

**State-Trait Anxiety Vis-À-Vis Linguistic Competence Among Sophomore  
College Students of Western Mindanao State University**

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**Abstract**

This study was undertaken to determine the state-trait anxiety and linguistic competence of WMSU sophomore college students. The objectives were to measure the degree of difference in state-trait anxiety and the linguistic competence of college students according to gender and course and to determine whether there is a significant relationship. Descriptive-Correlational Quantitative Research Design was used and Systematic Listing Sampling Procedure was utilized. Data were collected using State-trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) adapted from Spielberger (1991), and the Linguistic Competence Test (LCT) on grammar and vocabulary used by Salian (2012). The results showed that the

based on STAI. In terms of grammar and vocabulary, the LTC

-trait

anxiety and their linguistic competence, but gender and course of the respondents did not influence their state-trait anxiety and linguistic competence. Since moderate state-trait anxiety can

need to expose them to challenging language classroom activities. Gender and course do not affect state-trait anxiety and linguistic competence which may be indicative of the progressive benefits on the part of the language learning instructor and the English department curriculum. Contrary to traditional notion that females outperform males in linguistic competence task, the similar output of males compared to females here can be viewed as progress report for WMSU college students

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namely linguistic competence and linguistic performance Chomsky (1991/1965). Linguistic competence is a system of linguistic knowledge possessed by the native speakers of a language. It is in contrast to the concept of linguistic performance, which is governed by specific codes for communication by members within a community. In e and people with such competence have learned to utilize the grammar of their spoken language to generate an unlimited amount of statements. Known as Generative Grammar, the concept has been adopted and developed by linguists in the generative tradition (Fernandez, 2011).

How competence and performance intersect in language learning can be extended to acquire system and learned system (Krashen, 1985). Emphasizing language acquisition as the most important among the five hypotheses in second language linguistic competence. For instance, it has been observed by English teachers and professors in the tertiary level that students manifest certain behavioral patterns like restlessness, mental blocks, tensions, stammering, stuttering, forgetfulness, visiting the

(2009) findings, individuals with low affective filters are better language learners and better acquirers of the language than those with high affective filters.

It is imperative then that language teachers and professors develop an awareness of the phenomenon of anxiety in terms of its causes and impact on the linguistic competencies of the students in the learning classrooms. Likewise, they should find practical measures and remedies in reducing any form of anxiety so that the acquisition of the second language



**Table 4.** Profile of the Respondents

Respondents	Gender		Population
	M	F	
BSHRM	15	15	30
BSTEd	15	15	30
AB Eng	15	15	30
	45	45	90

TTTTw8 ß9 EMC m 0 0 /P -0 0 EMC /F1JETQ9q0.wTf1zE0-0 0d/F1Q9q7.45 reWE0κ393.9qQTfu0

The second was the linguistic competence test, a standardized unity- item test the English class. The vocabulary test consisted of a 45-item test divided into three levels: Easy (15 items), Average (15 items) and Difficult (15 items). The grammar test was composed of Subject-verb agreement which consisted of twenty-five (25) items and twenty (20) items on Verb tenses.

The respondents were tested on these two sub-categories since these were the most common areas where students committed errors on grammatical features of the language. The objective

### Data Collection Procedure

As soon as the approval from the deans of the College of Home Economics, College of Teacher Education and College of Communications and Humanities were granted, the list of respondents was finalized, the schedule was set, and the venue to administer the questionnaires to the 90 respondents was prepared. Ethical Clearance was sought and granted before administering the test questionnaires.

Thirty minutes (30) were allotted for the STAI questions and sixty (60) minutes for the Vocabulary and Grammar test respectively. After all the respondents have finished answering the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory and Linguistic Competence Test, all papers were retrieved. Answers were subsequently tabulated, coded, computed and treated with Statistical tools for analysis and interpretation.

### Data Analysis Procedure

The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory assesses both State and Trait separately. Each type of anxiety test has its own scale for a total of forty (40) different statements. For every answer, a respondent may get a score between 1 - 4 point. Scores may range from twenty (21) as the lowest score and 160 as the highest possible score. Scores show that (21-60) is interpreted as low anxiety level, (61 - 100) as moderate anxiety level, (101-140) as high anxiety level and (141-160) as severely high anxiety level. Table 7.0 as adapted from Spielberger (1991) shows the score range, its scale range with its adjectival rating equivalent. The presentation of the data was based on the 4-point Likert scale weighted mean.

**Table 7.** State-Trait Inventory (STAI) Scale

<b>Score Range</b>	<b>Scale Range</b>	<b>Adjectival Rating</b>
141 - 160	3.1 - 4.0	Severely High Anxiety Level
101 - 140	2.1 - 3.0	High Anxiety Level
61 - 100	1.51 - 2.0	Moderate Anxiety Level
21 - 60	1.1 - 1.5	Low Anxiety Level
0 - 20	Did not attempt	No assessable information

### Scoring Procedure for the Respondent's Linguistic Competence

For the Linguistic Competence Test for both vocabulary and grammar, every correct answer, a respondent was assigned one point. The total score of the respondents in the language competence test was explained using the following description:

A score of (82-90) means expert user, (73-81) means very good user, (64-72) means good user, (55-36) means competent user, (46-54) means modest user, (37-45) means limited user, (28-36) means extremely limited user, (19-27) means intermittent user, and (10-9), it meant they did not attempt to answer the test. The scores were added to constitute the analyzed and interpreted.

**Table 8**

SCALE	LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
82-90	Expert user	Has fully operational command of the language; appropriate accurate and affluent with complete understanding.
73-81	Very good user	Has fully operational command of the language with only occasional unsystematic inaccuracies and inappropriateness; misunderstanding may occur in unfamiliar situation; handles complex detailed argument well.



**Table 8.**

37-45	Limited user	Basic competence is limited to familiar situation; has frequent problem in understanding and expression; is not able to use complex language.
28-36	Extremely limited user	Coveys and understands only in general meaning in familiar situations; frequent breakdowns in communication occur.
19-27	Intermittent user	No real communication is possible except for the most basic information using isolated words or short formulas in familiar situations and to meet immediate needs; has great difficulty understanding spoken and written English.
10-18 1 9	Non-user Did not attempt the test	Essentially has no ability to use the language beyond possibly a few isolated words. No assessable information.



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trait anxiety when data are classified according to course groups. It can be inferred that

level of linguistic competence based on course groups. It can be inferred that course specialization does not necessarily

**Table 15.**  
**Variable**

Based on Course





progressive benefits on the part of the language learning instructor and the English department curriculum. Contrary to traditional notion that females outperform males in linguistic competence task, the similar output of males compared to females here

is current grammar and vocabulary tests. Same is true with equality of linguistic competence among BSHRM, BSED and ABENG who also obtained high linguistic competence in both grammar and vocabulary tests.

As regards, same results in state-trait anxiety based on gender and course, language learning curriculum instruction should be geared towards challenging and providing the college students more exposure to classroom activities to develop analysis and evaluation skills that will develop their optimal linguistic competence necessary for them to process the English language not merely as an abstract conceptual structure but a communicative process of engaging themselves as a social and analytical being.

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