

Examination of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety and Achievement in Foreign Language in Turkish University Students in Terms of Various Variables¹

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Abstract

This correlational survey study aimed to investigate whether the Turkish prep-class students' foreign language classroom anxiety levels and foreign language achievement significantly differ in terms of such variables as their gender, their experience abroad, perceived level of income and any third language (other than Turkish and English) they knew. Moreover, the study also tried to identify whether the sub-dimensions of the foreign language classroom anxiety scale—speaking anxiety in language class, interest towards language class and anxiety of talking with native speaker—significantly differ in terms of the independent variables afore-mentioned. And the last aim of the study was to understand whether there is any significant correlation between the foreign language classroom anxiety and foreign language achievement. The participants of the study was consisted of 683 students who, having been registered to study at various engineering departments of Fırat University, were receiving compulsory English preparatory education at the School of Foreign Languages during the academic year of 2013-2014. In order to measure the students' foreign language classroom anxiety, the scale developed by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986) and adapted into Turkish by Gürsu (2011) was used. The grades of the students were taken from the School of Foreign Languages. For data analysis, such statistical tests as percentage, frequency, t-test, ANOVA, eta-squared and Pearson's Correlation were employed. As a result, it was understood that there is a negative correlation between foreign language classroom anxiety and foreign language achievement.

Keywords: Language Anxiety, Language Achievement, Gender, Economic status, Experience abroad

1. Introduction

One of the foremost goals of any national education system can be said to make individuals obtain knowledge and skills necessary for earning their own living, and to make them participate into labour force as employable people (Gürüz, 2008). The increasingly outstanding one of these target skills nowadays is the ability to communicate in a foreign language. In fact, in today's globalizing world, the widespread use of mass media, the internet in particular, and the ease of international travel have made intercultural communication more necessary than ever, and have in turn led to the phenomenal recognition of a '*lingua franca*' (Jenkins, 2009). In this context, one of the key competencies required in the labour force of the global knowledge economy is said to be the ability of oral and written communication in one's mother language and at least one foreign language, especially in English (Gürüz, 2008). However, the fact that teaching and learning foreign languages in Turkey have already turned out to be a problem is almost a finding shared by many researchers (Demirel, 1999, 2003; Işık, 2008; Arslan, 2009; Haznedar, 2010; Bayraktaroğlu, 2012; Tosun, 2012). We think that one of the important obstacles in front of foreign language learning in our country is foreign language anxiety. In numerous researches carried out in Turkey (Demirdaş&Bozdoğan, 2013; Aksoy, 2012; Demirdaş, 2012; Karaca, 2012; Öztürk, 2012; Burgucu, 2011; Karabey, 2011; Aydemir, 2011; Er, 2011; Sağlamel, 2009; Ergün, 2011; Balemir, 2009; Aydın, 2008; Sertçetin, 2006; Dalkılıç, 2001), it was identified that learners experience a remarkable and statistically significant level of anxiety in learning a foreign language. Regarded as a barrier in front of achievement in

¹ This study is taken from the first author's PHD dissertation

foreign language learning (Aida, 1994; Arnold & Brown, 1999; Horwitz, 2001), anxiety has almost unanimously been reported to be minimized in the relevant literature (Morreale, 2011; Huang, 2012).

Foreign language anxiety, a sophisticated unique structure involving learners' own beliefs, emotions and behaviours related to learning in foreign language classes (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Aida, 1994), is more often a speaking skill-oriented feeling of appraisal (Dewaele, 2007). In studies carried out on students (Horwitz et. al, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Campbell & Ortiz, 1991; Onwuegbuzie et. al, 1999), foreign language classes have been reported to be the most anxiety-creating classes. It is understood from the relevant studies that the relationship between anxiety and academic achievement mostly displays a mutual structure. As learner's academic performance worsens, his/her level of anxiety related to any particular academic tasks increases (Huberty, 2009). Likewise, it is also known that an anxious learner will academically fail.

In many national and international research studies (Proulx, 1991; Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; Demirdaş & Bozdoğan, 2013; Demirdaş, 2012; Koroğlu, 2010; Gülözer, 2010; Kılıç, 2007; Batumlu, 2006; Gülsün, 1997; Kunt, 1997; Trylong, 1987; Saito et. al, 1999; Phillips, 1992; Ganschow et. al, 1994; Sparks et. al, 2000; von Wörde, 2003; Chan & Wu, 2004; Hao et. al, 2004; Awan et. al, 2010; Wang, 2011), it is reported that there is a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement or proficiency in foreign language. On the other hand, some studies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; Young, 1992; Horwitz, 1990; as cited in Brown, 2000) note down the benefit of facilitating anxiety in learning foreign languages. In Bailey (1983)'s study on competition and anxiety in foreign language learning, facilitating anxiety was said to be closely related to competition, and was one of the keys to success. And in the study in question, the positive effects of competition were explained with the facilitating anxiety structure (Brown, 2000). Sargül (2000) reports that there is no statistically significant relationship between these two variables. Such different findings, though the dimensions of the anxiety-achievement relationship are already known, have led to the need to research the boundaries of these dimensions more. Moreover, it is well-known that language learning is affected by cultural codes. Thus, even if the research problems may be similar, there could be different findings derived from the cultural codes, which makes it necessary to research the case more. In this study, we tried to investigate whether there is any correlation between the university students' foreign language anxiety and their achievement in foreign language learning, and whether these two dependent variables significantly differ in terms of such independent variables as gender, perceived economic status, experience abroad and any third language other than Turkish and English. What makes this research study unique and contributing to the literature is the fact that it focused on some variables such as experience abroad and the role of third language, which were observed not to have been studied in the Turkish context before.

2. Method

The research was conducted in the correlational survey method. The correlational survey models are research models aiming to determine the existence and /or level of covariance of two and more variables (Karasar, 2008). In the study, it was investigated whether there was any correlation between the university students', receiving English prep-class education, foreign language anxiety and their achievement in foreign language learning, and whether these two variables significantly differed in terms of such variables as gender, perceived economic status, experience abroad and any third language other than Turkish and English. It was further tried to reveal whether the sub-dimensions of the foreign language classroom anxiety scale- speaking anxiety in language class, interest towards language class and anxiety of talking with native speaker- significantly differed in terms of the independent variables afore-mentioned. And the study also tried to identify the relationships between the sub-dimensions of the foreign language anxiety and achievement in foreign language.

3. Participants

The participants of the study was consisted of 683 students who, having been registered to study at various engineering departments of Firat University, were receiving compulsory English preparatory education at the School of Foreign Languages during the academic year of 2013-2014. The univariate normality of the data was tested with certain statistical and graphical methods. P-P plot graphics and such statistical tests as kurtosis and skewness coefficients were evaluated. It was observed that these criteria were achieved. The independent variable characteristics of 683 students are given in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Research Participants

	Groups	Frequency (n=683)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	215	31.5
	Male	468	68.5
Experience-abroad	Yes	64	9.4
	No	619	90.6
Perceived Economic Status	Low	58	8.5
	Average	587	85.9
	High	38	5.6
Third language other than Turkish and English	Yes	183	26.8
	No	500	73.2

It can be seen from Table 1 that 68.5 % of the participants are male, 31.5 % female, and 90.6 % of them do not have experience abroad. Moreover, 85.9 % of the participants perceive their economic status as middle. The 73.2 % of the students do not know any third language other than Turkish and English.

4. Data Collection

For measuring the foreign language anxiety of the students, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) was used. The latest validity-reliability of the scale was understood to have been carried out by Gürsu (2011). As a result of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses of the scale, it was determined that the scale had a three-factor structure. These factors are “*Speaking Anxiety in Language Class*”, “*Interest towards Language Class*”, “*and Anxiety of Talking with Native Speakers*”. A reliability test was conducted in the present study for the scale, and the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was calculated as .751.

The students’ foreign language achievement grades were collected from the School of Foreign Languages. The grades are the mean of what the students got from the *Main Course*, *Grammar* and *Reading* classes in the first and second terms, and the mean score of the proficiency exam the students took at the end of the year. The general achievement grades of the students were determined by 60 % of the tests, quizzes and exams of two terms, and 40 % of the end-of-the-term proficiency exam. In order for a student to be successful at the compulsory English prep-class, he/she has to get at least 50 from the proficiency exam, and 70 as a general achievement grade.

For data analysis, such statistical tests as percentage, frequency, t-test, ANOVA, effect-size (eta-squared) and Pearson’s Correlation were employed. For the interpretation of the effect sizes, the effect size rates cited by Büyükkökçü, Çokluk and Köklü (2012:189) from Green and Salkind (1997) were taken into account. These rates are at .01, .06 and .14 levels and as small, medium and large respectively.

5. Findings

The first investigation of the study was whether the foreign language classroom anxiety scale with its sub-dimensions and foreign language achievement significantly differed in terms of gender variable. The relevant findings are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Comparison of Foreign Language Anxiety Scale with its Sub-dimensions and Foreign Language Achievement in terms of Gender

Variables	Gender	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	t	P	η^2
Foreign language anxiety	Female	215	3.00	0.41	1.035	-1.043	0.297	.002
	Male	468	3.03	0.39				
speaking anxiety in language class	Female	215	3.04	0.48	1.849	0.923	0.356	.001
	Male	468	3.00	0.45				
interest towards language class	Female	215	2.48	0.62	10.311	-6.063	0.000	.045
	Male	468	2.81	0.75				
anxiety of talking with native speakers	Female	215	3.27	0.75	4.282	-2.570	0.011	.011
	Male	468	3.43	0.66				
Achievement	Female	215	75.0	12.6	63.363	9.151	0.000	.080
	Male	468	63.2	20.7				

According to Table2, there is statistically significant difference in the sub-dimensions “interest towards language class” ($t(681) = -6.063, p < .05$) and “anxiety of talking with native speakers” ($t(681) = -2.570, p < .05$) in favour of the male students, while in the foreign language achievement ($t(681) = 9.151, p < .05$) in favour of the female students. As to the effect sizes of gender, the rate is nearly medium in the “interest towards language class” sub-dimension, whereas the effect size rates for other dimensions are small.

The second independent variable of the study was the experience abroad of the participants. An independent-samples

t-test was conducted in order to see whether there is any statistically significant difference in the foreign language anxiety scale with its sub-dimensions and achievement grades in terms of experience abroad variable. The relevant results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of Foreign Language Anxiety Scale with its Sub-dimensions and Foreign Language Achievement in terms of Experience Abroad

Variables	Experience abroad	N	\bar{X}	SD	F	t	P	η^2
Foreign language anxiety	Yes	64	2.94	0.36	0.263	-1.727	0.085	.004
	No	619	3.03	0.40				
speaking anxiety in language class	Yes	64	2.91	0.44	0.004	-1.875	0.061	.005
	No	619	3.03	0.46				
interest towards language class	Yes	64	2.66	0.77	0.041	-0.526	0.599	.000
	No	619	2.71	0.72				
anxiety of talking with native speakers	Yes	64	3.39	0.69	0.250	0.102	0.919	.000
	No	619	3.38	0.70				
Achievement	Yes	64	69.4	18.1	1.251	1.053	0.293	.002
	No	619	66.7	19.4				

According to Table 3, no statistically significant difference was found in the foreign language anxiety scale and its sub-dimensions and the students' achievement in terms of the experience abroad variable ($p > .05$). And as for the effect-sizes calculated for this variable, it was observed that the experience abroad is not effective on the foreign language classroom anxiety and achievement.

The third independent variable of the study was perceived economic status. A one-way ANOVA test was carried out for this purpose, and the results are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Comparison of Foreign Language Anxiety Scale with its Sub-dimensions and Foreign Language Achievement in terms of Perceived Economic Status

Variables	Economic status	\bar{X}	DF	Source	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	P	Diff
Foreign language anxiety	Low	3.16	0.41	B.G	1.481	0.741	4.633	0.010	1-2
	Middle	3.02	0.39	W.G	108.677	0.160			2-3
	High	2.92	0.41	Total	110.158				
Total		3.02	0.40	<i>Eta-Squared (η^2):.013</i>					
speaking anxiety in language class	Low	3.18	0.45	B.G	2.791	1.396	6.537	0.002	1-2
	Middle	3.01	0.46	W.G	145.174	0.213			2-3
	High	2.84	0.46	Total	147.965				
Total		3.02	0.46	<i>Eta-Squared (η^2):.019</i>					
interest towards language class	Low	2.62	0.83	B.G	0.968	0.484	0.903	0.406	
	Middle	2.71	0.73	W.G	364.706	0.536			
	High	2.82	0.57	Total	365.674				
Total		2.71	0.73	<i>Eta-Squared (η^2):.003</i>					
anxiety of talking with native speakers	Low	3.52	0.79	B.G	1.673	0.836	1.703	0.183	
	Middle	3.36	0.68	W.G	334.034	0.491			
	High	3.45	0.76	Total	335.707				
Total		3.38	0.70	<i>Eta-Squared (η^2):.005</i>					
Achievement	Low	63.7	21.8	B.G	696.8	348.4	0.928	0.396	
	Middle	67.3	19.1	W.G	255332.1	375.4			
	High	66.5	19.4	Total	256028.9				
Total		67.0	19.3	<i>Eta-Squared (η^2):.003</i>					

Perceived Economic Income (Low (N:58), Middle (N:587), High (N:38))

According to Table 4, there is statistically significant difference in the foreign language anxiety scale itself and in its "speaking anxiety in language class" dimension ($p < .05$). According to Tukey HSD test, the difference for both cases is between the low and the middle, and the middle and the high income groups. However, the effect-sizes in this respect are small, showing that perceived economic status is not very effective on foreign language anxiety and achievement.

The last independent variable of the study was whether the participants knew a third language other than Turkish and English. The relevant results are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of Foreign Language Anxiety Scale with its Sub-dimensions and Foreign Language Achievement in terms of Third Language

Variables	Third Language	N	\bar{X}	df	F	t	P	η^2
Foreign language anxiety	Yes	183	3.01	0.41	2.125	-0.602	.547	.001
	No	500	3.03	0.39				
speaking anxiety in language class	Yes	183	2.97	0.48	.878	-1.664	.097	.004
	No	500	3.03	0.45				
interest towards language class	Yes	183	2.71	0.69	.939	-0.047	.963	.000
	No	500	2.71	0.74				
anxiety of talking with native speakers	Yes	183	3.55	0.67	.946	3.950	.000	.022
	No	500	3.31	0.70				
Achievement	Yes	183	66.0	20.2	1.763	-0.744	.457	.001
	No	500	67.3	19.0				

According to Table 5, there is a statistically significant difference only in the sub-dimension “*Anxiety of Talking with Native Speakers*” in favour of those who know a third language other than Turkish and English ($t(681)=3.950$, $p<.05$). As to the effect-sizes in this sense, it is understood that knowing a third language is effective on the foreign language classroom anxiety and achievement at a small rate.

In order to understand the relationship between the foreign language classroom anxiety and its sub-dimensions and foreign language achievement, a correlation analysis was conducted, and the results are given in Table 6.

Table 6. The Correlation between Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety, its Sub-dimensions and Foreign Language Achievement

Correlation	N	Pearson (r)	P
FLAA *FLCA	683	-.231	.000**
FLAA * SALC	683	-.177	.000**
FLAA * ITLC	683	-.389	.000**
FLAA* ATNS	683	.052	.173
FLCA* SALC	683	.951	.000**
FLCA* ITLC	683	.408	.000**
FLCA* ATNS	683	.371	.000**

FLCA: Foreign language classroom anxiety, SALC: Speaking Anxiety in Language Class, ATNS: Anxiety of Talking with Native Speakers, FLAA: Foreign Language Academic Achievement, ITLC: Interest towards Language Class

** Correlation is significant at .001

According to the results in Table 6, there are some negative (FLAA*FLCA, FLAA*SALC and FLAA * ITLC) and positive (FLCA* SALC, FLCA* ITLC and FLCA* ATNS) significant correlations ($p<.001$).

6. Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the foreign language classroom anxiety and achievement in foreign language of the Turkish university students who, having registered to various engineering departments, were receiving compulsory English prep-class education. The study also looked for whether there was any significant correlation between the students' foreign language classroom anxiety and their foreign language achievement. As a result of the study, it was understood that such sub-dimensions of the foreign language classroom anxiety scale as interest towards language class and anxiety of talking with native speakers, and foreign language achievement significantly differed in terms of gender variable. Some studies reporting no significant difference in this respect (Özdemir, 2013; Karabıyık, 2012; Özütürk & Hürsen, 2012; Köroğlu, 2010; Doğan, 2008; Kılıç, 2007; Öner & Gedikoğlu, 2007; Batumlu, 2006; Şakrak, 2009; Sarıgül, 2000; Shabani, 2012; Wang, 2011; Wang, 2010; French & Richards, 1990) are available in the relevant literature. It was observed that the male students' level of interest towards language class and anxiety of talking with native speakers were higher than those of the females. Some studies reporting that male students are more anxious in learning a foreign language (Kitano, 2001; Nyikos, 1990; Karabey, 2011; Aydemir, 2011; Er, 2011) support this finding of the study. On the other hand, in Tuncer and Doğan (2015)'s study, it is reported that female students' level of interest towards language class is higher. It was further identified as a result that the students' foreign language achievement levels differed significantly in terms of gender. Accordingly, it was seen that the female students' academic achievement was higher than that of the males. The fact that females have stronger linguistic abilities, and that they are more successful than males at both mother tongue acquisition and foreign language learning is a highly admitted phenomenon in the relevant literature. In fact, Lutchmaya et. al (2002) emphasize that girls are more advantaged, with a wider vocabulary, in terms of language abilities than boys. This fact has also been reported in various national studies (Deniz, Gülden & Apaydın-Şen, 2013; Sarıcaoğlu & Arıkan, 2009; Dursun, 2007). In Onwuegbuzie et. al (2000)'s study, it is

stated that gender is one of the predictors of foreign language achievement, and that the females' level of achievement in foreign language learning is higher than that of the males.

As a result of the study, it was seen that the students' levels of foreign language anxiety and its sub-dimensions did not differ significantly in terms of experience abroad variable. Experience abroad is a cultural, touristic or educational short or long visit of a foreign language learner to any country where the target language is spoken. Such an experience has been told to provide foreign language learners with certain gains for language learning (Baro & Serrano, 2011). Lafford (2006), in this respect, states that study-abroad contexts have traditionally been considered to be the best environments where a second language is learnt, and where its culture is best understood. It has been reported that experience-abroad improves language proficiency and adaptation to different cultures (Sato, 2014), provides significant changes in learners' analytical and experimental language learning beliefs and their self-efficacy/self-confidence levels (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003), helps generate the willingness to communicate and interact with native speakers (Tsai, 2011), boosts second language learning motivation and helps learners develop their language learning approaches (Serrano, 2010). Furthermore, in Carroll (1967)'s preliminary study on 2,782 university students going abroad, it was reported that even a short-term experience abroad (for tours or for summer holidays) had a positive effect on foreign language proficiency (Lafford & Collentine, 2006). Similarly, Llanes & Munoz (2009)'s study also showed that even a 3-4 weeks of experience abroad produced important gains in all areas studied such as listening comprehension skill, and fluent and accurate speaking (Thompson & Lee, 2014). And in Freed (1995)'s study on the students learning French as a foreign language, it was found that those having had a certain period of experience abroad France improved more in terms of verbal fluency than those who had not had this kind of an experience. Although it is reported in the relevant literature that the longevity of the time spent abroad provides many gains related to language learning (Davidson, 2010; Thompson & Lee, 2014), it is also stated that experience abroad does not necessarily guarantee any improvement in the target language (Thompson & Lee, 2014, Lafford & Collentine, 2006). Campbell (2011) also reports that studying abroad is generally thought to offer an ideal environment for second language learning as opportunities of communicating with native speakers increase, however, recent studies emphasize that there is a disappointment in this sense since learners do not have enough interaction opportunities inside the classroom. Tuncer (2015), in a study on foreign students, draws attention to the fact that students who go abroad for education may be inclined to look for their own citizens in order not to experience a cultural shock, and states that this may lead to some motivational, environmental adjustment and learning problems. The result of the present study in this respect is important in the sense that an experience abroad does not necessarily provide any improvement in foreign language learning.

Another area in which the effect of experience abroad is investigated has been the foreign language anxiety of learners. Some studies in this sense (Allen & Herron, 2003; Coleman, 1997; Morreale, 2011; Thompson & Lee, 2014) touch upon the fact that experience abroad may reduce foreign language anxiety. Coleman (1997) claims that, after a certain period of experience abroad, learners are less afraid of making mistakes. Moreover, Thompson & Lee (2014) note that experience abroad is effective on English class performance anxiety, confidence in speaking with English native speakers and on fear of ambiguity, and that experience abroad in the general sense reduces foreign language classroom anxiety. Segalowitz et al. (2004) concluded that learners having experience abroad are more relaxed while talking with native speakers. Furthermore, in Morreale (2011)'s study, those students having study abroad experience had more motivation and less anxiety. It was further identified as a result of the present study that the students' level of academic achievement did not differ significantly in terms of the experience abroad variable. A possible reason for this may be that the majority of the students were in the middle and low economic status groups and their experiences abroad, if any, may have probably been very short and for touristic purposes. For, we only asked the students whether they had been abroad before, but there were not any questions regarding their purpose or period of such experience, and they were not asked whether they had been to any country where the target language was spoken. In fact, Wright (1999) stresses the fact that having visited any country in which the language being learnt is spoken have a significant effect on the learners' language learning attitudes (Gayton, 2010).

It was determined as a result of the study that the students' levels of interest towards language class and anxiety of talking with native speakers and their academic achievement did not significantly differ in terms of their perceived economic status. However, the students' levels of foreign language anxiety and speaking anxiety in language class showed statistically significant difference in terms of their perceived economic status. Accordingly, the foreign language anxiety and anxiety of speaking in language class levels of those perceiving their economic status as low were higher than those from the middle and high economic groups. In this context, Ausubel (1968) thought that middle-class children are more academically competitive than their lower-class counterparts and demonstrate more ambition in their learning; and the parents in lower-class families encourage the aspirations of their children far less, because they do not give the same weight to education as middle-class parents do (Gayton, 2010). This idea supports the finding of this study that the students from the middle-class group did not show any significant failure or anxiety. However, as is

understood from the findings, those perceiving themselves economically from low status were relatively more anxious. In the literature, in Çimen (2011) and Hanbay (2009)'s studies, the students' language attitudes did not differ in terms of their economic status; also in Çimen (2011)'s study, the students' anxiety levels showed no statistical difference in this respect. However, Alyaprak (2006) and Kayapınar (2006) found that the test anxiety levels of those children from the lower economic class were higher. And, Duman (2008) found that those children from the lower economic class had higher levels of trait anxiety, state anxiety and test anxiety (as cited in Çimen, 2011). Moreover, Ariani and Ghafournia (2015) concluded that learners' negative feelings toward foreign language learning can be related to their socio-economic status, and that socio-economic status can encourage or discourage learners. In Akramand Ghani (2013)'s study on Pakistani students, it was found that the students from the lower socio-economic status experienced more foreign language classroom anxiety than those from the higher status.

Another result of the study is that the students' levels of foreign language anxiety, anxiety of speaking in language class, interest towards language class and academic achievement did not show any statistically meaningful difference in terms of any third language they knew other than Turkish and English. However, the students' level of anxiety of talking with native speakers showed significant difference in terms of third language variable. Accordingly, the anxiety of talking with native speakers levels of those knowing a third language turned out to be higher than those who did not know any third language. As to multilingualism, Baker (2000) states that those who know three and four languages generally experience less anxiety in speaking in the second language, which is probably because their communicative skills must have improved as a result of exposure to other languages. Dewaele (2007) and Dewaele, Petrides and Furnham (2008) share similar results, and suggest that while foreign language anxiety and class anxiety related to second language learning are relatively high, the anxiety levels decrease with communication with more languages (as cited in Thompson & Kkawaja, 2015). In the present study, the students were asked whether they knew any other language other than Turkish and English, however there were not any questions about the number of languages the students knew, or about whether these languages were their mother languages or not. It is probable that those who reported they knew a third language other than Turkish and English thought about one of the local languages (Kurdish, Zazaki, Arabic... etc.) which are not officially taught in Turkey. It is further possible that these students in question reported they knew such Western languages as German and French which are taught at some schools generally at elementary level in Turkey. In both cases, the students almost hardly have chances of studying or practicing these afore-mentioned languages other than Turkish, the only official language, and English, the most widespread foreign language in Turkey. In this case, it is quite normal that the anxiety levels of these students were found to be high. However, as put forward by Dewaele (2007) and Dewaele et al (2008), the level of this relatively high anxiety of English is thought to decrease with more opportunities of communication in the languages the students reported they knew. Moreover, in Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014)'s study, it was found that "as the number of languages known by an individual increases, so does the enjoyment experienced in learning foreign languages; this heightened enjoyment decreases anxiety. Inversely, the fewer languages known, the more likely the individual is to experience less enjoyment and more anxiety" (as cited in Thompson & Khawaja, 2015). Thompson and Khawaja (2015)'s study on foreign language anxiety and the role of bilingualism and multilingualism in Turkey showed that bilingual students experienced more English classroom anxiety, which partially supports the relevant finding of the present study. On the other hand, in the relevant literature, it is generally accepted that knowing any language means to be able to use that language fluently at least in daily occasions and especially communicative skills should be at a level not disrupting the flow and the structure of any communication (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, 2001). There are nearly 36 ethnic minority languages in Turkey and all children, regardless of their first language, are to receive education in Turkish (Topbaş, 2011). We do not yet have any official data belonging to the first language proficiencies of these children. Therefore, it is thought that more in-depth research, especially in which both qualitative and quantitative methods are employed in a mixed approach, is necessary in order for us to have a clearer frame of reference in this sense.

The last but not least, important result of the study is that there is a statistically significant negative correlation between the students' foreign language classroom anxiety and their achievement in foreign language. This finding is encountered very often in the second language literature; in fact, since the preliminary study of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) in this respect, many a study (Proulx, 1991; Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Huang, 2012; Hewitt & Stefenon, 2011; Demirdaş&Bozdoğan, 2013; Demirdaş, 2012; Köroğlu, 2010; Gülözer, 2010; Kılıç, 2007; Batumlu, 2006; Gülsün, 1997; Kunt, 1997; Trylong, 1987; Saito et. al, 1999; Phillips, 1992; Ganschowet. al, 1994; Sparks et. al, 2000; von Würde, 2003; Chan & Wu, 2004; Hao et. al, 2004; Awan et. al, 2010; Wang, 2011; MacIntyre& Gardner, 1991; Young, 1991) have reported this finding. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) suggest that anxiety is like motivation in theory; there is a connection between anxiety and students' level of proficiency, and at first phases of language learning, anxiety is generally at the utmost level, but decreases gradually with the increase of proficiency.

Together with all these findings, as also suggested in the relevant literature, it was understood that there are various

relationships between anxiety and achievement in general, and foreign language anxiety and foreign language learning in particular. These results can be supported by the claim that there should be an anxiety measurement in terms of the validity and reliability of the measurement and evaluation activities to be carried out in the Turkish teaching/learning contexts. It was observed, with the effect sizes, that the independent variables of this study did not have that much significant effect on the dependent variables of the study. Thus, it is suggested that such variables as learning experiences, learning materials and motivation of the students be researched for their effects on this kind of anxiety of the students.

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