feel and the factors that cause the anxiety. This study is qualitative research in which the results will be analyzed using questionnaires and interviews with 47 Japanese language learner respondents who have experience participating in Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forums. The questions used in the questionnaire were questions related to FLA (Foreign Language Anxiety) according to Horwitz (1986). Based on the findings, the major keys showed that advanced-level certified learners (N2-N1) or the ones with more discussion exposures presented less anxiety than lower-class certified or less exposed individuals. The respondents with a higher language proficiency were found to be more confident about using vocabulary and constructing sentences properly, which allows easier communication. Interviews also underlined the problem of communication, especially in speaking and listening, because the nuances in vocabulary and pronunciation impeded communication. Respondents added that they became even more nervous when communicating with native speakers because of apprehension regarding grammatical correctness, suitable politeness, and fear of judgment. The study underscores the importance of structured exposure and practical engagement in alleviating language anxiety. Examples are more frequent intercultural forums, role-play, scenario preparatory workshops, and, generally, fostering peer networks in a spirit of learning cooperatively. Such approaches serve to give confidence in overcoming the psycholinguistic barrier in foreign language acquisition. This paper supports several important issues in designing supporting contexts for language growth and intercultural encounters which is vital for minimum level learners' anxiety within the multilingual environment.

KEYWORDS

Anxiety; Foreign Language Anxiety; Intercultural Discussion; Second Language.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has the second-highest number of Japanese language learners in the world. The total number of learners is 711,732, while the number of teachers is 6,617, the ratio between Japanese

learners and teachers in Indonesia is 1:107. These results assume that the Japanese language learning process in Indonesia is still not maximized (JPF, 2021). As foreign language learners, it is important for learners to understand how to interact with the language and culture from both directions (Daulay, 2020). Proficiency is not only seen from the

grammar that has been known or the vocabulary and kanji that have been mastered. However, the level of proficiency is measured based on the fluency of communication between the speaker and the interlocutor which can affect one's understanding of the culture and language being studied (Sakoda, 2002). The Japan Foundation (JPF, 2022) reports that to produce good Japanese language output, three basic competencies are needed, namely, (1) linguistic competence, (2) sociolinguistic competence, and (3) pragmatic competence. Linguistic competence consists of general linguistic range, vocabulary range, vocabulary mastery, grammatical accuracy, phonological mastery, orthographic mastery, semantic competence, and orthoepic competence. Meanwhile, sociolinguistic competence consists of sociolinguistic accuracy, and pragmatic competence consists of discourse competence and functional competence.

Hoftman and Hamidah (2022) also mentioned that the ability to speak in a foreign language has three basic competencies, namely linguistic, sociolinguistic, and pragmatic competencies. Clara (2022) provides an overview of the composition of learning in a Japanese language and culture study program based on the 3 basic competencies needed to produce foreign languages mentioned by The Japan Foundation (2022). From this, it is found that learning related to linguistic competence is the most learning with a percentage of 63%. Then there is learning related to sociolinguistic competence at 19%, and pragmatic competence at 18%. From the description of learning above, it can be understood that there is an unbalanced condition that may cause learners' academic achievement is not maximized.

Setiawan, Artadi, and Nurdiniyah (2022) *Kouryuukai* is an oral discussion activity about the language and culture of two countries through two-way interaction with the native language directly which can be implemented online or offline. However, henceforth in this research, it will be referred to as the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion. This intercultural discussion provides several benefits for participants in gaining new knowledge, but there are also participants who do not get this new knowledge, it is because participants experience problems of language anxiety.

Anxiety can also be experienced by language learners, it is called language anxiety or Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) (Priyo, 2018; Fitriah, & Muna, 2019; Fadhillah, 2022). There are experts who have explained the definition of language anxiety including Elaine Horwitz in the United

States and Peter MacIntyre in Canada. Although their opinions are in line and produce results that focus on the same goal to review some differences. However, according to Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013), language anxiety becomes a process of the uniqueness of language learners that is complicated and different from self-reactions, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors related to language learners. Whereas MacIntyre (1999, as cited in Ortega, 2013) explains the definition of language anxiety as a feeling of emotional reactions such as stress, nervousness, and worry associated with a second or foreign language being learned. It can be concluded that Horwitz focuses on the type of anxiety experienced by foreign language learners. They may not have many opportunities to use the second language outside of learning. In contrast, MacIntyre, Noels, and Clément (1997) focus on the mental state and self-confidence that emphasizes communication anxiety comes directly from second language speakers in the second language environment, he has an explanation that emphasizes social attitudes and behavior on communication affects around (Ortega, 2013).

Research on anxiety in Japanese language learning which has not been widely exposed in Indonesia, one of the related studies is that of Gusnovita, Wahyuni, and Putri (2018). In this study, an analysis was carried out on Japanese language learners. Apart from that, there are also those who use Indonesian, but almost all of them discuss concerns about learning English for Indonesian citizens and Indonesian for foreign citizens. Therefore, based on the above background, the author wants to examine the language anxiety experienced by Japanese language learners who take part in the Indonesia-Japan intercultural discussion program.

METHODS

The method used in this research uses a qualitative research methodology as many as 47 Japanese language learner respondents in the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum using questionnaires and interviews that discuss FLA (Foreign Language Anxiety) according to Horwitz (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013). Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively in the form of written and verbal explanations from participants in the intercultural discussion program with the following stages: (1) Preparation for data presentation, the first stage when you want to conduct research is looking

for a journal, thesis, and e-book references from sources trusted which includes this research topic which explains anxiety regarding second language acquisition, especially in intercultural discussion activities. (2) Data analysis and data collection using two instruments, the instruments used in this research were questionnaires and interviews. In this research, a questionnaire was used to obtain primary information regarding the opinions and attitudes of Japanese learners who were participants in intercultural discussions with a focus on anxiety. Because the questionnaire relates to the factors that influence participants' understanding become obstacles in the process of mastering Japanese and actively interacting in intercultural discussion activities. As a detailed literature review, 33 five-point Likert scale statement items were listed on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013) designed this research questionnaire.

In general, the 33 statements were statements of agreement or disagreement to 47 Japanese language learners regarding situations and anxiety factors that commonly occur in foreign language classes. Meanwhile, interview techniques are used to obtain some more complete information needs. Those interviewed were 25 respondents who had participated in the intercultural discussion program and had filled out a questionnaire. (3) Data Analysis Results, at this stage the method that will be used is qualitative descriptive data analysis. According to Mahsun (2005), the results of the analysis in the form of rules can be presented in two ways, namely explanations using ordinary words (informal) and explanations using signs or symbols (formal). At this stage, the results of data analysis from both research instruments use ordinary words.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Questionnaire Results and Data Analysis

Respondents who had participated in Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forums were classified based on gender, length of time studying Japanese, certificates of Japanese language proficiency, and intensity of attendance as participants in Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussions.

From 33 statements according to Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013), only 28 statements

have been selected by the researcher, because these 28 statements are in accordance with the needs in examining the concerns of language learners who are participants in the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion, only in the word "language class" in the statement according to Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013) the researcher changed the target class to become an Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum. The questionnaire data regarding the 28 statements of language learners' concerns according to Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013), were taken based on the length of time studying Japanese, the certificate of Japanese language proficiency owned, and the intensity of attendance as a participant in Indonesian-Japanese cross-cultural discussions. To make it easier to explain the results of the diagram, the researcher will narrow the five levels into three levels without reducing the essence of the five levels into 28 statements belonging to Horwitz et al. (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013) including "presence of anxiety" which is combined from the percentage level of agree and strongly agree, then "neutral", and "absence of anxiety" which is combined from the percentage level of disagree and strongly disagree.

Learner Anxiety Based on The Classification of Length of Time Studying Japanese

Respondents who have been participants based on the length of time they have studied Japanese resulted in three classifications, namely, more than four years, three to four years, and one to two years. Figure 1 is a diagram showing the anxiety level of learners with more than 4 years of learning experience.

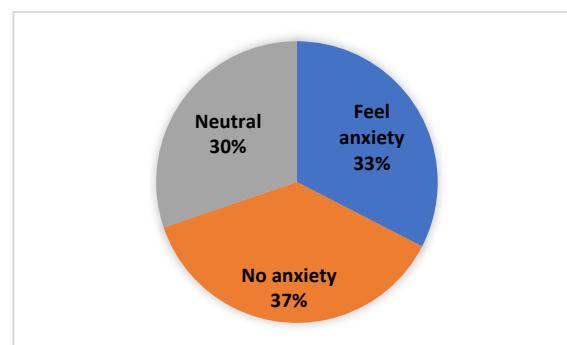


Figure 1: Anxiety level of >4 years of Japanese study experience respondents.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of anxiety levels among Japanese language learners with more than four years of study experience. The data reveals that while a significant proportion of learners (37%) report no anxiety during intercultural discussion forums, a considerable number (33%) still experience anxiety, and 30% remain neutral.

Figure 1 also presented that even with more than four years of study experience, most participants (33%) still felt anxious during the forum. This finding suggests that a longer duration of study does not necessarily translate into reduced levels of anxiety. Factors such as the complexity of in-person discussions, fear of making mistakes, and interacting with native speakers can contribute to this persistent anxiety (Toyama & Yamazaki, 2018; Muliadi, 2020). Machida (2010) found that intermediate-level Japanese learners experienced anxiety when communicating with native speakers, particularly due to concerns about proper vocabulary usage and pronunciation nuances. This aligns with the observation that learners with more than four years of experience may still face significant anxiety in discussion forums, especially when interacting with native speakers.

Figure 2 shows that most respondents with 1–2 years of Japanese study experience fall into the “neutral” category (39%), followed by “no anxiety” (34%) and “feel anxiety” (27%).

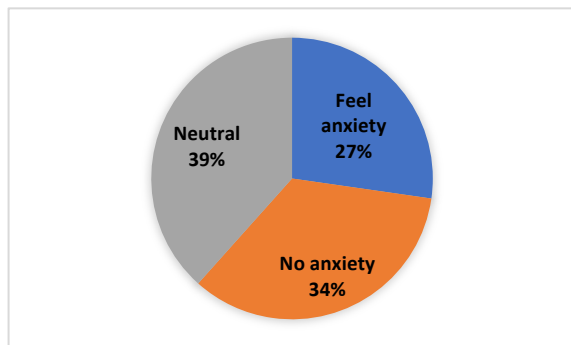


Figure 2: Anxiety level of 1-2 years Japanese study experience respondents.

From the results of the data analysis, it was found that respondents who chose neutral or did not feel anxiety were respondents who had experience participating in intercultural discussion activities longer than other respondents. Although they are not yet proficient in Japanese, they have already participated in similar activities, so they do not feel too much anxiety.

Learner Anxiety Based on Japanese Language Proficiency Certification

Respondents who have participated in Japanese language proficiency certificates have five classifications, namely a) Have participated, b) Participated but do not have a certificate, c) Passed JLPT/NAT-TEST/J-TEST basic level (N5 and N4), d) Passed JLPT/NAT-TEST/J-TEST intermediate level (N3), and e) Passed JLPT/NAT-TEST/J-TEST upper level (N2 and N1).

Based on the overall data seen from the classification of Japanese language proficiency certificates, it was found that participants who had never taken a Japanese language proficiency test had a 3% greater level of concern (combined percentage of agree and strongly agree) than those who had taken a Japanese language proficiency test but did not pass. However, for participants who passed the lower level (JLPT N5 & N4), the level of anxiety was 2% greater than participants who had taken part but did not pass.

Figure 3 illustrates the anxiety levels among individuals who have never taken the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).

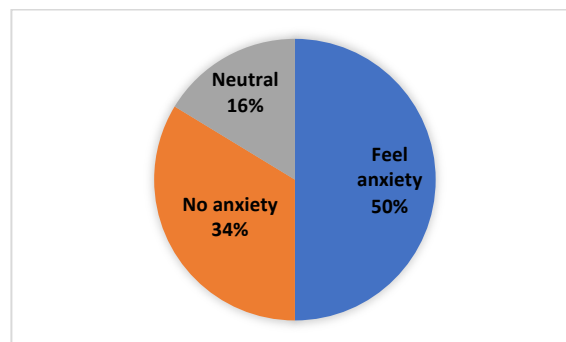


Figure 3: Anxiety level of respondents who have never taken the JLPT exam.

Figure 3 suggests that 50% of respondents who feel anxiety may be experiencing uncertainty about their language proficiency due to the lack of formal assessment, which can lead to apprehension about their abilities (Aydin, 2009). Meanwhile, the 34% who report no anxiety might have confidence in their self-assessed skills or feel indifferent toward the need for formal evaluations (Male, 2018). The remaining 16% who are neutral may reflect ambivalence toward their proficiency or the importance of standardized testing. Studies on foreign language anxiety, such as those examining test anxiety and its impact on performance, support these findings by highlighting how language

learners' confidence, coping strategies, and familiarity with assessments influence their emotional responses to language learning (Dauba, 2024).

Figure 4 illustrates the anxiety levels among individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities between Japanese and Indonesian participants who have never taken the Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).

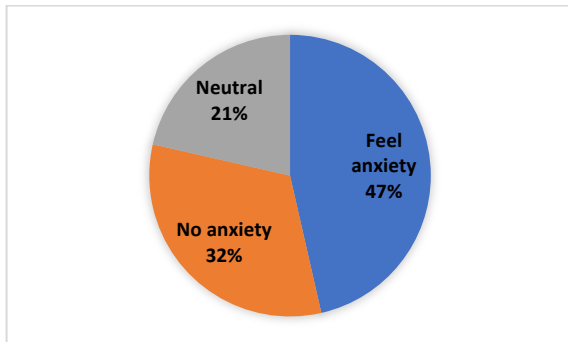


Figure 4: Anxiety levels of respondents who have taken the JLPT exam but have not passed.

A significant portion of 47% respondents reported experiencing anxiety, likely due to uncertainties about their Japanese language proficiency and unfamiliarity with cultural norms, which can create pressure in intercultural interactions. Meanwhile, 21% of participants felt neutral, possibly reflecting some exposure to similar settings or a balanced perspective on the activity. Notably, 32% experienced no anxiety, suggesting they may focus on the learning and relationship-building aspects rather than linguistic perfection or feel confident in their ability to communicate. The absence of formal language assessment, such as the JLPT, appears to contribute to uncertainty for some individuals, while others may feel less reliant on standardized measures of proficiency. This observation aligns with findings by Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010), who identified that language anxiety often stems from fear of communication, lack of self-confidence, and cultural differences in interpersonal interactions.

Figure 5 depicts the anxiety levels of individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) who have passed the JLPT N5 exam. Nearly half (49%) of participants reported feeling anxiety, suggesting that, despite passing a basic level of Japanese proficiency, these individuals may still feel uncertain about their ability to communicate effectively in real-world

intercultural settings. This could be attributed to the limited scope of the N5 exam, which focuses on fundamental grammar, vocabulary, and listening skills, potentially leaving gaps in conversational fluency and cultural understanding. Meanwhile, 34% of participants reported no anxiety, likely reflecting increased confidence from their formal language certification, which provides validation of their proficiency. The 17% who felt neutral might indicate individuals with moderate self-assurance, balancing between confidence from their certification and the challenges of real-world intercultural interactions. These findings highlight the importance of integrating practical communication skills and cultural competence into language learning to reduce anxiety in intercultural discussions. This result is in line with Liu and Jackson's (2008) research which mentions that anxiety often stems from fear of negative judgment, worry about making mistakes, and lack of confidence in their language ability. This is in line with the wider literature on language anxiety, which highlights self-perceived inadequacy as a major factor.

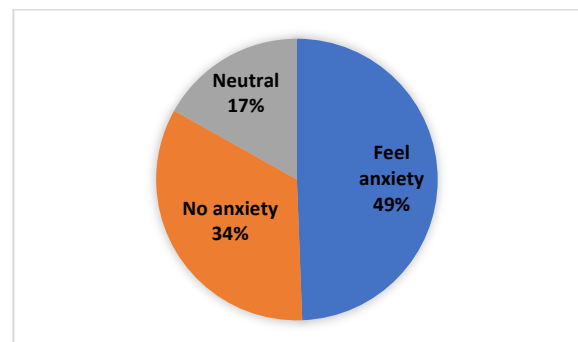


Figure 5: Anxiety level of respondents who have passed the JLPT exam (N4-N5).

Figure 6 illustrates the anxiety levels among individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) who have passed the JLPT N3 exam. Notably, 34% of participants reported feeling anxiety, which may be due to the intermediate nature of the N3 level, where individuals have developed a reasonable command of the language but might still struggle with nuances and cultural subtleties in real-world interactions. A larger proportion (38%) reported no anxiety, suggesting that the JLPT N3 certification has provided them with sufficient confidence and linguistic competence to participate actively in discussions. Meanwhile, 28% of participants felt

neutral, indicating that while they have some confidence in their abilities, they may still face occasional challenges related to cultural communication or situational demands. These results align with findings by Liu and Jackson (2008), who emphasize that even proficient language learners can experience anxiety in intercultural or unfamiliar contexts due to fear of negative evaluation or linguistic inadequacies. This highlights the importance of integrating advanced practical language use and cultural competence into language learning frameworks to further reduce anxiety in intercultural settings.

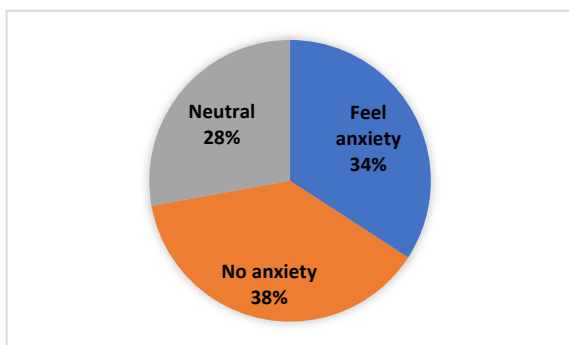


Figure 6: Anxiety level of respondents who have passed the JLPT exam (N3).

Further, Figure 7 illustrates the anxiety levels of individuals engaging in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) who have passed the JLPT N2 or N1 exams. The results show that only 26% of participants experience anxiety, which is relatively low compared to those with lower proficiency levels. This suggests that advanced language skills significantly reduce anxiety. The high proficiency indicated by N2 and N1 certifications enables individuals to comprehend complex materials, communicate confidently, and better navigate cultural differences. Additionally, 40% of participants reported no anxiety, demonstrating their confidence and ease in such settings. However, 34% felt neutral, implying that factors such as fear of cultural misunderstandings or personal traits, like perfectionism, might still influence their feelings. These findings align with Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010), who noted that even proficient speakers can face anxiety in specific situations, and Liu and Jackson (2008), who emphasized the importance of confidence and prior exposure in alleviating anxiety. This highlights the value of continued intercultural experiences to enhance confidence and further reduce anxiety.

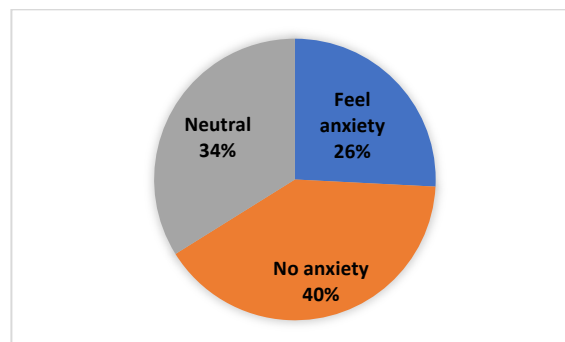


Figure 7: Anxiety level of respondents who have passed the JLPT exam (N1-N2).

Learner Anxiety Based on The Intensity of Attendance at The Indonesian-Japanese Intercultural Discussion Forum

Respondents who have been participants in terms of the intensity of attendance at the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum produced 3 classifications, namely a) attendance once a year, b) 2-5 times a year, and c) 6-12 times a year.

Based on the results of the overall data seen from the classification of the intensity of attendance at the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum, the more often participants follow the discussion forum, the less concern felt about the 28 statements related to the concerns of foreign language learners (Japanese) in the discussion forum.

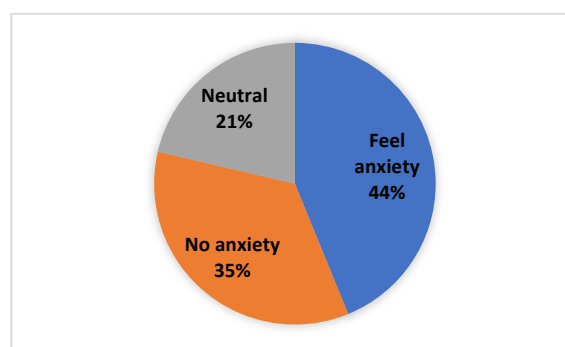


Figure 8: Anxiety level of respondents who participate in activities once a year.

Figure 8 shows the anxiety levels among individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) with limited exposure, engaging only once a year. A substantial 44% of participants reported feeling anxiety, which may be attributed to the infrequency of their

interactions. Limited exposure to intercultural discussions can lead to a lack of familiarity with cultural norms and conversational dynamics, heightening apprehension and self-doubt.

Meanwhile, 35% of participants reported no anxiety, possibly reflecting a more resilient or adaptable disposition or prior language and cultural knowledge. The remaining 21% felt neutral, indicating that while they may not experience significant anxiety, they also lack the confidence that comes with regular exposure. These findings align with Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010), who emphasize that anxiety in language learning is often linked to limited opportunities for practice and fear of communication failure, underscoring the importance of regular engagement in intercultural activities to build confidence and reduce anxiety.

Figure 9 illustrates the anxiety levels of individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) with a frequency of 2 to 5 times per year.

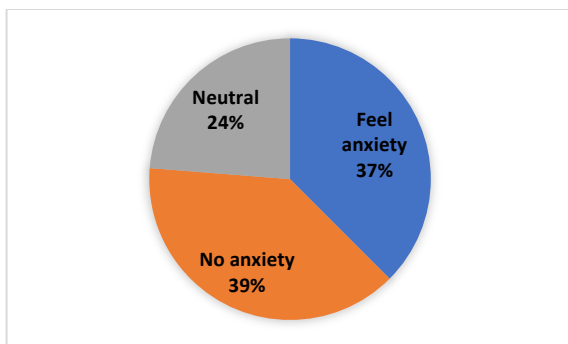


Figure 9: Anxiety level of respondents who participate in activities 2-5 times a year.

The data shows that 37% of participants feel anxiety, a decrease compared to those with minimal exposure, indicating that moderate participation reduces anxiety to some extent. Regular, albeit limited, engagement allows individuals to build familiarity with intercultural communication norms and improve their confidence. Meanwhile, 39% of participants reported no anxiety, suggesting that increased exposure enhances their comfort and competence in such settings. The remaining 24% felt neutral, which may indicate that while they are becoming accustomed to these interactions, they still face occasional uncertainty or challenges. This analysis aligns with Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010), who noted that regular practice and exposure play a critical role in reducing language

anxiety by helping learners develop confidence and communication skills.

Figure 10 below depicts the anxiety levels of individuals participating in intercultural discussion activities (Japanese and Indonesian) with a frequency of 6 to 12 times per year. Notably, only 25% of participants report feeling anxiety, indicating that increased exposure to intercultural discussions helps alleviate anxiety. Regular engagement allows participants to develop confidence in their communication abilities and better adapt to cultural differences. Additionally, 39% reported no anxiety, suggesting that frequent participation fosters familiarity and comfort in these settings. However, 36% of participants remain neutral, indicating that while they may not feel significant anxiety, they may still lack complete confidence or encounter occasional challenges. This aligns with Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010), who emphasized that frequent practice and exposure reduce foreign language anxiety by improving communication skills and increasing self-assurance in social interactions.

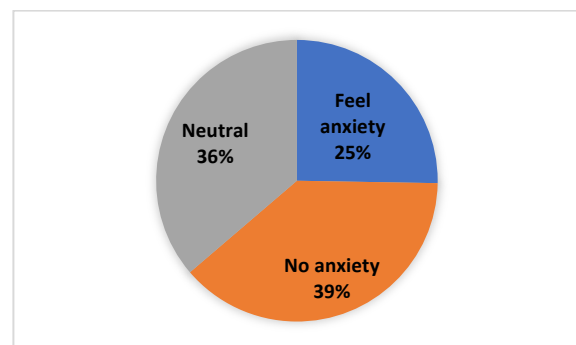


Figure 10: Anxiety level of respondents who participate in activities 6-12 times a year.

Learner Anxiety Based on Participation in Intercultural Discussion Forums Through Interviews

Interviews were conducted with respondents who had filled out the willingness to be interviewed on the questions in the questionnaire, interviews were conducted by researchers to seek answers to a more detailed explanation of the concerns of Japanese language learners in the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum.

The questions asked to respondents during the interview were also divided into two types, namely questions to those who had participated in discussion forums and those who had never participated in discussion forums. In the previous

chapter, 5 items of interview questions used questions developed by Horwitz, et al (1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013) and listed on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) found in Palupi's (2022) research and the remaining questions were more specific to the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum.

In question (1), in addition to lecture classes, 10 people do not hone their Japanese speaking skills with native or non-native Japanese, 10 people hone their Japanese skills with non-native Japanese, while 5 people hone their Japanese speaking skills with natives through offline or online friends and work partners. These findings highlight a significant gap in opportunities for authentic practice with native speakers. Ortega (2013) mentioned that language acquisition is influenced by both internal (mental and psychological) and external (environmental and social) factors. From this, it can be understood that the 5 respondents who had access to native speakers had a higher likelihood of developing Japanese communication skills than the other respondents.

In question (2) Intensity of using Japanese to communicate 25 people answered more often with non-natives because of the lack of opportunities for their relationships to speak Japanese with native Japanese. Therefore, with this intercultural discussion forum, 20 people who have participated in the forum said it helped them to train and improve their Japanese language skills. This underscores the need for intercultural discussion forums, as evidenced by the 20 participants who affirmed that such forums significantly helped improve their Japanese language skills.

The answer to question no (3) about being nervous speaking Japanese with a native or non-native has a difference in the level of Japanese proficiency certificate they have. For those who do not have a certificate - passing the basic level, they answered that they are more nervous about speaking with native Japanese. Because they feel afraid of their Japanese language skills especially practiced with native Japanese, where language learners prioritize good and correct sentence patterns with different levels of politeness to speak Japanese with native Japanese, while to speak with non-natives they can mix their conversations with Indonesian or English. Ortega (2013) mentioned that language acquisition is influenced by both internal (mental and psychological) and external (environmental and social) factors. These findings underscore the importance of fostering supportive, intercultural,

and immersive learning environments to mitigate anxiety and promote effective communication.

Answer to question no (4) Of the 25 interviewees, 10 answered that the most difficult skill was listening, 5 people wrote, 1 person read, and 9 people spoke. From these results, most of the difficulties are listening and speaking Japanese. This does not affect the certificate of Japanese language skills possessed, the length of Japanese language learning, and the intensity of participation in the activities of the Indonesian-Japanese intercultural discussion forum. The reasons for answering the difficult listening skills are almost the same, namely, they say Japanese vocabulary that has many meanings and pronunciation methods that are almost the same also confuse them as communicants. When they do not understand what they hear then they can not respond properly, such a situation that makes them feel nervous and nervous because the discussion does not run smoothly. Listening and speaking emerged as the most problematic areas, independent of the respondents' Japanese proficiency level or prior exposure to intercultural forums. Listening difficulties were attributed to the nuanced pronunciation and homophonic nature of Japanese vocabulary, which creates confusion during communication (Horwitz et al., 1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013). The inability to comprehend spoken Japanese leads to hesitation and disrupts the flow of discussions (Ortega, 2013).

The answer to question no (5) is that those who have been participants or have never known about this intercultural discussion forum information from social media group broadcasts spread by lecturers and friends.

The above results correlate with previous relevant research, namely that foreign language anxiety is considered to cause fear and embarrassment which is characterized as a type of communication anxiety, a condition where a person admits that he cannot interact with other people. When you consider that, it raises concerns

Communication arises as a direct response to one's environment. In addition, everyone experiences difficulties in communicating or listening to foreign languages caused by a lack of language knowledge (Horwitz, et al, 1986, as cited in Ortega, 2013). Indirectly, human relations and social aspects such as mental, environmental, psychological, and a person's characteristics can influence foreign language communication skills Ortega (2009).

CONCLUSION

In this study, there are two problem formulations which in this chapter will describe the conclusions of the analysis which answers the problem formulation above. From the results of the analysis, it was found that 3 main factors cause the emergence of anxiety of intercultural discussion program participants, in communicating using Japanese. These 3 factors are the length of study, the learning achievement factor (ownership of Japanese language proficiency certificates), and the intensity of respondents' participation in intercultural discussion forums. Of these three things, the intensity of respondents' participation in intercultural discussion forums is the most significant factor influencing respondents. That is, if the intensity of the respondent's participation is high, then the level of anxiety decreases. On the other hand, if the intensity of the respondent's participation is low, then the level of concern increases. From the three things above, there are also the results of the analysis which states that the cause of the emergence of the three factors of concern of the respondents is also influenced by the response of the interlocutors in the intercultural discussion forum. The respondents' anxiety tended to decrease because the interlocutors' responses, in this case, native Japanese speakers, did not show a negative response to the respondents' Japanese speech.

In principle, the anxiety of the participants of the intercultural discussion forum arose because of the high quantity or frequency of the three factors that caused the emergence of anxiety. For example, if a participant has a relatively long study time, then his/her worries will be reduced, while participants who have a relatively short study time, have a lot of worries. This is also the case when looking at learning outcomes. Learning achievement in this case is described by the possession of a Japanese language proficiency test certificate. The higher the level of the exam achieved, the lower the level of concern. Conversely, if the learning achievement is still low, then the level of worry increases. The concrete examples of these concerns are mostly related to the linguistic side. Respondents who have a longer mass of time learning Japanese and learning achievements seen from high-level certificates also do not rule out the possibility of having high concerns if not practiced. Therefore, the next factor, namely the intensity of participants in the discussion forum, can reduce the anxiety of respondents. If the intensity of participation is high,

then the worries will tend to decrease, while participants whose intensity of participation is still small, tend to have a lot of anxiety. The results obtained from this study are also in line with the statement from Horwitz, Elaine, Tallon, and Luo (2010) which states that more exposure to language outside the classroom can also help anxious students become more comfortable using the language.

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