

# **The Relationship Between Language Anxiety and Employability: The Moderating Effect of English Language Proficiency**

by

Yu-Peng Yu

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Advisor: Yi-Chun Lin, Ph.D.

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## ABSTRACT

Global economy dramatically changes in recent decades because of the rising of globalization and development of information technology. Nowadays, it is getting competitive in global economy that there are mutual business transactions, meeting and communicating with foreign colleagues, supervisors, or even clients in the business today. However, individuals with language anxiety to communicate with other people because English is not their mother tongue. Language anxiety further influences individuals' employability since it has negative impacts on individuals' job performance. Therefore, English language proficiency is needed at the moment that helps individuals decrease language anxiety and strengthen employability.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the negative relationship between language anxiety and employability and the moderating effect of English language proficiency in this relationship. This study used quantitative approach. The Internet-based questionnaires were answered by 556 participants working in technology companies, and 249 questionnaires were valid. Hierarchical regression analysis was used in this study. The results showed that there was a negative relationship between language anxiety and employability. The moderating effect of English language proficiency on the relationship between language anxiety and employability was also proved.

**Keywords:** English language proficiency, language anxiety, and employability.



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# CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, research questions, and definition of key terms were introduced.

## Background of the Study

Nowadays, the business, industry, and the labor market around the world had been dramatically changed and more vying than ever before since great developments in information technology, globalization and transportation today. Thanks to enormous influences on global economy by the phenomena above, there were vast changes in business, industries, and other specific areas in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Brown, & Adler, 2008; Chen & Young, 2012; Friedman, 2006; The International Research Foundation for English Language Education, 2012). The world was constantly changing that the concept of globalization was widely addressed in recent years. Clayton (2004) stated that the term globalization originally indicated economic progresses at an international level; further, several researchers considered globalization an unstoppable phenomenon integrating global economic and labor division in the world (Boswell & Chase-Dunn, 2000; Sklair, 1999).

With the generality and growth of globalization, information technology, transportation, and global economy were interdependent leading to outsourcing of the manufacturing internationally. The phenomena also reflected that there were more dependence on foreign workers, more products were developed by companies from different nations, and more internet-based cooperation was done through international transactions. Furthermore, all of these had become indispensable and interdependent

factors composing the global economy and workplace today (Graddol, 2006; GlobalEnglish, 2011).

Thus, English played an essential role in global economy, business, and workplace in 21<sup>st</sup> century since it had set up a connection linking language, non-work-related situations, and work-related situations. It was also considered as a lingua franca since it was widespread across the world (Riemer, 2002). Lingua franca was defined as a language that was adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2013). It ranged over long-term overseas assignments, workplace, and non-workplace (Baker, 2009; Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012).

Workers around the world were involved in a circle utilizing English effectively to interact with others from culturally diverse settings. For the sake of being successful and efficient in cooperating with others internationally, a widely spoken common language between each other is a must. It was widely considered that English was clearly a widely spoken common language used by more than two billion users who were not mother tongue of English (Crystal, 2008; TIRF, 2012; Graddol, 2004, 2006; GlobalEnglish, 2011; Kassim & Ali, 2010; Trilling & Fadel, 2009). English skills were pervasively highlighted recently that it had been sighted to be rather a skill of an era than a personal skill that workforce in the 21<sup>st</sup> century should obtain. In the global economy driven by abilities, knowledge, and skills, individuals should obtain employability by attaining required knowledge, skills, abilities, and competences in order to retain competitive advantage in labor market. (Brown & Lauder, 2001; DfEE, 2000; CBI, 2001; Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001).

However, workers may still have language anxiety when communicating or meeting with foreign clients by face-to-face, calling, or internet (Chen & Young, 2012; Woodrow, 2006). This anxious feeling individuals perceive during utilizing English in

actual communication might further affect job performances; furthermore, it has negative impact on individuals' employability.

Since the dramatic change in the world and economy, there was no longer long-term employment in business and most organizations. The main goal for workers was to stay attractive and valuable in the labor market around the world (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). Hence, this global trend warned workers around the world to be equipped with good employability and urged them to work across organizational or even national boundaries in the workplace today (Riemer, 2002). In addition, in order to survive the changeable working environment in the world, individuals ought to overcome language anxiety to conduct their tasks in English well. Moreover, they should obtain prerequisites such as certain English language proficiency test to enhance the flexibility and adjustment to sharpen their own competitiveness to effectively deal with the career-related changes occurring in today's economy such as the prerequisite of English language proficiency and to keep or get the jobs they desire in labor market (Hall, 2002; Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004; Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

### **Statement of the Problem**

There are several gaps this study aims to make up. First, the literature on the linkage between language anxiety and employability is scarce, so there was a gap between these two variables. Relevant empirical studies demonstrated that language anxiety occurred inside the classroom settings. For instance, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) proposed the theory of language anxiety occurred in foreign language classroom. Language anxiety on other language skills was also proposed, including writing (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999), reading (Saito, Horwitz and Garza 1999), and listening (Kim 2000). However, most literatures about language anxiety only focused on a one-dimensional domain anxiety, which was the anxiety occurring in

classroom settings (Woodrow, 2006), which caused there was limited literatures discussing language anxiety on practical issues such as employability. Most Taiwanese start learning English since they were in junior high school, but English was not mother tongue for Taiwanese. Being afraid to speak English with ungrammatical sentences, inappropriate vocabularies, and unacquainted sentence patterns to make others confused or even misunderstood, individuals might be anxious when talking or communicating with others in English, namely language anxiety. Furthermore, it affects the workers to be employed or paid attention by the employers in the workplace.

Second, though employability was discussed by previous studies in many aspects, such as the relationship among public policy, employment, and employability (Kossek, Huber, & Lemer, 2003), and the relationship between economics and employability (Lefresne, 1999), few literature clearly showed the direct relationship between language issues and employability.

Third, the previous studies demonstrated that English language proficiency was the key factor to influence on individual's career success. However, scarce literature proved that English language proficiency served as the moderator.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship among language anxiety, employability, and English language proficiency on Taiwanese workers. This study aimed to explore the negative relationship between language anxiety and employability. Furthermore, the moderating effect of English language proficiency on the relationship between language anxiety and employability were discussed as well.

### **Significance of the Study**

The major significance of this study was consisted of two parts; one was



theoretical and the other was practical part. The theoretical part was to (1) examine if individuals with higher language anxiety will have lower employability when they conduct actual communication in the workplace, (2) built the direct linkage between language anxiety and employability, (3) extended the research of language anxiety on workplace, and (4) made more supplemental literature on English language proficiency served as moderator.

On the other hand, the part of practical contribution, the outcome of this study helped Taiwanese workers dealt with language anxiety occurred during the work; increased abilities and skills from present workplace to obtain the employability and attractiveness in labor market by strengthening their English language proficiency. For corporations and organizations in Taiwan, this study helped them to focus on utilizing English language proficiency test (e.g. TOEIC) as the requirement and prerequisites in the process of recruiting and selecting international students since English was widely considered a skill must be obtained for the workforce in 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Research Question**

1. Does language anxiety negatively relate to employability?
2. Does English language proficiency have a positive effect on the relationship between language anxiety and employability?

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **Language Anxiety**

Language anxiety was described as individual's incapability to express their own opinions and thoughts in the target language, which might have debilitating impacts on individual's language learning, self-esteem, performance, adjustment and the image of themselves (Scovel, 1978; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Horwitz, 2001; Kondo, 2010; Woodrow, 2006).

### **Employability**

Employability was described as the capability or the skill individuals possess to maintain the job or to obtain the new job. (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

### **English Language Proficiency**

English language proficiency defined in this study was TOEIC test score.

## CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the literatures about English language proficiency, language anxiety, and employability were introduced. Moreover, the relationships among English language proficiency, language anxiety, and employability were discussed as follows.

### Language Anxiety

Anxiety was defined as an awakening of automatic nervous mechanism that the uneasiness, fear, tension, and worry one perceives (Spielberger, 1983). Anxiety was consist of trait anxiety and situation specific anxiety. Trait anxiety was a relatively stable personality that the tendency of individual's nervousness and tension instead of the anxiety occurring in any occasions (Spielberger, 1983). Situation anxiety, on the other hand, reflected the anxiety occurring in some specific occasions (Spielberger, Anton, & Bedell, 1976). According to Liebert and Morris (1967), the reactions from individuals who perceived the anxiety reflected emotionality or worry. Emotionality referred to both physical reactions (reddening or intensive heart beating) and behavioral reactions (speech impediment or restlessness). Worry, the other one, demonstrated that individual's cognition such as self-denying and task-unfitted toward himself or herself (Naveh-Benjamin, 1991; Zeidner, 1998). Compared to emotionality, worry was sighted to have more debilitating effects between two reactions of anxiety since it reflected individual's cognition as undertaking the tasks such as speaking English (Tobias, 1985).

To carry on the theory into language issues, language anxiety was referred to a situation anxiety arousing when individuals had problem expressing their own opinions in the target language, and it led to debilitating impacts on one's self-esteem and achievement in second language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986;

Scovel, 1978; Woodrow, 2006). In general, language anxiety took place on non-native language speakers in the incidents such as foreign language classroom, testing situation, oral practice, and communication by using the second language. (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Woodrow, 2006).

Language anxiety was indicated as a negative factor possible to hinder one's second language learning, performance and adjustment to the target environment (Horwitz, 2001; Kondo, 2010; Woodrow, 2006). Recent studies discussed the anxiety in language skills, including speaking (Woodrow, 2006), writing (Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert 1999), reading (Saito, Horwitz and Garza, 1999), listening (Kim, 2000), and the anxiety in achievement of second language learning (Horwitz, 2001). In the study conducted by Woodrow (2006), she pointed out that the language anxiety in using English during the communication both inside and outside the language learning classroom instead of solely highlighting inside of the classroom.

Language anxiety was also categorized situation anxiety, and this study will also focus on the situation-specific study because public speaking anxiety was discussed in the research conducted by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) and Horwitz (2001). Numerous studies on language anxiety of individual who spoke English as a foreign language (EFL) showed that the anxiety obstructed their performance and achievement in using English. (Horwitz, 2001; Andrade & Williams, 2009).

Previous studies demonstrated that language learning anxiety was classed as situation anxiety since the anxiety happening in language learning occasions (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991b; Horwitz 2001). Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), language anxiety was caused from low self-confidence or incapability in second language communication.

## **English Language Proficiency**

Kachru (1985) provided an idea that dividing countries into inner circle country, outer circle country, and expanding circle country based on the background of using English. Inner circle countries was referred to the residents in the countries using English as their mother tongue, such as the U.S., the U.K., Australia, Canada, and so forth. Compared with Inner circle countries, outer circle countries were defined as those countries where English is not the mother tongue but essential for historic and governmental reasons. The last one is expanding circle, which was stated that those countries where English does not have historic or governmental meaning for the countries, but using it as a foreign language or lingua franca. Therefore, Taiwan is defined as the expanding circle among countries using English.

The adjective of the proficiency, proficient was defined as being able to do something well because of training and practice (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 2013). Among literature of applied linguistics, proficient was correlated to the similar terms such as good, fluent, knowledgeable, bilingual, competent, and so forth (Galloway, 1987; McNamara, 1996).

English language proficiency was defined by performance on commercial tests, such as TOEFL, TOEIC, and IELTS. However, the definition of proficiency was somewhat different in studies using difference tests as criteria (Graham, 1987). In TOEIC test, English language proficiency was defined by Educational Testing Service (ETS, 2013) as the English language skills are essential for communication, meetings, podcasts and telephone conversations, e-mail writing, written reports, newsletters and other forms of business correspondence. Therefore, attained score of TOEIC test from participants represented English language proficiency.

## **Employability**

Connected with strategies and policies by important multinational corporations, employability was considered a vital role at national, regional, and local levels of labor market (OECD, 1998; CEC, 1999; ILO, 2000; UN, 2001). In recent years, corporations did not promise lifetime employment owing to the generality of boundaryless careers, causing there were temporary employments for the workers nowadays. Since the jobs were no longer permanent, the security of employment must be emphasized. In other words, workers should maintain career flexibility and competitiveness at firm level to succeed career success at individual level (Bloch and Bates, 1995; Capelli, 1999; DeFillippi and Arthur, 1994; Forrier & Sels, 2003b; Van Der Heijde & Van Der Heijden, 2006).

Employability made employees and workers able to be faced with and deal with immediately changeable policies and prerequisites from labor markets. It also loosened organizational commitment in traditional way but approached the way of surviving fluctuating and competitive working environment because job contents, skills, and prerequisites are required (Baerveldt & Hobbs, 1988; London and Greller, 1991; Van Der Heijde et al., 2006). Therefore, employability led the transition of individuals' career from stable one in the bureaucratic structures in the past to the new era of boundaryless career especially for individuals who were white-collar workers. (Collin and Young, 2000).

Former literature pointed out the problem that employees could not catch up with the fast paces from changeable environment; their development and competitiveness lost gradually with increasing age. Hence, the development of their career path significantly depended on their aggressiveness, initiatives, and investments (Van Der Heijde et al., 2006; Boerlijst, 1994; Hall, 1976; Thijssen, 1996).

There were two concepts leading the recent emphasis on theory of employability, which were (1) employability provided workers with advantages on employment and

(2) employability related to job insecurity (Brown, Hesketh, & Williams, 2003; de Vries, Grundemann, & Van Vuuren, 2001). Employability firstly emerged around 1955, when employability was utilized to comprehend the employment of minorities who had problem finding jobs. Yet, the empirical researches of employability were conducted until the late 1990s (Forrier & Sels, 2003a; McQuaid & Lindsay, 2005). The original notion of employability referred to individuals' perceived the opportunities in either internal or external labor market (March & Simon, 1958; De Cuyper, Bernhard-Oettel, Berntson, De Witte, & Alarco, 2008). Afterwards, other researchers described employability by following the original definition as individuals' perceived the opportunities and possibilities of getting a new job (Berntson & Marklund, 2007; Berntson, Sverke, & Marklund, 2006). Furthermore, employability relied on attaining prerequisites of any job; furthermore, it also depended on the relative relationships among all the job seekers (Brown, Hesketh, & Williams, 2003; Hirsch, 1977). For instance, if bachelor degree is the basic requirement for workers in the entry level, individuals ought to attain the advanced level in education such as master degree or degree of Ph.D. to get the advantage of employability.

Employability was defined in this study as the capability or the skill individuals possess to maintain the job or to obtain the new job (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). As Hillage and Pollard's (1998) definition, employability was individual's ability to work and survive by themselves within the labor market to realize their potential through constant employment. However, Hillage and Pollard neglected the notion that employability was regulated by labor market (Brown et al., 2003). Moreover, the perspective of employability included individuals' future success and ability to retain their positions and jobs (Bloch & Bates, 1995; Van der Heijden, 2002; Iles, 1997; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). There were two sub-dimensions in the notion of employability, including internal employability and external employability. Internal employability was defined as individuals' abilities job opportunity or promotion

within the same organization. External employability was described as individuals' abilities to obtain job opportunity outside the original organization (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

It was generally thought to be a key goal that individuals handle their careers; developing and training employees from organizations' perspective. It was considered to bring wide effects on career path, business, skill building, labor markets, and so on. Also, employability not only concerned individual attributes (individuals' effectiveness of movement in labor markets) but also associated with internal and external labor market (Forrier & Sels, 2003a; Fugate et al., 2004; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007; Rothwell, Herbert, & Rothwell, 2008). In this study, employability was observed from individuals' point of view. To be specific, it was what individuals believe where their chances are on desired job, and what kind of factors will affect their perception on it (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

There are several definitions of employability on previous literatures. For example, Fugate, Kinicki, and Ashforth (2004,) considered that employability was the adaptability in workplace enabling individuals to recognize career opportunities and gain possibility of employment. The notion included three dimensions, which are career identity, personal adaptability, and social and human capital. The concept from Fugate and his colleagues (2004) and Rothwell and Arnold (2007) differentiated from each other. However, both groups of researchers agreed that employability was beneficial for individuals coping with changes and challenges proactively in a fluctuated and changeable labor market.

Besides, employability was also explored from several points of view, levels (individual, organizational, and industrial), and academic fields (management, human resource management, human resource development, psychology, educational science, career development) (Thijssen & Van der Heijden, 2003).



## **Language Anxiety and Employability**

Previous studies showed that language anxiety had something to do with employability. Specifically, if individual thought English language proficiency was not competent enough, had low confidence on English language proficiency, or felt nervous and anxious when using English in some situations, language anxiety occurred in the communication that debilitated individual's confidence, self-esteem, and then eventually affected individual's performance and achievement (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; Howitz, 2001; Woodrow, 2006). The apprehension of speaking English might be related to factors such as communication apprehension, self-esteem, and social anxiety. Consequently, language anxiety affected individual's communication or the will of communication (Young, 1990). Besides, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) also found out the negative correlation between individual's language anxiety and their performance on doing tasks which required utilizing the language. Former researchers stressed that language anxiety was considered as a situational anxiety that occurred when individuals utilized English in some certain situation such as meeting, presenting, and communicating with others in the workplace. Eventually, language anxiety caused some negative impacts on individuals' work performance that lead to damage anticipation and image from their supervisors or employers (Andrade & Williams, 2009; Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; Scovel, 1978; Woodrow, 2006). Sanders and de Grip (2004) mentioned that employability depended on labor market occasions and policies from authorities of organization at the time. Nowadays, employers needed their employees to be competent to discuss the enhancement product or procedure with their supervisors, colleagues, business partners, or clients from different nations. Furthermore, employees developed English skills was essential on the process to be promoted on the career path (US Department of Education, 2006).

Employability focused that individual extended their possessed skills and

attributes to find or say in a work they desired. In contrast, if language anxiety occurred to damage the individuals' job performance, the employability they obtained might be debilitated as well. Therefore, the Hypothesis 1, 1a, and 1b were drawn as follows.

***Hypothesis 1:***

Language anxiety negatively relates to employability. Specifically, individuals with high language anxiety will have lower employability.

***Hypothesis 1a:***

Language anxiety negatively relates to internal employability.

***Hypothesis 1b:***

Language anxiety negatively relates to external employability.

### **The Moderating Effect of English Language Proficiency on the Relationship Between Language Anxiety and Employability**

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) stressed that individuals' language anxiety in English was decreased when their English proficiency was better and more sophisticated.

Based on the report from CILT, The National Center for Languages (2006), English did have some great impacts on European economy and played a vital role on European commercial activities and business because English was widely considered as the common language in European markets. Therefore, the more European organizations developed and strengthened employees' English abilities, the better it benefited national and international commercial activities and business (Pinon & Haydon, 2010). Take companies in Switzerland as example. Employees with fluent English speaking were paid higher from twelve percent to thirty percent and get hired easier than those without fluent English speaking (Grin, 2010).

Several researchers described that English was important and considered as part of daily communication among either multinational or domestic organizations in the in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Akar, 2002; Bilbow, 2002; Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002). Individual who wished to be easily employed and to avoid being constrained in low-payment works needed to strengthen their English language skills for workers (TIRF, 2012). Several former researchers also emphasized different English language skills which were commonly used in business such as English speaking and writing skills in communication (Nickerson, 2005). To be specific, English speaking skills included negotiation (Planken, van Hooft, & Korzilus, 2004), meeting (Louhiala-Salminen, Charles, & Kankaanranta, 2005; Chew, 2005), and e-mailing for writing skill (Louhiala-Salminen et al., 2005).

Kassim and Ali (2010) described the strong relationship between English language proficiency and work in engineering industries in Malaysia. Aside from possessing appropriate social and communication skills, being able to speak English in the workplace was an urgent demand for engineers in Malaysia since the communicative occasion in English was necessary in the industry. Therefore, Malaysian engineers who desired to be prominent in the industry must be equipped with good oral skill in English since they believed that the more excellence in English language proficiency, the more opportunity to be developed and advanced on their aptitude and profession as global engineers (Kassim & Ali, 2010; Fugate et al., 2004).

On the other hand, in the study which conducted by Briguglio (2003) showed that multinational corporations in Hong Kong and Malaysia highlighted English language proficiency in speaking and writing in order to have employees performed their tasks and work effectively. Conversely, employability will helped individual proactively prepare and engage in the prerequisites of work environment (Ashforth & Saks, 1996). Therefore, Individuals with high employability engaged in which influenced their expected and desired occupational path (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

The report from European Union (2007) reported a project which was conducted by EU, “European Union’s Lifelong Learning Programme”. The program listed eight key competences for lifelong learning, which aimed to define the skills which must be equipped by individual for gaining (1) social gathering, (2) dynamic citizenship, and (3) employability. The ability to communicate in foreign languages such as English was listed in one of the eight competencies.

Based on former literatures listed above, employees who possess good English language proficiency will be beneficial for employees to have better chance to be employed, get promoted, or keep up with the trend of the workforce in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to keep the job they desire, which is similar with the definition by Rothwell and Arnold (2007).

English proficiency was one of the positive and essential factors for individuals’ career success in their own countries which mother tongues were not English. Furthermore, the fluency in English helped these individuals increase employment probabilities and income (Berman, Lang, & Sriniver, 2000; Chiswick, 1991; Chiswick & Miller, 1995; Chiswick, Cohen, & Zach, 1997; Dustmann, 1994; Rivera-Batiz, 1990; Shields & Wheatley Price, 2001). Therefore, Hypothesis 2, 2a, and 2b were drawn as follows.

***Hypothesis 2:***

English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and employability.

***Hypothesis 2a:***

English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability.

***Hypothesis 2b:***

English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and external employability.

# CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, it is divided into the research framework, hypotheses, sample, data collection, reliability and validity, instrumentation, control variables, and data analysis.

## Research Framework

Language anxiety was served as independent variable, while employability was dependent variable. English language proficiency was served as the moderator on the relationship between language anxiety and employability. The research framework was shown in Figure 3.1 and all the hypotheses were proposed in Table 3.1 for this study.

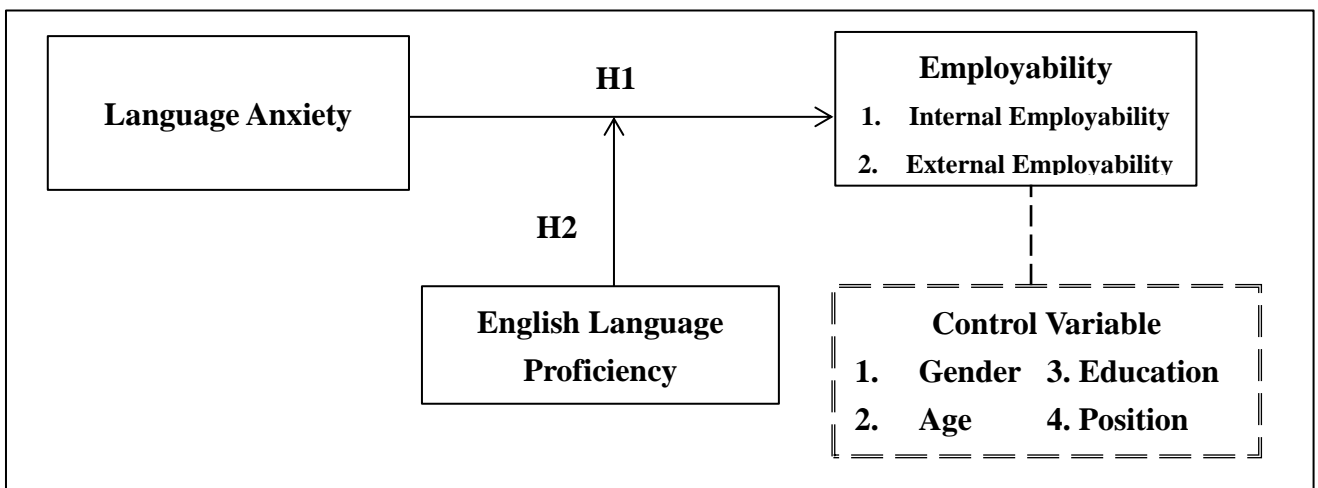


Figure 3.1 Research framework

## Hypotheses

Table 3.1

*Hypotheses in the Study*

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Hypotheses	Explanation
<b>Hypothesis 1.</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to employability. Specifically, individuals with higher language anxiety will have lower employability.
<b>Hypothesis 1a</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to internal employability.
<b>Hypothesis 1b</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to external employability
<b>Hypothesis 2.</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and employability
<b>Hypothesis 2a</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability.
<b>Hypothesis 2b</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and external employability.

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## Sample

There were three requirements for the samples in this study. Firstly, all participants in this study were workers in technology field including manufacturers of semiconductor, information technology, electronics, material suppliers, and other related industries. Workers in any levels and in any departments were all the target. Secondly, these workers should use English on their jobs and tasks including having meetings, writing emails, and presenting the projects, and etc. Thirdly, these workers

ought to have taken TOEIC exam since TOEIC scores represented individuals' English language proficiency in business and workplace contexts. Questionnaires were completed on the Internet, and there were 556 participants who answered the questionnaires. Eventually, only 249 questionnaires were valid since the other 306 participants failed to meet one the three requirements for the sample in this study.

### **Data Collection**

The channels to conduct data collection were composed of two approaches. One relied on contacting the practitioners in Human Resource department in technology companies by the mediation of Chun Shin Limited., the ETS Taiwan representative. Since Chun Shin Limited is in charge of holding TOEIC test in Taiwan and there is an academic partnership between this study and Chun Shin Limited. The manager of Chun Shin Limited contacted the Human Resource practitioner in technology companies at first place, and then the researcher in this study contacted Human resource practitioners for the details of distributing questionnaires. The other back-up to collect data was to adopt snowballing that asked friends, relatives, alumni who worked in technology companies.

### **Reliability and Validity**

#### **Reliability**

The study adopted maturing scales in the questionnaires to assure that all expected characteristics were measured to enhance the validity of each item in the questionnaires. Since all the original instruments in the questionnaires were designed in English and participants of the study were Taiwanese workers, the questionnaires were translated into Chinese version. Afterwards, expert reviews and peer reviews were also conducted as well to check the quality of translation work and made sure these Taiwanese participants could understand all the statements in each item. Expert review was done by thesis advisor, Dr. Lin. Peer review was done by a classmate who

majored in English in undergraduate. In this way, it aimed to reduce participants' language boundary and misunderstanding towards the questionnaires.

In addition to ensure the validity of questionnaires, the questionnaires were designed to avoid common method variance (CMV) problem before sending out. Therefore, first, the research purpose and variables in the study were not disclosed in the questionnaires because it may occur bias answers from participants (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Second, both 5-point and 7-point Likert scale were adopted to measure different variables in order to avert from CMV; Third, reverse items were comprised in the questionnaires to avoid participants to answer randomly.

In Table 3.2, the Cronbach's alpha values represent the reliability of the scales adopted in this study. The Cronbach's alpha value of employability was .85. The Cronbach's alpha value of two dimensions in employability were .72 (internal employability) and .79 (external employability). The Cronbach's alpha value of language anxiety was .93.

## **Validity**

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the validity of the study by manipulating AMOS 18.0. Various of fit indices were adopted to examine the model fit in this study including The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI), and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Goodness of Fit Index (GFI). Based on previous literature, a good model fit was formed when the value of chi square dividing degree of freedom was under 3.0, RMSEA score was below .08; and score of CFI, IFI, and TLI were all over .90 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Byrne, 1998). Table 4.3 shows the result of CFA in employability and language anxiety.

There were totally 11 items of employability. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was 76.69, and other fit indices of employability are shown as follows: RMSEA=.06, CFI=.95,



NFI=.91, IFI=.95, TLI=.93, GFI=.95.

As for language anxiety, there were totally 17 items in this variable. The chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was 244.40, and other fit indices of employability are shown as follows: RMSEA=.07, CFI=.95, NFI=.90, IFI=.95, TLI=.93, GFI=.90.

Table 3.2

*Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (n=249)*

Index	$\chi^2$	df	$\chi^2/df$	RMSEA	CFI	NFI	IFI	TLI	GFI
Employability	76.69	39	1.97	.062	.95	.91	.95	.93	.95
Language Anxiety	244.40	113	2.16	.068	.95	.90	.95	.93	.90

*Note.* RMSEA = The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation, CFI = Comparative Fit Index, IFI = Incremental Fit Index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index, NFI = Normed Fit index, GFI = Goodness of Fix Index.

## **Instrumentation**

### **Language Anxiety**

Language anxiety meant individual's incapability to express their own opinions and thoughts in the target language, which might have debilitating impacts on individual's language learning, self-esteem, performance, adjustment and the image of themselves (Scovel, 1978; Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; Horwitz, 2001; Kondo, 2010; Woodrow, 2006). The instrument of language anxiety was adopted from Yaikhong and Usaha (2012) with 17 items. Example item was "I never feel quite sure of myself while I am speaking English." Responses were designed on a 5-Point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Not at all anxiety) to 5 (Extremely anxiety). The high score indicated that individuals had anxiety in using English in business occasions.

### **Employability**

Employability was described as the capability or the skill individuals possess to

maintain the job individuals have or to obtain the job individuals wanted (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007). The instrument of employability was adopted from Rothwell and Arnold (2007) with 11 items. Example item was “Even if there was downsizing in this organization I am confident that I would be retained.” Responses were designed on a 5-Point Likert scale, ranging from 1(Not at all anxiety) to 5 (Extremely anxiety). The high score indicates that individuals possess high employability.

### **English Language Proficiency**

English language proficiency was individuals’ TOEIC test scores which ranged from 10 to 990. The TOEIC scores were divided into five colors, which were orange, brown, green, blue, and gold. The scores from 10 to 215 were classified as orange, 220 to 465 were classified as brown, 470 to 725 were classified as green, 730 to 855 were classified as blue, and scores over 860 were classified as gold. The higher TOEIC test scores individuals obtained, the better English language proficiency individuals had.

## **Control Variables**

### **Age**

Previous research demonstrated that age was relevant to the employability since more young generation worked with temporary contracts (Forrier & Sels, 2003a; Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

### **Gender**

Former studies showed that gender was essential to influence employability since more women worked with temporary contracts (Forrier & Sels, 2003a).

### **Education**

Rothwell and Arnold (2007) pointed out that educational status might affect employability as well.

### **Position**

There was a correlative relationship between position in the organization and employability. People at high levels in position believed they obtained more employability than individuals at lower levels in position. On the other hand, individuals at high level within an organization they might think they were senior enough to be paid well (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

## **Data Analysis**

In this study, SPSS 20.0 and AMOS 18.0 were manipulated in this study to analyze the data from questionnaires. The methods of data analysis included descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive analysis aimed to show the background information of participants by percentage and numbers. The items of descriptive statistics in this study included age, tenure in the present organization, total tenure in career path, gender, education, the need of using English to communicate with foreigners from tasks, company type, position, department in the company, annual income, the department using English in the company, and the situation using English during the work.

### **Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Pearson correlation analysis was adopted in this study to understand the correlation among control variables (age, gender, education, and position), TOEIC score (English language proficiency), employability, and language anxiety. Pearson correlation coefficient will be used to examine correlations among variables. If the correlation coefficient shows +1, it means there is a positively perfect correlation between two variables, while -1 means there is a negatively perfect correlation

between two variables. If the correlation coefficient reveals over 0.7, it represents two variables are highly correlated. The correlation coefficient within 0.4 to 0.7 reveals there is a medium correlation between two variables. Last, if the correlation coefficient shows under 0.4, it means there is a low correlation between two variables.

### **Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

The relationships among TOEIC score (English language anxiety), employability, internal employability, external employability and language anxiety were examined by manipulating hierarchical regression analysis since all these variables were continuous variables. In the first session, the relationship between TOEIC score and employability; the relationship between TOEIC score and the sub-dimension of employability (internal employability and external employability) were examined. In the second session, the moderating effect of language anxiety on the relationship between TOEIC score and employability was tested as well.

## CHAPTER IV FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

In this chapter, it mainly described the findings of each hypothesis in this study. The result of descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and hierarchical regression analysis was stated as follows

### Descriptive Statistics

The demographic information in descriptive statistics was collected from 249 employees in different technology companies. The descriptive statistics was divided into 10 questions including age, gender, education, position, company type, department, tenure in present company, total tenure in career, annual income, and communicating with foreigners at work. Table 4.1 shows frequency, percentage, and details of demographic information.

#### Age

Among 249 participants, 32 participants (12.9%) aged below 25 years old, 98 participants (39.3%) aged from 26 to 30 years old, 72 participants aged from 31 to 35 years old, 38 participants aged from 36 to 40 years old, and 9 participants are above 41 years. participants in this study mainly aged from 26 to 30 years old.

#### Gender

Among 249 participants, there were 81 female participants (32.5%) and 168 male participants (67.5%). participants in this study were primarily female.

#### Education

Among 249 participants, 14 participants (5.6%) graduated from high school, 121 participants (48.6) got bachelor degree, 111 participants (44.6%) obtained master degree, and 3 participants (1.2%) gained doctoral degree. In this study, participants with bachelor degree were majority.

## **Position**

Among 249 participants, there were 216 participants (86.7%) who worked as first-line employees, 28 participants (11.3%) was manager in basic level, and 5 participants (2%) worked as managers in middle level. Participants who worked as first-line employees were the majority.

## **Department**

Among 249 participants , 14 participants (5.6%) worked in production department, 135 participants (54.2%) worked in research and development (R&D), 13 participants(5.3%) worked in the department of quality management, 22 participants (8.8%) worked in sales department, 9 participants (3.6%) worked in procurement department, 19 participants(7.6%) worked in human resource (HR) or administration department, 4 participants(1.6%) worked in marketing or planning department, 2 participants (0.9%) worked in accounting or finance department, 5participants (2%) worked in the department of strategic planning, 6 participants (2.4%) worked in the department of information technology (IT), and the rest of 20 participants (8%) worked in other departments. The majority of participants in this study worked in the department of research and development.

## **Tenure in Present Company**

Among 249 participants 197participants (79.1%) were in the range from 1 to 5 years, and participantswho worked below 1 year in present company were also included. 39 participants (15.6%) were in the range from 6 to 10 years, 12participants (4.8%) were in the range from 11 to 15 years, and the rest of one participant (0.4%) worked more than 16 years in present company.

## **Total Tenure in Career**

Among 249 participants, 119 participants (47.8%) were in the range from 1 to 5 years, and participants who worked below 1 year in present company were also included. 77 participants (30.9%) were in the range from 6 to 10 years, 39 participants

(15.7%) were in the range from 11 to 15 years, 10 participants (4%) were in the range from 16 to 20 years, 3 participants (1.2%) were in the range from 21 to 25 years, and the rest of one participant(0.4%) worked more than 16 years in present company.

### **Annual Income**

Among 249 participants, 215 participants (86.3%) earned below 1,000,000 NT dollars per year, 30 participants (12.1%) earned from 1,000,001 to 1,500,000 NT dollars per year, and 4 participants (1.6%) earned more than 1,500,001 NT dollars per year.

### **The Department Having the Need of Using English**

In this part, all the items were designed to be multiple choices. 71 participants (29%) marked production department, 112 participants (45%) marked research and development (R&D), 64 participants (26%) marked the department of quality management, 130 participants (52%) marked sales department, 100 participants (40%) marked procurement department, 59 participants (23%) marked human resource (HR) or administration department, 88 participants (35%) marked marketing or planning department, 46 participants (18%) marked accounting or finance department, 73 participants (29%) marked the department of law and intellectual property, 62 participants (25%) marked department of strategic planning, 55 participants (22%) marked the department of information technology (IT), 2 participants (0.008%) marked other departments. The majority of participants in this study marked the department of research and development as the department requires to use English during the work.

### **The Situation Requiring Using English in the Company**

In this part, all the items were designed to be multiple choices as well. 227 participants (91%) marked emailing, researching information, or communicating through Internet, 171 participants (68%) marked presentation and speech, 182 participants (73%) meeting and customer service by phone, 125 participants (50%)

marked reception and attending social occasion, 146 participants (59%) marked attending conference and exhibition, 130 participants (52%) marked business trip and events planning, 183 participants (73%) marked writing report and making document. The majority of participants in this study marked emailing, researching information, or communicating through Internet as the situations that need to use English during the work.



Table 4.1  
Descriptive Statistics

Item	Frequency	Percentage	Item	Frequency	Percentage
<b>1. Age</b>			<b>6. Department</b>		
Below 25 years old	32	12.9	Production	14	5.6
26 - 30 years old	98	39.3	Research & development	135	54.2
31 - 35 years old	72	28.9	Quality management	13	5.3
36 - 40 years old	38	15.3	Sales	22	8.8
Above 41 years old	9	3.6	Procurement	9	3.6
Total	249	100	Human resource	19	7.6
<b>2. Gender</b>			/Administration		
Female	81	32.5	Marketing/Planning	4	1.6
Male	168	67.5	Accounting/Finance	2	0.9
Total	249	100	Strategic Planning	5	2
<b>3. Education</b>			Information technology	6	2.4
High school	14	5.6	Others	20	8
Bachelor	121	48.6	Total	249	100
Master	111	44.6	<b>7. Tenure in present company</b>		
Ph.D.	3	1.2	1 - 5 years	197	79.1
Total	249	100	(including below 1 year)		
<b>4. Position</b>			6 - 10 years	39	15.6
First-line employee	216	86.7	11 - 15 years	12	4.8
First-line manager	28	11.3	Above 16 years	1	0.4
Mid-level manager	5	2	Total	249	100
Total	249	100	<b>8. Total tenure in career</b>		
<b>5. Company type</b>			1 - 5 years	119	47.8
Domestic	223	89.6	(including below 1 year)		
Foreign	14	5.6	6 - 10 years	77	30.9
Joint	12	4.8	11 - 15 years	39	15.7
Total	249	100	16 - 20 years	10	4
			21 - 25 years	3	1.2
			Above 26 years	1	0.4
			Total	249	100

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Item	Frequency	Percentage
<b>9. Annual income</b>		
Below NT \$1,000,000	215	86.3
NT \$1,000,001- NT \$1,500,000	30	12.1
Above NT \$1,500,001	4	1.6
Total	249	100
<b>10. The department having the need of using English</b>		
Production	71	
Research & development	112	
Quality management	64	
Sales	130	
Procurement	100	
Human resource /Administration	59	
Marketing/Planning	88	
Accounting/Finance	46	
Law / Intellectual property	73	
Strategic Planning	62	
Information technology	55	
Others	2	

(continued)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Item	Frequency
<b>11.The situation requiring using English in the company</b>	
Emailing/ Researching information/ Communicating through Internet	71
Presentation / Speech	112
Meeting / Customer service by phone	64
Reception / Attending social occasion	130
Attending conference / Exhibition	100
Business trip / Events planning	59
Writing report / Making document	88

### Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis aimed to examine the correlation among age, gender, education, position, TOEIC score (English language proficiency), employability, two dimensions of employability (internal employability and external employability) and language anxiety. Table 4.2 shows mean score, standard deviation, reliability, and Pearson correlation coefficients of variables mentioned above. It showed that TOEIC score positively and significantly correlated to employability ( $r=.19$ ,  $p<.01$ ), internal employability ( $r=.18$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and external employability ( $r=.17$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Language anxiety negatively and significantly correlated to employability ( $r=-.49$ ,  $p<.01$ ), internal employability ( $r=-.23$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and external employability ( $r=-.20$ ,  $p<.01$ ).

The correlation among control variables, independent variable, dependent variable, and moderator showed that age positively and significantly correlated to employability ( $r=.13$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and internal employability ( $r=.16$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Gender positively and significantly correlated to employability ( $r=.13$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and internal employability ( $r=.17$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Besides, gender negatively and significantly correlated to TOEIC score ( $r=-.12$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Education positively and significantly correlated to

TOEIC score ( $r=.37$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Position positively and significantly correlated to TOEIC score ( $r=.15$ ,  $p<.05$ ), employability ( $r=.33$ ,  $p<.05$ ), internal employability( $r=.36$ ,  $p<.01$ ), and external employability( $r=.26$ ,  $p<.01$ ). To sum up, age, gender, position positively and significantly correlated to employability and internal employability. Position positively and significantly correlated to external employability

Table 4.2

*Mean, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliability (n=249)*

	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	31.16	5.15								
2. Gender	0.67	0.47	.05							
3. Education	3.41	0.62	-.14*	.20**						
4. Position	1.15	0.41	.48**	.05	-.03					
5. Language Anxiety	3.20	0.55	-.09	-.02	-.24**	-.10	(.93)			
6. Employability	3.71	0.44	.13*	.13*	.00	.33**	-.23**	(.85)		
7. Internal Employability	3.67	0.54	.16*	.16*	.00	.36**	-.20**	.87**	(.73)	
8. External Employability	3.74	0.45	.09	.08	.00	.26**	-.21**	.94**	.64**	(.79)
9. English Language Proficiency	556.93	142.17	.01	-.12	.37**	.15*	-.49**	.19**	.18**	.17**

*Note.* Numbers in parentheses represent Cronbach's alpha value. \*\*p<.01 \*p<.05

## **Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

### **Language Anxiety and Employability**

Hypotheses on the relationship between language anxiety; sub-dimensions (internal employability and external employability) and main dimension of employability were examined by manipulating hierarchical regression analysis and the results are shown in Table 4.4. First, control variables (age, gender, education, and position) were added in the hierarchical regression analysis, and then independent and dependent variables were added in the second step. Hypothesis 1 describes language anxiety negatively related to employability, internal employability and external employability. The result shows that language anxiety negatively related to employability ( $\beta=-.17$ ,  $p<.001$ ), internal employability ( $\beta=-.18$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and external employability ( $\beta=-.17$ ,  $p<.01$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 1, 1a, and 1b were supported.

Table 4.3

*Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis between Language Anxiety and Employability*

Variable	Employability		Internal Employability		External Employability	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
<i>Step 1</i>						
Constant	3.387***	4.143***	3.162***	3.945***	3.51***	4.26***
Age	-.00	-.01	-.00	-.01	-.00	-.01
Gender	.11	.12*	.17*	.18**	.07	.08
Education	-.01	-.05	-.02	-.06	-.01	-.05
Position	.36***	.35***	.47***	.45***	.30***	.29***
<i>Steps 2:</i>						
Language Anxiety		-.17***		-.18**		-.17**
$R^2$	.12	.16	.15	.18	.07	.10
Adjusted $R^2$	.11	.15	.13	.16	.06	.08
$F$	8.36***	9.522***	10.57***	10.57***	4.81**	5.41***
$\Delta R^2$	.12	.04	.15	.03	.073	.03
$\Delta F$	8.36***	12.60**	10.57***	9.16**	4.81**	7.30**

Note. \*\*\* $p < .001$  \*\* $p < .01$  \* $p < .05$

### **Moderating Effect of English Language Proficiency**

Hypothesis 2 presumed English language proficiency had positive effect on the relationship between language anxiety and employability. Three steps were conducted during manipulating hierarchical regression analysis. First, control variables such as age, gender, education, and position were added in the analysis. Second, language anxiety and English language proficiency were added at the second level of hierarchical regression analysis. Third, the product of language anxiety and English language proficiency were added at the third level in the analysis. Table 4.5 shows the result of moderating effects of English language proficiency. Model 1 to Model 3 present English language proficiency positively and significantly correlated to the relationship between language anxiety and employability because the beta coefficient

was increased positively ( $\beta=-.001$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and remained significantly.

Moreover, in order to examine the moderating effect of English language proficiency on the relationship among language anxiety and two sub-dimensions of employability, internal employability and external employability, the same steps were utilized, but changed employability variable to internal employability and external employability variables. Therefore, Model 3 to Model 6 shows English language proficiency positively correlated to the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability because the beta coefficient was increased positively at the significant level of .05 ( $\beta=-.001$ ). Model 7 to Model 9 indicates English language proficiency positively and significantly related to the relationship between language anxiety and external employability because the beta coefficient was increased positively ( $\beta=-.001$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and remained significantly. Thus, only Hypothesis 2 and 2b were supported.



Table 4.4

*The Result of Hierarchical Regression on Moderating Effect (n=249)*

Variable	Employability			Internal Employability			External Employability		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8	Model 9
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
<i>Step 1</i>									
Constant	3.39***	3.88***	3.91***	3.16***	3.63***	3.66***	3.52***	4.02***	4.06***
Age	-.00	-.01	-.01	-.00	-.00	-.01	-.00	-.01	-.00
Gender	.11	.14*	.15**	.17*	.21**	.22**	.07	.10	.11
Education	-.01	-.08	-.08	-.02	-.10	-.09	-.01	-.07	-.07
Position	.36***	.33***	.34***	.47***	.43***	.44***	.30***	.27***	.27***
<i>Steps 2:</i>									
Language anxiety		-.13*	-.16**		-.13*	-.14*		-.13*	-.14*
ELP		.00	.00		.00	-.00		.00	.00
<i>Steps 3:</i>									
LA x ELP			-.001*			-.001			-.001*
$R^2$	.12	.17	.19	.15	.19	.20	.07	.12	.14
Adjusted $R^2$	.11	.15	.17	.13	.17	.17	.06	.10	.11
$F$	8.36***	8.49***	8.01**	10.57***	9.37***	8.41**	4.81**	5.49***	5.41***
$\Delta R^2$	.12	.05	.015	.15	.041	.01	.07	.05	.02
$\Delta F$	8.36***	7.83**	4.39*	10.57***	6.09**	2.30	4.81**	6.43**	4.43*

Note. \*\*\* $p < .001$  \*\* $p < .01$  \* $p < .05$

In order to explain the moderating effect deeply, English language proficiency was divided into two groups via utilizing mean score. Figure 4.1 shows product graph among language anxiety, employability, and English language proficiency. Figure 4.2 reveals interactional graph among language anxiety, external employability, and English language proficiency. Moreover, the summary of hypotheses testing is shown as Table 4.5.

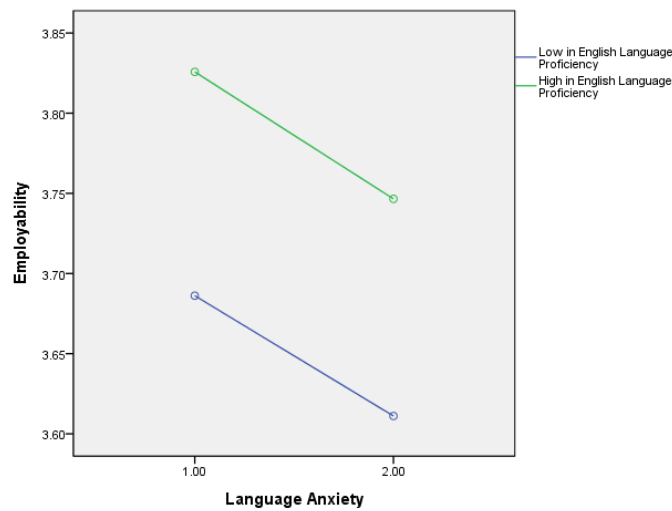


Figure 4.1 Product plots for moderating effect of English language proficiency (Employability as Y Axis)

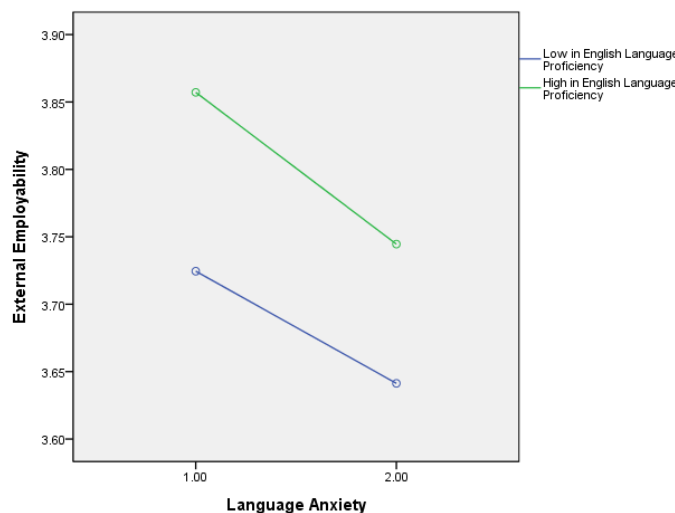


Figure 4.2 Product plots for moderating effect of English language proficiency (External Employability as Y Axis)

Table 4.5  
*Result of Hypotheses Testing*

Hypotheses	Explanation	Result
<b>Hypothesis 1.</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to employability.	Supported
<b>Hypothesis 1a</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to internal employability	Supported
<b>Hypothesis 1b</b>	Language anxiety negatively relates to external employability	Supported
<b>Hypothesis 2.</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and employability	Supported
<b>Hypothesis 2a</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability	Not Supported
<b>Hypothesis 2b</b>	English language proficiency positively moderates the relationship between language anxiety and external employability	Supported



## **CHAPTER V CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, conclusions, implications, and limitations of this study are discussed. Conclusions were made based on the research findings and discussion in previous chapter. Implication was composed of two parts, which were the benefits to theoretical parts and practical parts.

### **Conclusions**

To summarize, two main results were found in this study. First, there was a negative relationship between language anxiety and employability. The relationships between language anxiety and the two sub-dimensions of employability, internal employability and external employability were also negative. Second, English language proficiency positively moderated the relationship between language anxiety and employability. Moreover, it had a positive effect on the relationship between language anxiety and external employability as well. However, English language proficiency did not have a positive impact on the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability. Based on the results, the conclusions are discussed in detail as follows.

### **Language Anxiety and Employability**

In the result of Hypothesis 1, language anxiety negatively related to employability. Specifically, the more language anxiety individuals perceived, the lower employability individuals gained no matter the level of English language proficiency they had because language anxiety negatively affected individuals when they performed English ability on their tasks and influenced individuals' employability. The result of Hypothesis 1 was consistent with previous literature that

language anxiety occurred when individuals felt nervous and anxious in using English in some situations, which caused debilitated effects on individual's confidence and self-esteem, and then eventually affected individual's performance and achievement (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986; Howitz, 2001; Woodrow, 2006). The supervisor thought one's English ability was pretty well because he or she got high TOEIC scores; however, he or she could not perform English ability effectively and successfully on tasks because she felt anxious and nervous when having meeting, presenting, communicating in English. Under the circumstance, supervisors might think that individuals' English ability was not that good as expected to perform English on the tasks.

In addition, the results of Hypothesis 1a and 1b showed that language anxiety negatively related to external employability and internal employability. Though there was no direct literature to support these two specific results, it could be explained that language anxiety when individuals looked for a new job in another organization or new position in the same organization, the unknown challenge from the new job and tasks regarding using English in new work circumstances might make them feel anxious and affect their performance of using English (Andrade & Williams, 2009; Gardner , 1991a; Horwitz, 2001).

### **Moderating Effect of English Language Proficiency**

In Hypothesis 2, it presumed that English language proficiency had positive impact on the relationship between language anxiety, employability and its two sub-dimensions (internal employability and external employability). To be specific, individuals with higher language anxiety will have higher employability. The result of the Hypothesis 1 just echoed the previous research that English was widely thought as one of the most important abilities for workers in the in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Akar, 2002; Bilbow, 2002; Charles & Marschan-Piekkari, 2002); therefore, individuals who

wished to be easily employed and avoid being constrained in low-payment works needed to strengthen their English language skills for workers (TIRF, 2012). Therefore, take companies in Switzerland as example, employees with fluent English speaking were paid from twelve percent to thirty percent and get hired much more easier higher than those without fluent English speaking (Grin, 2010). Individuals gaining higher TOEIC scores meant they understood English pretty well and could perform their English ability in their jobs and business occasions effectively as well.

In addition, Hypothesis 2a and 2b assumed that English language proficiency positively moderated the relationship between language anxiety and internal employability and external employability. The results showed that there was only a positive relationship between English language proficiency and external employability. It indicated that English language proficiency was important for individuals who wanted to get other job opportunities in other organizations. On the other hand, English language proficiency did not positively moderate the relationship between language anxiety and employability since result showed that there was no significance on the relationship between two variables. It could be explained as when individuals want to get a higher position in the same organization, and only taking English language proficiency as prerequisites is not enough. Therefore, it might indicate that individuals ought to strengthen their other skills or requirements such as leadership, working experience, education, certificates, and skills if they would like to remain their employability within the same organization

## **Implications**

Implications were consisted with two parts, which are theoretical part and practical part. The recommendations for the future study are stressed as well.

### **Theoretical Implications**

In the perspective of previous literature regarding employability, there are only few literatures showed the direct relationship between language anxiety and employability. Besides, researches regarding language anxiety focus on academic settings such as school and language class. However, the result of this study proved that the negative relationship between language anxiety and employability, and the moderating effect of English language proficiency in the relationship. These two results could make up the insufficient literature regarding these three variables.

### **Practical Implications**

The practical suggestions were composed of five parts, which were suggestions for organizations, workers, HR professionals, and students. First, in the perspective of organizations, this study emphasized that English language proficiency benefited organizations it to advance the business to an international level because the communication with foreign clients, partners, colleagues, and supervisor was dependent on globally common language, English. Setting English language proficiency as the prerequisites in the recruiting process was needed indeed, so it helped the company not only build the organization climate that emphasized English language proficiency for every employee to accelerate the procedures of running business internationally but also helped organizations obtain outstanding human capitals. Take Rakuten, one of the biggest Japanese enterprises, as example. The chairman of Rakuten, Hiroshi Mikitani, believed that Rakuten should draw their future on global scale, which meant the global market. Therefore, he required all of



meetings should proceed in English and add TOEIC test score as one of the items in employees' performance appraisal, and his policy forced all the employees in every position to meet the certain required scores. If employees failed to meet the required TOEIC test scores, the promotion will not be approved or even be degraded.

Second, in the perspective of workers and employees, this study reminded them to strengthen their English language proficiency to decrease language anxiety and increase their abilities to get job opportunities within or outside of the organizations. Besides, the increasing of English language proficiency also benefited workers who were in a supervisory level. Supervisors without good English language proficiency would have hard time managing their subordinates if subordinates obtained better English language proficiency than supervisors.

Third, HR professionals could play the role of catalytic agent when organizations tended to promote the English language proficiency within the organizations. They could apply English language proficiency on training, performance management, and compensation. They could ask organizations for providing sufficient resources to hold the trainings regarding increasing the English language proficiency such as the English language proficiency classes or study groups to help employees get rid of language anxiety and increase their employability. They also could take employees' English language proficiency as one of the items in performance appraisal and rewarded employees once their test scores of English proficiency test are higher than the required scores in the organization.

Fourth, this study could apply to other Asian country such as China, Korea, or Japan since the mother tongue of these countries was not English, and language anxiety would probably occur on individuals from these Asian countries. Therefore, this study could extend its scale to determine if individuals from other Asian countries or other ESL countries have language anxiety when they communicated with others or

not.

Finally, this study shed the light on the key role of English language proficiency for students who wanted to get good jobs in the future. Since the need of working or communicating with foreigner was increasing, students with good English language proficiency would have advantages when they wanted to enter ideal companies in the future.

### **Research Limitations**

There are several limitations in this study. First, since quantitative research approach was conducted in this study by delivering questionnaires, the Common Method Variance (CMV) affected the results because the questionnaires were answered based on self-report or respondents' perspectives.

Secondly, the purposive sampling was conducted in the research. The participants in this study ought to be satisfied all of three criteria, which were (1) working in technology-related companies in Taiwan, (2) using English on their related job or tasks, and (3) taking TOEIC test before. Once one of the criteria was not achieved, the participant was invalid. In addition, Individuals who have only taken other forms of English proficiency tests instead of TOEIC tests (e.g. IELTS, GRE, GMAT, or TOEFL) were not included in this study as well.

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## APPENDIX A: SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION IN TECHNOLOGY COMPANIES

No.	Company	Number of distribution
1.	緯創資通股份有限公司 (Wistron Corporation)	173
2.	長興開發科技股份有限公司 (Cabot Microelectronics)	52
3.	力晶科技股份有限公司 (Powerchip Technology Corporation)	10
4.	友達光電 (AU Optronics Corporation)	3
5.	宏達國際電子股份有限公司 (High Tech Computer Corporation)	1
6.	台灣積體電路製造股份有限公司 (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company Limited)	1
7.	明基材料股份有限公司 (BenQ Materials)	1
8.	日月光半導體製造股份有限公司 (Advanced Semiconductor Engineering Incorporation)	1
9	力智電子股份有限公司 (UPI Semiconductor Corporation)	2
10	穩懋半導體股份有限公司 (Win Semiconductor Corporation)	1

No.	Company	Number of distribution
11.	英業達股份有限公司(Inventec Corporation )	1
12.	台灣國際航電股份有限公司(Garmin Corporation )	1
13.	荷蘭商臺灣戴爾股份有限公司台灣分公司(Dell Incorporation )	1
14.	亞智科技股份有限公司 (Manz Taiwan Ltd.)	1
Total		249