What are the Main Sources of Turkish EFL Students' Anxiety in Oral Practice?

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"Why can't I speak what to think a lot in English? I'm so bitter, trying hard. I'd like to speak a lot; however, I can't. Finally, I think my basic abilities of English ran short. I'm disgusted with myself" (Foss & Reitzel, 1988, p. 437).

Abstract

This study was designed in order to investigate two potential sources of the anxiety of Turkish learners of English in oral practice:1) an individual student's fear of negative evaluation, and 2) his/her self-perceived speaking ability. A total of 55 first year students enrolling in Anadolu University, Education Faculty, ELT Department participated in the study. A 55-item multiple-choice survey was administered to the participants in a regular classroom hour. The survey consisted of five parts: Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), Self-Rating Can-Do Scale (SR-CDS), Self-Rating for the Current Level of Study (SR-CL), Self-Rating Perception by the English (SR-EPE). The Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analyses were run for the statistical interpretation of the data. To achieve valid and reliable results, 15 students were also randomly chosen to conduct an interview in order to find out their reasons for being anxious in using English. The students' responses given to the survey were probed to have a better understanding of sources leading to high anxiety. The results of the study indicated a positive correlation between an individual's fear of negative evaluation and his/her anxiety level. Moreover, the findings of the current study revealed that there were significant negative relationships between anxiety and three of self-ratings; SR-CDS, SR-CL and SR-EPE. In addition, it was showed that among the FNE and the three self-ratings of English speaking ability, the combination of the FNE, the SR-CL and SR-CDS was the most appropriate model of predictors of anxiety level of this sample. Finally, the analysis of interview data provided valuable information about the main sources of the students' anxiety in oral practice such as: personal reasons, teachers' manners, teaching procedures, and previous experience.

Keywords: *Foreign language anxiety; potential sources of anxiety; anxiety in oral production*

Introduction

This comment, taken from a student's journal in an ESL class exemplifies the deep anxiety experienced by many second language learners in their efforts to master a new language. As it can be clearly understood from the sample comment, a foreign language class can be more anxiety-provoking than any other course they take, for many students (MacIntyre, 1995; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a; Liu, 2007; Ohata, 2005). Thus, researchers, foreign language teachers and even foreign language learners themselves have attempted to understand this phenomenon called as foreign language anxiety due to the possibility that it may inhibit language learning for some time since the literature has showed that anxious students are less willing to participate in learning

activities and have lower performance than non-anxious ones (Horwitz, 2001; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). In fact, Campbell and Ortiz (1991, p. 159) considered the levels of FL anxiety among university students to be "alarming" and stated that one-half of all language learners experience negative effects of language anxiety. Additionally, Price (1991) pinpointed that language learning settings seem to be prone to anxiety arousal, in general.

Finding that language anxiety can cause students to postpone language study indefinitely or even to change majors (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cage, 1986), researchers have attempted to identify and define the construct of language anxiety, "a key individual difference in language learning", for many years (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). Thus, language anxiety has been the subject of a good deal of research, based on the assumption that an understanding of its causes and investigation into how to reducing demands on cognitive processing space (Eysenck, 1979 as cited in Horwitz et al., 1986).

Scovel (1978) provides an early review of anxiety research warning language researchers in a way that they should be specific about the type of anxiety they are measuring. Keeping the advice given by Scovel, Horwitz et al. (1986) took the literature a step further by claiming that a situation-specific anxiety construct which they called "Foreign Language Anxiety" was responsible for students' negative emotional reactions to language learning. According to Horwitz et al. (1986) this anxiety stems from "the inherent inauthenticity associated immature second language communicative abilities (Horwitz, 2001, p. 114). Similarly, Gardner and MacIntyre (1994, p. 284) view language anxiety as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language texts, including speaking, listening, and learning". As Oxford (1999) highlighted, this anxiety is linked directly to performing in the target language, it is not a general performance anxiety.

In order to confirm empirically the existence and effects of FL anxiety on language achievement, many studies have been conducted, Horwitz et al.'s (1986) instrument, the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), can be considered as a departure point for many experimental studies in anxiety research. To name a few, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a, 1991b, 1994), MacIntyre (1995), MacIntyre, Noels and Clement (1997), Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley (2000), Speilmann and Radnosfky (2001),Gregersen and Horwitz (2002), Oya, Manalo and Greenwood (2004), Ohata (2005), Liu (2007) and Fang-peng and Dong (2010) identified the negative effect of learners' anxiety on their oral performance. Since learners' anxiety seems to come predominantly from speaking situation in class (Horwitz et al., 1986), there has been a professional interest in developing students' oral skills and reducing this specific type of anxiety. It is urgently needed to identify the sources of anxiety, so that teachers can take the necessary measures to prevent it in order to help their students enjoy learning a FL.

In a case review of literature on anxiety in language learning, Young (1991) identified six potential sources of language anxiety. According to the researcher, some of these sources are associated with the learner, some with the teacher, and some with the instructional practice. Young's (1991, p. 426) list consisted of "1) personal and interpersonal anxieties; 2) learner beliefs about language learning; 3) instructor beliefs about language teaching; 4) instructor-learner interactions; 5) classroom procedures; and 6) language testing". As she indicated, personal and interpersonal anxieties have been the most commonly cited and discussed in many anxiety studies, specifically in qualitative ones. However, quantitative research has not been conducted much with regard to the potential sources leading to FL anxiety. Hence, the main purpose of this present study was to investigate the potential sources of anxiety of Turkish EFL students. The two potential sources of anxiety addressed in the present study were 1) fear of negative evaluation as a personality trait, and 2) self-perception of speaking ability in the target language.

Review of Literature

Anxiety and Foreign Language Learning

Anxiety is a complex psychological term covering many variables. In its simplest form, anxiety can be defined as "a general feeling of apprehension including hyper-vigilance, increased sympathetic nervous system activity, and difficulty concentrating" (Davu and Palladino cited in Kelly, 2002, p. 54). Likewise, Horwitz et al. (1986) associated anxiety with the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry consisted of an arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Anxiety refers to an emotional state that can have both positive and negative influences, and which fosters and facilitates or disturbs and impedes learning (MacIntyre, 1995). According to Oxford (1999), the negative type of anxiety called as 'debilitating anxiety' harms learners' performance in many ways such as not participating in the activities or not using the language in public front situations. In contrast, anxiety can be regarded as helpful and 'facilitating' in some ways, such as keeping students alert (Oxford, 1999). For instance, it has been observed that anxious students listen to the instructions of the learning activities more carefully than the others in order to make the necessary preparations beforehand (Oxford, 1999)

MacIntyre and Gardner (1991b) define three perspectives of anxiety in general: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation specific anxiety. The first perspective considers anxiety as a general possibility trait that is relevant across several situations. A second perspective is interested in the here-and-now experience of anxiety as an emotional state. The third approach examines the specific forms of anxiety that occur consistently over time within a given situation.

As being a specific situation, foreign language anxiety has been isolated and distinguished from other forms of anxiety by psychologists and educators (Foss & Reitzel, 1988) because it consists of "self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128). According to Young (1991), the symptoms of language anxiety in the foreign language classroom could appear in the form of distortion of sounds, inability to produce the intonation and rhythm of the language, freezing up when called on to perform, and forgetting words or phrases just learned or simply refusing to speak and remaining silent.

Horwitz et al. (1986) were the pioneers who treat FL anxiety as a separate distinguishable phenomenon particular to language learning. In the light of this conceptualization of FL anxiety, Horwitz et al. (1986) proposed a model of the general FL anxiety construct which consists of three interrelated performance anxieties: *communication apprehension, test anxiety*, and *fear of negative evaluation* (Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003). Communication apprehension is a type of shyness characterized by fear of anxiety about communicating with people (Horwitz et al., 1986). Test anxiety refers to a type performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure, and fear of negative evaluation can be defined as apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively. These three components then are seen as having a negative impact on FL learning by Horwitz et al. (1986).

This finding has led the researchers to investigate FL anxiety from various directions. One direction has been to give theoretical background of the relationship between anxiety and learner achievement (Bailey, 1983; Campbell & Ortiz, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b; Price, 1991; Scovel, 1978; Young, 1991). Other studies have been the examination of the effects of specific type language anxiety oral performance on the learners (Aydın, 1999; Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Horwitz et al., 1986; Kitano, 2001; Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003; Boyce,

Alber-Logan, & Riley; 2007) and reading (Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999; Sellers, 2000; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004).

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Apart from general FL anxiety, many learners are highly anxious because of participating in speaking activities. In fact, it is often suggested that speaking is the most anxiety-provoking language skill in foreign language learning situation (Keramida, 2009).Since FL speaking anxiety is a commonly faced problem in the teaching of English as a foreign language, there is abundance of theoretical articles on the nature of this type of anxiety trying to have a better understanding of this phenomenon.

Cognitive approach forms a strong basis for the research of FL anxiety. The cognitive perspective on language acquisition sees the student as an autonomous actor, processing language data available in the environment to restructure their previous hypotheses related to language structure with a limited attention (Mitchell & Myles, 1998). Cognitivists view the relations among anxiety, cognition and behavior as recursive or cyclical, where each influences the other (MacIntyre, 1995).

To illustrate, if a student is required to speak in the target language, s/he may become anxious, this anxiety can lead to worry and rumination (MacIntyre, 1995). Nausea, sweating, weak knees and a dry mouth are the other symptoms associated with anxiety (Boyce et.al. 2007). Cognitive performance is diminished because of the divided attention and as a result performance suffers causing negative evaluations and more self-deprecating cognition, which further impairs performance and so on. For some students, this event takes place frequently, and anxiety becomes reliably associated with any situation involving the FL.

There is also possibility that anxiety affects FL activities, such as listening, speaking, and comprehension. There is potential role for anxiety in these processes because the anticipation of FL use in receiving information can provoke an anxiety reaction (MacIntyre, 1995). According to Horwitz et al. (1986), listening and speaking are the main sources of anxiety, since unprepared, free speech is especially disconcerting, and sound and linguistic structure discrimination present problems over comprehension difficulties.

According to Young (1992), speaking is probably considered the most stressful one among the four skills from the perspective of both FL teachers and learners. There has been a huge amount research conducted in the area of anxiety oral production (Sellers, 2000), but only a few studies have focused on the sources of it (Kitano, 2001). According to him, a fear of negative evaluation as a personality trait and self-perception of speaking ability in the target language are the two potential sources leading to FL speaking anxiety. The following part will discuss the relationship between these two concepts with regard to FL speaking anxiety.

Interaction between Fear of Negative of Evaluation and Self-perception

Fear of negative evaluation is desired as "an apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (Watson & Friend, 1969 as cited in Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 31). As Horwitz et al., (1986) underlined foreign languages require continual evaluation by the only fluent speaker in the class, the teacher. Therefore, students may also be "acutely sensitive to the evaluations-real or imagined-of their peers" (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 31). In short, students whose personalities are prone to fear negative evaluation seem to be one of the strong sources crediting to anxiety in FL classrooms.

Likewise, learners' self-perception of their ability has been considered as a strong cause of anxiety (Kitano, 2001). For instance, Horwitz et al. (1986) claimed that much of the language learners' anxiety derives from the threat to the learners' self-concept of competence since it is difficult to understand others or to make oneself understood in the target language. Foss and Reitzel (1991) saw self-perception as a critical factor in language learning anxiety due to the fact that language learners may likely to have low self-esteem, perceive themselves as less worthy than others, perceive their communication as less effective than that of their peers, and expect continued failure no matter what feedback they actually receive. According to Kitano (2001), among all the skills taught in the FL class speaking is usually the first skill that learners compare themselves with peers, teachers and native speakers. Thus, it is reasonable to consider that low self-perception of speaking ability is likely to be a source of anxiety.

If both fear of negative evaluation and self-perception of speaking ability can have an impact on FL anxiety, do these two variables interact to affect learners' anxiety level? Although there has not been any research examining the interaction of these two variables, one theory of social anxiety in cognitive psychology posits a related hypothesis (Kitano, 2001).

According to self-presentational theory, social anxiety arises "whenever people are motivated to make a desired impression on others, but are not certain that they will do so" (Schlenker & Leary, 1982 as cited in Kitano, 2001, p. 551). The arousal of anxiety in social situations can have other affective, cognitive and behavioral consequences. For instance, the affective experience of anxiety covers feelings of apprehension, uneasiness are increases in distracting self-related cognition, expectations of failure, and a decrease in cognitive processing ability, and the behavioral dimension consists of reactions such as increases in sympathetic nervous system arousal, inhibited actions, and attempts to escape situation (MacIntyre, 1995). In short, social anxiety is a consequence of feelings of tension and discomfort, negative self-evaluations and a tendency to withdraw in the presence of others.

Self-presentational theory forms a basis for the current study in the sense that it not only suggests the reasons for which the fear of negative evaluation and the self-perception of ability can affect anxiety level but also suggests the possibility that these factors may interact to influence anxiety level (Kitano, 2001). Therefore, the present study attempted to search for the possible relationship between fear of negative evaluation (which may influence a learner's desire to make a good impression) and self-perceived speaking ability (which may influence the learners' doubt in his or her successful performance) in terms of their influence on anxiety level in the Turkish FL classroom.

Empirical Studies on FL Speaking Anxiety

A great deal of FL anxiety research has centered on anxiety with respect to specific classroom activities such as speaking and listening suggesting that oral classroom activities are most problematic and anxiety provoking for FL learners (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 1995; Price, 1991; Young, 1991).

Cheng et al. (1999) designed an empirical study to investigate the relationship between FL classroom anxiety as well as their associations with FL speaking and writing achievement. The participants were 433 Taiwanese English majors. A questionnaire consisted of a modified FLCAS, an adapted SLWAT (Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test), and a background questionnaire. In addition, the participants' final course grades for their English speaking and writing classes were used as achievement measurements. The results of the study showed that FL classroom anxiety operationalized by the FLCAS, and FL writing anxiety measured by the SWLAT are two related but independent constructs.

The findings suggested that FL classroom anxiety is more general type of anxiety about learning a FL with a strong speaking anxiety element, whereas, FL writing anxiety is a language-skill-specific anxiety. Moreover, it was found that low self-confidence seemed to be an important component of both anxiety constructs. What's interesting about the results of the study is that it is possible that reading and listening tasks may provoke different levels of anxiety in FL learners and some of them may feel particularly anxious about speaking in the target language, and some about writing.

In another empirical study, Aydın (1999) showed an attempt to find out the sources of FL anxiety that Turkish students learning English as a FL experience in two productive skills, speaking and writing. 36 Turkish first-year EFL students participated in the study. They were instructed to complete two types of questionnaires: the FLCAS and the BALLI (Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory). On the basis of their responses to the FLCAS, the participants were divided into three groups: high, medium and low with regard to their anxiety levels. All of them were then required to keep personal diaries about their speaking and writing classes for four weeks. 12 students were selected randomly to make interviews in order to search for the evidence of FL anxiety.

Analysis of the students' comments both in the diaries and the interviews for each skill yielded three main sources of FL anxiety: personal reasons; their teachers' manner towards them and the teaching procedures. When analyzed specifically for the speaking skill, the study indicated that high anxious students were frustrated because of not being able to communicate in the FL. This frustration caused them to experience FL speaking anxiety, which in turn reduced their self-confidence in themselves. In addition, they were afraid of being evaluated negatively by the others in the classroom; namely, they suffered from negative social evaluation. Moreover, they thought that they were less competent than the other students in the classroom. Therefore, Turkish EFL students mostly avoided speaking and preferred to remain silent.

Kitano (2001) conducted another study to investigate two potential sources of anxiety of college learners of Japanese in oral practice: 1) an individual student's fear of negative evaluation, and 2) his or her self-perceived speaking ability. 212 students in Japanese courses at 2 major universities participated in the study. They were required to complete a 70-item multiple-choice survey. It contained a background questionnaire, the Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE), three kinds of self-ratings of Japanese speaking ability: Self-Rating Can-Do Scale (SR-CDS), Self-Rating for the Current Level of Study (SR-CL) and Self-Rating Expected Perception by the Japanese (SR-EPJ), and the Japanese Class Anxiety Scale (JCAS).

Data was analyzed through correlation and regression. It was found that an individual student's anxiety was higher as his or her fear of negative evaluation was stronger, and the strength of this tendency depended on the instructional level and the experience of going to Japan. Moreover, the results indicated that the anxiety of a male student became higher as he perceived himself less competent. Lastly, it was found that the fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived speaking ability did not interact to influence the anxiety level of an individual.

In another empirical study, Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) tried to clarify the relationship between FL anxiety and perfectionism through interviews, 8 students, 4 of them as the most anxious, and the other 4 were the least anxious took place in the study according to their scores on the FLCAS. The study covered two phases: In the first phase, the students were videotaped in a one-on-one oral interviewed designed to elicit a sample of their conversational English ability. In the second phase, they were asked to watch their videotaped interviews in order to reflect their own performances. By examining the reactions of the language learners to their actual oral performance and analyzing the audio tapes for instances of perfectionism, evidence was found that anxious and non-anxious learners

differ in their personal performance standards, procrastination, fear of evaluation, and concern over errors. The reaction of the anxious students to their oral performances demonstrated that they were never satisfied with what they accomplished. The researchers at the end of the study indicated that some procedures that have been used to help individuals overcome perfectionism might also be useful in helping anxious EFL learners.

Liu (2007) examined anxiety in oral English classrooms in a Chinese university in his study. The researcher specifically focused on the factors contributing to student anxiety in oral production and the strategies used by the students to cope with this anxiety. 27 college students took place in the study by responding to a survey (FLCAS) and keeping reflective journals.

The findings of the study revealed that anxiety was experienced by many students while speaking English in class. Most of the students reported that they became more anxious when making presentations at the front. There were several factors leading to anxiety such as lack of vocabulary, low English proficiency and memory disassociation. The researcher ended up his article by underlining the importance of the awareness of the teachers with regard to the existence of anxiety among EFL learners and showing empathy to them in class.

Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) conducted a classroom-based study in Greece aiming at examining the characteristics of anxious students in order to implement classroom interventions to reduce FL speaking anxiety. The researchers also aim at providing teachers with strategies to cope with anxiety stemming from students' fear of negative evaluation from their peers and perception of low ability.

Fifteen students participated in the study and the researcher used three techniques of qualitative data collection: semi-structured interviews, group discussion and direct observation. The data analysis yielded that six of those students were experiencing English language speaking anxiety as a result of fear of negative evaluation from their peers and perception of low ability in relation to their peers. Having established the sources for English language speaking anxiety, the researchers implemented the following classroom interventions to overcome it: project work, establishing a learning community and a supportive classroom atmosphere by considering teacher-student relations, providing indirect rather than direct correction, accepting the need for self-worth protection, employing teacher immediacy and praising. At the end of the article, the researchers pointed out that oral production in a foreign language is a potentially stressful situation for some students and therefore, the teachers should help their students to overcome foreign language anxiety.

As a more recent study, Fang-peng and Dong (2010) studied the main factors related to the students' anxiety to spoken English and put forward some implications to help students to improve their spoken English level. In order to find out which aspects of anxiety are more effective and whether highly anxious students have a lower spoken ability or not, the researchers carried out a survey with 82 Chinese college students.

The outcomes of the study confirmed that the students having higher anxiety also have the lower spoken English ability. Moreover, the more influential factors leading to high anxiety cover: the attention to intonation and pronunciation, the motivation, and the interference of mother tongue. Finally, the researchers listed the following countermeasures to overcome the problem of anxiety in oral production: cultivating the students to b e accustomed to listening to English and thinking in English, asking students to imitate the imitation of the recordings, correcting their pronunciation, and forcing students to speak English in class to enhance their motivation.

All of these studies provided valuable insights into the area of FL anxiety. Their findings reveal that FL anxiety, specifically in the oral production, is a phenomenal issue and mainly a negative factor in language learning. At the end of these studies, the researchers claimed that future research should replicate some parts of these studies so that these sources of anxiety in the language classroom would be clarified and handled appropriately. In other words, as Liu (2007) point out that the differences in foreign language learning situations and variance in underlying causes for foreign language classroom anxiety require that more research is needed to examine learners' anxiety levels, causes for and consequences of anxiety in various foreign language learning contexts. These suggestions could be considered as a departure point of the present study. It is hoped that the current study will add more empirical data to the study of anxiety in FL learners, including learners of English in Turkish contexts.

In the light of the issues stated above, the focus of the study is on two psychological factors; namely, the fear of negative evaluation and the self-perception of speaking ability in the target language, which are said to be the potential sources of anxiety in the classroom. In other words, this study will attempt to answer this basic research question: Is there any relationship between the fear of negative evaluation and self-perception of speaking ability in English, which affects the anxiety level of individual English learners? Thus, the following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1) What is the relationship between the anxiety level of a first-year EFL student and his or her dispositional fear of negative evaluation?
2) What is the relationship between the anxiety level of a first-year EFL student and the self-perception his or her speaking ability in English?
3) Do fear of negative evaluation and self-perception of speaking ability in English interact to relate to the anxiety level of individual EFL learners?

Methodology

Subjects

The study was conducted at Anadolu University, Education Faculty, ELT Department in the second term of academic year 2003-2004. 55 subjects participated in the study. All subjects were monolingual speakers of Turkish between the ages 17 and 19 all of whom were first-year students. 19 of the participants were male, and the rest 36 participants were female.

The researcher's two sections, A and B were chosen as the population in order to collect data appropriately. There were a total of 65 students in two sections, but the students who were coming from other departments, repeating the course for the second time were not chosen as the study subjects since they might not have the same language proficiency level compared to others.

Instruments for Data Collection

A 55-item multiple-choice survey was used in the study. It was the adapted version of the questionnaire used in Kitano's study (2001). It consisted of five parts created for the search of the possible sources of FL anxiety:

1) *Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (FNE):* It measures the degree to which the respondent experiences apprehension at the prospect of being evaluated negatively. The items were answered on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from 5 points (extremely characteristic of me) to 1 point (not all characteristic of me). The FNE showed an internal consistency coefficient of .86 (Cronbach Alpha=.

86, n=55). The Cronbach Alphas were calculated separately for each part of the scale to assess the reliability of the utilized instrument.

2) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS): The FLCAS, designed by Horwitz et al. (1986), was shortened and modified in Kitano's study. To assess the degree to which participants feel nervous during oral practice in class, some of the original FLCAS items were eliminated, such as the ones asking about concern over grades, discomfort in speaking the language outside the classroom, and anxiety over tests. For the present study, the 42nd item "I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes" was eliminated from the scale since the participants of this study were chosen among FL learners and as all the classes, this item would not be appropriate for their situation as suggested by Aydın (1999). Each of the 20 items of the FLCAS was scored on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from 5 points (strongly agree) to 1 point (strongly disagree). The Cronbach Alpha was computed as .87 on the same sample.

3) Self-Rating Can-Do Scale (SR-CDS): It was developed to measure speaking ability in FL situations. Each item of this 15-item scale asked the respondent to rate his or her difficulty in performing a certain task orally in English. The difficulty level of the tasks which were assessed in the scale shifts from the elementary level to the advanced level. Each item was scored on a 3-point Likert Scale: 3 (quite easily), 2 (with some difficulty) and 1 (with great difficulty or not at all). The Cronbach Alpha was measured as .85.

4) Self-Rating for the Current Level of Study (SR-CL): Using this 4-item scale, the respondent assessed his or her English speaking proficiency for his or her current level of study in the areas of pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, and overall speaking ability by selecting one answer from 5 points (very good), 4 (good), 3 (fairly good), 2 (relatively poor), and 1 (poor) by deliberately asking the respondent to take his or her ability as compared to that of peers. The Cronbach Alpha was .90 for this part.

5) Self-Rating Expected Perception by the English (SR-EPE): It was used to assess the respondent's self-perception of his or her ability as compared to that of native speakers. This measure has also 4 items that assessed pronunciation, fluency, grammatical accuracy, and overall speaking ability. It required the respondent to predict how a native speaker of English would rate his or her English speaking proficiency by selecting one answer from 5 (very good), 4 (good), 3 (fairly good), 2 (relatively poor), and 1 (poor). The Cronbach Alpha was calculated as .89.

Interviews: The researcher conducted semi structured interviews with the students who were found to be high anxious on the basis of their questionnaire outcomes and the poor grades they took from speaking classes. The main purpose of making an interview was to probe the answers given to the questionnaire to have a better understanding of the phenomenon termed as 'anxiety'.

Data Collection

The 55-item multiple-choice survey was administered to the participants by the researcher during the class hours. The participants were required to complete the questionnaire in 25 minutes. They were not asked to write their names in order to make sure that the results would not be used to evaluate their performance. They were only instructed to write their gender. The survey results were analyzed by the researcher and 15 participants who were classified as high anxious learners and who had poor grades in their speaking classes were required to answer the questions in an interview. The interview was conducted in the participants' native language, Turkish, in order to overcome the incapabilities of self-expression in the target language and it was recorded. The interview procedure took 10-15

minutes and the participants were asked to report their reasons for feeling anxiety in oral practice to determine the possible sources leading anxiety in the speaking classes.

Data Analysis

In order to assess the internal reliability of each part of the survey, Cronbach Alpha was computed on the responses of 55 participants. Then, for research questions 1 and 2, scatter plots were created to examine visually the relationships between each of the independent variables (FNE, SR-CDS, SR-CL and SR-EPE) and the dependent variable (FLCAS). The Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analyses were run in order to find out the relationships among them. t-tests were also performed for their significance. As mentioned before, the three self-ratings (SR-CDS, SR-CL and SR-EPE) were treated separately in the examination for the 2nd research question since they represented different types of self-perception about English speaking ability. To evaluate the role of gender on the FLCAS, FNE, SR-CDS, SR-CL and SR-EPE, multiple regression analyses and t-tests were conducted for the significance.

For the 3rd research question, multiple regression analyses were used to create a model to predict anxiety level. More specifically, a backward elimination procedure was employed to identify which variables among the fear of negative evaluation and the three self-ratings of English speaking ability were negligible in predicting English class anxiety. Since the fear of negative evaluation and the self-rating for the current level and the self-rating expected perception by the English were found to predict anxiety level, a two-way ANOVA was then performed to determine whether or not there was an interaction between these three variables with regard to their relationship to anxiety level.

For the interviews, the data were first transcribed and then analyzed by the researcher. In order to have reliable results, the data gathered from the interviews were also examined by another instructor.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the anxiety level of a first-year EFL student and his or her dispositional fear of negative evaluation?

The scatter plot (see Figure 1) indicates a positive correlation between an individual's fear of negative evaluation and his or her anxiety level. The Pearson correlation coefficient was found to be significant (r=.488, p=.000, n=55). Thus, the tendency was that the higher an individual's fear of negative evaluation, the higher his or her anxiety in the classroom.

Figure 1. The relationship between Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation

Regression Plot

Y = 38.0383 + 0.567478X
R-Sq = 0.238
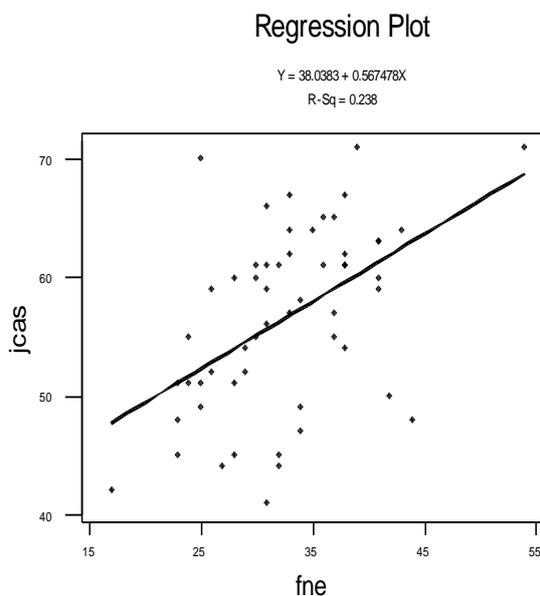
Research Question 2: What is the relationship between the anxiety level of a first-year EFL student and the self-perception of his or her speaking ability in English?

The examination of scatter plots and Pearson correlations showed that there were significant negative relationships between anxiety and three of self-ratings, SR-CDS, SR-CL, and SR-EPE (see Figures 2 to 4 for the scatter plots).

Figure 2. The relationship between Anxiety and Self-Rating Can-Do Scale

Regression Plot

$Y = 71.1958 - 0.383915X$
R-Sq = 0.030
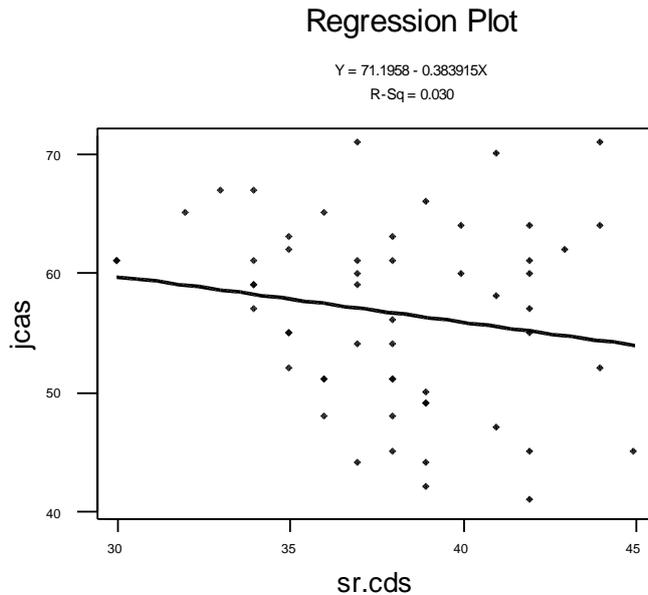
There was a negative correlation between the self-rating can-do scale and the anxiety level of an individual student. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated as $r=-.174$ and found to be significant $p=.205$). Hence, this meant that the higher an individual's self-rating can-do scale, the lower his or her anxiety level in the classroom. In other words, if a student trusts his abilities for doing something, he will not be anxious.

Figure 3. The relationship between Anxiety and Self-Rating for the Current Level of Study

Regression Plot

$Y = 68.9357 - 1.00662X$
R-Sq = 0.092
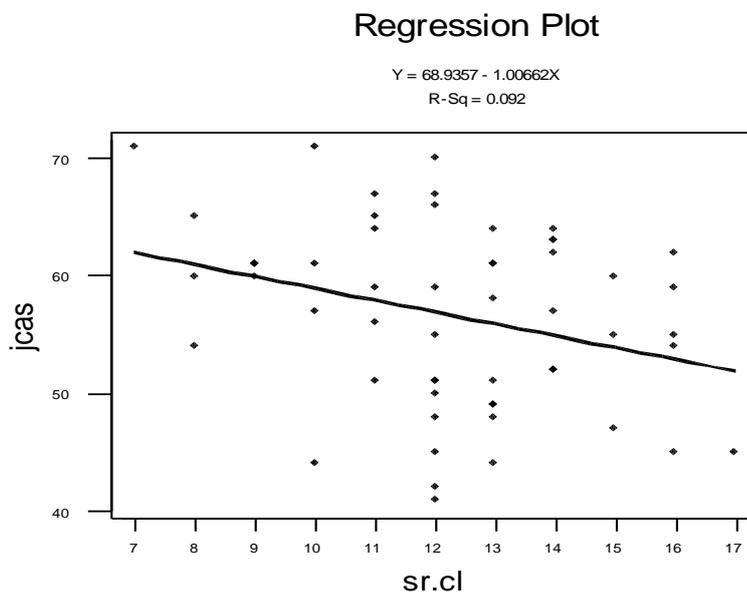
The analysis of the scatter plot and correlation indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between anxiety and self-rating for the current level of the study (r=-.303, p=.025). Therefore, when the anxiety level of students increased, the self-rating for the current level of the study decreased.

Figure 4. The relationship between Anxiety and Self-Rating Expected Perception by the English

Regression Plot

Y = 62.0133 - 0.370315X

R-Sq = 0.029
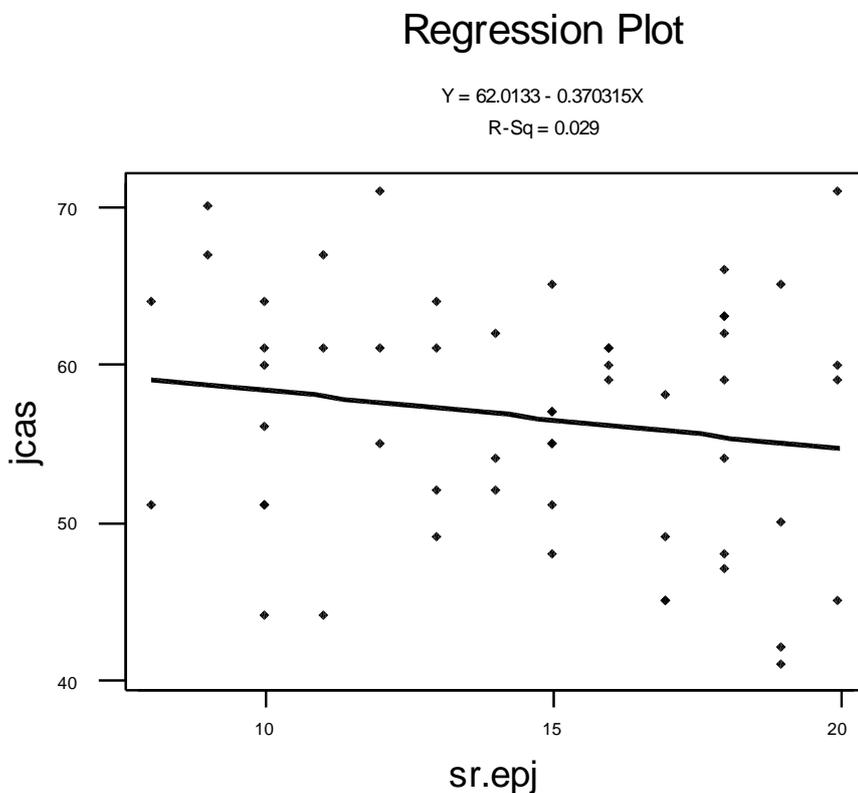
As it is explicitly seen in the other two self-ratings, there was again a negative correlation between the anxiety level of the students and self-rating expected perception by the English (r=-. 169, p=. 216). Thus, this meant that the higher an individual's self-rating expected perception by the English, the lower his or her anxiety level.

Tables 1 and 2 below present the descriptive statistics of the parts of the survey and the summary of the correlations between the foreign language classroom anxiety and the fear of negative evaluation and the three self-ratings, respectively.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Major Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
FNEX	55	17,00	54,00	32,7091	6,7073
JCASX	55	41,00	71,00	56,6000	7,7951
SRCDSX	55	30,00	45,00	38,0182	3,5250
SRCD	55	7,00	17,00	12,2545	2,3430
SREPJ	55	8,00	20,00	14,6182	3,5668
Valid N	55				

Table 2. Correlations between Anxiety and Three Self-Ratings

	FNE	FLCAS	SRCDS	SRCL	SREPE
FNE	1,0000				
FLCAS	,4883	1,0000			
SRCDS	-,0468	-,1736	1,0000		
SRCL	,0449	-,3026	,3111	1,0000	
SREPE	,1725	-,1694	,0094	,2179	1,0000

Research Question 3: Do fear of negative evaluation and self-perception of speaking ability in English interact to relate to the anxiety level of individual EFL learners?

A backward elimination procedure of multiple regression analysis found that, among the FNE and the three self-ratings of English speaking ability, the combination of the FNE, the SR-CL and SR-CDS was the most appropriate model of predictors of anxiety level of this sample. These predictors accounted for 33.6% of the variance of the scores on the FLCAS in this study.

After this finding was noted, further analysis was conducted. The participants were divided into two groups according to the level of their scores on the FNE (scores of 34 and above vs. scores of 33 and under), their scores on the SR-CL (scores of 12 and above vs. scores of 11 and under), and their scores on the SR-EPE (scores of 12 and above vs. scores of 11 and under) as suggested in the study of Kitano (2001). Then, a two-way ANOVA was conducted. The results are shown in Tables 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Table 3. The Effect of FNE on the Anxiety

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
JCAS*FNE between groups	001,75	22	90,989	2,276	,017
Within groups	279,45	32	39,983		
Total	281,20	54			

As shown in Table 3, the effect of the FNE on the anxiety level was significant and the interaction of this effect was also significant (p=.017).

Table 4. The Effect of SR-CL on the Anxiety

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
JCAS*SR-CL Between groups	70,561	10	77,056	1,350	,235
Within groups	510,64	44	57,060		
Total	281,20	54			

As presented in Table 4, the effect of the SR-CL on the anxiety level was significant, but the interaction of this effect was not statistically significant (p=.235).

Table 5. The Effect of SR-EPE on the Anxiety

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
JCAS*SREPE Between groups	007,974	12	75,664	1,339	,234
Within groups	373,23	42	56,505		
Total	281,20	54			

According to Table 5, the effect of the SR-EPE on the anxiety level was significant, but the interaction of this effect was not statistically significant (p=.234).

Table 6. Joint Influence of FNE and SR- CL and SR- EPE on Anxiety

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	69451,6	3	23150,527	747,018	,000
Within groups	6693,96	216	30,991		
Total	76145,5	219			

As shown in Table 6, the relationship between the FNE and the two self-ratings was statistically significant (p=.000). There was an interaction between these three variables.

Interviews

The aim of the study was to find out the sources of foreign language anxiety experienced in a productive skill, speaking from the perspectives of Turkish EFL learners. In order to identify the factors leading anxiety in the speaking courses, first a survey was given the participants, and according to the responses they gave to the survey, each of the subjects was assigned to one of the three anxiety levels: high, medium or low. Among the high anxious learners, the ones (15) who had poor grades in their speaking courses were selected to conduct interviews. This interview procedure was conducted to find if there were any further explanation and clarification for the foreign language anxiety these students felt.

Turkish EFL students, high anxious ones, in this study reported that they were not satisfied with their performance in their speaking classes. They thought that they were not able to communicate in the target language in an efficient way, in other words; they had low confidence in their ability. The following statements illustrate this point:

"I know, I'm not successful in speaking classes .I cannot speak English fluently. This makes me upset."

"I wish I could speak English fluently, just like Turkish. But, it seems impossible. I cannot even combine two or three words together to form a sentence, it takes a long time for me to choose the right words."

> *"I feel anxious, especially in the speaking classes because I cannot speak. Even though I know the answer, I hesitate to speak."*

The participants in this study specifically underlined the simple fact that if self assessment of ability was negative, this could lead to anxiety. In other words, if they believed that they did not have the necessary skills to achieve success in the speaking lessons, they could suffer from FL speaking anxiety to a greater extent. Similarly, having high expectations from their own performance in the speaking lessons and not being able to fulfill those expectations in a desired way could foster FL speaking anxiety. The following statements expressed by high anxious students might explain how they felt FL speaking anxiety as a result of negative self assessment and high expectations from their own performance;

> *"I don't feel myself competent in speaking classes. I know I must study a lot in order to be successful. I study, but I can't achieve success."*

> *"I don't feel myself secure in speaking lessons. Specifically, if I get low marks from speaking exams, I blame myself. I know, I'm a bad student. I have to work hard to be successful in this course."*

> *"I am a perfectionist. I want everything to be perfect, and I want to do everything perfectly......Whenever I cannot remember a simple vocabulary item while speaking, I get sad. I'm a university student, I should have rich vocabulary, I should speak fluently."*

The participants indicated that they did not want to be negatively evaluated by their classmates. They did not want to create a stupid image for themselves. Therefore, they remain silent and do not participate in the classroom activities. The statements below highlight this issue:

> *"I do not want to talk in my speaking classes because others can laugh at me, this irritates me a lot."*

> *"I think the answer of a question in Turkish and then translate into Turkish. While I 'm doing it, someone else talks and I cannot find another opportunity to express my ideas."*

> *"I always make pronunciation errors while speaking in the target language and observe a humiliating manner on my classmates' faces. This makes me angry."*

High anxious learners also pinpointed that they had a fear of being less competent. They compared themselves to the good students in the class and this comparison led them to feel a greater amount of anxiety. The following statements exemplify this situation:

> *"My friends can speak very well, but I cannot. What's the reason? I do not know, I just cannot speak!"*

> *"I am demotivated by realizing that my friends are better than I am."*
> *"The teacher praises the good students in the class, but she has never praised me, I'm one of the poor students in the class."*

The subjects believed that their inability in communicating in English stemmed from their lack of vocabulary knowledge. If they increase their vocabulary size, they can express themselves better.

> *"I cannot speak because I cannot find out the appropriate words to express my ideas immediately."*

> "*If I knew enough vocabulary to express myself, I could speak more in the class.*"

> "*I think I can be successful in speaking classes if I memorize lots of words.*"

Uninteresting teaching procedures created anxiety for five of the subjects in the present study. They stated that they could not focus their attention due to boring and uninteresting teaching procedures which lead to anxiety. As stated in the following examples, dealing with uninteresting materials created anxiety for high anxious students.

> "*I think the book and the materials used in speaking courses are very important. But, I don't like the book used in our speaking lessons. I don't like its activities. When I see the texts and the topics of our speaking book, I talk to myself; how boring it is!*"

> "*The level of the book and activities should match with the level of the students. They should not be too simple or challenging. For instance, if I find the activity in any speaking book too difficult, I feel anxiety due to a fear of incapability.*"

Finally, the participants focused on the teachers' manner as an anxiety-provoking factor. They reported that their teacher's manner towards the errors they made while speaking and towards them in general were the other reasons of anxiety they experienced in speaking classes.

> "*Of course, mistakes should be corrected. But, how? This is very important. Teachers should not disturb their students while making error correction.*"

> "*If a teacher interrupts to correct a mistake, I get confused and forget what to say next.*"

> "*Some teachers correct their students' mistakes harshly and this causes students to remain silent during speaking activities.*"

> "*If she corrects my errors in a harsh manner, I will lose my self-confidence and I cannot ask a question to her anymore. It can affect my success because I need clarification for some questions in speaking courses.*"

> "*When I got bored in speaking courses, I didn't listen to the teacher's explanations. Whenever she realizes this, she asks sudden questions, I don't like this situation, I get anxious.*"

Discussion

The relationship between anxiety and fear of negative evaluation

The present study found that fear of negative evaluation was a source of anxiety in the English FL classroom, an outcome that is consistent with Kitano's (2001) findings for the Japanese classrooms. The results of this study also confirmed the results of Horwitz et al.'s (1986) study for the French and Spanish classrooms. She proposed that the language student has mature thoughts and ideas but an immature vocabulary and grammar with which to express them. According to her, because students are unsure of themselves and what they are saying, they may feel that they are not able to make the proper social impression. This fear of negative social evaluation may result in frustration and apprehension.

This finding also lends support to the views of Gregersen and Horwitz (2002). The researchers found that high anxious students had a fear of negative evaluation since they thought that they seemed

foolish when confronting a group, which allowed for negative evaluation by peers or teachers. These results were confirmed empirically by another study conducted by Aydın (1999). Working with Turkish EFL students, she found that the learners got frustrated when they were not able to communicate effectively in the target language. This frustration made them experience FL anxiety, which in turn reduced their confidence in themselves. In addition, these learners had a very strong fear of being negatively evaluated by their peers, which resulted in avoiding speaking in order not to seem foolish.

The findings of the present study certainly show that teachers should make an effort to respond appropriately to their students' fear of negative evaluation as suggested by Kitano (2001). It would be a good idea for the teachers to identify the students who have strong fear of negative evaluation and consider supportive ways of treating them in and outside of the classroom owing to the fact that it is a personality trait that is difficult to eliminate. For instance, teachers can promote the more positive speaking experiences rather than the anxiety-provoking ones through positive reinforcement, their students will feel better (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a). Teachers should be encouraged to show this type of students' special consideration by making positive comments in class in private conversations in the teacher's office, or on the students' homework sheets or journals whenever possible (Kitano, 2001).

The relationship between anxiety and self-perceived ability in speaking english

The current study showed that students feel more anxious in the FL classroom when they perceive their own speaking ability as poorer than that of their classmates and native speakers of English. This finding corroborates Kitano's opinion stating (2001, p. 558) "a student's self-perception of his or her peers should be carefully considered because of its strong relationship to anxiety level". In other words, it is inevitable that most FL students will be aware of their own performance in comparison to other students since FL instruction requires the performance of language learners in front of their peers and teachers (Young, 1991). In such a setting, teachers should create a friendly and social classroom environment so that students will not be forced to be competitive but collaborative. For example, the teacher could include sufficient comprehensive practice and choral work before calling on individual students or make them write their answers (Millrood, 2004). Pair work or group work activities could be inserted into the classroom practices (Hirvela, 1999). Teachers should use ice-breaking activities which will make the learners know each other very well and support each other without considering differences in ability. Apart from these general classroom strategies, teachers should show individual interest to the students who are weak because these students may have a low-perception of ability and feel anxious in the classroom, which inhibits their learning. Aydın (1999) claimed that anxious students generally perceiving themselves as less worthy than their classmates and their communication as less efficient than their peers have a tendency to compare themselves with the others in the classroom and adopt a competitive behavior. What's more, they may compete with their personal expectations, which also create language anxiety. Hence, teachers should identify these students and help them from the early stages of their FL study.

At this point, there appears a question mark in people's minds: Does a student's self-perception accurately reflect his or her actual abilities? (Kitano, 2001). Some learners having low self-esteem, my rank their abilities lower than they really are. The present study did not include a more objective measure of evaluating students' ability, such as an evaluation by their teachers, to compare to the self-evaluation. In this way, a possible match or mismatch can be found between an objective measure and their own self-evaluation.

As it is found in the present study, one of the sources of students' FL anxiety stemmed from comparing the self-perception of insufficient ability to that of native speakers. It is difficult to tell

students not to compare themselves with native speakers since they are always expected to learn from tapes and videos of native speakers in communication with one another (Kitano, 2001). Some students may set their goals as high as the level of native speakers with a belief that less than a perfect performance is a failure (Aydın, 1999) which may make them experience anxiety. Therefore, language teachers should highlight setting realistic and short-term goals in language learning for their students. Young (1991) claimed that an approach such as giving a half point for linguistic accuracy and the other half point for fluency when grading students' oral performance can help students to grasp the fact that instructors are equally interested in accuracy and fluency, which may lead to a reduction in anxiety.

Interaction between fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived ability to speak english

This study found that there was an interaction between fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived ability that affects anxiety level. That's, the students with a strong fear of negative evaluation and the students with low self-perceived ability showed high anxiety, the effect that fear of negative evaluation had on anxiety did depend on the effect of self-perceived ability and the effect of self-perceived ability did depend on the level of fear of negative evaluation. These findings supported the self-presentational theory, which argued for the effect of the interaction between the fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived ability on anxiety since these two variables influence each of the two separate constructs of anxiety, such as one's motivation to make a desired impression on others and doubt that one will be able to do so (Kitano, 2001). The findings of the present study did not corroborate with the findings of Kitano's (2001) study, since the researcher did not find out a relationship between the fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived speaking ability.

The outcomes of the present study revealed that the fear of negative evaluation and self-perceived speaking were the important sources of anxiety and what's more there occurred an interaction between these two variables, which accelerated the level of anxiety.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of two psychological factors, the fear of negative evaluation and the self-perception of speaking ability in the target language as they were said to be potential sources of anxiety in the classroom (Kitano, 2001; Ohata, 2005; Young, 1991). The findings of the study confirmed empirically that they were indeed anxiety-provoking in a FL classroom. Moreover, the study also questioned the interaction between dispositional fear of negative evaluation, which may influence a learner's desire to make a good impression, and self-perceived speaking ability, which may influence the learner's doubt in his or her successful performance, in terms of their influence on anxiety level in the English FL classroom. And this interaction was found, as well.

It is hoped that these findings will encourage FL language teachers to identify students having high anxiety and low self-esteem and create a supportive and friendly atmosphere for them to practice the target language. Otherwise, anxiety may interfere with the student's ability to demonstrate the amount that she or he does know. The classic example is the student who knows the material but "freezes up" on a test (MacIntyre, 1995, p. 96). Anxious students are caught in this double bind; they have learned less and furthermore they may not be able to demonstrate the knowledge that they have learned. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that the teachers should take necessary precautions which reduce the anxiety level of their students (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002).

In summary, it is necessary for both EFL teachers and students to beware that anxiety is a serious phenomenon for EFL students and that various factors contribute to it in foreign language classrooms. More importantly, they should seek for the appropriate strategies to help students to reduce or eliminate anxiety in oral production since anxiety-provoking variables may vary from context to context.

Suggestions for further Studies

The findings of the present study suggest a number of various studies for future research. First of all, since this investigation was limited to analyze the sources FL speaking ability through a survey, and interviews another study can be conducted to examine the potential sources of this type of anxiety using different data collection procedures, such as diary writing, and think aloud protocols.

This study was conducted with the university students from the ELT department. The scale used in this study can be applied to different groups of students from different language majors, different universities in order to find out whether the two variables are indeed language anxiety- provoking or not. A final suggestion for future research is to investigate the sources of FL anxiety for other skills such as reading, writing and listening. Research in this area will shed valuable light on the sources leading to anxiety for specific skills and how they can be diminished.

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