

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAST LANGUAGE LEARNING
EXPERIENCES AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY OF TURKISH
UNIVERSITY EFL STUDENTS

The Graduate School of Education
of
Bilkent University

by

GÜLSEN GÜLTEKİN ÇAKAR

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE DEPARTMENT OF
TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
BILKENT UNIVERSITY
ANKARA

July 2009

BILKENT UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
MA THESIS EXAMINATION RESULT FORM

July 7, 2009

The examining committee appointed by the Graduate School of Education for the thesis
examination of the MA TEFL student

Glsen Gltekn akar

has read the thesis of the student.

The committee has decided that the thesis of the student is satisfactory.

Thesis Title: The Relationship between Past Language Learning
Experiences and Foreign Language Anxiety of
Turkish EFL students

Thesis Advisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydnl
Bilkent University MA TEFL Program

Committee Members: Vis. Asst. Prof. Dr. Philip Lee Durrant
Bilkent University MA TEFL Program

Dr. Hande Il Meng
Bilkent University School of English Language
Head of Teaching Unit

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

(Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı)
Supervisor

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

(Visiting Asst. Prof. Dr. Philip Lee Durrant)
Examining Committee Member

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

(Dr. Hande Işıl Mengü)
Examining Committee Member

Approval of the Graduate School of Education

(Visiting Prof. Dr. Margaret Sands)
Director

ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAST LANGUAGE LEARNING
EXPERIENCES AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY OF TURKISH EFL
STUDENTS

Glsen Gltekin akar

M.A., Department of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı

July 2009

This study mainly investigated the relationship between past language learning experiences and the foreign language anxiety levels of university EFL learners. It also aimed to find out the extent to which language learning background factors have an impact on foreign language anxiety. The study was conducted in the English preparatory programs at Bilkent and Pamukkale Universities, with the participation of 285 students from three proficiency levels (pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate).

Data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire administered to students included two main sections. In the first section, demographic information about the participants was collected. In the second section, the translation of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986 was given to the participants. Questionnaires were analyzed by using *t*-tests and ANOVA tests. Afterwards, using the results of the analyses involved in the quantitative part, participants who demonstrated high and low

levels of anxiety were selected for participation in the qualitative phase. Through the use of in-depth interviews, actual accounts of past language learning experiences and university students' current anxiety levels were explored.

The analysis of the quantitative data revealed that students' prior history of visiting countries, having had a native teacher, having studied another language besides English were all related to the prediction of foreign language anxiety.

The interview results showed that for both high and low anxiety students the role of previous language learning experiences has an impact on forming their current anxiety levels.

Key words: foreign language anxiety, past language learning experiences

ÖZET

TÜRKİYE’ DEKİ ÜNİVERSİTE HAZIRLIK SINIFI ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN GEÇMİŞ YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENİM DENEYİMLERİ İLE YABANCI DİL KAYGILARI ARASINDAKİ İLİŞKİ

Gülşen Gültekin Çakar

Yüksek lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Yar. Doç. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı

Temmuz 2009

Bu çalışma, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerinin geçmiş dil öğrenim deneyimleri ile yabancı dil kaygıları arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Ayrıca, geçmiş dil öğrenme etmenlerinin dil kaygısı üzerinde ne ölçüde etkili olduğunu araştırmıştır. Çalışma, Bilkent ve Pamukkale Üniversiteleri, Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu’nda üç farklı seviyede (orta altı, orta ve orta üstü) öğrenim gören 285 öğrencinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Veri, anketler ve görüşmeler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Öğrencilere verilen anket iki kısımdan oluşmaktadır. İlk bölümde, öğrencilerden demografik geçmiş bilgileri istenmiş ve ikinci bölümde Horwitz, Horwitz ve Cope (1986) tarafından hazırlanan Yabancı Dil Öğrenme Kaygı Ölçütü’ nün Türkçe çevirisi öğrencilere verilmiştir. Geçmiş dil öğrenme etmenlerinin dil kaygısına ne ölçüde etkilediğini bulmak için t-test ve tek yönlü varyans analizi testleri kullanılarak nicel çözümleme yapılmıştır. Daha sonra, anketteki nicel veri analizi sonuçları kullanılarak, düşük ve yüksek kaygılı öğrenciler saptanıp, bu öğrencilerle detaylı görüşmeler yapılmış ve şimdiki kaygı

seviyelerinin geçmiş dil öğrenim deneyimleri ile ilişkisi olup olmadığı araştırılmıştır.

Nicel veri analizinin sonuçları katılımcıların dil kaygı seviyeleri ile daha önce İngilizce dilinin konuşulduğu bir ülkede bulunmalarına, geçmiş dil sınıflarında yabancı İngilizce öğretmenin olmasına ve İngilizce dışında başka bir dil bilmelerine göre değişiklik göstermektedir. Öğrenci görüşmelerinde toplanan veriler ise geçmiş dil öğrenme deneyiminin hem yüksek ve hem de düşük kaygılı öğrenciler için, öğrencilerin var olan kaygı seviyelerine büyük etkisinin olduğu görülmüştür.

Anahtar kelimeler: yabancı dil kaygısı, geçmiş yabancı dil öğrenim deneyimleri

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to thank and express my deepest gratitude to my thesis advisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Julie Mathews-Aydınlı, for her invaluable guidance, and support throughout my study. Without her assistance and useful contributions, this thesis would never have been completed. Apart from her invaluable suggestions and comments, she also provided me with support and encouragement throughout the year. She always made me feel better whenever I felt confused during my study with her smiling face. She set a perfect teacher profile to me not only by her deep knowledge in her field but also her patience and friendly attitude towards me. It was a real privilege for me to be one of her advisees.

My sincere appreciation is extended to Asst. Prof. Dr. JoDee Walters, who shared her invaluable knowledge with us all through the year. Her guidance and expert advice enabled me to complete this thesis successfully.

I also would like to express my sincere gratitude to Asst. Prof. Dr. Philip Lee Durrant and Dr. Hande Işıl Mengü, my examining committee members, for their contributions and invaluable guidance for my thesis.

I owe special thanks to Turan Paker, the Director of School of Foreign Languages Department at Pamukkale University, who encouraged me to apply to the MA TEFL Program and gave me permission without any hesitation to attend it. I am really indebted to him for his support and trust in me. I am also grateful to the Assistant Director of School of Foreign Languages Department at Pamukkale University Seçil Çırak, who helped me a lot while I was conducting the actual study and arranging interviews with the students.

I would like to thank Pelin Gümüş and Emine Kılıç for always encouraging me with their heartwarming words, and for caring me in any situation and making everything more joyful. I will never forget our hysterical laughs, msn chats, breakfasts at METU, and Eymir Gölü adventure. Our friendship does not end here. I know that you are just a phone call away from me whenever I need you. Deep in my heart, I would like to thank my dear friend, Emine, once again for her friendship, help and encouragement. I believe I would not have been able to persevere in my efforts during this challenging process and leave with such sweet memories if it had not been for the wonderful, and hopefully, long-lasting friendship we developed over the year.

I would like to thank the MA TEFL 2009 class. I am deeply grateful to the dorm girls, Dilek, Gülnihal, Mehtap and Sevda for their invaluable friendship, support, guidance, and cooperativeness throughout the year. I would like to thank them for never leaving me alone on this path and in the dormitory. We suffered happily all together!

Last but not least, I would like to thank my mother and father for their endless love, constant understanding and support for everything in my life. Without their love and affection, I would not be able to succeed in life. Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Gürdal Çakar, for his invaluable support, encouragement, love, and understanding during this busy year.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ÖZET.....	v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	ix
LIST OF TABLES.....	xiii
CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background of the Study	2
Statement of the Problem	5
Significance of the Study.....	7
Conclusion	8
CHAPTER II- LITERATURE REVIEW	9
Introduction.....	9
Affective Factors in Language Learning	9
Definition of Anxiety.....	10
Trait Anxiety, State Anxiety and Situation-specific Anxiety	11
Foreign Language Anxiety.....	11
Examining How Anxiety Affects Language Learning and Performance	13
Measuring Anxiety	16
Components of Foreign Language Anxiety.....	17
Communication apprehension	17
Test anxiety.....	18
Fear of negative evaluation	18
Related Studies on Sources of Anxiety.....	19

Past Language Learning Experiences	23
Teaching Methodology.....	26
Learning English as a Foreign Language in Turkey.....	27
Group Dynamics.....	30
Teacher Factor	31
Peer Factor	33
Conclusion	35
CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	36
Introduction.....	36
Setting and Participants	36
Instruments.....	38
Section I: Demographic Background Information Questionnaire (DBI)	39
Section II: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).....	40
Section III: Interviews	41
Piloting the Interviews.....	44
Data Collection Procedure.....	44
Data Analysis.....	45
Conclusion	46
CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS	47
Introduction.....	47
Quantitative Data	48
Foreign Language Anxiety of the Participants	48
Responses to specific items.....	50
Data from the Background Questionnaire	53
Descriptive Analysis of the FLCAS.....	53

Differences in Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Participants' Foreign Country Travel Experience.....	55
Differences in Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Students' High School Type	56
Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Participants' Having Had a Native Teacher.....	56
Differences between Anxiety Level and Studying Languages besides English.....	57
Qualitative Data	58
Past feelings and attitudes towards English.....	60
Attitudes towards past English lessons.....	62
The ways students were taught prior to coming to their universities	64
Evaluation of previous English classes	64
Comments on the previous books.....	68
Students experiences with previous teachers and peers	70
Previous teacher influence	70
Students' comments about their peers	73
Evaluation of past and present attitudes towards English.....	74
Conclusion	76
CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION.....	77
Introduction.....	77
Discussion of the Findings	78
Foreign Language Anxiety Level	78
Influence of Demographic Background Factors	80
Similarities and Differences between High and Low Anxiety Learners' Past Language Learning Experiences.....	83

Past feelings and attitudes towards learning English	83
Attitudes towards past English lessons.....	84
Evaluation of the previous English courses	85
Evaluation of previous teaching style of the instructor.....	87
Previous teacher and peer influence	88
Evaluation of past and present attitudes towards English.....	89
Pedagogical Implications of the Study.....	90
Limitations of the Study	92
Suggestions for Further Research	93
Conclusion	94
REFERENCES	96
APPENDICES	102
APPENDIX A- Questionnaire for Background Information	102
APPENDIX B- Genel Bilgi Formu.....	104
APPENDIX C- FLCAS Questionnaire.....	106
APPENDIX D- FLCAS Anketi	108
APPENDIX E- Participants' FLCAS Mean Scores	110
APPENDIX F- Informed Consent Form	113
APPENDIX G- Thesis Interview Questions.....	114
APPENDIX H- Tez Görüşme Soruları.....	115
APPENDIX I- Sample of Interview Transcription	116
APPENDIX J- Öğrenciyle Yapılan Bir Görüşme Örneği.....	118

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 -Detailed information about interviewed participants	38
Table 2 - Demographic Background Characteristics of the Participants	40
Table 3 - Overall anxiety levels of each university	49
Table 4 - Description of the anxiety level of participants.....	49
Table 5 - Distribution of the FLCAS values and their descriptions	50
Table 6 - The highest mean scores of the FLCAS questionnaire	52
Table 7 - The lowest mean scores of the FLCAS questionnaire	53
Table 8 - Descriptive statistics of FLCAS scores summarized by proficiency levels ..	54
Table 9 - Foreign country travel experience	55
Table 10 - Descriptive statistics for foreign language anxiety and high school type ...	56
Table 11 - Native teacher factor	57
Table 12 - Previous experience with another foreign language	58
Table 13 - Participants' background data	59

CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION

Introduction

As most English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers, students and researchers are aware, learning a second language is a complex process. It involves the acquisition of vocabulary and grammar structures, the development of communication skills, and an awareness of culture. Although some students excel at learning a second language, others may find the process threatening and may experience extensive nervousness in the language classroom. These learners may be good at other courses, such as math, physics or history, but when it comes to learning a second or foreign language, they claim to have a “mental block” against it (Horwitz, et al., 1991).

Over the past twenty years, researchers have been investigating the anxiety that students experience in their foreign or second language classrooms; however, due to the complex nature of language learning, Horwitz and Young (1991b) note that “exactly how anxiety impedes language learning has not yet been resolved” (p. 177). In a close review of the literature on anxiety, some of the potential sources of language anxiety are found to be associated with the learner, the teacher, and the instructional practices. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) state that language anxiety occurs only after students are exposed to several experiences with the second language context. If these experiences are negative, foreign language anxiety may begin to develop. They further state that as negative experiences persist, foreign language anxiety may become a regular occurrence and the student will begin to expect to be nervous and ultimately to perform poorly.

The initial inspiration for this research stems from my own personal experiences that I had when I was a student. The successes and challenges I encountered while learning a second language prompted me to pursue this research.

Thus, the aim of the study is to look into the past language learning experiences of EFL students, to investigate the extent of their foreign language anxiety, and ultimately explore the nature of the relationship between the two.

Background of the Study

“French classes were very, very stressful for me, because I didn’t speak well. It was the most traumatic experience I’ve ever had. I’d rather be in the prison camp than speak a foreign language” (Price, 1991).

“Whenever I am called upon to speak English, I am very anxious and can feel my speedy heart rate” (Huang, 2005, p. 1).

The statements above were uttered by students who experienced similar negative reactions to language classes. Considering the voices of the many students experiencing these or similar emotions, one may claim that learning a foreign language is one of the most complex processes that students experience in school life. The process of language learning can be very stressful at times because learning a language is “a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition,” one that “directly threatens an individual’s self-concept and world view” (Guiora, 1983, cited in Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986 p. 125). Students especially experience some degree of frustration when they attempt to speak in a language in which they are not fully proficient. Moreover, when they do not understand complex messages in the foreign language, they feel distressed, and that discomfort may reveal itself as stuttering, trembling, forgetting words and phrases just learned or simply refusing to speak and remaining silent (Horwitz et al., 1991). Therefore, within the context of language learning some students may experience mental blocks and anxiety in a classroom setting.

Foreign language anxiety has been the object of interest for many researchers over the past twenty years. However, it is not always clear how foreign language

anxiety comes into being. Ehrman (1996) maintains that it is difficult to describe language anxiety in one simple sentence, as it arises from many kinds of sources. Language anxiety involves several factors that affect language learning, such as negative self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom settings (Horwitz, et al., 1986). To recognize foreign language anxiety in a broader context of research, MacIntyre & Gardner (1991b) describe language anxiety as a form of situational anxiety experienced in the well-defined situation of the foreign language classroom. Horwitz and Young (1991a) view language anxiety as a particular form of anxiety because there is something unique in the language learning process which makes learners nervous and anxious. This may stem from personality variables, students' learning beliefs, inadequate language skills, and previous negative experiences with the target language.

Over the past several years, researchers have found that anxiety plays a crucial role in success or failure in the foreign language classroom (Ganschow, et al., 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Kitano, 2001; Oxford, 1999). Anxiety can be divided into two types depending on its effects on learning and performance: “facilitating” and “debilitating” (Scovel, 1991), or what Oxford (1999) calls “helpful” or “harmful” anxiety. Facilitating anxiety produces positive effects on students' performance and does not hinder language learning. In contrast, debilitating anxiety impedes successful learning. Debilitating anxiety harms students' performance in many ways, such as reducing participation in the classroom and breeding negative attitudes and beliefs towards language learning. Although language anxiety is sometimes viewed as beneficial for learning, many researchers agree that the harmful effects of anxiety are much more dominant than its useful effects (Horwitz, 2001; Yan & Horwitz, 2008).

Since foreign language anxiety has a predominantly negative effect on language learning, it is generally considered necessary to reduce it. In reducing language anxiety, identifying the potential sources should be the first step. Young (1991) stated that some classroom activities that center primarily on having to speak in the target language in front of a group have been found to be the most anxiety provoking. For instance, according to Koch and Terrel, (1991) dialogues and skits are some oral activities cited by students as being stressful. Young (1990) found that more than 68% percent of her subjects reported feeling more comfortable when they did not have to get in front of the class to speak. The kind of anxiety students experience, especially in relation to various kinds of L2 activities that the learners perform in the classroom, have been described as stemming from the three possible sources of foreign language anxiety (Horwitz et al., (1986): 1) communication apprehension; 2) fear of negative social evaluation; and 3) test anxiety. These three sources, according to Horwitz et al. (1986), are seen as having a deleterious effect on second language acquisition.

On the other hand, Wörde (2003) points out that anxiety may also originate depending on the learners' negative experiences of foreign language learning. According to Ginsburg and Oppen (1969) educators need to make use of the learning experiences that students bring into the classroom in order to tailor educational experiences to meet students' needs (cited in Cota, 1997). An inability to speak another language does not necessarily stem from laziness or unwillingness, it could be due to bad past learning experiences. Language learning may be associated with long list of words, endless grammar exercises and lots of repetition. Attempts at speaking the language may have been ridiculed and mocked. Such negative experiences can cause feelings of inadequacy and anxiety.

Tse (2000) states that there are a wide variety of factors that shape students' foreign language learning experiences. These can include opinions about teachers, views of instructional activities and approaches, attitudes towards peers and cultural background of the students. She further notes that students' opinions and attitudes toward specific classroom activities or teacher-student interaction are often linked to the students' success or failure in language learning. According to a survey conducted by Lin and Warden (1998), most of the participating Taiwanese students had either fearful or unpleasant feelings about their past English learning experiences. In the study, researchers asked the students the reasons for their fear by looking back at their English learning history and the answers fell into four main categories: 1) afraid of being laughed at by others due to inaccurate pronunciation; 2) fear of examinations; 3) the ways classes were taught in the past; and 4) physical punishment. Therefore, the students' language learning experiences in junior and high school were shown to have a negative influence on Taiwanese University students' English learning.

Students clearly come away from their language learning experiences with certain attitudes and perceptions that differ from those with which they began. These views are, as Gardner (1991) pointed out, the result of prior experiences and beliefs and not solely the product of the present classroom environment.

Statement of the Problem

Over the last twenty years, much attention has been given to the relationship between language learning and anxiety, and its impact on the learning process. Specifically, it has been acknowledged that language anxiety limits students'

performance and has a negative effect on language learning (Aydın & Zengin, 2008; Yan & Horwitz, 2008 ; Horwitz, et al., 1991; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clement, 1997). In addition to investigating the negative relationship between anxiety and language learning, many researchers have also examined the potential sources of foreign language anxiety in second language learning (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Price, 1991; Young, 1991). The findings of all studies have provided useful information about the sources and effects of language anxiety. However, the extent to which particular past language learning experiences have an impact on anxiety has not yet been fully explored. Hence, this study intends to investigate the past language learning experiences of EFL students, the extent of their foreign language anxiety, and to explore the connections and patterns that emerge between the two.

Like other non-native speakers of English, many Turkish EFL learners also express their inability to speak or write in a second/foreign language. Throughout my teaching experience, I have observed that despite the same opportunities given in a classroom, some students are less likely to respond to questions while others are eager to participate in lessons, apparently without fear of making mistakes. Some of my students express their concern about their poor performance by stating openly that they experience anxiety and nervousness when they attempt to speak in a foreign language. According to Young (1992), the high levels of anxiety that some students experience are a product of environment and negative experiences, and not an inherent state. Similarly, many of my students express the belief that because of their past language learning experiences, such as inadequate teaching instruction or an instructor's behavior in high school, they feel distressed and anxious. Thus, it is necessary to understand in what ways the language learning experiences of university students

might be affecting their current attitudes and feelings, in order to help those learners overcome their anxiety and even, perhaps, improve their academic achievement. Overall, this study attempts to explore the relationship between past language learning experiences and language anxiety.

Research Questions

This study attempts to address the following research questions:

1. What is the foreign language anxiety level of Turkish university preparatory students?
2. To what extent do language learning background factors affect foreign language anxiety?
3. What are the similarities and differences between high and low anxiety learners' past language learning experiences?

Significance of the Study

Due to the lack of research in the field of foreign language teaching concerning the relationship between the past language learning experiences of EFL students and their levels of foreign language anxiety, the results of the study may contribute to this literature by drawing educators' attention to foreign language anxiety and determining the impact of previous language learning experiences on learners' current attitudes and behaviors. With the help of this study, educators can acknowledge that students' anxiety may not only stem from their current teaching and learning contexts, but also find its roots from within the learners' past language learning experiences, such as inappropriate methodologies or attitudes of the instructor.

At the local level, by providing more information about the relationship between previous language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety, the results of the study may help teachers to have a better understanding of the nature of

students' anxiety before labeling them as successful or unsuccessful. The results of this study may guide educators in creating classrooms that minimize student anxiety reactions. The study and its results might also suggest better ways of teaching methods and techniques which will help the students feel more comfortable.

Conclusion

In this chapter, an overview of the literature on foreign language anxiety and past language learning experiences has been provided. The statement of the problem, research questions and significance of the study have also been presented. In the second chapter, the relevant literature is reviewed in more detail. In the third chapter, the methodology of the study is explained. In the fourth chapter, the results of the study are presented, and in the last chapter, conclusions are drawn from the data in the light of the literature.

CHAPTER II- LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This study aims to investigate the relationship between foreign language anxiety and past language learning experiences. This chapter focuses on selected literature related to the topic of the study. In the first section the definition and types of anxiety will be reviewed. In the second section effects and components of foreign language anxiety will be examined. The third section will present studies on the possible sources of foreign language anxiety. The subsequent section will discuss past language learning experiences. Then, possible factors that might have an impact on past language learning experiences will be covered.

Affective Factors in Language Learning

Why is it that some students succeed while others fail in their attempt to learn a language? It seems obvious that learning a second/ foreign language is a complex process which develops under a diverse set of conditions. Research has identified two types of factors affecting the process of second language acquisition: cognitive and affective. The cognitive component refers to the stable characteristics of learners such as aptitude, intelligence, and certain cognitive style characteristics; on the other hand, affective variable describes individual characteristics relating to factors such as attitude, motivation, and language-related anxieties. Both factors are important in the process of second language learning but affective factors are considered to be more influential than cognitive factors (Gardner, MacIntyre, & Lysynchuk, 1990). Arnold and Brown (2000) state that the term “affect” can be considered broadly as meaning the emotions, feelings, moods, or attitudes of people. The way in which affect

interacts with learning is emphasized by Ehrman (1996):

... the affective dimension affects how efficiently students can use what they have. For example, strong motivation tends to help students marshal their assets and skills, whereas low-motivation or intense anxiety interferes with their ability to use their skills and abilities (p.138).

Many studies have been conducted to investigate affective factors (Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 1995; Oxford, 2000). Among these affective variables, learner anxiety has come to be recognized as an important area of study because of the negative consequences it can have on student achievement. This study focuses on language anxiety and the past language learning experiences of university students. In this review, firstly a brief definition of anxiety will be given and then the types of anxiety and its relationship to performance will be presented.

Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety has been studied by psychologists for over seventy years. Freud (1936) defined anxiety as an unpleasant emotional state arising from a unique combination of phenomenological and physiological qualities (cited in Truitt, 1995, p. 9). He asserted that if a person feels anxious, it is the ego's reaction to threats from within, from the id or the superego, whereas fear is the ego's reaction to external threats. Scovel (1991) defines anxiety as "a state of apprehension, a vague fear" (p. 18). It is believed that "anxiety, fear, and even anger produce similar physiological responses activating adrenal medulla, which can secrete the heartbeat raising hormones of adrenaline and non-adrenaline" (Koch & Terrel, 1991, p. 110). According to these definitions, anxiety is a kind of fear that arouses unpleasant emotions in the individual. Studies have revealed that there is a consistent relationship between anxiety and language learning. For example, in the process of language learning when a person encounters a task

which is challenging and threatening, he/she may feel inadequate to performing the particular task; therefore this feeling of inefficiency may create an atmosphere of panic, fear, and other unpleasant feelings which are psychologically and physiologically associated with anxiety. As a result, failure in language learning may become inevitable for the language learner.

Trait Anxiety, State Anxiety and Situation-specific Anxiety

Psychologists describe three categories of anxiety: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Although there seems to be no clear distinction between these three categories, the differences can roughly be identified on a continuum from stability to transience (Zheng, 2008). Trait anxiety is an inherent, long term, personality characteristic (Scovel, 1991). People with high levels of trait anxiety are generally nervous people who lack emotional stability (Goldberg, 1983 cited in Young, 1991). State anxiety is a transient anxiety which is “a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test” (Spielberger, 1983 cited in Horwitz, 2001, p. 113). The third category, situation-specific anxiety, falls in the middle of the continuum, representing the probability of becoming anxious in a particular type of situation (Zheng, 2008). Situation-specific anxiety is like trait anxiety, except applied only to a single context or situation such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation. Thus, it is stable over time but not necessarily consistent across situations (MacIntyre, 1999). Examples of situation-specific anxiety can be test anxiety, math anxiety, and language anxiety. Each situation is experienced differently and a person may be nervous in one situation but not in others.

Foreign Language Anxiety

According to Young (1991), language anxiety is a complicated psychological phenomenon related to language learning. Since it is a complex phenomenon, it is

difficult to describe. Horwitz et al. (1991) note that “research has neither adequately defined foreign language anxiety nor described its effects on foreign language learning” (p. 125). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) describe language anxiety as a form of situational anxiety experienced in the well-defined situation of the foreign language classroom. This means that it is difficult to predict who will experience language anxiety. For example, students who experience high level anxiety while learning a second language may not feel nervous in other courses. Horwitz and Young (1991b) note that there are two general approaches to identifying language anxiety. The first approach views foreign language anxiety as a basic human emotion that may be brought on by numerous combinations of situational factors. It is like the transfer of other forms of anxiety, such as test anxiety and communication apprehension. It is normal to feel anxious for a test anxious student because he feels constantly tested. Similarly, when asked to speak in the target language, a shy student may not feel comfortable (Horwitz & Young, 1991b).

The second approach to identifying foreign language anxiety suggests that anxiety experienced in the course of learning a foreign language is specific and unique. From this perspective, language anxiety can be defined as the worry and emotional reaction aroused when learning a second language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Horwitz et al. (1986) claimed that language anxiety is unique because it involves learner’s self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning. Students may find language learning threatening especially when they cannot convey complex messages in the foreign language, when they display a lack of confidence or freeze up in role activities, and when they forget previously learned vocabulary or grammar.

Language anxiety can be distinguished from other types of anxiety with regard to its performance. A negative correlation exists between language anxiety and achievement; however, this correlation cannot be maintained with other types of anxiety. In other words, while foreign language anxiety does correlate with lower language performance, other types of anxiety such as trait and state anxiety have not been shown to do so. For example, MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between language anxiety and other anxieties. In their study, eleven scales were factor analyzed. Two orthogonal factors were found which were labeled as General Anxiety and Communicative Anxiety. General Anxiety included scales of Trait, State and Test anxiety while Communicative Anxiety included French class, French use, English class, and Audience Anxieties. The factor analysis suggested that foreign language anxiety is a part of Communicative Anxiety. This study has shown that there is a clear relationship foreign language anxiety and foreign language proficiency. While Communicative Anxiety showed a significant negative effect on the learning of French vocabulary by native speakers of English, General Anxiety did not show a relationship with French vocabulary learning or production.

Examining How Anxiety Affects Language Learning and Performance

Although many researchers reported a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000; Price, 1991), early research on language anxiety “provided mixed and confusing results” (Scovel, 1991, p. 17). It can be seen that in the language learning process anxiety has different roles based on its effects on learning and/ or performance. Scovel (1991) claimed that these ambiguous experimental results can be resolved if a distinction between facilitating and debilitating anxiety is drawn.

Facilitating anxiety is defined as anxiety that improves performance whereas debilitating anxiety hinders performance. Positive anxiety motivates, helps, energizes and facilitates the learner, while the negative anxiety creates doubts, encourages the learner to run away and debilitates. The factor of task difficulty has been argued to affect learners' developing of a facilitating or a debilitating anxiety. MacIntyre (1995) suggests that only when a given task is relatively simple, could foreign language anxiety be facilitating, but once the task becomes difficult, anxiety may impede performance in language learning. Therefore, anxiety could be either useful or harmful, depending on the task difficulty.

The effects of language anxiety can also be explained with reference to the cognitive consequences of anxiety arousal (MacIntyre, 1995). Tobias (1986) presents a model of cognitive effects of anxiety on learning from instruction. According to him, language anxiety may occur at three stages of learning: input, processing, and output. Anxiety can affect the ability of an individual to process information at each of the three stages. These three stages may allow us to point out why language learners make mistakes or what kind of difficulties they encounter while using the target language. This can provide an insight to help understand anxiety experienced in the target language and may ultimately help to reduce its effects. Tobias (1986) noted that it is difficult to make sharp distinctions among these three stages, such as specifying the point at which one stops and the next one starts. However, this model can explain the effects of language anxiety on cognitive processing.

Anxiety at the input stage refers to the apprehension caused by learners' first experience of new information in the target language. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994b) state that input anxiety represents the fear experienced by language learners when they are presented with a new word, phrase, or sentence. Language learners often develop

mental blocks that hinder the acquisition of language. For example, in second language learning, if the language is spoken too quickly or if written material is too complex for the learner to understand, difficulties may arise. Krashen (1985) considered input as a basic stage of language learning, and therefore developed his “Input Hypothesis,” in which he asserted that “speech cannot be taught directly but emerges on its own as a result of building competence via comprehensible input” (p.3). He later claimed that the affective filter acts as a barrier to target language input. According to Krashen (1985), the higher the filter is, the lower the ability to acquire language.

The processing stage involves the cognitive operations performed on the subject matter: organization, storage and the assimilation of the material (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b). At the processing stage, learners first need to understand the new knowledge and then learning occurs as new words are given meaning. In this stage, anxiety would tend to be disadvantageous to the memory. Tobias (1986) argues that anxiety impairs cognitive processing on tasks that are more difficult, more heavily reliant on memory and more poorly organized.

The output stage involves the production of previously learned material. Anxiety is more likely to appear in this stage, which has generally been regarded as the most important indicator of students’ learning by the majority of teachers. A good example of interference can be seen at this stage in the cases of students who report “freezing” (Horwitz et al., 1986) on tests even though they have already learned the required information. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) affirm that performance at the output stage can be measured by test scores and verbal production.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b), by applying Tobias’ model to language learning conducted a study to investigate the effects of “communicative anxiety” on input, processing and output in language learning. They observed significant

correlations between language anxiety and second language performance at both the input and output stages. This suggests that language anxiety affects both learning and production of vocabulary in French.

However, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994a) note that Tobias' model should not be taken to mean that learning occurs in separate sections. All three stages of anxiety have been found to be somewhat interdependent, which means that each stage depends on the successful completion of the previous one. For example, difficulty in performance at the output stage may be caused by problems created at the input or processing stages. Therefore, the negative correlation between language anxiety and second language production might be a sign of problems occurring at any of the three stages.

Measuring Anxiety

Anxiety is usually measured by three major methods. The first, behavioral observation, measures the actions of a subject, such as fidgeting or stuttering in order to estimate the amount of anxiety that a person is experiencing. The second, physiological tests, measure the physiological symptoms, such as the heart rate and blood pressure of a person. The third method, self-reports, measures the feelings and reactions of the individual by asking the participant to report on their anxiety, through a questionnaire or interview. Of these three measures, self-reports are easier to use and they are considered more precise in focusing on a specific affective construct like anxiety (Scovel, 1991). Therefore, self-report tests are used most often in measuring foreign language anxiety. A more current measurement instrument specific to foreign language anxiety is the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). The FLCAS is a 33-item paper-and-pencil questionnaire aimed at measuring levels of anxiety experienced by foreign

language students. It consists of statements that cover communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the foreign language classroom. This scale has been used in many studies of anxiety in foreign language learning and found to be a highly reliable measure (Aida, 1994; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Wörde, 1998; Young, 1986). The FLCAS will be used in the present study, and it is described in more detail in Chapter 3.

Components of Foreign Language Anxiety

Researchers have long been aware that anxiety is often associated with language learning. Since foreign language anxiety is a major obstacle to second language learning, it is important to identify its sources. As noted earlier, Horwitz et al. (1986) suggested that foreign language anxiety comprises three components: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The description of these components is important as they may provide insights to comprehend the sources or causes of foreign language anxiety.

Communication apprehension

Communication apprehension, which generally refers to a type of anxiety experienced in interpersonal communicative settings, has been frequently examined in the context of second language learning. Horwitz et al. (1991) defined communication apprehension as “a type of shyness along with fear of or anxiety about communicating with people” (p. 31). They further noted that communication apprehension shows itself when learners are having difficulty in speaking in dyads or groups (oral communication), or in listening to or learning a spoken message (receiver anxiety). Therefore, oral communication consists of two components: listening and speaking. Speaking is anxiety-provoking in foreign language activities. Most students are particularly anxious when they have to speak a foreign language in front of their class.

As to listening, it is a problem for language learners, too. Foreign language learners usually have difficulty understanding others. Because of the feeling of inability to speak, communication apprehension emerges.

Test anxiety

Test anxiety also plays a large role in foreign language anxiety. Test anxiety refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure (Horwitz et al. 1991). It generally occurs when students have experienced poor performance on previous tests. Many students are observed to be test-anxious since tests and quizzes are frequent in language classrooms. Oral tests, obviously, have the potential of provoking both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously in susceptible students (Horwitz et al., 1991). Although it overlaps with other constructs of foreign language anxiety, test anxiety is relevant to academic context where performance evaluation is frequent. According to Huang (2005), the causes of provoking test anxiety might derive from the educational system. Huang (2005) states that, in the Taiwanese context, since the majority of students focus on solely the scores they get from quizzes or tests in language classes, students seem to feel anxious and nervous easily.

Fear of negative evaluation

The third component of anxiety is fear of negative evaluation that can be defined as “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively” (Horwitz, 1991, p. 31). Anxious students may be negatively affected not only by their teacher’s evaluation but also their peer’s evaluation. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) propose that fear of negative evaluation is closely related to communication apprehension. When students are unsure of what they are saying, fear of negative evaluation occurs and they may

doubt their ability to make a proper impression. Fear of negative evaluation mostly exists in sensitive students since they are doubtful about their abilities in language classes. Fear of receiving negative evaluation is an important factor in language classroom environment that causes anxiety. Students with a fear of negative evaluation might sit passively in the classroom, refraining from classroom activities.

Horwitz et al. (1991) note that language anxiety consists not simply of these components because foreign language anxiety is 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. 31). In order to reduce foreign language anxiety, it is important to determine what other factors may lead to it.

Related Studies on Sources of Anxiety

In relation to the three components of anxiety mentioned above, Young (1991) noted that language anxiety may have many sources; “some are associated with the learner, some with the teacher, and some with the instructional practice” (p. 427). Based on a review of the literature, Young (1991) identified six potential sources of anxiety: 1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3) instructor beliefs about English teaching; 4) instructor-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedures; and 6) language testing. Young also added that “research in the area of anxiety as it relates to second or foreign language learning and performance was scattered and inconclusive” (p. 426).

Using Young’s (1991) six sources of language anxiety as a theoretical guideline for data collection and analysis, Ohata (2005b) aimed at exploring the nature of language anxiety from the perspective of five Japanese learners of English, by using a qualitative interview format. By contrasting and comparing the results obtained from

his study with the six potential sources of language anxiety summarized by Young (1991), he identified both similarities and differences among them. The types of anxiety that fit with the proposed sources by Young (1991) were all considered to be personal and interpersonal anxieties, including fear of negative evaluation, and lack of self-confidence in language proficiency, the subject matter and competitive situations. There were also other potential sources that did not fit into any of Young's six categorizations. These were: culturally fixed beliefs about learning and its procedures, different attitudes or motivation toward language learning, personality differences, perceived levels of English proficiency and age differences.

Bailey (1983) studied language learners' diaries and reported that competitiveness can lead to anxiety when language learners compare themselves to others or to an idealized image. Moreover, several researchers have maintained that the heavy ego-involvement in language learning tends to increase anxiety levels (Onwuegbuzie, et al., 2000). These studies are significant because they reveal why high-anxious students tend to be more afraid of negative evaluation than their low-anxiety peers.

Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Dailey (2000) conducted an exploratory study with 210 university students to determine the demographic self-perception factors that are predictors of foreign language anxiety. The instruments used in their study were the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, the Self-Perception Profile for College Students, the Social Interdependence Scale, the Study Habits Inventory, and a Background Demographic Form. Participants were given the questionnaire packet and were instructed to complete them at home within two weeks. The study revealed that age, academic achievement, prior history of visiting foreign countries, prior high school experience with foreign languages, expected overall grade average, perceived

scholastic competence, and perceived self-worth, were all related to the prediction of foreign language anxiety. An interesting finding was that the variable of visiting foreign countries was a predictor of low foreign language anxiety. This result was similar to Aida's (1994) study. Aida (1994) investigated the relationship between foreign language anxiety and students' performance by using the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). She found negative correlations both between the final grade and level of anxiety and the final grade and gender, suggesting that more anxious students and male students are likely to receive lower grades than less anxious students and female students. In addition, the result of the study indicated that students who are required to take Japanese, and who have never been to Japan, are likely to have higher levels of anxiety. Thus, it seems obvious that direct exposure to countries where the target language is spoken helps students to reduce their levels of foreign language anxiety.

Horwitz (1988) researched language learning beliefs of university students and reported that students have been exposed to many common and contradictory beliefs about language learning. These preconceived beliefs, such as, some people are unable to learn any foreign language, might influence a learner's effectiveness in the classroom and contribute to anxiety reactions in language learning. For example, an unsuccessful learning experience can easily lead a student to think that he/she is a failure in language learning and that language learning requires special ability. Thus, this belief would surely cause anxiety when students attempt to learn foreign language.

Price (1991) examined language anxiety from the students' perspective by conducting interviews with ten students who were identified as highly anxious. Students were asked to describe both present and past foreign language courses. She concluded from her case studies that the proficiency level of foreign language classes,

students' language aptitude, certain personality variables such as perfectionism and fear of public speaking, and stressful classroom experiences are all possible causes of anxiety. It is interesting to note that stressful classroom experiences emerged as an important factor in her study. In the interviews several students talked about their painful memories of being ridiculed by other students. However, she stated that the role played by experience is difficult to evaluate from these interviews, as the backgrounds and classroom experiences of the interviewees were quite varied.

Similarly, Wörde (2003) investigated the sources of language anxiety from the students' perspectives. The primary goal of this research was to identify those factors that may contribute to anxiety. The participants mentioned numerous and various sources of anxiety, such as speaking activities, inability to comprehend, negative classroom experiences, and fear of negative evaluation, methodology, pedagogical practices, and the teachers themselves. The interviews revealed extremely negative experiences from their language classes.

Aydın and Zengin (2008) stated that very limited studies on language anxiety have been done in Turkey. Aydın (2001) investigated the main causes of foreign language anxiety in speaking and writing classes. The findings of the study supported other findings stated in the literature. She found that there are three main reasons why students feel anxious: students' personal concerns, the teacher's manner in the classroom, and the teaching procedures in speaking and writing.

As is apparent from these results, language anxiety involves personal and environmental factors and they all play a crucial role in second language learning. According to Heron (2006), the "roots of anxiety may be found in the repressed distress of the past- the personal hurt that has been buried and denied so that the individual can survive emotionally" (p. 60). Because language anxiety is a distinct

form of anxiety felt in response to language learning, and because it can have a negative effect on language learning, focusing on the actual source of anxiety, which can be the past language learning experiences, could prove an effective means of reducing foreign language anxiety.

Past Language Learning Experiences

The effects of prior language experiences on language achievement have been considered by many second language researchers; however, the effects of past language learning experiences on language anxiety have been neglected. Learning experiences that the students bring in to the classroom should be taken into account because the student is the beginning point, the center, and the end of the educational process (Cota, 1997). Bailey (1983) stated that learner experiences in a language lesson are as important as the teaching method, the sequence of presentation, or the instructional materials. According to Wittrock (1977), “Learners, especially their prior experiences, backgrounds, abilities, are crucially important in the equations for predicting learning” (cited in Campbell, 2000, p. 219).

Shi (1998) investigated the learning and teaching experiences of English students and teachers in China. Forty-two students and seventeen teachers were chosen as survey participants. They were selected from the Foreign Languages Department of a medical university in southwest China. A teacher survey and student survey were conducted to examine learning and teaching experiences in English language classes and to provide suggestions based on the study for future improvement. The learning experiences of university students suggested that most learners were not satisfied with the English education they had received when they were in high school. They reported that English teaching was based on rote memorization and linguistic rules that did not

allow participation. Their comments on textbooks, teaching approach and evaluation also suggested that these were designed mainly for language forms and rules. The study also showed that English instruction in practice tended to make the students passive in learning and ignorant of learning strategies and learning autonomy. Students were aware of their weak abilities in speaking English and reported that they would prefer a classroom which allowed student interaction and engagement. Drawing on this result, the researcher concluded that the teachers' professional development and a pedagogy that meets the natural ways of learning are two key issues in the further improvement of English education in China.

Chambers (1998) in his longitudinal study on the motivational perspectives of secondary school pupils learning German, presented some of his findings on pupils' perceptions of their in-school foreign language learning experiences. The study showed that pupils are in agreement as to the most important factors contributing to a positive view of their foreign language experience: the teacher, the textbook, the equipment, and teacher-made materials. Of all the factors which may contribute to a pupil's positive or negative evaluation of the subject, the teacher comes out on top for all students. From the interview comments and responses to open-ended questions relating to a range of aspects of the learning experience, the teacher is named as the reason, for example, for why they like/dislike German/English, and why their learning experience has improved/deteriorated. The teaching methodology and the textbooks are another two important factors contributing to pupil's positive or negative feelings about learning German/English and "in-school" issues. The study showed that the teacher carries an enormous responsibility in the students' language learning process.

Foscolos (2000) examined ESL students' perceptions about their educational experiences in high school. The researcher looked into the school lives of these

students and how ESL students perceive what is happening as they experience the phenomenon of schooling. The researcher selected ten participants who volunteered to participate in the study and share their high school learning experiences in a large urban senior high school. The results suggested that the factors of instructional support, student-student relationships, socio-cultural influences and personal motivation and learning environment directly influenced the students' English language proficiency and thus the quality of their education.

Zheng (2008) asserts that language learning experiences, especially, under certain circumstances, can be traumatic. Such unpleasant experiences may harm one's self-esteem or self-confidence as a learner. MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) presented a Model of the Role of Anxiety in Language Learning which described the ways in which language anxiety is likely to develop. According to this model there are three stages of language learning: beginner, post-beginner and later. At the beginner stage learners do not begin the language learning experience with language anxiety. At the beginning of the language learning process, learners may come across some difficulties such as comprehension, grammar, and other areas. If they experience anxiety, it is most likely state anxiety. After getting used to the second language context, the student develops emotions and attitudes specific to the situation, learning the new language. If the student's experiences are negative, then anxiety will start to develop at the post-beginner stage. At this stage a learner may expect to be nervous and perform poorly in the language. At the later stage, if the negative experiences continue to happen, the learner will experience increased anxiety. Young (1991) states that if MacIntyre and Gardner's theory is correct, this suggests that the problem is not really related to the student but in the language learning experience, i.e., the methodology.

From the studies mentioned above, teachers, teaching materials, teaching methodology, and peers are highly influential in shaping the language learning experiences of students. Therefore, the next section deals with these factors as they may contribute to language learning experiences of students' either positively or negatively.

Teaching Methodology

In recent years, much attention has been given to the impact of anxiety on student achievement in the foreign language classroom, and teaching techniques and methods have been developed for the purpose of alleviating anxiety in order to maximize learning. Yet, Arnold and Brown (2000) state that some teaching methods that are used in foreign language teaching can actually contribute to anxiety. For example, the Audio-Lingual Method and the Grammar Translation Method were criticized and rejected by many educators since these methods were seen to have a negative effect on language learning. Koch and Terrel (1991) stated that the teaching techniques associated with the grammar-translation and audio-lingualism can "foster negative attitudes toward the target language and language learning in general" (p. 109). The contents of these methods were seen to be restricted to the learning and the teaching of the language itself. Long (2001) states that although these traditional methods of teaching were found to obstruct learning, common classroom practices, such as grammar and vocabulary explanations, display questions, fill in the blanks exercises, dialog memorization, drills and error correction are still in the syllabi of many language teaching programs.

Many instructional methods have been presented, such as The Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, or The Natural Approach, which

emphasize a low anxiety environment; however, different activities in the classroom procedure, particularly those that demand that students speak in front of the whole class, have been found to be the most anxiety provoking (Horwitz, 2001, p. 118). For example, Koch and Terrel (1991) conducted a study to determine which parts of the Natural Approach result in positive attitudes and which, if any, create anxiety in the classroom. They collected questionnaire responses from 119 foreign language students who were enrolled at the University of California, Irvine. They found that more than one-half of their subjects reported that giving a presentation in the class, or participating in oral skits and discussions in large groups are the most anxiety-producing activities. However, in the study more than half of the students reported that they were delighted to have a language class that did not emphasize grammar because their past experiences with grammar instruction had been negative. This suggests that methods like the Natural Approach may seek to reduce anxiety and promote communicative competence; however, if care is not taken to provide an emotionally safe atmosphere, the chance of the development of anxiety-provoking situations can increase greatly. Crandall (2000) suggests one of the most powerful ways to cope with debilitating anxiety is to include cooperative learning as a classroom procedure because cooperative learning creates a more positive affective climate in the classroom, while it also individualizes instruction and raises student motivation.

Because previous language learning experiences are influenced by learners' educational experience, the section below will provide a brief introduction to the situation of EFL learning in Turkey as the context for the present study.

Learning English as a Foreign Language in Turkey

Learning at least one foreign language is compulsory in all secondary schools in Turkey. Kavanoz (2006) states that much effort has been given to promote effective

second language teaching in Turkish education. Considering this, the government is reorganizing curricular programs, teaching methods and techniques, and education-training according to international standards. In 1997, an education reform package was passed, and the syllabi of secondary schools were renewed on the basis of constructivist and learner-centered principles. The government has developed a set of objectives to promote effective language teaching but mainly the aim has been to promote learner-centered teaching so that pupils will be more actively involved in the learning process. However, it is important to note that it is difficult to change the traditional education system of a country all at once; it takes time. Yılmaz (2007) asserted that the most common methods of teaching in the Turkish context focus on rote memorization. The teacher, the textbook and the individual work are all the dominant characteristics of conventional foreign language instruction in Turkey. Teachers are seen as the source of knowledge; therefore, they take all the responsibilities in the classrooms. As a result of this kind of education system, “students are considered passive learners who wait for the teachers to take in knowledge and information” (Kavanoz, 2006, p. 1-2). Therefore, it arouses difficulty for educators to successfully to apply learner-centered teaching into their actual practice.

Additionally, Yılmaz (2007) aimed at identifying the problems of learner-centered education in Turkey and reported that learner-centered instruction is a great challenge both for teachers and students in Turkish secondary schools. It is difficult for teachers to change their approach in teaching since they are used to such traditional methods as lecture, recitation and drills. Students may see learner-centered instruction as a threat because learner-centered instruction encourages self-directed learning and

students may not be able to handle this responsibility even if the teacher employs scaffolding to make students more responsible for their learning.

According to Woods (1994), some problems may occur while implementing learner-centered instruction. He asserts that the stages that students experience when taking responsibility for their own learning are similar to those associated with trauma and grieving. These are shock, denial, strong emotion, resistance and withdrawal, surrender and acceptance, struggle and exploration, return of confidence, and integration and success (cited in Yılmaz, 2007). Teachers need to be aware of these stages to deal with them effectively.

While seeking answers to the obstacles that students face in the implementation of learner-centered instruction in secondary schools, Yılmaz (2007) also asked the views of several teachers. Teachers mentioned that students' language learning experiences, backgrounds, talents, and cultures all play a crucial role while practicing learner-centered instruction. They stated that due to Turkish society's patriarchal structure, which depends on parental and teacher authority, it is difficult to encourage students to participate in discussions both in class and at home. Because of this authoritarian culture and the traditional teaching method, it is possible that students may experience anxiety while speaking and listening, which may lead them to have a negative attitude towards English classes. In addition, the teachers who participated in the study considered the classical teacher-centered and authoritarian educational style to be the most fundamental problem in the Turkish education system.

It should be emphasized that teaching methods and materials in Turkish schools have become more communicative in recent years and this may have an effect on the English learning of students. Since the purpose of this study is to explore the past language learning experiences of university students, the results may also shed

some light on the effectiveness of the teaching methods and materials being practiced in Turkish second language education.

Group Dynamics

Stevick (1980) asserted that in a language course, success depends less on materials, techniques and linguistic analysis, and more on what goes on inside and between the people in the classroom (cited in Dörnyei & Maldare, 2000). Dörnyei and Maldare (2000) state that group processes are essential factors in most learning contexts and are highly influential factors when it comes to successful learning experiences. According to Symonds (1951), “The dynamics of group processes is based essentially on the relation of one person to another and a dynamics of a group process must be an extension of the dynamics of interpersonal relationship” (p. 82). He continues by suggesting that greater learning will take place in the classroom if the learner is able to get his emotional needs satisfied in the classroom. Thus, for maximum learning the teacher should provide an atmosphere to reduce anxiety through constructive learning activities. He also notes that learning takes place in a group that is emotionally free to focus its attention on objective problems. Thus, group-related issues can be considered to have an important effect on L2 learning process since they have been centered at the heart of the affective dimensions. These classroom dynamics include such group properties as structure, composition, cohesiveness, climate, norms, roles and interaction patterns. The teacher and the students affect that environment through their behavior. As Jones and Jones (1995) point out:

It is important to realize that groups, like individuals, have needs that must be met before the group can function effectively. If the classroom group is to function in a supportive, goal-directive manner, teachers must initially

set aside time for activities that enable students to know each other, develop a feeling of being included, and create diverse friendship patterns. Only after these feelings have been developed can a group of students proceed to respond optimally to the learning goals of the classroom (cited in Dörnyei and Maldarez, 2000, p. 156).

Turula (2002) pointed out that classroom dynamics play an important role in influencing students' levels of language anxiety. She noted that some classroom situations make students feel that they are being judged, that they are isolated, and that they lack control. She suggested that the teacher is responsible for creating a friendly learning environment. With an authoritarian, uncompromising teacher students feel isolation and a loss of control, which creates anxiety in the classroom. A classroom environment which is absent of threat provides a trusting environment for students to learn in without the fear of humiliation and intimidation.

Teacher Factor

Although there are a number of factors that contribute to successful outcomes for groups, none is more important than the teacher (Dörnyei and Maldarez, 2000). Many researchers relate language anxiety to instructor-learner interactions (Koch & Terrel, 1991; Price, 1991; Young, 1990). The role of the teacher is crucial in alleviating anxiety, more vital perhaps than a particular methodology. There are ways to build trust into every classroom. Teachers who provide a supportive and understanding environment, who employ non-threatening teaching methods, and who use appealing and relevant topics seem to enhance the foreign language experience. Price (1991) reported that "instructors had played a significant role in the amount of anxiety that each student had experienced in particular classes" (p.106). The teacher's personality, knowledge of the target language, professional qualifications, style of error treatment, and teaching style, along with the attractiveness of the lessons and the

teacher's ability to give clear explanations are among the most important factors that affect the instructor-learner relationship in a language classroom (Turula, 2002).

When you ask someone about the language(s) he/she has learned, it is easily possible to arouse memories of particular teachers. It may be the teacher who first captured their enthusiasm, or the situation might be the opposite. Allwright and Bailey (1991) point out that even young children seem to identify school subjects strongly with the teachers who teach them. If students do not like the teacher, they may find the subject difficult and boring. Although some teachers may affect all their learners with their own enthusiasm, others may fail in creating a positive environment of learning and create anxiety in students. Several research studies have already been conducted in an attempt to explore the role of the teachers in language learning. Young (1991) has noted that some teachers believe the teacher's role is that of a "drill sergeant" instead of a "facilitator" and that there is need to correct students' errors constantly (p. 428). Aida (1994) investigated the effect of teacher's personalities and teaching styles on students' anxiety levels. She found that a teacher's harsh manner of teaching created an atmosphere of terror and caused the students to feel anxious and afraid in the classroom. Based on these studies, there is no doubt that an authoritarian teaching style can create separation in the classroom causing an obstacle to group development (Dörnyei and Maldarez, 2000). If the teacher constantly tries to correct student's errors both verbally and non-verbally, the student, "especially one who has a weak self-concept might say himself or herself something like, Oh, I have made this mistake again. How stupid of me. I'd better keep quiet now" (Puchta, 2000, p. 254).

Peer Factor

Another factor that might have an impact on language learning and anxiety is the peer factor. The language classroom is considered to be an anxiety provoking setting to some learners, as it often involves evaluations from others as well as from the learner him/ herself. In such an environment, being evaluated might serve as a reminder of the learner's current L2 competence in comparison to others' or to idealized images of him/herself as a successful language learner (Ehrman, 1996 cited in Ohata, 2005). In her 1990 study, Young investigated students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. The results of her study revealed that, in a language class, the students felt most anxious when they had to speak in front of their peers. Horwitz (1986) suggests that students find language classrooms threatening because they are often required to communicate in front of their peers in an unfamiliar language and are publicly evaluated while doing so.

Bailey (1983) examined herself while she was taking classes as a doctoral student and she kept a journal in which she wrote about her experiences in language learning. Most importantly, she was surprised to notice that, in her diary, she mostly compared herself to the other students in class. For example, in one of her journal entries she wrote:

..... I hope Marie will eventually like me and think that I am a good language learner, even though I am probably the second lowest in the class right now (next to the man who must pass the ETS test). The girl who has been in France seems to think that she's good for the rest of us, but she didn't do all that well today.....I feel different from many of the students in the class because they have been together for a quarter with the other teacher. They also don't seem very interested in learning French. Today Marie was explaining something and some of the students looked really bored. (Bailey, 1983, p. 75)

Brian Lynch (1979) also recorded his experiences in a college Spanish class in his journal. In his diary, Lynch felt that his fear of public failure was apparently aggravated by the reactions of one of the student. The following entry reveals the type of hostility he experienced in his French class:

One of the tangents we got off onto today actually involved only one student and the teacher, as near as I could tell. At least there were few people who I noticed were looking around bored, annoyed, or laughing at the somewhat ridiculous questions this person tends to come up with regularly. This same person has the annoying (not just to me I believe) habit of exclaiming out loud in a “whiny” tone, “No-oo-o” when someone in the class gives the wrong answer- a tone which seems to say, “How *could* you say *that*!”... I tend to get very nervous and it takes me a few seconds before I can even start to speak, even when it’s a relatively simple task or phrase. I’m obviously very afraid to make a mistake in front of the class- and I always feel very embarrassed about stammering.... (Bailey, 1983 p. 82)

From the journal entries above, it can be seen that students may feel anxious, uncomfortable, and envious because of the perceived differences between themselves and their peers. Peers constitute a kind of language learning environment. Most students face constant struggles in school while attempting to learn a second language. It is highly possible that they may experience rejection and negative sneers from their peers. Therefore, students may become frustrated due to the lack of understanding, and feel a sense of helplessness because of their less-than-successful efforts to learn the new language.

A large number of studies on foreign language anxiety have been conducted in EFL classroom settings. However, until now there seems to have been no empirical study that has examined the relationship between past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety. The present study, therefore, is aimed at investigating

the relationship between past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety in EFL Turkish university students.

Conclusion

This review of the literature presented the definition and types of anxiety. I also reviewed the literature by examining how anxiety affects language learning and performance. The components of foreign language anxiety included communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Additionally, previous research on possible sources of anxiety was illustrated. The chapter also discussed the issue of past language learning experiences and possible factors that may help to determine those experiences. The studies reviewed here reveal that the effect of past language learning experiences should be investigated in greater depth to understand the extent to which students' experiences have an effect on foreign language anxiety. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap in the literature with an attempt to understand the relationship between the past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety of students. The next chapter will cover the methodology used in this study, including participants, instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative and quantitative study is to explore the past language learning experiences of EFL students and to investigate the extent of their foreign language anxiety.

The following research questions were addressed in this study.

1. What is the foreign language anxiety level of Turkish university preparatory students?
2. To what extent do language learning background factors affect foreign language anxiety?
3. What are the similarities and differences between high and low anxiety learners' past language learning experiences?

This chapter introduces the methodology of the present study. The following subsections, which review setting, participants, instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis procedures, explain how this study was conducted.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in two universities: Pamukkale University School of Foreign Languages (PAU SFL) and Bilkent University School of English Language (BUSEL). PAU SFL is a newly founded institution in which it has only been two years since they have started teaching English preparatory classes. BUSEL; however, is a deeply-rooted university, having been established nearly 25 years ago. One obvious difference between these two universities is that PAU is a state institution and is not an English medium university-except for those majoring in the Department of English

Language Teaching, the Department of English Language and Literature, and the Faculty of Medicine. On the other hand, Bilkent is a private university and the medium of instruction of all departments in the university is English. There are several reasons for my interest in conducting this study in these particular types of universities. To begin, I believed that differences might be observed between the two universities in terms of the anxiety levels of the students, since one is an English medium university and the other is not. In addition, because of the diverse backgrounds of the student profile in the two universities, I felt I could obtain rich data. Overall, it seemed that a great amount of knowledge about such students' language learning experiences could be acquired by comparing results from two different universities.

The participants of this study were drawn from among EFL students enrolled in preparatory classes. At these two universities, a total of 285 preparatory students were asked to fill out the questionnaires administered. In order to be able to make generalizations about the foreign language anxiety level of university preparatory class students, and to investigate whether there is any variation in the anxiety level of the students due to their proficiency levels, the study was conducted with students in pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate classes. After the students completed the questionnaires, interviews were conducted with 12 students, six of whom were found to have low level anxiety and six found to have high level anxiety. The overall breakdown of the participants is shown in Tables 1 below.

Pamukkale University			
Proficiency Levels	No of Sts (Questionnaire)	No of Sts (Interview)	
		High	Low
Pre-intermediate	58	1	1
Intermediate	41	1	1
Upper-intermediate	47	1	1
Total	146	3	3
Bilkent University			
Proficiency levels	No of Sts (Questionnaire)	No of Sts (Interview)	
		High	Low
Pre-intermediate	47	1	1
Intermediate	45	1	1
Upper-intermediate	45	1	1
Total	139	3	3

Table 1 -Detailed information about interviewed participants

Instruments

In order to seek answers to the research questions guiding this study, a two phased research design was developed that included both quantitative and qualitative elements. The quantitative part of this study, with the help of questionnaires, focused on the differences in the levels of the students' foreign language anxiety. Whereas the qualitative part, consisting of multiple mini-case studies, attempted to achieve a full understanding of the feelings, thoughts, intentions, and language learning experiences of the focus participants. At the start of this research, I was concerned that giving out questionnaires and conducting interviews with the students in English could be challenging because of their varying English ability levels; therefore, all the instruments were prepared in Turkish to eliminate any miscomprehension problems.

Section I: Demographic Background Information Questionnaire (DBI)

The background information questionnaire was developed by the researcher.

The background questionnaire was used to obtain the following information: gender, proficiency level, high school type, length of previous English study, and previous experience with English speakers. Additional questions were asked, such as whether the participants had ever visited a foreign country before and whether they had studied a foreign language besides English. The demographic background characteristics of the sample participating in the present study are shown in Table 2.

		N	%
Gender	Female	129	45.3
	Male	156	54.7
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
Proficiency level	Pre-intermediate	105	36.6
	Intermediate	88	31.2
	Upper-intermediate	92	32.2
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
Length of Previous English Study	Never	34	11.9
	1-3 years	53	18.6
	4-6 years	54	18.9
	7 and above	144	50.5
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
High School Type	General high school	81	28.4
	Technical high school	8	2.8
	Anatolian high school	92	32.3
	Super high school	41	14.4
	Private school	34	11.9
	Other	29	10.1
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
Native Teacher	Yes	148	51.9
	No	137	48.1
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
Foreign Country Visited	Yes	30	10.5
	No	255	89.5
	<i>Total</i>	285	100
Studying Different Languages	Yes	120	42.1
	No	165	57.9
	<i>Total</i>	285	100

Table 2 - Demographic Background Characteristics of the Participants

Section II: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

The FLCAS was developed by Horwitz et al.(1986) to assess the degree to which a respondent feels anxious in a foreign language classroom based on the construct of foreign language classroom anxiety, which integrates three related anxieties (communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation). The FLCAS consists of 33 items, scored on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from

strongly agree to strongly disagree. These items include 24 positively worded and nine negatively worded items. In the case of negatively worded items (numbers 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32), the values were reversed at the analysis stage. Horwitz et al. (1986) performed a detailed study of the measurement reliability and validity of FLCAS and reported that internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha was 0.93, based on a sample of 108 subjects. In this study, Turkish version of FLCAS (see Appendix D) was used. The FLCAS was translated into Turkish by me by looking at earlier translations that had been made of (Aydin, 2001; Köse, 2005; Şakrak, 2009) and then I had checked my translation by another English teacher. Finally, the translation was revised by the head of the teaching unit of Bilkent University Preparatory Program. After the revision procedure, a pilot study, with a group of 50 preparatory school students at Pamukkale University, was conducted to determine whether any questionnaire items were confusing or unclear to students. The participants in the study were selected randomly. For reliability, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated. The Cronbach Alpha measure in the questionnaire was found to be 0.87, which indicated high internal consistency.

Section III: Interviews

In addition to the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews were used in this study in order to gain detailed information about the past language learning experiences of the participants. Merriam (1998) states the decision to use a qualitative research design stems from the researcher being interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing. Therefore, the logic behind using a qualitative instrument of data collection is to provide access to the things that cannot be directly observed, such as feelings, thoughts, intentions, or beliefs (Ohata, 2005a). In addition, according to Merriam (1998) interviewing is necessary when researchers

are interested in past events that are impossible to replicate. A catastrophic event that cannot be replicated might be the focus of a qualitative case study investigation. Since the focus of my study was to explore actual accounts of past language learning experiences and university students' current anxiety levels, a qualitative research approach was considered best suited and therefore constitutes a large part of this study.

In this study, a general interview guide was followed, using a set of questions developed to elicit answers to research question 3. These questions were not asked in a fixed order, and the exact wording was not determined in advance. As the researcher and interviewer, I modified wording and order of the questions according to the interviewees' responses, though with an intention of gathering data that would respond to ten basic questions.

- 1) What is the first thing that comes into your mind when you think about your past English classes?
- 2) What did you feel about learning English in primary/middle/high school?
- 3) What were the things you liked most about your English classes? What were those you disliked most?
- 4) What kind of lessons did you have? What aspects of language were you generally practicing?
- 5) Do you remember the books you used in your previous English classes? Did you like them or not?
- 6) What types of activities do you remember doing in your English classes?
- 7) In your past education experiences did you ever have an English teacher who influenced you greatly? In what way?
- 8) Have you ever thought that your friends were better or worse than you in English classes? If so, did this thought affect your behavior?

9) In the last few months of your English learning experience have any of your feelings towards learning English changed?

10) Do you think your past language learning experiences have affected your present attitude towards learning English?

These questions were designed based on the research questions. The interviews focused on three main topics: (a) past feelings and attitudes toward learning English; (b) the ways the students were taught English prior to coming to Bilkent and Pamukkale universities and (c) students' experiences with their previous teachers and their peers.

On the original questionnaire, students were able to check off a box indicating whether or not they would be willing to participate further in the study if asked. Those students whose responses on the FLCAS indicated the highest and lowest levels of anxiety, and who had indicated willingness to participate further, were contacted with the help of their teachers and invited to be interviewed. The interviews were scheduled outside of class time, and the arrangements were made by the head of the teaching unit. All of the participants were contacted were willing to participate and some appear quite eager to discuss their experiences. During the initial contact with students, I explained the nature of the study, and made sure they understood that their participation was voluntary and that it would have no effect on their class grade. Before each taped interview began, I engaged in casual conversation with the participants to establish rapport. The interviews were held in Turkish to allow the students to more easily express their ideas clearly, and the participants were reassured of the full confidentiality of their responses. Every interview lasted approximately 20 minutes. Again with the permission of each participant, the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. I later translated the transcriptions into English, and these

translated transcriptions (see an excerpt of an original and translated transcript in Appendix I and J) provided the data source for the qualitative analysis.

Piloting the Interviews

For the interviews, a number of semi-structured questions were prepared. Two students at BUSEL were given a pilot interview to make sure that the questions were understandable and clear. Necessary changes and additions were made with the help of the supervisor's feedback and suggestions.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted in the spring semester of 2009, and was organized in two parts. First, quantitative data were gathered using the DBI and FLCAS questionnaires. The quantitative data were collected from the two universities following different procedures. Since PAU is the home institution of the researcher, verbal permission was obtained from the Director of the School of Foreign Languages. The program head was asked to select the preparatory classes randomly from each proficiency level. The questionnaires were sent to PAU via mail, and colleagues were informed about the purpose of the study and asked for help in the distribution. Completed questionnaires were later mailed back. However, the data collection procedure was slightly different in BUSEL. Formal follow-up letters written by the researcher and the supervisor, accompanied by the proposal of this study, were sent to the Director of BUSEL. The preparatory school directors examined and approved the research material. Then, they were asked to distribute the questionnaires to six randomly selected preparatory classes at the pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper-intermediate proficiency levels.

The questionnaires were attached with a cover letter explaining the voluntary nature of the study (see Appendix A and B). In the cover letter, the researcher informed the participants about the purpose of the research and invited students to participate. In addition, the participants were asked to put a tick if they would be willing to take part in the second phase of the study. All students in each class participated voluntarily. At both universities, participants were number coded for confidentiality, thus those students eligible for the interviews could be easily traced. For the qualitative part of this study, all 12 students were contacted via the head of the teaching unit coordinators and they were asked to participate in a case study. At a pre-arranged time, the researcher visited each student to conduct interviews. Participants were asked to sign informed consent forms (see Appendix F) before the interview began. The objective of this second phase was to gather qualitative data to investigate the extent to which past language learning experiences may have an impact on anxiety.

Data Analysis

This study investigated the foreign language anxiety level of EFL university students in two different universities that are different from each other in terms of their historical background and educational policy. It also aimed to explore the past language learning experiences of EFL students and the extent to which past language learning experiences have an impact on anxiety.

Data were collected from two sources: a questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The data collected from the FLCAS questionnaire were statistically analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version. To analyze the data the means of each student were computed. Additionally, one-way ANOVAs and *t*-tests were run

to examine the relationship between foreign language anxiety and students' demographic data.

In order to investigate whether there is any relationship between language learning experiences and the foreign language anxiety level of EFL students and whether there are any similarities and differences between those students who demonstrate high and low level anxiety, in-depth interviews were conducted. The data analysis of the interviews followed the steps of qualitative content analysis, seeking common patterns in the responses. Attention was focused on the participants' beliefs, experiences, and feelings.

Conclusion

In this chapter the setting and the participants of the study, instruments for data collection, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques were presented. The next chapter will present the results of the study.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study was designed to explore the relationship between foreign language anxiety and past language learning experiences of university EFL learners in two different universities in Turkey. The study addresses the following questions:

1. What is the foreign language anxiety level of Turkish university preparatory students?
2. To what extent do language learning background factors affect foreign language anxiety?
3. What are the similarities and differences between high and low anxiety learners' past language learning experiences?

The participants in this the study consisted of 285 EFL preparatory students from Bilkent and Pamukkale Universities. Of all the participants, 129 (45.3 %) were female and 156 (54.7 %) were male. The data were collected through questionnaires and in-depth interviews and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The researcher performed descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, to analyze the obtained data to reveal frequency distribution. The means and standard deviations were computed to find the levels of language anxiety. In addition to this, in order to explore the effects of language learning background factors on the anxiety levels of the participants, one way ANOVAs and *t*-tests were used. Lastly, using the results of the analyses involved in the quantitative part, participants who demonstrated high and low levels of anxiety were selected for participation in the qualitative phase.

In this chapter, the data analysis will be reported in terms of the quantitative and qualitative data. The first section focuses on the analysis of the foreign language

anxiety level of the participants and presents the extent to which language learning background factors affect foreign language anxiety. The second section looks for common patterns in the responses by reporting on the results of in-depth interviews conducted with the participants.

Quantitative Data

Foreign Language Anxiety of the Participants

This section describes the results obtained from the FLCAS. The FLCAS questionnaire developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) was used in this study. The FLCAS contains 33 items, scored on a five point Likert scale (see Appendix C for a copy of the questionnaire). Responses range from strongly disagree to strongly agree. For each item, the highest degree of anxiety receives five points and the lowest, one point. For the analysis, all negatively phrased items in the questionnaire (items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, 32) were reverse coded. In the process of analysis, first and foremost, the reliability coefficient of Cronbach's Alpha Model, a model of internal consistency based on the average inter-item correlation, was computed. Even though the reliability the FLCAS has been calculated on different occasions, it was again computed for this study. FLCAS scale displays a high level of reliability, with a coefficient of .90 in Alpha model in this study. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilk tests showed the data to be normally distributed ($p > .05$); therefore the data were converted to descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequencies of responses to find the levels of language anxiety. The purpose was to discover the anxiety level of each student. The students who seemed to experience high and low levels of anxiety according to these results were interviewed later by the researcher.

The two groups of subjects' means and standard deviations were calculated both in combination and separately according to their universities. Table 3 gives a summary for the overall student anxiety levels of each university. The scores of Bilkent University students ranged from 1.33 to 4.06, with a mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of .46; however, for Pamukkale University the scores ranged from 1.12 to 4.64, with a mean of 2.88 and a standard deviation of .59. On average, BUSEL students experience less anxiety ($M = 2.65$, $SE = 0.40$) than PAU students ($M = 2.88$, $SE = 0.50$). This difference is significant $t(272) = -3.7$, $p < .05$; and it represented a small effect size $r = .21$. This difference implies that perhaps due to the different backgrounds of the students in these universities or the different curricula in these universities, BUSEL students report being less anxious than PAU students.

Bilkent University					
	<i>N</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
FLCAS	139	4.06	1.33	2.65	.46
Pamukkale University					
	<i>N</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
FLCAS	146	4.64	1.12	2.88	.59

Table 3 - Overall anxiety levels of each university

The overall average anxiety of the participants was 2.77 with a standard deviation of .54. As for the statistical analysis of research question 1, table 4 shows the combined means and standard deviations of students from both schools.

	<i>N</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
FLCAS	285	4.64	1.12	2.77	.54

Table 4 - Description of the anxiety level of participants

Total scale scores range from 1 to 5, with high scores indicating a high level of anxiety. Between the choices 1 and 5 there are 4 'spaces'. Since the scores fall into three categories indicating low, moderate, low anxiety, each space spans 1.3. Therefore, mean values from 1.00 to 2.30 were defined as low anxiety, values ranging from 2.31 to 3.60 were defined as moderate anxiety, and values from 3.61 to 5.00 were defined high anxiety (see Table 5). According to the students' scores obtained from the administration of the FLCAS, the anxiety level of these university EFL learners is classified as moderate anxiety.

The Levels of Anxiety

<u>Levels</u>	<u>Scores</u>
Low Anxiety	1.00 – 2.30
Moderate Anxiety	2.31 – 3.60
High Anxiety	3.61 – 5.00

Table 5 - Distribution of the FLCAS values and their descriptions

Responses to specific items

As mentioned above, the data were initially analyzed by determining the mean values and the standard deviations. The whole percentages and frequencies (with means and standard deviations) for each item can be seen in Appendix E.

Table 6 and 7 below show the six items that received the three highest and lowest mean scores of students. The situations that made students the most anxious about their foreign language classroom are as follows. First, for item 10, "*I worry about the consequences of failing my English class*" 82% percent of students marked that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, given the item a mean of 4.12, the highest of all the items. It is perhaps not surprising that this statement got the highest mean score because the administrative regulations of the two universities require that unless students are successful in the preparatory class, they won't be able

to start studying in their departments. Therefore, these students may feel that they have great pressure on them to pass. Secondly, the inability to comprehend what was being said in the classroom provoked considerable anxiety. Students highly endorsed the statement in item 4, “*It frightens me when I don’t understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language*”. Two thirds (66.5%) of the students agreed or strongly agreed with this item (mean = 3.62). This result suggests that students feel insecure when the teacher speaks in a way they find incomprehensible. Lastly, a slight majority of students agreed that percentage of students say that *they feel overwhelmed by the number of rules they have to learn to speak a foreign language* (52.5%). This statement got the third highest mean score (3.29), the reasons for which seem to be clear when we analyze the interview results. During the interviews, high anxiety students complained about the instruction they had received in their previous language learning exercises. Both from this statement on the FLCAS and the interview responses, we can assume that students may feel pressure with some teaching strategies that heavily depend on grammar.

Contrary to these statements, the following section discusses those situations that make students the least anxious about the foreign language classroom. Firstly, item 19 “*I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make*” got the lowest mean score (2.06). A vast majority (80.6%) of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with that item. This result is arguably not surprising because Turkish students often report liking error correction and they generally want their teachers to correct every mistake they make. Following this, item 31, “*I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language,*” got the next lowest mean score (2.06). Again, a large majority (79%) of students disagreed or strongly disagreed with this item. This result is interesting because in the literature it is

often stated that students are most anxious when they have to speak in front of their classmates. However, this result indicates that these Turkish students do not experience a great deal of peer pressure when speaking in the language classroom. Lastly, the item that got the next lowest mean score is *“Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious”* (item 16, mean = 2.07). Three quarters (75%) of the students disagreed with that item. This result suggests that students tend to feel relaxed and self-confident as long as they study for their English classes.

ITEMS	SD		D		UD		A		SA		Mean	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	M	SD
10. I worry about the consequences of failing in my foreign language class.	25	8.7	16	5.6	10	3.5	83	29.1	151	53.1	4.12	1.253
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	16	5.6	46	16.1	33	11.5	126	44.2	64	22.4	3.62	1.162
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	16	5.6	77	26.9	42	14.7	109	38.2	41	14.3	3.29	1.172

Table 6 - The highest mean scores of the FLCAS questionnaire

ITEMS	SD		D		UD		A		SA		Mean	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	M	SD
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious.	95	33.3	120	42.1	33	11.5	29	10.1	7	2.4	2.07	1.064
31. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language	78	27.3	148	51.7	29	10.01	25	8.7	5	1.7	2.06	.94
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	73	25.5	157	55.1	27	9.4	21	7.3	7	2.4	2.06	.93

Table 7 - The lowest mean scores of the FLCAS questionnaire

Data from the Background Questionnaire

In order to seek an answer to research question 2, which aimed to explore the extent to which language learning background factors affect foreign language anxiety, the data from the FLCAS and demographic background questionnaires were used. Tables 8 through 14 show the effects of grouping students under six demographic characteristics: gender; proficiency level; high school type; visiting in an English speaking country; experience with the native teacher; and studying other foreign languages besides English. FLCAS descriptive statistics shown in the tables consists of the number of cases (N), mean (M), minimum (MIN), max (MAX), and standard deviation (SD).

Descriptive Analysis of the FLCAS

Table 8 shows the descriptive statistics of the FLCAS score, grouped with respect to the students' proficiency level.

University	Group	N	M	MIN/MAX	SD
Pamukkale	PIN	58	2.94	1.73 / 4.64	0.60
	INT	41	2.92	2.09 / 3.79	0.42
	UPP	47	2.76	1.12 / 4.36	0.69
Total		146	2.88	1.12 / 4.64	0.60
Bilkent	PIN	47	2.69	1.33 / 4.06	0.52
	INT	47	2.66	1.73 / 3.52	0.40
	UPP	45	2.58	1.52 / 3.39	0.45
Total		139	2.65	1.33 / 4.06	0.46
Note: PIN= Pre-intermediate INT= Intermediate UPP= Upper-intermediate					

Table 8 - Descriptive statistics of FLCAS scores summarized by proficiency levels

As can be seen in Table 8, the mean of the FLCAS score for both groups of students consistently decreases as the proficiency level of the group increase. In other words, group PIN, which has the lowest proficiency level, has the highest mean score. The same can be observed for the Bilkent data. In both schools, The UPP group, which has the highest proficiency level, has the lowest mean score. Thus, as proficiency in English increases, it seems that anxiety decreases.

There is also a difference between the overall mean scores of Bilkent and Pamukkale students. Bilkent has a lower mean score than Pamukkale University.

A one way ANOVA was also conducted to explore the relationship between English proficiency level and foreign language anxiety. The independent variable, participants' proficiency level, included three dimensions: pre-intermediate, intermediate and upper intermediate. The results show that there was not a statistically significant relationship between proficiency level and participants' anxiety level ($p < .127$). However, the study suggests that there might be a pattern between pre-

intermediate and upper-intermediate students' language anxiety levels. In other words, by the time students reach the upper-intermediate level, their anxiety seems to decrease. However, to confirm such a pattern, further research is needed.

Differences in Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Participants' Foreign Country Travel Experience

In Table 9, descriptive statistics were computed for students grouped according to the question of whether they had ever visited an English speaking country. The word "Yes" represents the group of students who reported having lived in or visited an English speaking country and "No" represents the rest of the students. It is interesting to note that only one student attending PAU stated that he had visited an English-speaking country before, while the rest of these students were all from Bilkent.

A *t*-test was run to look at the relationship between the participants' anxiety level and their experience visiting an English speaking country. The result shows that participants who have visited an English speaking country experience less anxiety ($M = 2.51$, $SE = .066$), than the participants who have never been to an English speaking country ($M = 2.79$, $SE = .034$). This difference is significant $t(46) = -3.7$, $p < .05$; and it represents a medium effect size $r = 0.48$. This seems to make sense, since students who have spent time in an English speaking country have presumably had greater opportunities to communicate in the target language. Not only have they had opportunity for more practice but also other affective factors such as motivation may also come into play and this may be serving to reduce their in-class anxiety.

Visit to an English Speaking Country	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean
Yes	30	2.51	0.36	0.066
No	255	2.79	0.55	0.034

Tablo 9 - Foreign country travel experience

Differences in Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Students' High School Type

The independent variable “high school type”, has six dimensions: General high school, Anatolian high school, Super high school, Technical high school, Private high school and other. As for the relationship between foreign language anxiety and high school type, a one-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant effect of high school type on participants' foreign language anxiety ($p < .084$). However, participants who had received their education in private high schools did get lower anxiety scores than those who were educated in Anatolian, general, super, and technical schools. This difference may stem from the fact that private school graduates start learning English at an earlier age and their English lessons are more intensive when compared to the state schools. Moreover, private school graduates are more likely to be taught by native English speaking teachers. Having foreign teachers at an early age may help students develop self-confidence in the target language. Table 10 shows the mean scores of the participants who were educated in each school type.

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Std. Error
1 General High School	81	2.80	.58	.06
2 Technical High School	8	2.85	.45	.15
3 Anatolian High School	92	2.80	.57	.05
4 Super High School	41	2.74	.52	.08
5 Private High School	34	2.68	.42	.07
6 Other	29	2.70	.53	.09
Total	285	2.76	.54	.03

Tablo 10 - Descriptive statistics for foreign language anxiety and high school type

Foreign Language Anxiety Level and Participants' Having Had a Native Teacher

Participants were also asked whether they had been taught by a native English teacher or not. In this study, it is interesting to note that the number of students who responded that they had been taught by a native teacher is almost the same as the

number of students who had not been taught by a native teacher. It seems impossible for that number of students to have been taught by a native teacher in their high school, because state high schools such as general high school, technical high school, Anatolian, and super high schools do not have native teachers in Turkey. This response may result from the fact that the questionnaires were distributed in the second academic term of the year, and students may have responded that item taking into account their previous term at PAU or BUSEL preparatory school.

A *t*-test was run to find out the relationship between the participants' anxiety levels and whether or not they had had a native English speaking teacher. The result shows that participants who had had a native teacher experience less anxiety ($M = 2.66$, $SE = .43$), than participants who had not had a native teacher. ($M = 2.87$, $SE = .050$). This difference is significant $t(280) = -3.3$, $p < .05$; and it represents a small effect size $r = 0.19$. This difference can perhaps be related to the ways teachers in Turkey interact with their students. Many students perceive foreign teachers as being more cheerful, tolerant and easygoing than Turkish teachers. Therefore, this could make English lessons with the native English speakers more anxiety free.

Native teacher	N	M	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Yes	148	2.66	.53	.043
No	137	2.87	.54	.046

Tablo 11 - Native teacher factor

Differences between Anxiety Level and Studying Languages besides English

In order to explore whether having studied other foreign languages besides English has an impact on the anxiety level of the students, a *t*-test was used. According to the result of the *t*-test, the difference is significant $t(220) = -2.74$, $p < .05$, $r = .18$. This finding indicates that participants who have studied other foreign languages beside English experience less anxiety than participants who have not studied other

foreign languages. Thus, it might be inferred that the more students learn different languages, the less anxiety they experience. When you study a language, you learn about how to learn a language, so learning the next one may be easier.

Studying Different Languages	N	Mean	SD
Yes	120	2.66	.58
No	165	2.85	.39

Tablo 12 - Previous experience with another foreign language

The last demographic characteristic examined was gender. The result reveals that there was not a significant relationship between these variables ($p < .092$).

Qualitative Data

The data for this part were collected through interviews with 12 students, six with high level anxiety and six with low level anxiety according to the FLCAS results. The student selection process was mentioned in detail in Chapter 3. The interviews were transcribed from audio-tape and analyzed to look for similar responses to the participants' accounts of specific past teachers and classroom events, references to their peers or references to themselves. Attention was focused on the participants' feelings and past language learning experiences. As mentioned in chapter 3, the participants in this study were from PAU and BUSEL. Table 13 shows the interviewed participants' background data.

Participant Data						
High Anxiety Level Students						
	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6
Anxiety Level	4.64	4.36	4.06	4.03	4.06	3.62
University	PAU	PAU	BUSEL	PAU	BUSEL	BUSEL
Proficiency Level	Pre-Int	Int	Int	Upper-Int	Pre-Int	Upper
Previous English Study	8	8	6	8	6	8
High School Type	General	General	Anatolian	Anatolian	General	Private
	high school	high school	high school	high school	high school	school
Native Teacher	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Foreign Country Visited	No	No	No	No	No	No
Studying Different Languages	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Participant Data						
Low Anxiety Level Students						
	Student 7	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10	Student 11	Student 12
Anxiety Level	1.12	1.33	1.39	1.52	1.73	1.73
University	PAU	BUSEL	BUSEL	PAU	PAU	BUSEL
Proficiency Level	Upper-Int	Int	Upper-Int	Pre-Int	Int	Pre-Int
Previous English Study	8	8	8	8	8	8
High School Type	Anatolian	Private	Private	Military	Anatolian	Private
	high school	high school	high school	high school	high school	school
Native Teacher	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Foreign Country Visited	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Studying Different Languages	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Tablo 13 - Participants' background data

A general interview guide was followed, using a set of questions developed to elicit answers to research question 3, which aimed to find out the patterns of similarities and differences between high and low anxiety students' past language learning experiences. The questions were selected to provide both a context for the students' experiences and reflection on various aspects of their language learning experiences. In this section, the data collected from the individual interviews with the

students were analyzed qualitatively through categorization. The participants' responses fell into four major categories: (a) past feelings and attitudes toward learning English; (b) the ways the students were taught English prior to coming to Bilkent and Pamukkale; (c) students' experiences with their previous teachers and their peers; and (d) evaluation of past and present attitudes towards English. Although there is some overlap among the responses in each category, each category is presented separately for the sake of clarity. Therefore, the results are presented under these four headings below.

Past feelings and attitudes towards English

Throughout the interviews, when the participants were asked their feelings and attitudes towards their previous English courses there was a clear cut difference between high anxiety and low anxiety students' responses. Interestingly, all of the high anxiety participants reported unfavorable attitudes while low anxiety students gave favorable reactions to their past foreign language learning experiences:

Interviewer: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about your English classes?

Student 1: Fear

Interviewer: What do you mean by "fear"?

Student1: Fear of being unsuccessful. I usually saw myself successful in other classes, but when it comes to English lesson, I always felt unsuccessful and this made me feel uncomfortable.

Student 2: Fear

Interviewer: Fear of?

Student 2: Fear of not being able to speak correctly, finding the right word. I still have this feeling for my present situation but not as strong as the previous years. In high school, when I tried to speak, I always thought that "what happens if the teacher doesn't understand me?"

Student 4: Fear.... I was always scared of not being able to utter the right word in class. Also, I was scared and anxious when I didn't understand what the teacher said in the classroom.

It can be noted that high anxiety students' comments were usually associated

with fear of negative evaluation and this is closely related with communication

apprehension. When students are unsure of what they are saying, fear of negative evaluation occurs and they may doubt their ability to make a proper impression. Students may lose self-confidence and become anxious when they feel that they are deficient or limited in the target language.

Other students used the terms “frustration” (hayal kırıklığı), “nervous”(gergin), “anxious” (endişeli) in their responses. They seemed to differ from other responses in that they tended to attribute the blame for such anxiety *outward* rather than making a personal connection with “fear”:

Student 6: I had negative feelings towards English but I always felt that our education system is responsible for this negative attitude.

Student 3: At first, I was very excited and enthusiastic about learning English. However, because of my English teacher, I got very frustrated and my positive feelings turned negative.

On the other hand, low anxiety students reported that English classes were fun and enjoyable for them:

Student 7: I always loved English. It was a pleasure for me to attend English lessons. I personally volunteered to learn English when I was in primary school. My parents supported me and I went to a private English teaching institution because there wasn't an English lesson in my school. When I recall my years in high school, my best memories belong to English lessons.

Student 11: Learning English was always enjoyable for me and I believe that knowing English is a part of being educated.

Student 9: I started learning English when I was in kindergarten. I liked it, it was fun..... it wasn't hard for me.... It was easy.

The first impressions of both groups of students are quite strikingly different. These excerpts from the interviews indicate that while many high anxiety students believed that a feeling of fear made them feel incapable and frustrated, low anxiety students recalled that they had a lot of fun in their previous English classes.

Attitudes towards past English lessons

Another stark difference emerges when we look at the students' specific attitudes towards English lessons. All of the high anxiety participants clearly noted that English lessons for them were only a compulsory lesson to be taken in high school; on the other hand, low anxiety students all chose to point out how English lessons help one continue his/her education and enable one to understand different cultures. For example, in the words of some of the high anxiety students:

Student 6: When I was in high school, English lessons for me were nothing but a required course. I never enjoyed English classes.

Student 5: I wasn't aware of the importance of English language before I started university. I hated English lessons.

Student 1: I didn't like..... It was very boring..... I didn't like it... I hated every minute.

Student 3: Nothing special... just like any other subject in school. I had to study.... It was boring.

Their words are in stark contrast to those by the low anxiety students:

Student 12: I was always interested in English and I worked hard for it because I believe that English is a universal language spoken everywhere and in order to have a good job in the future, one needs to know English. Also getting to know different cultures excites me very much. That's why English lessons are different from other courses.

Student 8: I like learning new things, different cultures. I find it interesting to learn about different cultures. English in our schools should be emphasized more because it is an international language and it is just like power.

Student 10: I like the idea of communicating with foreigners. English lessons help me understand different cultures. When I finish here, I'd like to continue my education abroad.

Student 11: Actually, I have liked the English language since I started studying it until now. English was my favorite subject at school. We should learn it in order to find a better job in the future.

Interestingly, low anxiety students also advocated the idea of studying more than one language:

Student 9: I think speaking more than one language is a very advantageous thing. It is essential for us to study more than one foreign language for our future career.

Student 7: We should learn other languages as well. People who know more than one language can find a better job. Thus, other foreign languages in schools should be emphasized more.

Such differences between high and low anxiety students are quite noteworthy.

While high anxiety students treat English learning as a task or just a compulsory lesson, low anxiety students express an awareness of the importance of learning English for the sake of future job prospects and for being informed about other cultures. It is important to note that low anxiety students highlight the need for knowing more than one foreign language whereas none of the high anxiety students mentioned this idea.

Participants were also asked what they liked and disliked most about their English classes. Surprisingly, while most of the high anxiety students reported that they most liked grammar, vocabulary study and reading, low anxiety students mentioned the tediousness of grammar and vocabulary study and commented that they preferred speaking most. This discrepancy comes through in the following excerpts:

Student 6: When I was in high school, I liked grammar most because I always knew that if I studied, I would easily succeed.

Student 4: I liked grammar and reading lessons most.

Interviewer: Why do you think like that?

Student 4: Because I prefer studying by writing and memorizing vocabulary. I didn't like speaking and listening because I felt nervous.

Student 2: I like rules and memorizing them.

Interviewer: What about the things you disliked most?

Student 2: Hmm. I don't remember exactly but I didn't like speaking in front of the class. I preferred doing grammar exercises, worksheets, to speaking.

In contrast to high anxiety students, low anxiety students reported that speaking was their most favorite lesson and they added that they didn't like lessons that only focused on grammar:

Student12: I remember my classes being concentrated in grammar and vocabulary and memorizing dialogues. They got to be boring after some time. I prefer speaking lessons.

Student 7: I liked class discussions most and I still like it. I don't like rules and doing grammar exercises. If you don't practice English, you forget easily.

Student 9: I liked listening because we sometimes used to watch movies in our lessons and it was great, especially when I understood what the person was saying of course speaking lessons were very important to me.

The different attitudes and feelings of students towards English learning were presented above. A general observation seems to be that high anxiety students tend to make more critical statements and have negative opinions towards English language learning and the English language course, whereas low anxious students have more positive comments and overall exhibit more positive feelings. It seems evident that students' attitudes and feelings towards English language course can greatly affect their desire to learn English as well as their anxiety levels.

The ways students were taught prior to coming to their universities *Evaluation of previous English classes*

During the interviews all twelve students were asked to comment on their previous English classes in terms of their content, methodology and their general class atmosphere. Their comments were again remarkably different from each other.

When participants were asked what aspects of language they most often remember practicing in these classes, four of the six high anxiety students reported that they only studied grammar in English lessons. As a result, the activities they did were

based on grammar exercises such as filling in the gaps, matching exercises or translation exercises.

On the other hand, all of the low-anxiety students stated that they practiced all four skills in their earlier English classes, but grammar teaching was still the most important one. Moreover, the activities that low anxiety students report participating in were varied. This difference comes through in the following excerpts:

Student 1: We studied only grammar. The teacher used to write all the grammar rules and we used to copy them from the board. I don't remember practicing speaking, listening, or writing.

Interviewer: Then, what kinds of activities were you practicing?

Student 1: Only grammar activities... they were especially from the workbook.

Student 2: First of all, they emphasized learning grammar. Memorization is emphasized over understanding so the lessons were usually very structured.....

Interviewer: What about the other skills? Were you doing any different activities in the classroom?

Student 2: No. The way our teacher taught English was same every day. First, she was teaching the grammar rules and then we were doing the exercises in the book. Mainly filling in the blanks types.

Ohhh, I remember translation exercises. Our teacher always wanted us to translate all the sentences in the worksheets.

Student 2 also stated that her failure in speaking may be due to her teachers' not giving importance to speaking lessons. She wished that she had had the opportunity to use English rather than to study it only in the classroom:

Student 2: The main thing that teachers ignored was the practice of speaking skills. Maybe because of my teachers I am incapable of speaking. I wish I had learned English differently with more emphasis on communication.

Student 3 and Student 4 also highlighted that the way English was taught in their high schools was grammar-oriented and naturally they mostly did grammar exercises:

Student 3: Our teacher basically used to teach us vocabulary and grammar so that we would be able to read and understand at a very elementary level...

Student 4: the teacher would cover some grammar points we used to read passages discussing grammatical problems in Turkish where we would learn how to structure some grammar.... And then there was memorization of vocabulary....

Interviewer: What about the activities? Were they different from what you had learned in your lessons?

Student 3: No, they were almost same. We used to practice what we had learned in our lessons. We used to do worksheets and the workbook. Filling in the gap was the most popular exercise type.

One high anxiety participant stated that they had a separate speaking class, but it “never worked”:

Student 5: In our speaking class, the teacher used to talk Turkish instead of English. We almost learned nothing from that class..... we were mainly taking notes of what the teacher said.

In contrast to high anxiety students, low anxiety students reported that apart from studying grammar, they also studied other skills in English classes. It is interesting to note that low anxiety participants were involved in different kinds of activities while high anxiety participants practiced only grammar and vocabulary exercises. Moreover, four of the low anxiety students reported that their lessons were most often conducted in a discussion format. According to these four students, students’ questions were welcomed any time during the class period, and the teacher allowed student ideas and interests to drive the curriculum:

Student 8: We used to have speaking lessons and they were very enjoyable. Grammar teaching was important but our teacher always told us the importance of practicing English. She used to encourage us to speak in lessons.

Student 12: Grammar and vocabulary were important for our teachers but we also used to have writing, speaking and listening lessons. Apart from grammar teaching, we used to listen to songs, play games..... we used to arrange teatime with our teacher.

Student 9: Besides grammar teaching, we used to practice writing and listening and speaking. Our teacher created an atmosphere where everyone could speak freely.

Student 7: We were really having fun in English classes. Our teacher always encouraged us to speak. We used to play a kind of game... I can't remember the name but it aimed to increase vocabulary knowledge. Moreover, we performed a play at the end of the year.

Student 11: We used to have varied activities and tasks. Our teacher would bring in interesting pictures and we used to describe or narrate those pictures. We were mostly given incomplete conversations and with our pairs we used to answer or ask a question and complete the conversation. Those activities were really helpful. Also I remember our teacher used to give us a situation and the characters and after a preparation time we were acting roles. They were very challenging activities. Some of our friends didn't like that kind of activities, but I liked them.

As noted above, all of the participants point out that they practiced a lot of grammar and vocabulary, but low anxiety students differ from the others in that they also remember studying other skills, while the high anxiety students emphasize that grammar and vocabulary were the only subjects that were taught in their English classes. Similarly, in the FLCAS questionnaire, a large group of students reported that they were overwhelmed by the number of rules in learning a language. This implies that anxiety might be exacerbated by the teaching strategies of the instructors. It is also interesting to note that participants who mentioned only grammar teaching were graduates of regular high schools while students who stated that they had speaking, listening and writing lessons were graduates of Anatolian or private high schools. This finding suggests that both Anatolian and private schools are more likely to emphasize the communicative language teaching methods more than do other state schools.

The students were then asked whether they remember working more in groups or individually in their English classes, and it is interesting to note that none of the high anxiety participants mentioned group work:

Student 1: I remember doing the tasks or exercises individually.

Student 2: I don't remember doing activities in groups, but sometimes our teacher let us do the exercises with our friends.

Conversely, five of the low anxiety students stated that their teachers mostly encouraged them to work in pairs or groups:

Student 7: Well, it changed according to the activities we were doing. We sometimes worked in pairs, in groups or individually. For example, we had class debates and were working with our groups.

Student 8: Both in pairs and individually. We also had group discussions.

As can be seen from the responses, while high anxiety students practiced mainly grammar activities through individual work in their classes, low anxiety students tended to come from classes in which communicative activities in pairs or group work were also included. This result supports what the literature has proposed about the importance of interaction in English classes. Students seem to gain more confidence when they work with their partners or groups; as a result, they experience less anxiety.

Comments on the previous books

In response to a question about whether they liked their previous English text books or not, only students who graduated from general high schools responded negatively. Moreover, it is interesting to note that those students are all high anxiety students:

Student 1: The books were classic MEB books. There were three... the green, the black, and the white one. I didn't like them.

Student 2: we studied MEB books. They were really boring when I compare them to our current books.

Student 5: We didn't learn much from the books. There were no discussions to help you interact with the language.

Student 3: We had two kinds of books. One of them was MEB's book and the other was "English in Minds". English in Minds was

better than MEB's book. There were very long passages and unknown words in MEB's book.

On the other hand, low anxiety students stated that their previous text books were similar to their current text books and they were entertaining, though some did remark that the books were difficult for their level:

Student 10: The books were the same with our current books but at that time the books were difficult for us.

Student 12: They were almost the same as our current books...interesting and enjoyable.

From the interviews it also emerged that the teachers of all the high anxiety students taught lessons primarily in Turkish:

Student 1: Our teacher was lecturing in Turkish... he never spoke English.

Student 5: Both Turkish and English when necessary, but she never encouraged us to speak English.

Perhaps related to this, it is interesting to note that some high anxiety students objected to their teacher's lack of qualifications. Two of the high anxiety students reported that their teachers were not ELT trained teachers:

Student 2: My English teacher in primary school was not originally a language teacher. She was a music teacher. I don't remember her speaking English. We always spoke Turkish.

Student 4: When I was in secondary school, our science teacher was teaching English. She was mostly doing translation. She rarely spoke English.

Conversely, low anxiety students were taught lessons in English and were encouraged by their teachers to speak English:

Student 11: Both students and teachers were speaking English.

Student 10: When I was in military high school, to be able to speak English was very important. American sergeants were teaching us speaking. Our teachers especially gave importance to pronunciation. any student who spoke Turkish had to buy a cup of tea for everyone in class. It was very fun.

Student 8: We used to speak English.... Our teacher encouraged us to participate in the lessons.

As mentioned above, those who reported that their teachers often spoke Turkish in English lessons tend to be the high anxiety students, while the teachers of low anxiety students spoke English and forced them to speak English as well. This result is not surprising, because when students are exposed to the target language, they develop self-confidence over time and they get used to this kind of atmosphere; therefore, they become less likely to feel nervous or worry about making mistakes. On the other hand, since the high anxiety students in this study were not used to either speaking or listening in their earlier English classes, they may continue to feel scared and insecure.

Students experiences with previous teachers and peers

Previous teacher influence

Perhaps the most striking thing to come out of the interviews was the constant reminder that the teacher plays a key role in determining the anxiety level of the students. Participants were asked whether they had had any English teachers who had influenced them either negatively or positively. It was seen that each student had a story to tell about their teacher and the stories revealed a clear pattern. Unsurprisingly, perhaps, high anxiety students immediately recalled negative stories, sometimes shockingly negative. The following excerpts show two of the high anxiety students' reporting their teachers' mistreatment against them:

Student 1: My primary school teacher was very quick-tempered. He was shouting all the time without any specific reason. I was ten years old and I was affected by his unkind attitude very much. He was not only shouting but also I remember he slapped my face once because I didn't do my homework. Maybe it is because of him I hate English.

Student 5: My high school teacher favored some of the students more than others. One of my English teachers in high school was

very strict ... I always felt the teacher was humiliating me because she always told me “I couldn’t do well in lessons however hard I try”. Because of her treatment, I always felt that I am unsuccessful in English classes. Moreover, I remember she pulled my ear and slapped my face just because I laughed in class. From that bad experience, I always thought that I would never do well in English classes ... I developed a kind of fear and prejudice towards English.

Other students mainly commented on the teacher’s personality, treatment of the students, style of error treatment, and teaching style:

Student 3: Everybody in our class used to be afraid of our English teacher. Even [students in] other classes which she didn’t teach. She was a very stern and mean person. If someone made her angry, she used to say “you are in my black book”. Moreover, her teaching style was very boring.

Student 6: I had both good and bad English teachers. Well, everything depends on the teacher I guess. For example, I remember one of our teachers was very strict and authoritarian. We never talked in class ... she used to give a minus if someone didn’t know something and this was awful, everyone was really stressed. Because of her, I never liked studying English.

Student 2: I didn’t like my high school teacher because she didn’t treat everyone equally. She had a kind of prejudice that a quiet student is always unsuccessful. She always perceived students in the front seats as successful on the other hand the students at the back seats were considered lazy and indifferent. I was sitting at the back and even if I answered the question correctly, she never praised me..... then I stopped speaking in class. Also, although she always told us English is learnt through speaking, she rarely spoke English in class.

Based on these students’ reports of negative experiences, there is no doubt that an authoritarian teaching style will likely to create anxiety in a language classroom. It is interesting to note that students who were exposed to physical abuse by their teachers experience the highest anxiety level and one of them reported that because of that bad experience he always hated English.

Low anxiety students on the other hand, immediately brought forth stories of a much more positive nature:

Student 12: I owe very much to my high school English teacher. When I was in prep school, I was a very shy student.... never talked in class and ...One day, my teacher asked me to tell about my weekend in the past tense. I was very excited and while speaking I made too many mistakes but my teacher never corrected my errors and after I finished speaking she told me “well done *student’s name*”. Although I remember having made many errors, this kind of praise encouraged me and motivated me to learn English.

Student 10: My first English teacher was great, she was like a friend to me. She always cared about us. If I am successful at English, that’s because of her. Besides her personal qualities, she used very creative activities.

Student 9: My prep school teacher [in high school] had a very big influence on me. When she was appointed to another school, I remember crying after her.....What I liked most was her character and the way she taught. She was very friendly and lively. Thanks to my teacher I am good at English.

Student 8: Not all my English teachers were good but I always admired my high school teacher because she had a strong sense of humor. She was very funny and she was good at providing a kind of relaxing atmosphere. She was also very good at teaching. Her accent was awesome like a native speaker.

Student 11: The teacher in the first year was monotonous and dull; then in the second year, we had another one and she was very lively in the class. She asked us to become active and tried to involve us in speaking.

From the responses above, we see that high anxiety participants feel that the interactions they had with a particular teacher greatly impacted their lack of interest in English, whereas low anxiety students believe that one of the positive contributions to their success in English belonged to their teacher. Many high anxiety students felt that they could have been more successful in English if their teachers had been friendly, kind and understanding. Other aspects of teachers’ personalities are also closely related to students’ anxiety level. In general, students believed that teachers who were lively, caring, understanding and fair, provided a supportive atmosphere that was conducive

to language learning. In addition to personal qualities, his or her way of teaching English and content knowledge are the most striking points that students emphasized.

Students' comments about their peers

When participants were asked whether they had ever felt peer pressure or not in the classroom, only one high anxiety student indicated that he had experienced:

Student 6: In a language class, I always felt like how come I am not as good as others? I felt worried when I was asked to speak up in class thinking that my friends would laugh at me.

None of the other students, either or high or low anxiety, responded that they had experienced any feelings of discomfort or pressure stemming from their peers.

However, when students were asked how they felt when their friends were better or worse than them at English, five low anxiety students responded that the pace of others affected their own efforts, often serving as a kind of incentive to work harder:

Student 11: Of course, this would affect me, especially if they were better than me.

Student 7: If they were worse than me, this didn't influence me very much but if they were better, I studied harder to catch up with them. I like competition.

Student 8: I felt sorry for my friends who were worse than me.

Student 10: Some of my friends were speaking better than me and I was affected by them and studied harder.

On the other hand, four high anxiety students reported that they didn't care one way or the other about their friends' grades or performances:

Student 1: I was not interested in my friends' grades. I am not a competitive type person.

Student 3: My friends' being better or worse than me would not affect me. In fact, we were all same. I mean we all had the same problem....inability to speak.

Student 5: They were all like me except two or three in class. That's why it didn't affect me.

Student 2: If my friends were better than me, maybe I would have been affected, but they were not.

As the excerpts show, for low anxiety students, peers constituted a kind of competitive learning environment and if others did better, they would also be pulled up in a sense by this competitive spirit. These low anxiety students mentioned that the competitive atmosphere made them work harder. This is interesting because in the literature it is generally proposed that competitiveness could lead to anxiety when language learners compare themselves to others. However, from these interviews it can be noted that high anxiety students were not as competitive as the low anxiety students.

Evaluation of past and present attitudes towards English

On a positive final note, participants were also asked whether their attitudes towards learning English have changed since starting university, and all except one respondent answered positively. This one student continued to harbor negative feelings:

Student 1: My attitude towards learning English didn't change and it won't change. If I had known that the medium of instruction in PAU was English, I would not have come here.

Conversely, the remaining students both high and low anxiety ones, seem to have reached a common consensus in the sense that they all report now understanding the importance of learning English, and most report now working harder than they did in high school:

Student 3: I realized that English is very important. In high school I wasn't aware of the importance of learning English but now owing to my teachers I feel positive towards English..., but I still feel anxious when speaking.

Student 5: Before coming here, I had prejudices against BUSEL. I always thought that I had been studying English for six years and I learned nothing; I thought that I would learn nothing again. But now I am very happy at BUSEL. All my negative attitudes towards

English have changed. My teachers here are very different from my teachers in high school.

Student 7: I don't think I want to study more English....what I know right now is good enough I guess....but I still have positive attitudes towards English.

Student 3: My attitudes towards English have changed especially in the last few months. I don't feel nervous when I speak English anymore. I am much more motivated. BUSEL is very difficult but they are really good at teaching English.

Student 2: When I was in high school, I don't remember getting over 60 out of 100, but now in PAU the more I get higher grades, the more I feel motivated. Moreover, both the teachers and their way of teaching English are very different from high school. PAU changed my negative feelings to positive.

Student 10: My feelings didn't change. still positive...

As for the last interview question, participants were asked directly whether they felt that their past language learning experiences had affected their present attitude towards learning English. All students confirmed that past language learning experiences have a very big influence on them:

Student1: I definitely believe that past language learning experiences affect our present attitude towards learning English. I wish I hadn't been taught English by that teacher.

Student 2: Our past experiences definitely have an influence on our in- class behaviors. It is because of my past language learning experiences that I experience nervousness when speaking.

However, many stated that these attitudes can easily change depending on the teacher's treatment and teaching style. High anxiety participants reported that it is the teacher's duty to change these negative feelings into positive ones:

Student 5: I agree that our past experiences affect our present attitudes but I think here the role of the teacher is very important. If I had had the same kind of teacher [now as I had in the past], my general feelings towards English classes would have been the same as in high school.

Student 3: My past language learning experience started very badly, but now I am happy to study English once more. I think past

language learning experiences affect the behaviors more than attitudes. My attitudes have changed but I still have that fear of speaking. Maybe, I need more praise and motivation from the teacher.

Student 7: It is just because of my English teacher that I loved English and I still love it though sometimes it is starting to be boring studying the same things repeatedly. I think past language learning experiences affect the present attitudes.

As the excerpts show, for both high and low anxiety students the role of past language learning experiences is inevitable. The findings of this study suggest that emphasis should be placed on identifying and addressing individual negative experiences. It is interesting to note that the role of the teacher is seen as central in changing these negative feelings into positive ones.

Conclusion

This chapter explained the data analysis procedures that were carried out in this study and reported the results gathered from them. Further analysis, discussions, and interpretation of the data will be presented in the next chapter in more depth and from various perspectives.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between the past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety levels of Turkish preparatory students. It also aimed to find out the extent to which language learning background factors have an impact on foreign language anxiety.

The data were collected through a questionnaire and in-depth interviews and analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. First, questionnaires were administered to 285 students from two different universities. The questionnaire administered to students included two main sections. In the first section, demographic information about the participants was collected. In the second section the FLCAS questionnaire by (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) was given to the participants. Afterwards, in-depth interviews were held with six high anxiety and six low anxiety students from three proficiency levels. The data obtained from the questionnaire were analyzed quantitatively by using descriptive statistics, one-way ANOVAs, and *t*-tests. The data analysis of the interviews followed the steps of qualitative content analysis, seeking common patterns in the responses.

This chapter discusses the results obtained in this study, in the same order in which the results were given in chapter 4. It then compares the results with those of similar studies, suggests pedagogical implications, discusses the limitations of this study, and outlines suggestions for further research.

Discussion of the Findings

This section discusses major findings and the conclusions that have been drawn through the data collection and analysis processes. The findings of the study will be displayed in three sub-sections referring to each research question: the foreign language anxiety level of students, the influence of language learning background factors on language anxiety and similarities and differences between high and low anxiety learners' past language learning experiences.

Foreign Language Anxiety Level

The first question of the study investigated the foreign language anxiety level of Turkish EFL students. In this study, the average mean value of Turkish EFL students was found to be 2.77 indicating an overall moderate level of anxiety as measured by the FLCAS. Using these two schools' data, with a total of 285 students, a general statement can be made that Turkish EFL students have moderate anxiety level. This mean score is similar to Kunt's (1997) and Köse's (2005) earlier studies of Turkish students (respective FLCAS means = 2.73/ 2.70).

On the other hand, it is interesting to note that Turkish students appear to experience lower anxiety levels than those of other groups, including Horwitz's (1986) study of American students in Spanish (mean = 2.86), Aida's (1994) study of American students of Japanese (mean= 2.93), and Truitt's (1995) study of Korean EFL students (mean = 3.06). The results indicate that Turkish EFL students have relatively low foreign language anxiety compared to students in other studies. It is important to note there is a slight variation in anxiety levels of nationality groups. These results support the suggestion that has been made in the literature that learners from certain cultures may have higher levels of foreign language anxiety than those from other cultures.

According to Zheng (2008), cultural influences, such as stereotyping of teachers, students, and classroom interactions, can vary largely from culture to culture. Some classroom practices may be perceived as stressful for learners from a different culture. For instance, Western and Eastern cultures differ in their use of silence in communication. In Western culture, talk is viewed positively and is generally rewarded, while silence is interpreted as a lack of interest, an unwillingness to communicate, a sign of anxiety or shyness, or a lack of verbal skills. In contrast, Eastern cultures are generally argued to place less value on the frequency of talk, and instead value the expression of an individual's inner thoughts (Kim, 1999). With such an understanding it might not be surprising that Eastern learners of foreign languages would have higher anxiety levels than students of other cultures. However, to make such cultural generalizations cannot be appropriate at all times because these generalizations may lead to over-emphasizing preconceived notions of student groups. In this case for example, the Turkish students who might be interpreted by some as being more "Eastern" than "Western", actually show consistently lower anxiety levels than the American students in some earlier studies cited above. Clearly, while the cultural explanation may have some insights, it is important not to forget that ultimately these are students with individual anxiety levels not just group means.

Another interesting result of this study comes up in the strikingly different mean scores of students in the two universities. The mean score of students in Pamukkale was 2.88 while in Bilkent it was 2.65. This difference is statistically significant ($t = -3.7, p < .05$). Explanations for such a significant difference between the PAU and BUSEL groups can perhaps be related to the different backgrounds, needs and expectations of the two groups of students. These possibilities will be explored in the next section.

Influence of Demographic Background Factors

The next phase of the study sought to answer the research question about the extent to which language learning background factors have an impact on foreign language anxiety. The demographic background information questionnaire aimed to gather information on the language learning backgrounds of the participating university students. Three background variables were found to have a significant relationship with the students' anxiety levels. These were whether the participants had ever visited a foreign country, whether they had ever had a native teacher, and whether they had ever studied languages besides English.

A *t*-test was conducted to explore whether participants' having visited a foreign country has an impact on their anxiety level or not. The result showed that students who had visited a foreign country experience a lower level of anxiety than students who had not. This is consistent with the finding of Aida (1994). In her study, she found that students who had visited Japan tended to have lower levels of foreign language anxiety associated with the study of Japanese than those who had not been to Japan.

It is also consistent with a study by Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley (2000), who found that visiting foreign countries was a predictor of low foreign language anxiety. These results suggest that the exposure to different cultures, especially those where the target language is spoken, may help students reduce their foreign language anxiety levels. In several articles, Clement states that the contact with the culture and people of the target language is important for determining learner motivation, and positive experiences can improve self-confidence (or decrease anxiety) leading to greater motivation to learn the target language (cited in Neff, 2007).

As a result, students who have visited a foreign country might have more confidence and desire to speak English with native speakers, and more integrative

motivation than the students who had never visited foreign country before. This result might be partially explanatory for the differences between PAU and BUSEL students' anxiety levels because only one student from PAU reported having gone abroad at PAU. The remaining 29 students reporting having gone abroad were BUSEL students.

Another significant difference was found between those students who, in their previous language learning experiences, had been taught by a native teacher and those who had not. The result indicated that participants who had had a native teacher either in high school or in their previous academic term experience less anxiety than participants who had not had a native teacher. This result is quite surprising because often in the literature, native teachers are seen as one of the most anxiety provoking factors for students. In a study conducted by Miyazato (2002), students confessed initial fear or anxiety toward native speaking teachers' classes, caused mainly by communication anxiety. Similarly, Wörde (1998) stated that students find it difficult to understand native teachers as they tend to speak quickly. As that study noted, when students cannot understand what the teacher says, they experience anxiety.

On the other hand, the result of the present study may make sense in the light of the findings of other studies, noting that since native teachers are likely to give more importance to communication skills, and to disregard grammar errors unless they hinder communication, students may feel more confident and less anxious while speaking with native teachers (Madrid & Canado, 2004 ; Üstünoğlu, 2007). In addition, Üstünoğlu stated that Turkish students find foreign teachers more open to communicate with students. Foreign teachers more frequently praise the students, address students by their names, make lessons enjoyable, use body language and treat students respectfully. This might mean that they are less strict than non-native teachers, and thus create a more relaxed atmosphere for students in their classes. Again, this

result might partially explain the differences between the overall anxiety mean scores of PAU and BUSEL students because out of 148 students who reported having been taught by a native teacher, only 53 students were PAU students, the rest belonged to BUSEL students.

The last significant result connected with background factors was related to the participants' having studied other foreign languages besides English. By looking at the results, it can easily be concluded that students who have studied other foreign languages besides English have lower anxiety levels than students who have not. This result suggests that the familiarity with the process of learning a foreign language tends to increase students' comfort with the process, and this is revealed in lower anxiety levels. This is consistent with the finding of Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000), who observed that students who had taken another foreign language at school tended to achieve more highly in their foreign language course at university. Since many researchers acknowledge that there has been a negative correlation between language anxiety and achievement that is, the lower anxiety the students experience the higher achievement scores they tend to receive (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Llinas & Garau, 2009; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991), then the findings of Onwuegbuzie et al. are not surprising. In other words, the greater the students' familiarity with the process of studying foreign languages, the lower their degree of language anxiety tends to be. The reason for this result may be that students, who have studied another foreign language in addition to English, might have developed personal strategies to learn a foreign language since they have had experience with the problems involved in language learning. Furthermore, there is evidence in the literature that language learners transfer skills from one language to another (Cunningham and Graham, 2000). After learning another language, individuals can transfer language learning strategies they've acquired

to subsequent language learning contexts and become better language learners in general.

Similarities and Differences between High and Low Anxiety Learners' Past Language Learning Experiences

The second half of the study involved interviews with students from the two universities. Students whose anxiety levels were either above or below average and seemed high or low according to the FLCAS questionnaire results were interviewed by the researcher. The selected 12 students had anxiety levels that were either between 1.12 and 1.73 indicating low level anxiety or between 3.62 and 4.64 indicating high anxiety. Considering the findings from the interviews, the relationship between foreign language anxiety and past language learning experiences is evident.

Past feelings and attitudes towards learning English

It is well documented in the research literature that in order to be most successful, students must be interested or motivated in the process of language learning. Awareness of progress in one's learning process can help sustain interest in learning and can stimulate learners for more challenging tasks. In contrast, a sense of not progressing is very likely to frustrate students, and may even lead them to adopt negative attitudes towards learning English (Shi, 1998). It was immediately obvious in this study that all of the high anxiety students reported unfavorable attitudes towards learning English whereas the low anxiety students reported just the opposite.

According to Krashen (1985), negative emotions are formed through low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety. Moreover, in his affective filter hypothesis, Krashen(1982) points out that success in language learning is associated with the student's emotional condition. A language learners' passion for participating in the class can have an impact on their success in second language acquisition. Generally speaking, students who see improvements in their language acquisition are optimistic

and ready for more learning. This confidence they build up throughout their learning process helps to lower their affective filter and to enable more progress in subsequent learning. Similarly, in this study, the common previous language learning experiences among the low anxiety participants were interest, enjoyment, and feeling “fantastic” when they found they had communicated well or learnt new things by using the language.

Conversely, worries about incompetence and lack of progress increase anxiety. Students in this case develop more unfavorable feelings and their affective filter remains up. The high affective filter prevents the process of input, and as a result, such language learners may develop mental blocks that hinder the acquisition of language. Likewise, in this study many high anxiety students reported feelings of frustration, hatred and disinterest towards their earlier English classes in which they felt they lacked the ability to learn English. This phenomenon seems to be quite vividly illustrated by the students’ remarks quoted previously in chapter 4.

Attitudes towards past English lessons

When asked about the specific attitudes towards English lessons, it was revealed that the two groups again reported very different attitudes related to their earlier English classes. It is interesting to note that while high anxiety participants saw English as a required course that had to be taken because it was a part of the curriculum, low anxiety participants emphasized the importance of studying English. These two different viewpoints are interesting. It can be noted from the students’ responses that all of the low anxiety participants had either “instrumental” or “integrative” motivation for studying English as a foreign language. The instrumental motivation revealed in the analysis is either educational (continue education, desire to study abroad) or professional (more opportunity, getting a job, better future). In this

study, the integrative motivation is characterized by the participants' positive attitudes towards the target language group and the desire to learn about English culture.

On the other hand, the responses of high anxiety students indicated that they had no motives for attending English classes other than that English classes were mandatory. This is consistent with the findings of Carreira's (2006) study which revealed that students who have practical reasons to study English and intellectual satisfaction tended to have a lower level of anxiety. Thus, it could be concluded that students in this study who had some clear motivation for learning English even at the high school level were likely to be less anxious than those who perceived learning English as only a compulsory activity.

Evaluation of the previous English courses

Throughout the interviews, high anxiety participants reported that in their secondary or high school English classes they mainly practiced grammar, vocabulary, or translation exercises and ignored other skills. Thus, the lessons for them were boring and monotonous. Koch and Terrel (1991) state that students may display negative attitudes toward the target language and language learning in general because of the teaching techniques associated with grammar-translation and audio-lingualism. From the students' excerpts, there is extensive evidence that the high anxiety students were almost invariably taught with the grammar translation method in their secondary or high school education.

On the other hand, low anxiety students reported that in their earlier English classes they practiced all four skills. Moreover, they recalled that since their teachers wanted them to develop their speaking abilities, they required them to actively participate in classroom activities. The dilemma, sometimes noted in the literature, is that activities like role plays, dialogues or skits which encourage creative and authentic

oral communication may also tend to encourage anxiety (Koch and Terrel, 1991). Interestingly, in this study it was revealed that greater exposure to communicative lessons may be a factor in eventually lowering anxiety, which is in contrast with Koch and Terrel. It appears that, despite the fact that those activities have also been cited as the most anxiety causing, if learners have experienced more communicative activities in the past, this exposure over time may gradually lead to lower anxiety. Another possible explanation of this discrepancy may well be that this variation of response is more due to differences in individual learning styles, cultural factors and particular learner factors rather than the activities themselves.

In the data analysis, I also noticed that high anxiety students were in conflict with respect to their reports of preferred and experienced activities. During the interviews, when high anxiety students were asked what subjects they currently liked and disliked most, most of them responded that grammar and vocabulary study were their most favorite lessons while speaking and listening were their least favorite. On the other hand, when they were asked to evaluate their previous lessons, they talked about the tediousness of grammar lessons and translation exercises. This contradiction may have been due to the students' perceiving themselves as lacking adequate speaking skills, and therefore tending to be reluctant to join in speaking activities or to volunteer answers. It can be suggested that these students might be trapped between their expectations and beliefs. On the one hand, they looked forward to a language classroom that would allow more student engagement and interaction in learning activities. On the other hand, the belief that they had weak abilities in English speaking made them want to avoid speaking lessons.

In addition, during the interviews, high anxiety students reported that in their high school English classrooms they mostly worked individually whereas low anxiety

students remember working most often in groups or in pairs. This is also significant because Koch and Terrel (1991) stated that students interacting in small groups or pairs relax and speak the target language more freely.

Evaluation of previous teaching style of the instructor

During the interviews, it was also found that high anxiety students were used to being passive in their learning. Their reports of prior English language learning experiences revealed that the most common method of teaching they faced generally focused on rote memorization, and that teacher-centered instruction was dominant in their classes. In addition, most of the high anxiety students reported that in their earlier English classes they were used to just listening to the teacher, and trying to take in whatever they were taught. Based on the high anxiety students' responses, it can be suggested that anxiety can be increased as a result of the teaching style of the instructor. Young (1991) stated that instructor beliefs about language teaching are a source of language anxiety. For example, instructors who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control, who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching, and who think their role is more like a "drill sergeant's than a facilitator's" may be contributing to learner language anxiety (428).

We should also take into consideration that since these high anxiety students were not used to being taught with more communicative teaching techniques, the new teaching style of their instructors at preparatory school might have increased their current anxiety levels. In other words, these high anxious students might have been bored in their earlier classes however, once exposed to new teaching techniques at preparatory school, they might have experienced anxiety.

Previous teacher and peer influence

The findings from the interviews revealed that teachers have perhaps one of the most influential roles to play overall in students' general feelings of foreign language learning anxiety. The outcome of Price's (1991) research indicating the instructor's significant role in students' developing language learner anxiety very much resembles those presented in the previous chapter of this study. The results of this study showed that each student had vivid memories of their past teachers and how these teachers had treated him or her. When students were asked about their past English teachers, their answers were surprisingly consistent. While all of the high anxiety participants immediately recalled negative stories, all the low anxiety participants remembered pleasant memories of their teachers. According to the students' comments, teacher generated anxiety stemmed either from the teacher's pedagogical practices or from the teacher's personality. The results showed that while some teachers had increased students' anxiety, such as those who treated students unequally, those who lacked proper qualifications, had a harsh manner, and criticized students, other teachers played an important role in alleviating anxiety in the classroom situation. According to the students' reports, these anxiety reducing teachers were characterized as being helpful, understanding, and successful in motivating their students.

In terms of the relationship between students and their peers, the interview results showed that Turkish students generally did not feel any peer pressure. Of the 12 participants, only one high anxiety student stated that he had been worried when he was asked to speak up in class, thinking that his friends might laugh at him. Other respondents, both high and low anxiety ones, commented that the classroom atmosphere and students' relationship with their friends were great, and they never made any connection between their friends' presence or attitudes and their own

anxiousness or nervousness. Similarly, in another study conducted in Turkey, (Bekleyen, 2004), it was found that peer influence was not reported to have much of an effect on the anxiety levels of the participants. Additionally, as with this study, the students in Bekleyen's study reported that the other students in the class were not rivals and their presence was not very important for them.

However, these results strikingly contrast with the broader literature findings. In a review of literature, it has been generally acknowledged that the influence of peer pressure is tremendous in language learning (Young, 1991; Tsui, 1996; Wörde, 2003). This difference between the findings of those earlier studies and this one can perhaps be partially explained by referring again to culture and to culture specific classroom interactions. As Oxford (1999) noted "behaviors vary across cultures, and what might seem like anxious behavior in one culture might be normal behavior in another culture" (cited in Zheng, p. 7). Thus, Turkish students might be less subject to peer pressure than other cultures.

Evaluation of past and present attitudes towards English

On the whole, the students reported that their past language learning experiences have a tremendous effect on them. Many high anxiety participants openly stated that their language anxiety might stem from their earlier negative experiences. This finding supports what MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) have argued about the negative language learning experiences of students. They state that language anxiety occurs only after students are exposed to several experiences with the second language context. If these experiences are negative, foreign language anxiety may begin to develop. They further assert that as negative experiences persist, foreign language anxiety may become a regular occurrence and the student may begin to expect to be nervous and ultimately to perform poorly.

Moreover, the data revealed how the positive or negative characteristics of past language learning experiences constitute the current affective attitude of these individuals towards their present English learning situation. For instance, high anxiety students clearly drew a connection between their negative previous experiences in learning a foreign language at high school and the way they felt now while learning English in their Preparatory School. What is interesting in this study is that participants reported that these negative or positive feelings can be changed easily depending on the teacher's treatment and teaching style. Thus, as a final comment, we are reminded again that the role of the language teacher is central in creating an anxiety-free (or at least anxiety-minimizing) learning environment.

Pedagogical Implications of the Study

The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety. Based on the results from this study, the relationship between foreign language anxiety and past language learning experiences is evident. Given that language anxiety has been shown to have a detrimental influence on foreign language learning, it is important that language instructors not only recognize that anxiety is a major contributor to students' lack of success in English classes but also assist them in overcoming their feelings of unease and discomfort. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations can be made.

First and foremost, teachers should acknowledge the existence of students' feelings of anxiety in foreign language learning and particularly in speaking the foreign language and then should take initiatives for its effective reduction. They should identify individuals with signs of stress and seek ways of helping them recover from these feelings. Familiarity with students' previous language learning experiences can

assist language teachers to understand and decode anxiety-related behaviors in some students. To help students recognize their feelings, Foss and Reitzel (1989) recommend that the instructors may ask students to verbalize their fears about language learning or about any negative experiences they had in their earlier English classes (cited in Young, 1991). In this way, students can see they are not alone in their anxieties. Another technique for reducing language anxiety that Foss and Reitzel suggest is using dialogue journals to lower students' language anxiety. From their journals, students can learn "to recognize their feelings of inadequacy so they may arrive at more realistic expectations" (p.405). Moreover, with the help of dialogue journals students can carry on a private discussion with their teacher, through which they can perhaps find the opportunity to write about their past language learning experiences.

As was stated in previous section, in this study, more traditional teaching techniques like the Grammar Translation Method and Audiolingual Method were found to be anxiety provoking factors. Since high anxiety students shared a lack of practice in speaking skills in their previous language learning experiences, it is not unexpected that they are more likely to experience speaking anxiety than students who practiced communicative approaches of teaching. Therefore, it is suggested that if students receive more communicative approaches at an early stage, they will be more familiar with it by later years, and that might reduce anxiety in a class that demands participation.

Moreover, this study seemed to reveal a relationship between students' working only individually and increased anxiety. Therefore, instructors can incorporate into their classrooms more pair work, can play more games, and can tailor their activities to the affective needs of the learners. Language games with an emphasis on

cooperative problem-solving as suggested by Young (1991) can be an effective way to create interest, motivate students, and reduce language anxiety.

It is important to note that one of the biggest complaints of high anxiety students was fear and lack of humor in their previous language learning experiences. Therefore, to decrease anxieties based on instructor-learner interactions, instructors should be reminded to give more positive reinforcement, to be supportive rather than authoritarian especially in error correction practices, to give students opportunities to interact with peers in pair and small group activities, to add humor in their language classrooms, to encourage students to speak out, and in general to provide a friendly and learning-supportive environments. Based on the high anxiety students' responses, the teaching style of the instructors are also seen as a source of anxiety provoking factor. In a review of the literature, teacher beliefs are closely related to their teaching style. Due to teachers' beliefs, some teachers may not be aware of what they should be doing in language classrooms. Teachers who believe that some intimidation is necessary for student motivation, that the instructor is the authority figure in the classroom, or that all errors should be corrected, might need to be encouraged to examine their own language teaching beliefs to see whether any of their beliefs might be negatively impacting learners. Because instructor beliefs about language learning are often reflected in teaching behavior, videotaping, peer observations, or class visits might facilitate the identification of teacher assumptions about language learning. Above all, instructors should involve themselves in language teaching workshops or conferences to keep pace with current language teaching research and practices.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations which should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. First, in the literature it has been truly acknowledged that self-

report measures may not engage the interest of the all respondents, which in turn, may foster response sets (i.e., answering all the questions with the same response) (Dörnyei, 2007) and since self-report measures were used in the first part of the study, the results necessarily depend on, and are therefore limited by the subjects' ability and willingness to respond accurately to the items. Second, as there was a limited time for carrying out this research, the number of the samples of the broader population came from just two universities. Therefore, it is difficult to generalize the findings of the study to all EFL students in Turkey.

Third, in order to investigate the complex issue of language anxiety and its relationship with past language learning experiences, only a limited time was available for the interviews (15-20 minutes/participant). In addition, more students could have been interviewed in case there are other factors affecting foreign language anxiety.

Last, due to time limitations, only the researcher did the analysis of the qualitative data, which limits its reliability. Another person could have also examined the interview data to see whether the same codes and themes emerged.

Suggestions for Further Research

Great effort was made to ensure the validity and reliability of the measures used in this study. However, replication of this study is necessary in order to validate the present findings. Such a replication of this study could be made with larger and more diverse samples of EFL students from both state and private universities in Turkey, to have a broader picture of Turkish EFL students' foreign language anxiety levels and their past language learning experiences.

In addition, it is suggested that different kinds of qualitative studies trying to obtain more in-depth findings of the past language learning experiences of students are recommended. For example, focused group interviews, class observations, and

learning logs written by the participants would give more information and insights into the language learning experiences of students. Moreover, a longitudinal study of the process of foreign language learning in the cases of some low and high anxiety students would allow for an exploration into the changes of affective variables, such as anxiety, over a longer period of language learning.

The current curricula being used at secondary or high school institutions can be analyzed to investigate whether they include learner-based instruction with communicative teaching methods to contribute to a more anxiety-free classroom atmosphere. Institutions and even individual teachers can be invited to do some kind of reflective or evaluative study to consider how their curricula and personal teaching approaches rate with respect to the anxiety issue.

Conclusion

The present study has provided information about Turkish preparatory students' foreign language anxiety levels with a specific reference to their previous language learning experiences. The results indicated that for both high and low anxiety students the role of past language learning experiences in forming their current attitudes towards language learning is a powerful one. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on identifying and addressing individual students' negative experiences.

The results suggest that the high anxiety participants' previous language learning experiences tended to focus too much on grammar rather than communicative competence. This kind of classroom instruction seems to have helped create students who are both passive and anxious about language learning. In addition, such teacher-dominated classrooms, which discourage student participation and fail to include language production activities, both hinder the development of students' English speaking abilities and lead to students becoming disappointed in their study of target

language. Conversely, communicative methods of language teaching, learner-centered instruction, and activities that allow student involvement seem to foster student encouragement and help to form low anxiety students.

Like other previous studies, this study also emphasizes the importance of language teachers in language learning. The role of the teacher is crucial in alleviating anxiety, more vital even perhaps than the methodology he or she uses. While authoritarian teaching styles create anxiety and hinder language learning, a style that helps create a warm and friendly classroom atmosphere will likely result in a learning context that is free from language anxiety and which supports language learning.

REFERENCES

- Aida, Y. (1994). Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's construct of foreign language anxiety: The case of students of Japanese. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78(2), 155-168.
- Allwright, D., & Bailey, K. M. (1991). *Focus on the language classroom: An introduction to classroom research for language teachers*. Great Britain: Cambridge University Press.
- Arnold, J., & Brown, H. D. (2000). A map of the terrain. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 1-24). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Aydın, B. (1999). *A study of sources of foreign language classroom anxiety in speaking and writing classes*. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation. Anadolu University, Eskişehir.
- Aydın, S., & Zengin, B. (2008). Yabancı dil öğreniminde kaygı: Bir literatür özeti. *Journal of Language and Linguistics Studies*, 4(1), 81-94.
- Bailey, K. M. (1983). Competitiveness and anxiety in adult second language acquisition: Looking at and through the diary studies. In H. W. Seliger & M. H. Long (Eds.), *Classroom oriented research in second language acquisition* (pp. 67-103). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Bekleyen, N. (2004). The influence of teachers and peers on foreign language classroom anxiety. *Dil Dergisi*, 123, 49-66. Retrieved from http://dergiler.ankara.edu.tr/detail.php?id=27&sayi_id=745.
- Campbell, C. (2000). Socializing with the teachers and prior language learning experience. In K. M. Bailey & D. Nunan (Eds.), *Voices from the language classroom: Qualitative research in second language acquisition* (pp.201-223). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Carreira, M. J. (2006). Relationships between motivation for learning English and foreign language anxiety: A pilot study. *JALT Hokkaido Journal*, 10, 16-28. Retrieved from www.jalthokkaido.net/jh_journal/2006/Matsuzaki.pdf.
- Chambers, G. N. (1998). Pupils' perceptions of the foreign language learning experience. *Language Teaching Research*, 2(3), 231-259.
- Cota, I. C. (1997). The role of previous educational learning experiences on current academic performance and second language proficiency of intermediate school limited English proficient students. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 21(2&3), 103-118.

- Crandall, J. (2000). Cooperative language learning and affective factors. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp.226-245). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Cunningham T. H., Graham, C. R. 2000. Increasing native English vocabulary recognition through Spanish Immersion: Cognate transfer from foreign to first language. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 92(1), pp. 37-49.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2007). Research methods in applied linguistics: Quantitative, Qualitative and mixed methodologies. Oxford University Press: USA.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Maldarez, A. (2000). The role of group dynamics in the foreign language teaching. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 155-169). United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Ehrman, M. (1996). *Understanding second language learning difficulties*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Foscolos, T. (2000). *ESL students' perceptions of their high school learning experiences*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta.
- Ganschow, L., Sparks, R. L., Anderson, R., Javorsky, J., Skinner, S., & Patton, J. (1994). Differences in language performance among high-average- and low-anxious college foreign language learners. *The Modern Language Journal*, 78, 41-55.
- Gardner, R. C., MacIntyre, P. D., & Lysynchuk, L. M. (1990). The affective dimension in second language programme evaluation. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 3(1), 39-64.
- Heron, J. (2006). *The complete facilitator's handbook*. London: Kogan Page Publishers.
- Horwitz, E. K. (1988). The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The Modern Language Journal*, 72, 283-294.
- Horwitz, E. K. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 112-126.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, B. M., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70, 125-132.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. A. (1991). Foreign language classroom anxiety. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

- Horwitz, E. K., & Young, D. J. (1991a). Preface. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. xii-xiv). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Horwitz, E. K., & Young, D. J. (Eds.). (1991b). *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 27-36). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Huang, H. W. (2005). *The relationship between learning motivation and speaking anxiety among EFL non-English major freshman in Taiwan*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Chaoyang University of Technology.
- Kavanoz, H. S. (2006). An exploratory study of English language teacher's beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge about learner-centeredness. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 5(2), 3-9.
- Kim, M. S. (1999). Cross-cultural perspectives on motivations of verbal communication: Review, critique, and a theoretical framework. *Communication Yearbook*, 22, 51-89.
- Kitano, K. (2001). Anxiety in the college Japanese language classroom. *The Modern Language Journal*, 85(1), 549-566.
- Kleinmann, H. (1977). Avoidance behaviour in adult second language acquisition. *Language Learning*, 27, 93-107.
- Koch, A. S., & Terrel, T. D. (1991). Affective reactions of foreign language students to Natural Approach activities and teaching techniques. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 109-126). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*: New York Pergamon Press.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis*. London: Longman.
- Kunt, N. (1997). *Anxiety and beliefs about language learning: A study of Turkish-speaking university students learning English in North Cyprus*. Unpublished Ph. D, Dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin.
- Köse, D. (2005). *Impact of dialogue journals on language anxiety and classroom affect*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Bilkent University, Ankara.
- Lin, H.-J., & Warden, C. A. (1998). Different attitudes among non-English major EFL students. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 4(10), 1-9. Retrieved from <<http://www.aitech.ac.jp=iteslj=Articles=Warden-Difference>>.
- Long, M. (2001). Focus on form: A design feature in language teaching methodology. In D. K. Bot, R. Ginsberg & C. Kramsch (Eds.), *Foreign language research in cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 180-190). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- MacIntyre, P. D. (1995). How does anxiety affect second language learning? A reply to Sparks and Ganschow. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 90-99.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (1999). Language anxiety: A review of the research for language teachers. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning: A practical guide to creating a low-anxiety classroom atmosphere* (pp. 24-45). USA: McGraw-Hill College.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning*, 39, 251-275.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991a). Language anxiety: Its relationship to other anxieties and to processing in native and second languages. *Language Learning*, 41, 513-534.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991b). Methods and results in the study of anxiety and language learning: A review of literature. *Language Learning*, 41(1), 85-117.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994a). The effects of induced anxiety on three stages of cognitive processing in computerized vocabulary learning. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 16, 1-17.
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1994b). The subtle effects of foreign language anxiety on cognitive processing in the second language learning. *Language Learning*, 44, 283-305.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Noels, K. A., & Clement, R. (1997). Biases in self-ratings of second language proficiency: The role of anxiety. *Language Learning*, 47, 265-287.
- Madrid, D., Canado, P. M. (2004). Teacher and student preferences of native and nonnative foreign language teachers. *Porta Linguarum*, 2, 125-138.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miyazato, K. (2002). *Anxiety or admiration?: Japanese EFL learners' perceptions of native speaker teachers' classes*. Paper presented at the JALT, Shizuoka.
- Neff, E. P. (2007). The roles of anxiety and motivation in language learner task performance. *Doshisha Studies in Language and Culture*, 10(1), 23-42.
Retrieved from
http://elib.doshisha.ac.jp/cgi-bin/retrieve/sr_bookview.cgi/U_CHARSET.utf-8/BD00011695/Body/006010010002.pdf
- Ohata, K. (2005a). Language anxiety from the teacher's perspective: Interviews with seven experienced ESL/EFL teachers. *Journal of Language Learning*, 3(1), 133-155.

- Ohata, K. (2005b). Potential sources of anxiety for Japanese learners of English: Preliminary case interviews with five Japanese college students in the U.S. *TESL-EJ*, 9(3), 1-21.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., Bailey, P., & Daley, C. E. (2000). Cognitive, affective, personality, and demographic predictors of foreign language achievement. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 94(1), 3-15.
- Oxford, R. L. (1999). Anxiety and the language learner: New insights. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 58-67). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oxford, R. L. (2000). Anxiety and the language learner: New insights. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp. 58-67). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Price, M. L. (1991). The subjective experiences of foreign language anxiety: Interviews with anxious students. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 101-108). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Puchta, H. (2000). Creating a learning culture to which students want to belong: The application of Neuro-Linguistic Programming to language teaching. In J. Arnold (Ed.), *Affect in language learning* (pp.246-259).United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Scovel, T. (1991). The effect of affect on foreign language learning: A review of the anxiety research. In E. K. Horwitz & D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory and research to classroom implications* (pp. 15-25). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Sheorey, R. (2006). Learning and teaching English in India Available from <http://books.google.com.tr/books?id=QYHAKbIoznYC&pg=PA13&lpg=PA13&dq>.
- Shi, Y. (1998). *Learning and instructional experiences of English as a foreign language in contemporary China*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, China.
- Symonds, P. M. (1951). Introduction to special issue on classroom dynamics. *Journal of Educational Research*, 45, 81-88.
- Şakrak, G. (2009). *The relationship between emotional intelligence and foreign language anxiety in the Turkish EFL context*. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Bilkent University, Ankara.
- Truitt, N. S. (1995). *Anxiety and beliefs about language learning*. Unpublished Ph D. Dissertation, The University of Texas, Austin.

- Tse, L. (2000). Student perceptions of foreign language study: A qualitative analysis of foreign language autobiographies. *The Modern Language Journal*, 84, 69-84.
- Turula, A. (2002). Language anxiety and classroom dynamics: A study of adult learners. *English Teaching Forum*, 40(2), 28-33.
- Üstünoğlu, E. (2007). University students' perceptions of native and non-native teachers. *Teachers and Teaching*, 13(1), 63-79. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13540600601106096>.
- Wörde, R. (1998). *An investigation of students' perspectives on foreign language anxiety*. Unpublished Ph. D, George Mason University, Fairfax:Virginia.
- Wörde, R. (2003). Students' perspectives on foreign language anxiety. *Inquiry*, 8(1), 27-44.
- Yan, J. X., Horwitz, E. K. (2008). Learners' perceptions of how anxiety interacts with personal and instructional factors to influence their achievement in English: A qualitative analysis of EFL learners in China. *Language Learning*, 58(1), 151-183.
- Yılmaz, K. (2007). Learner-centred instruction as a means to realize democratic education: The problems and constraints confronting learner-centred instruction in Turkey. *Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development*, 4(3), 15-28. Retrieved from <http://sleid.cqu.edu.au>
- Young, D. J. (1986). The relationship between anxiety and foreign language oral proficiency ratings. *Foreign Language Annals*, 19, 439-445.
- Young, D. J. (1990). An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, 23, 539-553.
- Young, D. J. (1991). Creating a low anxiety classroom environment: What does language anxiety research suggest? *The Modern Language Journal*, 75(4), 426-439.
- Young, D. J. (1992). Language anxiety from the foreign language specialist's perspective: Interview with Krashen, Omaggio, Hadley, Terrel, and Rardin. *Foreign Language Annals*, 25, 157-172.
- Zheng, Y. (2008). Anxiety and second/foreign language learning revisited. *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education*, 1(1), 1-12.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A- Questionnaire for Background Information

Dear Participant,

I am a student at Bilkent University, in the MA TEFL program. This study will be done for my thesis. The aim of this study is to find out the relationship between the past language learning experiences and foreign language anxiety of Turkish university students. I would like you to assist me by answering the following questionnaire items. Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept completely confidential and will not be revealed to third persons. For the success of this investigation, please give honest answers and do not leave out any questions. There will be interviews in the second phase of the study. If you would like to participate in the interviews, please tick (✓) the box below.

If you would like to get further information about this study, please feel free to send me an e-mail. Thank you for your cooperation.

I would like to participate in the interviews. ☐

Gülşen Gültekin Çakar
gultekin.gulsen@gmail.com

Please choose the appropriate option or complete the blanks.

1) Gender:

2) At which level are you a student this term?

Pre- Intermediate ☐

Intermediate ☐

Upper-Intermediate ☐

3) How long did you study English before you started university?

- a) Never b) 1-3 years c) 4-6 years d) 7 and over

4) In what type of school did you study?

- a) General high school b) Technical high school c) Anatolian high school

- d) Super high school e) Private high school f) Other_____

5) Have you ever had a native English speaker teacher?

☐ Yes

☐ No

6) Have you ever traveled to an English speaking country?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes,

What country? _____

How long were you there? _____

7) Have you ever studied another language other than English and Turkish?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes,

Which language/s? _____

How long did you study? _____

APPENDIX B- Genel Bilgi Formu

Değerli Öğrenci,

Ben Gülsen Gültekin Çakar, Bilkent Üniversitesi'nde “Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Eğitimi” bölümünde yüksek lisans eğitimi görüyorum. Geçmiş dil öğrenim deneyimleri ve yabancı dil endişesi arasındaki ilişkiyi bulmaya yönelik bir çalışma yapmaktayım. Hazırlayacağım tez için sizlerin yardımınıza ihtiyacım var.

Eğer bu çalışmaya katılmak istiyorsanız sizlerden ilişikteki iki kısımdan oluşan ankete yanıt vermeniz istenmektedir. Ayrıca, bu çalışmanın ikinci kısmında mülakatlar yapılacaktır. Eğer mülakata gönüllü katılmak istiyorsanız lütfen aşağıdaki kutuyu işaretleyiniz.

Bu ankette verdiğiniz cevaplar tamamen gizli tutulacak ve hiçbir şekilde üçüncü kişilere açıklanmayacaktır. Araştırmanın sağlıklı bir şekilde yürütülmesi için hiçbir soruyu atlamadan tüm sorulara samimi bir şekilde cevap veriniz.

Bu çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmek isterseniz, benimle e-mail adresimden iletişim kurmakta çekinmeyin. Katılımınız için teşekkür ediyorum.

Daha sonra yapılacak olan mülakata gönüllü olarak katılmak istiyorum. ☐

Gülsen Gültekin Çakar
MA TEFL Programı
Bilkent Üniversitesi, ANKARA
gultekin.gulsen@gmail.com

Genel Bilgi Formu

Lütfen soruları dikkatle cevaplayınız.

1) Cinsiyetiniz: a) Bayan b) Erkek

2) Hazırlık sınıfındaki kurunuz (seviyeniz) nedir?

☐ Alt-orta düzey (Pre-intermediate)

☐ Orta düzey (Intermediate)

☐ Üst düzey (Upper-intermediate)

3) Üniversiteye başlamadan önce kaç yıl İngilizce dersi aldınız?

a) Hiç b) 1-3 yıl c) 4-6 yıl d) 7 ve üzeri

4) Öğrenim gördüğünüz lisenin türü nedir?

a) Düz Lise b) Meslek Lisesi c) Anadolu Lisesi d) Süper Lise

e) Özel Lise f) Diğer _____

5) Hiç yabancı bir İngilizce hocanız oldu mu?

☐

Evet

☐

Hayır

6) İngilizce dilinin konuşulduğu herhangi bir ülkede bulundunuz mu?

☐

Evet

☐

Hayır

Evet ise,

Ülke adı? _____

Ne kadar kaldınız? _____

7) İngilizce haricinde başka eğitimini gördüğünüz diller var mı ?

☐

Evet

☐

Hayır

Evet ise,

Hangi dil/ diller? _____

Kaç yıldır eğitimini gördünüz? _____

Bu dili/ dilleri öğrenmeye kaç yaşında başladınız? _____

APPENDIX C- FLCAS Questionnaire

Directions: This questionnaire is composed of 33 statements. Please read the sentences attentively and tick (✓) your position on the scale provided.

QUESTIONS	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't worry about my mistakes in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
6. During the language class, I find myself thinking about things that I have nothing to do with the course.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I worry about the consequences of failing in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
12. In language class I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	1	2	3	4	5
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5

19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I always feel that other students speak the language better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
28. When I am on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word that language teacher says.	1	2	3	4	5
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I get nervous when the language teachers asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX D- FLCAS Anketi

Yönerge: Aşağıdaki ifadeyi okuyun, sonra da sizin için uygun olanımı belirtin.

SORULAR	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. İngilizce derslerinde konuşurken asla kendimden emin olmam.	1	2	3	4	5
2. İngilizce dersince hata yapmaktan endişelenmem.	1	2	3	4	5
3.İngilizce derslerinde konuşma sırasının bana geleceğini bildiğimde aşırı heyecanlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
4.İngilizce öğretmenimin söylediklerini anlamamak beni huzursuz eder.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Daha fazla İngilizce dersleri almak beni rahatsız etmez.	1	2	3	4	5
6. İngilizce dersinde kendimi dersle ilgisiz şeyler düşünürken bulurum.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Diğer öğrencilerin dil konusunda benden daha iyi olduğunu düşünmeden edemiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
8. İngilizce sınavlarında genellikle rahatımdır.	1	2	3	4	5
9. İngilizce derslerinde hazırlıksız konuşmak zorunda olduğumda paniğe kapılırım.	1	2	3	4	5
10. İngilizce derslerinde başarılı olamamak beni endişelendirir.	1	2	3	4	5
11. İngilizce derslerinin insanları neden bu kadar ürküttüğünü anlamıyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
12. İngilizce derslerinde o kadar çok heyecanlanırım ki bildiklerimi de unuturum.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Derste gönüllü cevap vermekten çekinirim.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Anadili İngilizce olan insanlarla konuşurken rahatsız olmam.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Öğretmenin düzelttiği hataların ne olduğunu anlamamak beni sinirlendirir.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Derse iyi hazırlandığım zaman bile huzursuz olurum.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Çoğu zaman derse gitmek içimden gelmez.	1	2	3	4	5
18. İngilizce derslerinde derste konuşurken kendime güvenirim.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Öğretmenin yaptığım her hatayı düzeltecek olmasından korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5

20. İngilizce dersine kaldırıldığında kalbimin çok hızlı attığını hissedebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Sınavlara ne kadar çok çalışırsam kafam o kadar çok karışır.	1	2	3	4	5
22. İngilizce derslerine iyi hazırlanmak için baskı hissetmiyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Her zaman diğer öğrencilerin İngilizceyi benden iyi konuştuklarını hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Diğer öğrencilerin önünde İngilizce konuşurken rahat olamam.	1	2	3	4	5
25. İngilizce dersi çok çabuk ilerliyor, geride kalmaktan endişe ediyorum.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Diğer derslere göre kendimi dil dersinde daha gergin ve heyecanlı hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
27. İngilizce dersinde konuşurken heyecanlanırım ve aklım karışır.	1	2	3	4	5
28. İngilizce dersine girerken kendimden çok emin ve rahatım.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Öğretmenin söylediği her kelimeyi anlamazsam heyecanlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Bir dili konuşmak için öğrenilmesi gerekli olan kuralların sayısı beni sıkar.	1	2	3	4	5
31. İngilizce konuşursam diğer öğrencilerin bana güleceğinden korkarım.	1	2	3	4	5
32. İngilizceyi ana dili olanlarla konuşurken kendimi rahat hissederim.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Öğretmen daha önce hazırlanmadığım sorular sorduğunda heyecanlanırım.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX E- Participants' FLCAS Mean Scores

	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	Std. Dev
Items	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	M	SD
10.I worry about the consequences of failing in my foreign language class.	23	8.7	16	5.6	10	3.5	83	29.1	151	53.0	4.12	1.253
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	16	5.6	46	16.1	33	11.5	126	44.1	64	22.4	3.62	1.162
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	16	5.6	77	26.9	42	14.7	109	38.1	41	14.3	3.29	1.172
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	26	9.1	71	24.8	41	14.3	98	34.3	49	17.1	3.26	1.259
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	28	9.8	90	31.5	47	16.4	82	28.8	38	13.3	3.04	1.238
6. During the language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	23	8.0	79	27.6	84	29.4	72	25.2	27	9.4	3.00	1.112
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	27	9.8	87	31.6	64	16.5	76	28.7	31	13.3	2.99	1.179
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	36	12.6	87	30.4	60	21.0	59	20.7	42	14.7	2.96	1.291
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language class.	30	10.5	81	28.3	85	22.7	65	22.7	4	8.4	2.90	1.125
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	30	10.5	94	32.9	62	21.7	80	28.0	19	6.6	2.87	1.134
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	36	12.6	103	36.1	43	15.0	74	25.9	29	10.1	2.85	1.231
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	30	10.5	107	37.4	57	20.0	70	24.6	21	7.3	2.81	1.142
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	25	8.7	125	43.7	60	21.00	57	19.9	18	6.3	2.71	1.079

28. When I am on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	24	8.4	113	39.5	85	29.7	54	18.9	9	3.1	2.69	0.977
3. I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in language class.	52	18.2	106	37.1	42	14.7	58	20.3	27	9.4	2.66	1.254
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	41	14.3	112	39.2	53	18.5	60	21.0	19	6.6	2.66	1.156
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	46	16.1	95	33.2	72	25.2	57	19.9	15	5.2	2.65	1.127
2. I don't worry about my mistakes in language class.	49	17.1	109	38.1	46	16.1	58	20.3	23	8.0	2.64	1.213
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in language class.	43	15.0	113	39.6	48	16.8	65	22.7	16	5.6	2.64	1.153
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	44	15.4	115	40.4	44	15.4	64	15.4	18	6.3	2.64	1.172
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	38	13.3	108	37.8	69	24.1	59	20.6	18	3.8	2.64	1.071
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	38	13.3	108	37.8	78	27.3	50	17.5	11	3.8	2.61	1.045
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	42	14.7	134	47.0	36	12.6	52	18.2	21	7.3	2.56	1.163
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	52	18.2	114	40.0	49	17.2	57	20.0	13	4.6	2.53	1.137
23. I always feel that other students speak the language better than I do.	46	16.1	115	40.2	66	23.2	43	15.1	15	5.3	2.53	1.093
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	25	8.7	151	52.8	50	17.5	51	17.8	8	2.8	2.53	0.977
14. I would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.	56	19.6	112	39.3	51	17.9	55	19.3	11	3.8	2.48	1.125
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	58	20.3	105	36.7	64	22.5	4	16.1	12	4.2	2.47	1.112
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	23	8.0	39	13.6	38	13.3	110	38.5	75	26.2	2.39	1.236
12. In language class I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	72	25.2	114	40.1	57	20.1	30	10.06	11	3.9	2.27	1.074

16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	95	33.3	120	42.1	33	11.5	29	10.1	7	2.4	2.07	1.064
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	73	25.5	157	55.1	27	9.4	21	7.3	7	2.4	2.06	.931
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	78	27.3	148	51.7	29	10.1	25	8.7	5	1.7	2.06	0.94

APPENDIX F- Informed Consent Form

Dear Interviewee,

You have been asked to participate in a study which is intended to explore the past language learning experiences of EFL students and investigate the extent of their foreign language anxiety.

In order to achieve the goals of the study, first you answered a questionnaire, which investigated your foreign language anxiety level. This interview will be the second phase of the study. You are going to be interviewed in order for the researcher to have deeper insights into your actual accounts of past language learning experiences.

Your participation in the interview will bring valuable contribution to the findings of the study. Any information received will be kept confidential and your name will not be revealed. This study involves no risk to you.

I would like to thank you once again for your participation and cooperation.

Gülsen Gültekin Çakar
MA TEFL Program
Bilkent University
gultekin.gulsen@gmail.com

I have read and understood the information given above. I hereby agree to my participation in the study.

Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX G- Thesis Interview Questions

- 1) What is the first thing that comes into your mind when you think about your past English classes?
- 2) What did you feel about learning English in primary/middle/high school?
- 3) What were the things you liked most about your English classes? What were those you disliked most?
- 4) What kind of lessons did you have? What aspects of language were you generally practicing?
- 5) Do you remember the books you used in your previous English classes? Did you like them or not?
- 6) What types of activities do you remember doing in your English classes?
- 7) In your past education experiences did you ever have an English teacher who influenced you greatly? In what way?
- 8) Have you ever thought that your friends were better or worse than you in English classes? If so, did this thought affect your behavior?
- 9) In the last few months of your English learning experience, have any of your feelings towards learning English changed?
- 10) Do you think your past language learning experiences have affected your present attitude towards learning English?

APPENDIX H- Tez Görüşme Soruları

- 1) Geçmiş İngilizce derslerini düşündüğünüzde aklına gelen ilk şey nedir?
- 2) İlköğretim ve lise eğitimin sırasında İngilizce öğrenmek senin için nasıl bir duyguydu?
- 3) İngilizce dersinin en sevdiğin ve en sevmediğin yanı neydi?
- 4) O dönemlerdeki İngilizce dersleriniz nasıl geçiyordu? Daha çok neleri pratik ediyordunuz?
- 5) O döneminde kullandığınız İngilizce ders kitaplarını hatırlıyor musunuz?
Kitapları nasıl buluyordunuz?
- 6) O dönemdeki İngilizce derslerinizde ne tür aktiviteler yapıyordunuz?
- 7) Geçmiş İngilizce öğreniminizde sizi büyük ölçüde etkileyen bir öğretmeniniz oldu mu? Olduysa ne yönde etkiledi?
- 8) O dönemlerde İngilizce dersinde arkadaşlarının sende iyi veya kötü olması sizi etkiler miydi?
- 9) Üniversiteye başladığınızdan beri İngilizceye karşı duygularınızda veya düşüncelerinizde herhangi bir değişiklik oldu mu?
- 10) Sizce geçmiş yabancı dil öğrenme deneyiminin bugünkü duygu ve düşüncelerine etkisi var mıdır?

APPENDIX I- Sample of Interview Transcription

R: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you think about your English classes?

S1: Fear

R: What do you mean by “fear”?

S1: Fear of being unsuccessful. I usually saw myself successful in other classes, but when it comes to English lesson, I always felt unsuccessful and this made me feel uncomfortable.

R: Interviewer: What did you feel about learning English?

S1: I didn't like..... It was very boring..... I didn't like it... I hated every minute.

R: What kind of lessons did you have? What aspects of language were you generally practicing?

S1: We studied only grammar. The teacher used to write all the grammar rules and we used to copy them from the board. I don't remember practicing speaking, listening, or writing.

R: Then, what kinds of activities were you practicing?

S1: Only grammar activities... they were especially from the workbook.

R: Interviewer: Were you working individually or in pairs or groups?

S1: I remember doing the tasks or exercises individually.

R: Do you remember the books you used in your previous English classes? Did you like them or not?

S1: The books were classic MEB books. There were three... the green, the black, and the white one. I didn't like them.

I: Was your English teacher speaking Turkish or English when lecturing?

S1: Our teacher was lecturing in Turkish... he never spoke English.

R: In your past education have you ever had an English teacher who influenced you greatly? In what way?

S1: My primary school teacher was very quick-tempered. He was shouting all the time without any specific reason. I was ten years old and I was affected by his unkind attitude very much. He was not only shouting but also I remember he slapped my face once because I didn't do my homework. Maybe it is because of him I hate English.

R: Have you ever thought that your friends were better or worse than you in English classes? If yes, did this thought affect your behavior?

S1: I was not interested in my friends' grades. I am not a competitive type person.

R: In the last few months of your English learning experience have any of your feelings towards learning English changed?

S1: My attitude towards learning English didn't change and it won't change. If I had known that the medium of instruction in PAU was English, I would not have come here.

R: Do you think your past language learning experiences have affected your present attitude towards learning English?

S1: I definitely believe that past language learning experiences affect our present attitude towards learning English. I wish I hadn't been taught English by that teacher.

APPENDIX J- Öğrenciyle Yapılan Bir Görüşme Örneği

I: İngilizce derslerini düşündüğünde ilk aklına gelen şey nedir?

S1: Korku

I: Korku derken ne demek istiyorsun?

S1: Başarısız olma korkusu. Yapamama korkusu. Genelde diğer derslerde başarılı bir insanımdır ama İngilizce dersimde kendimi her zaman başarısız gördüm. Bu beni hep rahatsız ederdi.

I: İngilizce öğrenirken neler hissediyordun?

S1: Ben İngilizceyi hiç sevmedim, çok sıkıcıydı. İngilizce dersinin her dakikasından nefret ettiğimi söyleyebilirim.

I: Ortaokul veya lise döneminde dersleriniz nasıl geçiyordu? Daha çok neleri pratik ediyordunuz?

S1: Sadece dilbilgisi üzerine çalışıyorduk. Öğretmen dilbilgisi kurallarını tahtaya yazardı bizde tahtadan deftere geçirirdik.

I: Sadece dilbilgisi mi görürdünüz? Konuşma, dinleme, yazma çalışmaları yapmaz mıydınız?

S1: Yok hayır. Sadece dilbilgisi. Derste İngilizce konuştuğumuzu veya İngilizce bir şeyler dinlediğimizi veya yazdığımızı hiç hatırlamıyorum.

I: O zaman ne tarz alıştırmalar yapıyordunuz?

S1: Dediğim gibi sadece dilbilgisi alıştırmaları. Zaten onlarda çalışma kitabından oluyordu.

I: Peki, hiç grup çalışması yapıyor muydunuz?

S1: Yok hiç öyle grup çalışması falan yapmazdık. Tek başımıza soruları çözerdik, sonra hoca onları kontrol ederdi.

I: Öğretmeniniz dersi İngilizce mi anlatırdı?

S1: Yok yaaa nerdeee. Öğretmenin İngilizce bildiğinden bile şüpheliyim yani. Sadece soruları okurken İngilizce okurdu kitaptan.

I: Peki, lisede kullandığın kitapları hatırlıyor musun? Kitapları nasıl buluyordun?

S1: Klasik Milli Eğitim Bakanlığının kitaplarıydı. 3 taneydi yeşil, siyah, beyaz.

Kitapları sevmiyordum, sıkıcı buluyordum.

I: Geçmiş İngilizce eğitimde seni büyük ölçüde etkileyen İngilizce öğretmenin oldu mu?

S1: Evet oldu. İlkokul öğretmenin çok sinirli bir insandı.

I: Neden bağıyordu acaba? Hatırlıyor musun?

S1:Sebeplerini hatırlamıyorum ama devamlı bağırdı. Şiddet kullandığı da oluyordu.

Ben o zaman 10 yaşındaydım ve ister istemez çok etkilenmiştim onun bu tavrından.

I: Şiddet derken ne demek istiyorsun?

S1: Bir keresinde ödevimi yapmamıştım o zaman tokat atmıştı bana.

I: Arkadaşlarının iyi veya kötü olması seni etkiler miydi hiç?

S1: Arkadaşlarımın notları beni etkilemezdi. Hırslı bir insan değilimdir ben. Ya benim kimseyle yarışmak gibi bir amacım yoktu. Onların bazı dersleri iyiye benim bazı derslerim iyiydi.

I: Üniversiteye başladığından itibaren İngilizceye karşı duygularında veya düşüncelerinde herhangi bir değişiklik var mı?

S1: İngilizceye karşı olan tutumum hiç değişmedi ve değişmeyecek. Ben burada İngilizce hazırlık olduğunu bilseydim, üniversite sınavında asla burayı tercih etmezdim.

I: Sence geçmiş yabancı dil öğrenme deneyiminin bugünkü duygu ve düşüncelerine etkisi var mı?

S1: Kesinlikle katılıyorum. Her zaman şunu söylerim eğer ilkokulda o hoca değil de başka birisi İngilizce dersine girseydi ben böyle olmazdım. Keşke ilk İngilizce öğrenme deneyimim o hoca tarafından olmasaydı.