



# Language Anxiety, Acculturation, and L2 Self: A Relational Analysis in the Taiwanese Cultural Context

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## Abstract

Due to the detrimental effects of foreign language anxiety on multiple areas of language achievement, a large body of research has been devoted to examining the sources of this anxiety. Yet very few studies have considered acculturation and L2 self as causal factors in foreign language anxiety. This enquiry proposes hypothesized links between foreign language anxiety, three components of Schumann's (1978, 1986) acculturation theories (assimilation, preservation, and adaptation), two aspects of Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 motivational self system (ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self), and selected sociodemographic variables in the Taiwanese EFL context. A setwise multiple regression analysis revealed four variables that contributed significantly to the prediction of foreign language anxiety: the L2 self, preservation, hours spent on English listening comprehension practice, and self-perceived English proficiency. The pedagogical implications of these findings for reducing foreign language anxiety and for improving foreign language learning are discussed.

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## 1 Introduction

Most foreign language learners, adolescents and adults in particular, have experienced anxiety of some kind in their acquisition process. Foreign language (FL) anxiety, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), is part of communication anxiety that is often "associated with the language class and differentiated from other contexts" (p. 297). Abundant research has consistently found detrimental effects of anxiety on language acquisition and production and thus has devoted substantial efforts to uncovering the sources of such negative emotion (e.g. Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Kitano, 2001; Kota, 2005; Young, 1991). Despite the extensive literature in the area, there has not been much research that probes a potential association between culture and language anxiety.

A few anxiety studies have indicated that the difference and distance between native language culture and the target language (TL) culture may be causal factors in language anxiety. For example, some researchers (Jones, 2004; Woodrow, 2006) described that the concern of "face" sanctioned particularly by Confucian heritage cultures may lead to culture-bound language anxiety. Culture also appears to be manifested in learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) which has been found to be closely connected to language anxiety (MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001). Examining communicative anxiety of participants who had French as L1, L2, L3, and L4, Dewaele (2010) found that cultural distance may inhibit learners to exercise their linguistic resources, impel them to embrace the unexpected, and possibly aggravate their levels of language anxiety. Most of these studies have centered on comparisons of anxiety levels among multilingual learners or learners of various ethnicities in L2 contexts. Relatively little research, however, has considered the impact of culture on language anxiety within a group homogenous in terms of their

L1 and nationality in EFL contexts. As Tollefson (1991) suggests, “learners who wish to assimilate – who value or identify with members of the target language community – are generally more successful than learners who are concerned about retaining their original cultural identity” (p. 23). It is thus reasonable to speculate that the higher the degree of acculturation, the lower the level of language anxiety. Viewing language anxiety, therefore, from the acculturation perspective may not only elucidate the interactions between culture and language anxiety but provide insights into the sources of this anxiety.

Another variable, self-concept or self-perception, has consistently been viewed as a strong predictor of FL anxiety (Horwitz, 1990; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Price, 1991; Young, 1991) due to a common insecurity to display L2 self relatively incompetent than L1 self. However, the connection between other aspects of L2 self, in addition to self-perceived proficiency, and language anxiety is relatively unexplored. As Markus and Kitayama (1991) claim, culture and self are two tightly intertwined constructs that determine individuals’ cognition, emotion, and motivation. It is therefore worthwhile gaining an understanding of the roles of culture and self in FL anxiety.

The purpose of this study is to explore these potential sources of FL anxiety by evaluating theoretical frameworks of acculturation and L2 self which underpin the hypothesized links between 1) FL anxiety, 2) Schumann’s (1978, 1986) acculturation theories, and 3) Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009) L2 motivational self system (*ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self*). In addition, the relationships between FL anxiety and selected sociodemographic variables are explored.

## 2 Review of literature

For decades, language anxiety has been one of the most tantalizing areas in second language acquisition (SLA) research. Early research used broad definitions of language anxiety, resulting in inconclusive findings with some studies reporting a negative relationship between language anxiety and achievement (Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977, 1980) and others reporting little or a positive relationship (Chastain, 1975; Scovel, 1978). To address this issue, many researchers have been exploring the construct of language anxiety (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Saito & Samimy, 1996). For example, Horwitz, et al. (1986) found language anxiety only correlated weakly with general trait anxiety and identified language anxiety as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process” (p. 128). Later MacIntyre (1999) conceptualized foreign language anxiety as “the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language” (p. 27). By now there is a broad consensus that language anxiety has a negative impact on all areas of language achievement (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Aida, 1994; Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Phillips, 1992).

In an attempt to reduce such negative emotion arising from language learning contexts, many studies were conducted to identify factors associated with language anxiety. Research into the relationship between gender and language anxiety has produced inconsistent findings. Some research studies report significant anxiety-gender effects (Kitano, 2001; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004) while others reporting no relationship between the two (Aida, 1994; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999). Language anxiety has also been found to be closely associated with learners’ linguistic history (e.g. prior language learning experiences, learning contexts, and age of onset of acquisition) (Aida, 1994; Dewaele, 2010; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). In a study examining 26 factors associated with FL anxiety, Onwuegbuzie, et al. (1999) found that seven variables contributed substantially in predicting FL anxiety (i.e. age, academic achievement, prior high school experience with foreign languages, prior history of visiting foreign countries, expected overall average for current language course, perceived scholastic competence, and perceived self-worth).

With respect to the links between FL anxiety and personality variables, Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) reported that anxious learners and perfectionists shared some common characteristics: they set relatively higher standards for their language proficiency, were overconcerned about the errors they made, and cared too much about others’ evaluations. In addition, anxious learners had a ten-

dency to procrastinate due to their unrealistic goals for language learning. In a study of Japanese learners enrolled in language programs in New Zealand, Oya, Manalo, and Greenwood (2004) found that extroverted learners outperformed introverted learners in fluency, accuracy, and complexity of sentences. On the other hand, Dewaele (2002) found that neuroticism was a main determinant of FL anxiety among three Eysenckian personality dimensions (extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism).

A small number of studies have addressed the potential impacts of culture on language anxiety (Dewaele, 2010; Woodrow, 2006) while they focused mainly on comparisons of anxiety levels among multilingual learners or learners of various ethnicities in L2 contexts. Little research, if any, has investigated culture as a causal factor of language anxiety in a monolingual EFL context. To uncover the impact of the TL culture on FL anxiety, the Acculturation Model proposed by Schumann (1978, 1986) may provide a useful framework. According to Schumann (1986), *assimilation*, *preservation*, and *adaptation* are three integration strategies that “yield varying degrees of contact between the two groups and thus varying degrees of acquisition of the target language” (p. 381). The desirable condition for SLA is when learners try to assimilate into a TL group and adapt to the cultural conventions of the TL group. However, SLA will not be supported if learners desire to remain culturally and linguistically isolated. In other words, the social and psychological distances are determinants of the quantity and quality of the contact and optimal SLA. One could speculate that language anxiety will be alleviated when the socio-linguistic gap between learners and the TL community is closed since increased cultural knowledge will promote an understanding of the TL input, and thus lower learners’ anxiety levels.

Learners’ negative self-perception, among various predictors of language anxiety, has repeatedly been considered a primordial source of their anxiety (Dewaele, 2010; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Horwitz, 1990; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). These previous studies demonstrate language learners’ apprehension of being deprived of their real personality due to their relatively incompetent display of L2 self. The role of learners’ L2 self in language learning can also be conceptualized in Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009) L2 motivational self system. According to the researcher, the *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self* are two major motivators that encourage learners to devote more efforts to their language learning. The ideal self is “the L2-specific aspect of one’s ideal self” (p. 106). It represents a desired future self (e.g. a fluent L2 speaker, an excellent L2 writer, etc.) a learner aspires to become. The ought-to self, on the other hand, refers to the ought-to process one believes to go through to accomplish self-perceived expectations, obligations, or responsibilities. Previous research has indicated that the ideal self reduces learners’ English anxiety whereas the ought-to self triggers higher levels of English anxiety (Papi, 2010). Considering the bipolar effects of self-concept on FL anxiety described in previous FL anxiety literature, it is likely that the impact of the ideal self or the ought-to self on anxiety is bidirectional.

### 3 Purpose of the study

Despite the significant research efforts and advances in exploring factors associated with FL anxiety, previous studies have mostly considered the links between FL anxiety and sociodemographic variables or personality variables. Less attention has been paid to the role of culture, particularly acculturation, in FL anxiety. Furthermore, although acculturation has thus far been shown to be a possible source of anxiety, how its different aspects operate to affect anxiety in EFL settings remains unclear. The present research purports to investigate the relationship between three facets of acculturation (assimilation, preservation, and adaptation) and FL anxiety in the Taiwanese EFL context. Given that much of the discussion on acculturation focuses on immigrants and most scales developed to measure acculturation center on bilingual immigrant contexts (Anderson et al., 1993; Stephenson, 2000; Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000), a questionnaire was designed for this study to probe into the issue. In addition, the study addresses a relatively unexplored area of the influence of different aspects of the L2 self on FL anxiety. In an attempt to bridge these research gaps and offer insights into the multifaceted nature of FL anxiety, the study addresses the following questions:

- 1) Do students experience FL anxiety? If so, what is the severity of their FL anxiety?
- 2) What are the relationships between learners' FL anxiety, acculturation, L2 self, and selected sociodemographic variables?

#### 4 Participants

Participants included 108 undergraduate students majoring in Applied English in Taiwan. Only English majors were recruited given that students otherwise may not have much recent experience in attending English classes to provide information regarding their FL classroom anxiety. The sample consisted of 62 females and 46 males. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 23 ( $M = 19.97$ ,  $SD = 1.08$ ). All participants had learned English as their foreign language for at least six years in instructed settings during middle and high school years. Approximately 70 percent ( $n = 75$ ) of the participants had taken the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) Intermediate and/or High-Intermediate levels. Based on their GEPT scores, they had a wide range of English proficiencies from 140 to 240 on a 240-point scale.

#### 5 Instruments

Participants were invited to complete a paper-based questionnaire which consisted of three parts: (a) the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS); (b) the L2 Self Questionnaire (L2SQ); (c) the EFL Student Acculturation Questionnaire (ESAQ); and (d) the Background Questionnaire. The FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986) was used to measure learners' language anxiety in English classes. The L2SQ (Papi, 2010) was used to measure learners' attitudes toward the ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self. The ESAQ was developed to assess learners' levels of acculturation in various domains (cultural values, social interactions, and life choices). The background questionnaire elicited information on participants' gender, age, age of onset acquisition, and current exposure to English. Each instrument was first translated into Chinese and checked through back-translation to ensure that alteration in meaning of the items had not occurred. They were pilot-tested prior to the formal study.

**The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.** The 33-item FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was used in this study to assess anxiety that occurs during language learning in classroom settings. The scale was measured by 5-point Likert scale with 1 showing *strongly disagree* and 5 showing *strongly agree*. It has demonstrated high reliability, validity, and test-retest reliability (Aida, 1994; Horwitz et al., 1986; Truitt, 1995).

**The L2 Self Questionnaire.** The L2SQ was comprised of 12 items on 5-point Likert scales from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The original questionnaire was developed by Papi (2010) based on Dörnyei et al.'s (2005, 2009) L2 motivational self system. The original instrument consisted of items measuring learners' attitudes, English learning experience, intended effort, and English anxiety. For the purpose of this study, only two attitudinal scales toward L2 selves, namely the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self items, were used.

**The EFL Student Acculturation Questionnaire.** The ESAQ was developed following the criteria for inventory development (Dörnyei, 2003; Gilham, 2000) to assess learners' acculturation levels in an EFL context. The initial items were developed based on theoretical frameworks of acculturation (Schumann, 1978, 1986). Prior to the pilot test, three experts in educational psychology and EFL pedagogy were asked to scrutinize item clarity, redundancy, and reliability. Their comments resulted in minor revisions of item wordings and questionnaire instructions. The preliminary version of the questionnaire was piloted among 100 students in the same university and their comments were incorporated accordingly to refine the questionnaire. The final version included 21 items on 5-point Likert scales in which 5 indicated *strongly agree* and 1 indicated *strongly disagree*. Evaluated with an exploratory factor analysis (principal axis extraction with direct oblimin rotation), the questionnaire revealed a three-factor solution which optimized parsimony and interpretability. Appendix A contains all the variables and items that have been submitted to correlation and regression analyses. The three factors included in this instrument were as follows:

- 1) Assimilation measuring an adoption of cultural norms, values, and lifestyles of the TL group
- 2) Preservation assessing the attributes that one maintains one's own cultural values while at the same time rejecting those of the TL group
- 3) Adaptation measuring an adjustment to the TL groups' cultural norms and at the same time keeping their own cultural values

## 6 Results and discussion

The results are presented in two sections. First, a descriptive analysis was conducted to analyze participants' responses toward the FLCAS. Second, the relationships between FL anxiety, three aspects of acculturation (assimilation, preservation, and adaptation), two aspects of L2 self (the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self), and selected sociodemographic variables were explored. Pearson product-moment correlations were first performed to determine the correlations between FL anxiety and the chosen variables. A multiple regression analysis was then used to examine the best predictors of FL anxiety. More specifically, setwise regression was used to determine the optimal set of variables that accounted for the maximum proportion of total variance. In setwise regression, all possible simultaneous models involving the selected variables were tested based on the following steps: separate regressions were computed for each independent variable solely at first and all possible combinations of independent variables (pairs, trios, and so on) until the best grouping of independent variables was identified according to a criterion: the model with the largest  $R^2$  was selected. Compared to the stepwise regression, setwise regression is guaranteed to find the model with the largest  $R^2$  (Hocking, 1976).

### 6.1 Foreign language anxiety among Taiwanese EFL learners

The FLCAS revealed a composite score with a possible range from 33 to 165. After the responses toward the positively-worded items were scored reversely, a descriptive analysis was performed on the scale. The total FLCAS scores of the participants ranged from 66 to 130 ( $M = 101.82$ ,  $SD = 12.14$ ). Severity of anxiety was measured through a one-sample  $t$  test against a neutral mean of three. The results showed that the participants' foreign language anxiety was significantly higher than the neutral value ( $t(107) = 2.44$ ,  $p < .05$ ), suggesting that these students experienced some levels of anxiety in their English classes.

Given the socio-cultural nature of anxiety, participants' foreign language anxiety level may be related to the culture of their community such as values and expectations within and beyond the classroom. English classes, for many learners, may be closely associated with English tests (Horwitz et al., 1986). Such connection may have become more powerful since the recent widespread use of English proficiency test scores (e.g. TOEIC, TOEFL, IELTS, GEPT) as a university graduation benchmark of English proficiency in Taiwan. Huang (2010) surveyed 1,399 Taiwanese college students and found that test anxiety, especially the anxiety to achieve a minimum English qualification for graduation, was the major source of learners' foreign language anxiety. This may be a possible explanation for the anxiety many participants experienced in the study.

The pervasive culture of Confucian-based collectivism in Taiwan and many Asian countries values interdependent self-concept (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Taylor, Peplau, & Sears, 2000). Interdependent individuals prioritize group goals over personal goals and tend to adopt avoidance and face-saving techniques to decrease direct confrontations or disagreements (Ting-Toomey, 2005). This indirect communication style may be one of the major stressors for the participants considering many language class interactions (e.g. questioning, error correction) may be potentially face-threatening (Jones, 2004; Zhang, 2001). Some cross-cultural causal attribution studies have suggested that East Asians, influenced by collectivist cultures, have a tendency to attribute failure to internal causes (Crystal, 2000; Hui, 2001). This tendency may lead to irrational self-blame and self-doubt which can potentially contribute to a higher level of anxiety.

## 6.2 Foreign language anxiety, acculturation, L2 self, and selected sociodemographic variables

Normality of the questionnaire data was first checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965). The results indicated that the distribution of the FLCAS scores were normal ( $W = .98$ ,  $p = \text{n.s.}$ ). In addition, no violations regarding the linearity and homoscedasticity were identified, justifying the use of Pearson product-moment correlations and a multiple regression approach. To examine the relationships between FL anxiety, EFL student acculturation (i.e. assimilation, preservation, and adaptation), L2 self (i.e. ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self), and selected sociodemographic variables, Pearson product-moment correlations were used (see Table 1). One acculturation-related variable, preservation, was found to be the largest correlate of FL anxiety, explaining 6.25 % (i.e.  $.252 = 6.25\%$ ) of the variance. The second significant correlate of FL anxiety was the ideal L2 self, which explained 5.76 % of the variance. FL anxiety was also found to correlate significantly with the following variables: hours spent on English listening comprehension practice, motivation to practice English-speaking skills, motivation to practice English-listening skills, and self-perceived English proficiency. Each accounted for 4%, 5.76%, 4.41%, and 3.61% respectively of the variance.

Independent variable	FLCAS ( $r$ )
<b>EFL Student Acculturation</b>	
Assimilation	.09
Preservation	.25*
Adaption	.13
<b>L2 self</b>	
Ideal L2 self	.24*
Ought-to L2 self	.05
<b>Selected sociodemographic variables</b>	
Gender	.16
Age	.02
Onset of English acquisition	-.04
Numbers of English oral classes enrolled	-.02
Hours spent on English speaking practice per day	.05
Hours spent on English listening comprehension practice per day	.20*
Motivation to practice English-listening skills	.24*
Motivation to practice English-speaking skills	.21*
Self-perceived listening ability	.19
Self-perceived speaking ability	.16
Self-perceived English proficiency	-.19*

\* $p < .05$

**Table 1: Pearson correlations of anxiety with selected variables**

Table 2 presents the unstandardized regression coefficients and intercept, the standard error of the unstandardized coefficients, the standardized regression coefficients, the semi-partial correlations, and the squared multiple correlation coefficient ( $R^2$ ) of the model which maximum proportion of variance was explained ( $R^2$ ). The analysis of setwise regression revealed that the ideal L2 self, hours spent on English listening comprehension practice, preservation, and self-perceived English proficiency contributed significantly,  $F(4, 101) = 4.903$ ,  $p = .001$ , to the prediction of FL anxiety. These four variables in combination accounted for 16.3% of the variance in FL anxiety. The remaining two variables added less than 0.8% to the total variance and as such were excluded in the final model. An inspection of the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) measure and Tolerance indicated that no multicollinearity was identified. Standardized residuals generated from the model suggested no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The semi-partial correlation coefficients (Table 2) suggested the ideal L2 self was the best predictor of FL anxiety, accounting for 23.8% of the variance. Preservation was the next best predictor, explaining

18% of the variance, followed by self-perceived English proficiency and hours spent on English listening comprehension practice per day which explained 14.5% and 10.6% of the total variance respectively.

Independent variable	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	<i>t</i> value	Standardized regression coefficient	Semi-partial coefficients
Intercept	1.859	.304	6.114		
Ideal L2 self	.204	.078	2.611*	.243	.238
Hours spent on English listening comprehension practice per day	.063	.054	1.164	.118	.106
Preservation	.083	.042	1.989*	.205	.181
Self-perceived English proficiency	-.064	.040	-1.590	-.148	.145

Note: Model  $R^2 = .163$ ,  $F(4, 101) = 4.903$ ; adjusted  $R^2 = .129$ ; \* $p < .05$

**Table 2: Selected multiple regression model for predicting FL anxiety**

The regression model suggests that EFL learners with high levels of FL anxiety were likely to demonstrate at least one of following attributes: held high expectations for FL learning, remained culturally and linguistically separated from the TL group, had high self-perceived English proficiency, and spent longer hours on English listening comprehension practice.

Given the relative high positive impact of L2 self on FL anxiety, it appears that, for the Taiwanese EFL learners, the stronger they desired to become proficient in English in the future, the higher the levels of anxiety they experienced. The result is at odds with a current finding (Papi, 2010) that L2 self plays a significant role in reducing Iranian learners' English anxiety. The result, however, supports the perfectionism-related FL anxiety theory (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002) that the desired future self may pose an unrealistic or exceptionally high standard that induces higher levels of anxiety. The theory may also explain why the longer the hours spent on English listening comprehension practice, the higher the degrees of anxiety the participants experienced. The learners may aspire to sound exactly like native English speakers, which leads to a potentially vicious cycle of anxiety.

The ought-to L2 self, contrary to Papi's (2010) finding, was not found to be a significant predictor of FL anxiety. It is possible that participants in this study are college students, rather than high school students, who are inherently more mature and may become less likely to be influenced by their family, peers, or teachers.

An important result of this study is the confirmation of the speculation that preservation in Schuman's acculturation theory (1978, 1986) was found to be a significant predictor of FL anxiety. This finding suggests that anxious EFL students were likely to have a disposition to resist the TL culture so that their cultural identity would remain intact. In other words, increased cultural preservation can result in reduced contact with the TL group and greater social distance, which exacerbated FL anxiety.

Consistent with previous findings (Bailey, Onwuegbuzie, & Daley, 2000; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997; Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), negative self-perception is a predictor of FL anxiety inasmuch as FL language classes expose learners to insecure environments where their imperfect language can cause harm to their self-image anytime. The result also bears out Greenberg et al.'s (1992) terror management theory that self-esteem or positive self-image works as an anxiety-buffer that protects people from anxiety arising from unpredictable situations.

## 7 Conclusion and implications

This study set out to investigate the effects of acculturation, L2 self, and selected sociodemographic variables on FL anxiety in the Taiwanese EFL context. Based on the statistical analysis, two major findings were revealed. First, the students experienced some levels of language anxiety. Second, four variables were found to be significant predictors of FL anxiety: ideal L2 self, preservation, self-perceived English proficiency, and hours spent on English listening comprehension practice per day. In light of these findings, two implications are proposed for EFL classroom practices and future research.

An important finding indicates that learners' inclination to resist the TL culture can lead to increased levels of FL anxiety. Hence strategies need to be devised and implemented to allow learners to develop stronger security about their roots and simultaneously reaching out to a global world where multilingual and multicultural societies are the norm. Some researchers have suggested that the approach to sensitize students to cultural pluralism is to help language learners, via experiential learning, to recognize that culture is a relative construct, rather than an absolute one (Byram, 1989; Donmall, 1985; Inkster, 1993).

The significant positive relationship between L2 ideal self and FL anxiety suggests the importance for learners to establish realistic expectations for English learning. Although the Standard English Ideology (Lippi-Green, 1997) may motivate learners to aspire for communicating in the ways like native English speakers or interacting with native English speakers, such native-speaker norms may oftentimes be misinterpreted as the only legitimate varieties and implying that people who do not speak such varieties of English are deficient in some ways. More and more researchers (Canagarajah, 2006; McKay, 2005), however, have begun to focus more on learners' proficiency in pragmatics, namely the negotiation capabilities to shuttle between different speech communities and English varieties, rather than proficiency in abstract grammar rules or linguistic features. Sociolinguistic skills such as the use of speech acts, turn-taking, conversational sequencing, and discourse strategies are therefore recommended to be emphasized in language classes to equip learners with resources to engage in intercultural communication, convey their ideas effectively, and as such reduce their tense and frustration when communicating in the TL.

Three major limitations of this study should be noted. First, language anxiety, acculturation, and L2 self were mainly operationalized by means of a questionnaire, thus limiting the extent of these concepts investigated. In addition, the self-reported nature of the findings could over- or underestimate participants' actual behaviors or practices. Third, the study is exploratory and includes only a small sample size from a single setting, which may reduce the generalizability of the findings beyond the current participants. Future studies including participants across multiple sites and qualitative examinations would provide a better understanding about the relationships explored in this study.

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## Appendix A

Scale for items: 1 (Strongly disagree), 2 (Disagree), 3 (Neither disagree nor agree), 4 (Agree), 5 (Strongly agree)

*Assimilation* ( $\alpha = .80$ )

5. I want to make friends with native English speakers.

17. I watch English TV shows and movies.

1. I listen to English songs.

10. I want to become a native English speaker in the way I think, talk, and act.

- 21. I would prefer to live in an English-speaking country.
- 12. I prefer Western values than Asian values.

*Preservation* ( $\alpha = .70$ )

- 4. I feel Asian values are more acceptable than Western values.
- 11. I feel I can trust people from my own culture more than people from Western cultures.
- 2. I prefer making friends with people from my own culture than people from Western cultures.
- 15. I cannot see myself living in a culture different from my own.

*Adaptation* ( $\alpha = .83$ )

- 18. I respect Western cultural values and lifestyles.
- 6. I think Asian and Western cultures are unique in their own way.
- 8. I understand Asian and Western cultural values.
- 14. I can make friends with people from my own and Western cultures.
- 3. I can see myself communicating effectively both in my own language and English.
- 12. I behave differently with people from different cultures to conform to their cultural norms.