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FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING ANXIETY AND ACHIEVEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF THE STUDENTS STUDYING AT ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART UNIVERSITY*

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STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Anxiety is described as an uncontrollable state that can make the language learning situation problematic and stressful. This study investigates the degree of language anxiety of Turkish university students. It also examines the relationship between foreign language speaking anxiety and achievement.

Introduction

It is true that learners bring many individual characteristics to the learning process. Anxiety, as one of the learner characteristics, has been subject to a considerable amount of investigation (Williams and Burden, 1997). According to Freud, anxiety is "an unpleasant affective state or condition similar to dread or nervousness, with physiological and behavioral manifestations" (Spielberger, 1972. cited in Kunt, 2001). As for language learning anxiety, it is defined as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al. 1986, p. 128).

In recent years foreign language researchers have paid considerable attention to the effects of anxiety on language learning and demonstrated that language anxiety is most closely related to the acquisition of a foreign language (Horwitz et al., 1986). The research on language anxiety has addressed three key issues: (1) the sources of language anxiety, (2) the nature of the relationship between language anxiety and language learning, and (3) how anxiety affects learning. Thus, this study focuses on determining the foreign language anxiety levels of Turkish university students studying at the ELT department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University and aims to find out the relationship between their anxiety level and oral communication achievement. To this end, this study addressed four research questions:

1- What is the degree of language learning anxiety among first year ELT students?

2- What is the anxiety level difference among the students according to their gender?

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3- What is the anxiety level difference among the students according to their age?

4- Is there a relationship between the students' speaking anxiety levels and achievements?

Review of research into language classroom anxiety and language learning

Although there is a wide agreement about the sources of language anxiety in classroom settings, there is less agreement about the relationship between language anxiety and learning. Ellis (2008) identifies three positions: (1) anxiety facilitates language learning, (2) anxiety has a negative impact on language learning, and (3) language anxiety is the result of difficulties with learning rather than their cause.

Eysenck and MacIntyre (1979; 2002. cited in Ellis 2008) noted that low levels of anxiety can lead to more effort and facilitative anxiety leads to increased motivation. Chastain (1975) found that measures of anxiety were positively related to marks achieved by one group of audio-lingual French learners, indicating that learners with higher levels of anxiety did best. However, Language anxiety generally has been found to have a negative effect on learning. Horwitz et al., (1986) found a negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and the grades students expected in their first semester language class. Their research indicated that students with higher levels of foreign language anxiety both expected and received lower grades than their less anxious friends. Similarly, in an Asian EFL context Kim, (1998) found significant negative relationships between FLCAS scores final grades of the participants.

The research on issue in Turkey seems to be limited. Kunt (1997) investigated beliefs about language learning and foreign language anxiety and found lower levels of foreign language anxiety in Turkish-speaking university students of English. Aydın et al. (2006) investigated the test anxiety level of Turkish students as EFL learners and its reasons, effects and results on foreign language learning by found that participants usually had a high level of anxiety.

Dalkılıç (2001) conducted a study focusing on the relationship between anxiety and achievement of the Turkish EFL students. In the study, test anxiety was not the focus but a factor that has an effect on language anxiety. In a similar research study, Batumlu and Erden (2007) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and students' English achievement and found that for all levels of students, there was a significant negative relationship between students' foreign language anxiety and their English achievement at the significance level of 0.45.

In the present study, the researcher aimed to investigate the foreign language speaking anxiety experience and the relationship between speaking anxiety and success of English-major students. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the field and help teacher-trainees and trainers be aware of the role of anxiety on speaking and spend effort to cope with it.

Methodology

The main objective of this study is to review foreign language classroom anxiety experience and examine the relationship between their anxiety level and achievement. To this end, a quantitative research method was employed. The research study was conducted at the ELT Department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University in the spring term of 2010-2011 academic year. The data were collected from 77 first year students consisting of 50 females and 27 males. The research instrument used for this part of the study was a translated version of the FLCAS designed by Horwitz et al. (1986), which had demonstrated satisfactory reliability co-efficient. The researcher compiled the survey scores and final Communication Skills Course scores and conducted a statistical analysis to look for correlations among the scores.

Results and Discussions

The research results showed the existence of considerable level of anxiety in the foreign language classes. This is a general problem of Turkish ELT learners who cannot speak in front of others even though they know English grammar well. Furthermore, this might be due to their being less motivated, not having enough self-confidence or practice to speak in English. It is known that in Turkey developing the speaking and listening skills of foreign language learners are always neglected.

The data analysis also showed that there was a significant difference between the means of anxiety scores of male and female students (t= -2.154; Sing. = .034). In all the anxiety categories, the anxiety levels of the female students were higher than those of male students. This might be due to the social structure of Turkish society in which females are shy and more oppressed by their families. However, the anxiety level differences of students according to their age, was only significant in the listening category. Although the role of age was significant in this study and this was supported by Aydın et al. (2006) who found that younger learners felt less confident, less relaxed and more anxious than older students, it ought to be replicated.

As for the correlations among the scores, a significant relationship was observed between the participants` anxiety level and success. It was revealed that while the speaking scores were falling, the anxiety levels were rising. This might be due to the fact that more anxious students cannot express themselves freely and inevitably they score lower points. There have been a number of studies in instructional contexts with different languages using the FLCAS with parallel results (Horwitz et al. (1986); Aida (1994); Kim, (1998). The results of this research study supported teachers' and students' intuitive feeling that language classrooms in which students communicate orally were anxiety provoking. These findings are supported by all the study findings given above.

Students' cross-cultural contact may help the development of their communicative competence and increase their motivation and decrease of language use anxiety. So it seems reasonable to provide ELT students opportunities to interact with native speakers in some contexts to lessen their speaking anxiety. Besides, instructors should keep in mind that every mistake students make should not be corrected

since it can decrease students' motivation and it is necessary to make the artificial classroom teaching atmosphere as natural as possible.

The researcher assumes that changing some automatic behaviors of students requires considerable awareness and commitment, effort and time and help of teachers. A further step should be demonstrating some strategies to cope with their anxiety and providing more natural, stress-free situations for the students.

Key Words: anxiety, foreign language anxiety, language learning achievement

YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENME KAYGISI VE BAŞARI: ÇANAKKALE ONSEKİZ MART ÜNİVERSİTESİ ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN DURUM DEĞERLENDİRMESİ

ÖZET

Son yıllarda insanlar küreselleşmenin bazı alanlarında olumlu tutumlar sergilemeye, başka ülkelerin televizyonlarını izlemeye, müziklerini dinlemeye başlamış ve daha hızlı seyahat ve iletişim kurma olanaklarına sahip olmuşlardır (Aydın, 2014). Bu anlamda İngilizce, bir yabancı dil olarak bütün dünyada ortak anlaşma dili olarak kullanılmaya başlanmıştır. Kaygı, yabancı dil öğrenmeyi problemli ve stresli hale getiren, kontrol edilemeyen bir durum olarak tanımlanır. Bu çalışma üniversitede okuyan Türk öğrencilerin ne derece yabancı dil kaygısı duyduklarını araştırmaktadır. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda yabancı dil konuşma kaygısı ile başarı arasındaki ilişkiyi de incelemektedir. Veri toplama ve analiz aşamalarında nicel araştırma yaklaşımı benimsenmiştir. Nicel veriler, Yabancı Dil Sınıf Heyecan Ölçeği (FLCAS), (Horwitz et. al.,1986) kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Ayrıca öğrencilerin Güz dönemi konuşma dersi final dönemi notları derse giren hocalarından temin edilmiştir. Ölçek Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart Üniversitesinin İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bölümü birinci sınıfındaki 77 öğrenciye uygulanmıştır. Toplanan nicel veriler SPSS 15,0 içindeki betimsel istatistik, t-test, ANOVA and Reali Alpha-Cronbach teknikleriyle analiz edilmiştir. Nicel veri analizleri öğrencilerin değişik düzeylerde yabancı dil kaygısı duyduklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Kız öğrencilerin bütün kaygı gruplarında kaygı düzeylerinin erkeklerden daha fazla olduğu görülmüştür. Öğrencilerinin kaygı düzeyleri ile başarıları arasında önemli bir ilişki olduğu da görülmüştür. Bunun anlamı, kaygı düzeyi yüksek olan öğrencilerin konuşma dersi notlarının daha düşük olmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: kaygı, yabancı dil kaygısı, dil öğrenme başarısı

1. INTRODUCTION

English has lately spread as an international language around the world and been used for communication among people who have no other language in common. In the age of globalization, people developed positive attitudes about certain aspects of globalization and started to watch films

and TV and listen to music of other countries, and had greater opportunities for travel and faster communication (Aydın, 2014). As a result of this, learning and teaching of a foreign language, specifically English language, has gained greater importance. In recent years foreign language researchers have paid considerable attention to the effects of anxiety on language learning and demonstrated that language anxiety is most closely related to the acquisition of a foreign language (Horwitz et al., 1986). They also pointed out that anxiety prevents learners from reaching their goals and students 'unrealistic beliefs about language learning negatively affect the development of foreign language performance.

Thus, this study aims at determining the anxiety level of Turkish university students studying at the English Language Teaching Department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. This paper first gives different definitions of anxiety as one of the individual characteristics, explains different types of anxiety and focuses on language anxiety which is consistently associated with problems in language learning and mentions anxiety measuring scales. The paper then reviews the research using FLCAS and describes similar studies in the world and in Turkey carried out by different researchers. Next, this paper describes the study that aims at measuring the levels of anxiety of Turkish university students in the ELT Department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University. Finally, this paper discusses the pedagogical usefulness of this mode of enquiry and the need to reduce anxiety in language learning classes.

Anxiety

It is undoubtly true that learners bring many individual characteristics to the learning process. One of the characteristics that has been subject to a considerable amount of investigation is anxiety (Williams and Burden, 1997). According to Freud, anxiety is "an unpleasant affective state or condition similar to dread or nervousness, with physiological and behavioral manifestations" (Spielberger, 1972. cited in Kunt, 2001).

While explaining affective individual factors about second language learning Gass and Selinker (2008) state that anxiety, competitiveness or an uncontrollable situation can make the language learning situation difficult and stressful. They note that anxiety seems to represent a trait that falls within the broader scheme of factors affecting learning but it is not clear whether it is a matter of personality or emotional reaction to a situation, or a combination. Similarly, suggestopedia is founded on the principle that people are capable of learning more if their minds are clear of other things, and also free of anxiety.

To sum up, in the light of the facts mentioned above, it is necessary that the people who teach and learn a foreign language should be more concerned about understanding the anxiety factor since it plays an important role in the acquisition of L2.

Types of Anxiety

Dörnyei (2005) points out that there are two dimensions in the literature that are relevant to understand anxiety: beneficial/facilitating vs. inhibitory/debilitating anxiety and trait vs. state anxiety. The first refers to whether or not anxiety can be a positive or a negative force in learning and the second refers to whether anxiety is part of an individual's makeup across many situations or whether it is a reaction in a particular situation.

Psychologists show the difference between trait anxiety, which is a stable part of a person's personality and state anxiety, which is related to specific events or situations. Research has shown that introverts tend to experience more anxiety than extraverts (Ehrman, 1994). Ehrman (1996) adds that trait anxiety is state anxiety extended over many more situations. For purposes of working with students having learning difficulties, it may be a good strategy to treat all anxiety about

learning as if it were state anxiety. Gardner and MacIntyre (1991) view anxiety from three perspectives: 1) anxiety as a general personality trait (trait anxiety), which has been shown to impair cognitive functioning, to disrupt memory, to lead to avoidance behaviors, 2) anxiety as an emotional state (state anxiety), which refers to a transitory emotional state or condition and 3) anxiety that extends consistently over time within a given situation (situation-specific anxiety), which is experienced in a type of situation.

Another distinction is between debilitating and facilitating anxiety. The anxiety previously described is debilitating. It gets in the way of learning. Facilitating anxiety mobilizes the resources to accomplish a task. Some researchers believe that no anxiety is even helpful, and others believe that facilitating anxiety exists for some people but not others. Facilitating anxiety is to build up just the right amount of arousal to get onto a task and mobilize one's cognitive and affective resources (Ehrman, 1996).

Language Learning Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986) defined language anxiety as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 128). They identified three varieties of foreign language anxiety; Communication *apprehension*, which is viewed as a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with other people, *Test anxiety*, which is a fear of feeling in test situations. It is an unpleasant experience held consciously or unconsciously by learners in many situations. *Fear of negative evaluation* is defined as apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate one negatively.

Horwitz (2001) in a review of the literature noted that there is something unique about language learning anxiety separate from other types of anxiety and language anxiety (LA) as a significant variable consistently and negatively impacts upon language performance regardless to the targeted L2 and aspects of L2.

According to Gass and Selinker (1994), anxiety and stress are also very common in classroom learning as well as in individual learning contexts. They believe anxiety, competitiveness as well as shock in a new, perhaps uncontrollable, situation can make the language learning situation problematic and stressful. Bailey (1983) conducted a diary study of her own language learning experience. She pointed out that she felt very anxious about her class and she knew she was a good language learner but she got lost in class because she felt she was behind the others and this slowed down her pace.

The research on language anxiety has addressed three key issues: (1) the sources of language anxiety, (2) the nature of the relationship between language anxiety and language learning, and (3) how anxiety affects learning. Thus, this study focuses on determining the foreign language anxiety levels of Turkish university students studying at the ELT department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University and to find out the relationship between their anxiety level and oral communication achievement.

Review of research into language classroom anxiety and language learning

Although there is a wide agreement about the sources of language anxiety in classroom settings, there is less agreement about the relationship between language anxiety and learning. Ellis (2008) identifies three positions: (1) anxiety facilitates language learning, (2) anxiety has a negative impact on language learning, and (3) language anxiety is the result of difficulties with learning rather than their cause.

Eysenck and MacIntyre (1979; 2002. cited in Ellis, 2008) noted that low levels of anxiety can lead to more effort and facilitative anxiety leads to increased motivation. Chastain (1975) found that measures of anxiety were positively related to marks achieved by one group of audio-lingual French learners, indicating that learners with higher levels of anxiety did best.

However, Language anxiety generally has been found to have a negative effect on learning. Horwitz et al., (1986) administered FLCAS to 78 students in Spanish classes and found a negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and the grades students expected in their first semester language class. Their research indicated that students with higher levels of foreign language anxiety both expected and received lower grades than their less anxious friends. Similarly, Aida (1994) found a significant negative correlation between FLCAS scores and final grades among American second-year Japanese students at the University of Texas, Austin. She divided the students into high anxiety and low anxiety groups while analyzing the data and showed that the students with high anxiety received significantly lower grades than the ones with lower anxiety. This finding was replicated by Saito and Samimy (1996) with Japanese students at three levels. They indicated that most students experienced situation specific anxiety when they spoke a foreign language in the classroom.

In an Asian EFL context Kim, (1998) not only found significant negative relationships between FLCAS scores final grades but also reported an interesting difference in the relationship when observed in a traditional reading focused class and a conversation class. The students were especially less anxious in the reading classroom than they were in conversation class. The result of this research supports teachers' and students' feelings that language classrooms, in which students communicate orally, are more anxiety provoking than traditional classrooms.

The research on issue in Turkey seems to be limited. Kunt (1997) investigated beliefs about language learning and foreign language anxiety of 882 Turkish speaking university students learning English as a foreign language in North Cyprus and found lower levels of foreign language anxiety in Turkish-speaking university students of English. Aydın et al. (2006) investigated the test anxiety level of Turkish students as EFL learners and its reasons, effects and results on foreign language learning by collecting data from 114 students. They administered a background questionnaire; a test anxiety scale adapted from Sarason's (1984) and found that participants usually had a high level of anxiety. They also found that younger learners felt less confident and relaxed and more anxious than older students. Their study also showed that the anxiety of learners affected their motivation, concentration and achievement negatively.

Çubukçu (2008) administered both the Foreign Language Anxiety scale and the Foreign Language Self Efficacy Scale to100 junior level students from the English teacher training program at a university in Turkey. She investigated the correlation between self-efficacy and foreign language learning anxiety and found that both aspects are uncorrelated and gender did not play an important role in terms of the anxiety level and self-perception ratings of these junior teacher trainees.

Dalkılıç (2001) conducted a study focusing on the relationship between anxiety and achievement of the Turkish EFL students. In the study, test anxiety was not the focus but a factor that has an effect on language anxiety. In a similar research study, Batumlu and Erden (2007) examined the relation between foreign language anxiety and students' English achievement by collecting data from the 150 prep students of Yıldız Technical University, School of Foreign Languages, Basic English Department by means of 'Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale' developed by Horwitz, et al. (1986). In the study, students' achievement level was determined by the average of their 1st and 2nd midterm grades. It was found that while the learners' initial foreign language anxiety did not vary according to their English level; $F(2\text{-}147) = 1.97$, $p>0.05$, their latter

foreign language anxiety differed significantly according to their English level; F (2-147) = 1.97, p=0.05. It was also found that for all levels of students, there was a significant negative relationship between students' foreign language anxiety and their English achievement at the significance level of 0.45. Finally, it was also found that B and C level students' foreign language anxiety differed in successful and unsuccessful students. Unsuccessful students' foreign language anxiety was higher than successful students. Similar to the findings of Çubukçu, no gender differences was determined in their study.

Apart from the studies presented above, Sevim (2012) intended to develop a speaking anxiety scale to measure teacher candidates' speaking anxiety by collecting data from 338 prospective teachers studying at the Social and Natural Sciences Departments of Kazım Karabekir Faculty of Education of Atatürk University. The researcher developed the speaking anxiety scale with 20 items to test the speaking anxiety levels of the trainees. 19 of the items were designed with a negative design and one of them was designed with a positive design. The scale had three sub-categories; speaker-oriented anxiety, society-oriented anxiety, and psychology of speaking. The reliability of the scale was analyzed by Alpha-Cronbach and found highly reliable (0. 912).

In another study in the Turkish context, Sallabaş (2012) studied the speaking anxiety level of learners studying Turkish as a foreign language by employing a survey model. The quantitative data for the study were collected from 68 students by means of a speaking anxiety scale developed by Özdemir (2012, cited in Sallabaş, 2012) and analysis of the data showed that the anxiety level of the students who learn Turkish as a foreign language is below the average(M=58.35). Additionally, it was revealed that learners who perceive Turkish as a difficult language experienced more anxiety than those who think that it is a difficult language, and that there was not a significant difference in terms of other variables.

In a recent study, Şener (2010) carried out a study to reveal the level of different foreign language anxiety types (speaking, listening, general and test anxiety) and compare the anxiety levels of the Turkish university students with the anxiety levels of the Spanish university students. The analysis of the data showed that Turkish university students experienced language learning anxiety but the anxiety level percentages of several items were lower than those of the Spanish university students. In other words, Turkish university students did not experience as high levels of foreign language anxiety as the Spanish university students did. Her finding was similar to Kunt's previous study (1997) in the field.

In the present study, the researcher aimed to investigate the foreign language speaking anxiety experience and the relationship between speaking anxiety and success of English-major students. It is hoped that the findings will contribute to the field and help learners and trainers be aware of the role of anxiety on speaking and spend effort to cope with it.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Aim

The main objectives of this study is to review foreign language classroom anxiety experience as they appear reflected in the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and to examine the anxiety level difference of students` according to their gender and age, and finally, to determine the relationship between the oral communication anxiety and students' achievement. This study addressed four research questions: 1- What is the degree of language learning anxiety among first year ELT students? ; 2- What is the anxiety level differences among the students according to their gender? ; 3- What is the anxiety level differences among the students according to their age? ; 4- Is there a relationship between the students' speaking anxiety levels and achievements?

Setting and Participants of the Study

The study was conducted at the ELT Department of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University in the spring term of 2010-2011 academic year. The program operates on a basis, comprising a one-year preparatory class and a four-year mainstream training program. In total, 77 ELT students ranging in age 18 to 29 studying in 1A /B participated in the study. The mean age of the participants was 19.5 and they were all adult learners. They consisted of 50 females and 27 males. All the participants had to accomplish the exemption test before they were admitted to first year of the university. The students, who were all native speakers of the Turkish Language, had been studying English for an average of 8 years as a mandatory subject at primary and high school.

Data Collection Procedures and Instruments

The research instrument used for this part of the study was a translated version of the FLCAS designed by Horwitz et al. (1986). It consists of 33 items which relate to the anxiety. They were available measuring the situational anxiety directly associated to the specific context of the foreign language classroom; on the other hand, the scale had demonstrated satisfactory reliability co-efficient with the first samples of population to which it had been administered (Horwitz, 1991). The five point Likert scale used in the FLCAS ranges from "Strongly agree" to "Strongly disagree". Items 1, 2, 3, 7, 9, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33 were related with the speaking anxiety; items 4, 15, 29 were abut determining the listening anxiety; items 8, 10, 21 were related with the test anxiety and items 5, 6, 11, 12, 16, 17, 22, 25, 26, 28 were about general anxiety. Besides, 2010-2011 Winter Term Communication Skills Course final results were obtained from the Faculty of Education of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University to be used to find the correlation between their language anxiety levels and achievements.

Results and Discussions

Firstly, the reliability of the Turkish version of the scale was analyzed by Alpha-Cronbach and found highly reliable (0, 915). In this study, all the data obtained by the help of FLCAS were analyzed within the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 15.0.

RQ1- What is the degree of language learning anxiety among first year ELT students?

When the mean scores of four different groups of anxiety levels were examined, the highest mean score was found as the listening anxiety (3. 01) and the lowest mean score was the test anxiety (2. 46). The mean scores of other groups of anxiety levels were speaking (2. 75), and general anxiety (2. 55).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics mean scores of different anxiety groups

Anxiety Category	Grand Mean	Hotelling's T-Squared, Sig	Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (Average Measures)	Non additivity, Sig	Cronbach's Alpha
Speaking Anxiety	2.75	264.730;.000	0.896	1.089; .512	.896
Listening Anxiety	3.01	54.142; .000	.513	.427; .514	.513
Test Anxiety	2.46	158.296;,000	.515	.108; .743	.515
General Anxiety	2.55	341.367;.000	.736	1.867; 0.172	.736

Speaking seemed to be difficult for some students. Item 30 revealed that 62.4% of the students felt overwhelmed by the number of the rules they had to learn. Students' lack of self-

confidence when speaking the foreign language was revealed by the fact that 40.3 % of them agreed with item 1(I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English) and 40.3 % disagreed with item 18 (I feel confident when I speak in English in my language class). Most of the students (70. 2%) expressed that they got embarrassed to be volunteer to answer questions in the language class (item 13). 58.5 % of the students said that they trembled when they knew that they were going to be called in class (item 3). 52% of the students expressed that they would be nervous speaking the English language with native speakers (item 9)and one quarter of them said they started to panic when they had to speak without preparation in language class (item 14).

When speaking anxiety manifestations are concerned, it was observed that (item27) 59.8 % of the students got nervous and confused when they spoke in the foreign language. According to item 20, 57.2 % of the students felt their heart pounding when being called on in language class. Item 33 revealed that 46.8% of the students got nervous when the language teacher asked questions which they had not prepared before. The responses to item 2 showed that 31.2 % of the students were worried about making mistakes in the language class, which is an important factor involved students' fear. According to items 19 (I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make) and 24 (I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of the other students) the fear of being evaluated by others were 77.9% and 24.7% respectively. The data analysis showed that most of the students were afraid to be corrected by the teacher for every mistake they made and one fourth of them felt self-conscious about speaking in front of other students.

A high percentage of the students (63.7%) were afraid that other students would laugh at them when they spoke the foreign language in front of the other students (item 31). When comparing themselves with others, 61% of the students felt that other students spoke the foreign language better than they did (item 23) and 53.3% of the students thought that the other students were better at languages than they were (item 7). Item 32 indicated that 62.4% of the students agreed that they would feel uncomfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

According to items 29 and 4 (55.9 % and 45.5%) listening anxiety reactions were observed. That means almost 50% of the students felt restless when they did not understand what the teacher said in the foreign language. It was also observed that the level of listening anxiety significantly increased when error correction was involved in the process since 66.3% of the students felt that they got upset when they did not understand what the teacher was correcting.

When the test anxiety responses are considered, 22.1% of the students worried about the consequences of failing their language class (item 10) and 83.2% of them denied being usually at ease during the test in their language class (item8).As can be seen in item 21 83.2% of the students agreed that they need to study more to be successful in the foreign language test.

Several items revealed that there was a quite high level of concern over foreign language lessons in general, both outside and inside of the classroom. Item 22 revealed that 54.6% of the students felt pressure to prepare very well for the language class; 18.2 % of the students seemed to understand that foreign language classes could be a chaos of distressed (item 11); 61.1 % of the students actually said that they worried about the foreign language class even when they were well prepared for it (item 16). Besides71.4% of the students disagreed feeling sure and relaxed when they were going to the English class (item 28); 70.1% of the students denied that they often felt like not going to the language class (item 17). 68.9% of the student denied that it would not bother them at all to take more English language classes (item 5). When anxiety experiences lived inside the classroom was considered, 77.9% of students worried about being left behind because of the lesson's pace (item 25). 84.5 % of the students said that they felt more tense and nervous in the foreign language class than in other classes (item 26); 15.2% of the students expressed that they

could get so nervous that they forgot things they knew in class (item 12). Finally, 66.6% of the students normally found themselves thinking of things that had nothing to do with it (item 6).

To summarize, the research results showed the existence of considerable level of anxiety in the foreign language classes. The ELT students in this study experienced more speaking anxiety in the oral communication classes. Çubukçu's (2008) findings support the findings of the present study. This is a general problem of Turkish ELT learners who cannot speak in front of others even though they know English grammar well. Furthermore, this might be due to their being less motivated, not having enough self-confidence or practice to speak in English. It is known that in Turkey developing the speaking and listening skills of L2 learners are always neglected. Another remarkable point is that item 32 revealed 62.4% of the students felt comfortable with the native speakers although they got nervous and confused in speaking classes. The reason might be that they feel relaxed when they speak with someone who most probably they will not meet again in their lifetime. Çubukçu found a similar result in her study. In class the teacher is the person who notices faults with the students and corrects them, so this might increase the students' anxiety levels.

RQ2- What is the anxiety level differences among students according to their gender?

Paired t-Test results showed that there was a significant difference between the means of anxiety scores of male and female students (t= -2.154; Sing. = .034).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics mean scores of students according to their gender

Anxiety Category	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Speaking Anxiety	Male	28	33.39	7.608
	Female	49	38.35	10.707
Listening Anxiety	Male	28	8.61	2.753
	Female	49	9.29	2.318
Test Anxiety	Male	28	7.00	2.073
	Female	49	7.59	2.336
General Anxiety	Male	28	2.64	4.946
	Female	49	2.02	6.388

In all the anxiety categories, the anxiety levels of the female students were higher than those of male students. However, the difference between male and female students in the speaking category is statistically meaningful. The mean speaking score of the female students is higher (M=38. 35) than the scores of the males (M= 33.39). This might be due to the social structure of Turkish society in which females are shy and more oppressed by their families (See Table 2). However, the t-test results found no significant difference between girls and boys in terms of anxiety level in the study carried out by Çubukcu (2008).

RQ3- What is the anxiety level differences among students according to their age?

In order to see the anxiety level differences of students according to their age, the data were analyzed by Oneway ANOVA Test and a significant difference was observed in the listening category.

The anxiety level of the students at age 19 is higher than those at age 20. Aydın et al.'s (2006) findings confirmed the results of this study, which revealed that the listening anxiety level

of the younger students is higher than the level of the older ones. It can be said that younger learners have less experience in L2 learning (See Figure 1).

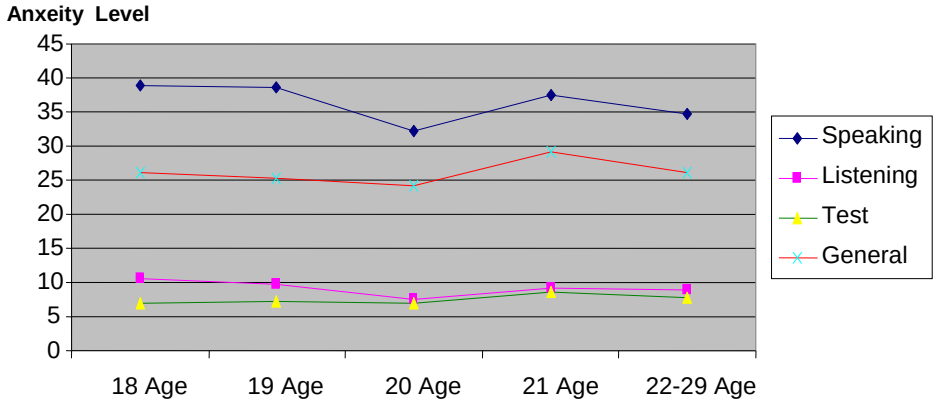


Figure 1. Anxiety Level According to the Age

RQ4- Is there a relationship between students' speaking anxiety levels and achievements?

In order to determine the relationship between the students' speaking anxiety and achievements, the data were analyzed by Oneway ANOVA Test and a significant relationship was observed. The anxiety level of the students who scored CC in the speaking course was found to be higher than those who scored BA and BC. Similarly, the anxiety level of the students who scored DC in the speaking course was higher than the students who scored BA. In other words, while the speaking scores are falling, the anxiety levels are rising. This might be due to the fact that more anxious students cannot express themselves freely and inevitably they score lower points (See Figure 2).

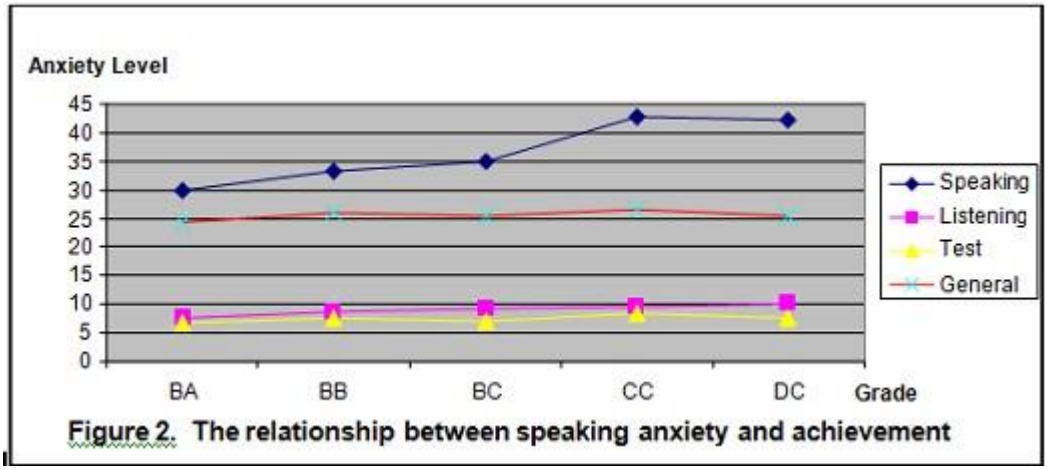


Figure 2. The relationship between speaking anxiety and achievement

There have been a number of studies in instructional contexts with different languages using the FLCAS with parallel results (Horwitz et al. (1986); Aida (1994); Kim, (1998). The results of this research study supported teachers' and students' intuitive feeling that language classrooms in which students communicate orally were anxiety provoking. These findings are supported by all the study findings given above.

3. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

An individual with well-developed communication skills is seen as more effective in dealing with daily issues, problem-solving, and finding solutions to interpersonal communication conflicts (Akkuzu and Akkaya, 2014). It is also known that a high correlation between classroom communication and the teaching-learning process and success has been found. However, speaking seemed to be difficult for some students due to their language speaking anxiety. In this study, it was found that Turkish university students experienced foreign language learning anxiety. For that reason, the students need to be presented new type of strategies. Yang (1992) claims that the use of certain strategies in turn influences language learning beliefs. Knowledge of student beliefs not only helps students clear up wrong ideas about language learning but also helps teachers instill positive feelings in students. According to this study, students have a number of negative beliefs or misconceptions that inhibit effective language learning. Thus, it seems reasonable that teachers and instructors should spend more time helping learners to get rid of these misconceptions in order to be more effective language learners.

Speaking seemed to be difficult for some students. The investigation revealed that more than half (62.4%) of the students felt overwhelmed by the number of the rules they had to learn, and students' lack of self-confidence when speaking the foreign language was revealed and observed that almost half of the students never feel quite sure of themselves when they are speaking in English. This finding is similar to the findings of Altıntaş and Görgen (2014) who investigated the pre-service teachers' perceptions related to their teaching practice at schools. The participants expressed that they noticed that they were not able pick up words to express themselves during their first teaching experience in class, whereas normally, they could speak for hours without having a break. Although they state that this this due to their lack of teaching experience, in fact this is because of their speaking anxiety.

The role of age on anxiety needs to be investigated in further research. Although the role of age was significant in this study and this was supported by Aydın et al. (2006) who found that younger learners felt less confident, less relaxed and more anxious than older students, it ought to be replicated.

As for the anxiety level differences among students according to their gender, it was found that female students experienced a higher level of listening anxiety than male students. However, Çubukcu (2008) found no significant difference between girls and boys in terms of anxiety level in her study. This issue needs to be investigated in a further study, too.

Students' cross-cultural contact may help the development of their communicative competence and increase their motivation and decrease of language use anxiety. So it seems reasonable to provide ELT students opportunities to interact with native speakers in some contexts to lessen their speaking anxiety. Besides, instructors should keep in mind that every mistake students make should not be corrected since it can decrease students' motivation and it is necessary to make the artificial classroom teaching atmosphere as natural as possible.

In conclusion, anxiety as an unpleasant affective state prevents learners from being more successful in ELT classes, so it seems necessary to teach the learners to cope with their anxiety. The researcher assumes that changing some automatic behaviors of students requires considerable

awareness and commitment, effort and time and help of teachers. A further step should be demonstrating some strategies to cope with their anxiety and providing more natural, stress-free situations for the students. From this perspective, this study is hoped to contribute to the L2 acquisition of the Turkish learners because it revealed the existence of a certain level of foreign language anxiety and confirmed the previous studies carried out in Turkey in the field.

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