T.R.

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INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

USING COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATION TO ALLEVIATE COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION IN EFL LEARNERS

Seyit Ahmet ÇAPAN

Master of Arts Thesis

Advisor
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	Tezin Adı	Using Computer-Mediated Communication to Alleviate Communication Apprehension in EFL Learners (Yabancı Dil Öğrencilerinin İletişim Kaygısının Azaltılmasında Bilgisayar Destekli İletişim Yönteminin Kullanılması)

    Bu tezin proje safhasından sonuçlanmasına kadarki bütün süreçlerde bilimsel etiğe ve akademik kurallara özenle riayet edildiğini, tez içindeki bütün bilgilerin etik davranış ve akademik kurallar çerçevesinde elde edilerek sunulduğunu, ayrıca tez yazım kurallarına uygun olarak hazırlanan bu çalışmada başkalarının eserlerinden yararlanılması durumunda bilimsel kurallara uygun olarak atıf yapıldığını bildiririm.

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Öğrencinin imzası
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Yukarıda adı geçen öğrenci tarafından hazırlanan Using Computer-Mediated Communication to Alleviate Communication Apprehension in EFL Learners başlıklı bu çalışma 08/06/2012 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda oybirliği/oyçokluğu ile başarılı bulunarak, jürimiz tarafından yüksek lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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2- Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa ÖZGEN

3- Yrd. Doç. Dr. Harun ŞİMŞEK

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ÖZET

Yabancı dil kaygısı, yabancı dil öğrenimini her yönüyle etkileyen karmaşık, psikolojik bir faktördür. Yabancı dil kaygısı sıklıkla bireyin yabancı dildeki performansıyla ilişkilendirildiği için bu kaygının en güçlü etkiyi iletişim becerilerine yapar. Bu sebeple yabancı dil kaygısının bir parçası olan iletişim kaygısı başarılı yabancı dil performansını olumsuz etkiler. Bu çalışma iletişim kaygısının yabancı dili İngilizce olan Türk öğrenciler üzerindeki negatif etkilerini, bilgisayar destekli iletişim şekli olarak sıkça kullanılan bir sesli-görüntülü araç vasıtasıyla sanal ortamda haftalık yapılan görüşmelerle azaltmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Bu çalışmadaki katılımcılar (N: 18) amaçlı örnekleme yöntemiyle seçilmişlerdir. Veri toplamada nicel (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) ve nitel (özbildirim) teknikler kullanılmıştır. Toplanan verilerin analizinde non-parametrik Wilcoxon sıralı işaretler testinden faydalanılmıştır. Sonuçlar sesli-görüntülü araçlarla sağlanan bilgisayar destekli iletişimin, çeşitli kaygı düzeylerine sahip katılımcıların iletişim kaygılarının azaltılmasında önemli bir katkı sağladığını göstermiştir. Çalışmada en ciddi azalma yüksek kaygı grubunda gözlenmiştir çünkü düşük ve orta dereceli kaygıya sahip katılımcılardan farklı olarak yüksek kaygılı katılımcılar önemli bir ilerleme kaydetmiş ve çalışma sonunda orta dereceli iletişim kaygısı seviyelerine ulaşmışlardır.

Ayrıca, katılımcıların özbildirimleri, bilgisayar destekli iletişimin öğrencilerin inter-kültürel farkındalıklarının yanı sıra yabancı dilde iletişim kaygısına yönelik tutumlarında da önemli ölçüde pozitif değişikliklere yol açtığını göstermiştir. Son olarak, katılımcıların özbildirim analizleri, yüksek iletişim kaygısını azaltmaya yönelik olası çözümler olarak birtakım pratik öneriler sunmuştur.

SUMMARY

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a complex, psychological phenomenon that affects all aspects of foreign language learning. As FLA is commonly associated with one's performance in FL, it has the strongest impact on communication skills. For this reason, communication apprehension, a component of FLA, negatively correlates with successful FL performance. This study intends to remedy negative effects of communication apprehension on Turkish EFL learners by weekly virtual meetings held through a widely used Vo-IP tool as a form of computer-mediated communication.

The participants (N: 18) in this study were selected through purposeful sampling. The study employed both quantitative (Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale) and qualitative (self-reports) techniques in data collection. To analyze the data collected, a non-parametric test, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test, was utilized. The results indicated that computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools made a significant contribution to alleviate communication apprehension levels in the participants with varying degrees of anxiety levels. The study observed the most drastic reduction in high anxiety group, since unlike low and moderately anxious participants, highly anxious participants made a significant progress and ended up with moderate levels of communication apprehension.

Also, the participants' self-reports revealed that computer-mediated communication yielded remarkably positive changes in the participants' attitudes towards communication in FL as well as contributing to their intercultural awareness. Finally, an analysis of participants' self-reports provided a bunch of practical suggestions as possible solutions for reducing high levels of communication apprehension.

Abbreviations

BIQ: Background Information Questionnaire

CA: Communication Apprehension

CAI: Computer Assisted Instruction

CAL: Communication Apprehensive Learner

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

CLL: Community Language Learning

CMC: Computer Mediated Communication

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELL: English Language and Literature

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

FL: Foreign Language

FLA: Foreign Language Anxiety

FLCAS: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

LCDH: Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis

L2: Foreign/ Second Language

NBLT: Network-Based Language Teaching

WTC: Willingness to Communicate

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CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

Language learning has been a matter of great interest for the past few decades. The fact that the world gets smaller thanks to the technological developments has well proven the importance of language learning for individuals from all parts of the society. In other words, the boundaries between countries have sharply shrunk, and the great curiosity in people to get familiar with different cultures, people and lifestyles has been extensively intrigued as technological developments come in leaps and bounds. Also, the ascent in the mobility rates of people has rendered it possible and, in effect, common for people to get in contact with people from other countries, which makes the need for learning a second language explicit. Therefore, learning another language as the most prominent tool for communication in an international context has arisen as an interesting yet challenging issue of the last few decades.

The bulk of research conducted on language learning is a good nominee to evidence the increasing interest in this field. However, it is not likely to define the subject of language learning, human beings, unidimensionally. That is people are highly intricate by nature as they have social, emotional, cognitive and behavioral aspects all acting concurrently. Thus, success in language learning research is almost always open to debate as no single method or approach for language learning has proven successful under every and each circumstance. Actually, it is dubious whether any method can ever achieve this.

One of the above-mentioned possible reasons for the unexpected results in language learning, learners' emotional dimension merits further inquiry as it hardly lends itself to clear-cut explanations. That is it is less likely to make black or white statements about affective factors as they are quite subjective by nature. The other three major aspects affecting success in language learning can be observed in one way or another and thus, more easily compensated. In contrast, affective variables in human beings are relatively ambiguous and much less conducive for a possible solution.

First and foremost reason for the lack of clarity in foreign language learning with regard to the emotional aspect may be the highly subjective nature of affective variables. As they are the product of internal processes, they cannot be identified by external measures. In this regard, even recognition of affective reactions in learners may help instructors go a long way in terms of providing a solution. Also, they will be implicit unless learners are willing to share their feelings. That is to say, teachers specifically trained for this may even fail to realize emotional turbulences if learners do not make their feelings public. For this reason, there may be several cases where affective variables may go unnoticed despite their worthwhile impact on language learning process. Even worse, teachers may inadvertently deteriorate the case with their remarks, attitudes and behaviors. Henceforth, nothing done or said about the impact of affective filters could go beyond being a speculation if individual learners show unwillingness to cooperate.

Although a gloomy concept seems to be depicted thus far, taking advantage of affective filters is also probable. In other words, affective variables offer teachers a magical key for opening the door leading to the inner world of learners. While the difficulty in learning about learners' affective variables may give rise to problems in language learning process, teachers will get the power to manipulate the case positively once they find the right path leading to learners' emotions. When they are provided sufficient training to raise their familiarity with factors mirroring learners' affective situation, instructors may gain the potential to convert negative feelings into positive contributors and at the same time, supplement the already positive mood so that learners will make good of language learning process. Bearing all these in mind, it is possible to say that affective variables hold the potential to be a determinant factor for achievement in language learning.

Foreign language anxiety connected to communication in the target language (i.e. the basic concern of the present study) is a hotly debated affective variable that has a sound impact on language learning (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, 2010; Saito & Samimy, 1996). Although much research has been done to unravel its impact on foreign language learning, there is still a lot to be done as any new study opens a

new horizon for further research. Whereas there is a grave lack of consensus over its nature, reasons leading to it and its impacts, Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986: 126) associate foreign language anxiety with such expressions as worry and apprehension. Specifically arising from language learning contexts (Young, 1992: 157), foreign language anxiety has conflicting impacts on learners. Moreover, several distinct factors like age, gender, and education level are arguably considered as triggering language anxiety. All these will be delineated in depth and breadth in the following sections of this study.

Another equally important criterion for achievement in language learning is to keep up with the needs and developments of the current age. Technological developments have an undeniable influence on all aspects of education, and language learning is no exception. People's need and desire to learn languages and their interest in technological developments have made it inevitable for language practitioners to benefit from opportunities offered by technological instruments, in particular the computer. Indeed, several attempts have been made to incorporate the computer into different aspects of language learning (Jimin, 2007; Pena & Yeung, 2010). As a result, language learning has witnessed a bloom in the number of computer-assisted programs and tools specifically designed for language learning. Moreover, each program or tool displays notable differences in their foci. For example, social networking tools like Google Talk, Skype, MSN Live etc. provide wonderful opportunities to improve overall communication skills as one can both write and speak through such tools depending on his/her own wish.

Apparently, the introduction of technology, in particular the computer, into language classrooms is not a recent phenomenon at all. Going back to the late 1950s, the integration of technological applications into language classrooms, which can be named under the broad term Computer Assisted Language Learning (hereafter CALL), has gone through some stages in accordance with the theoretical developments in language learning. Warschauer (1996: 3) outlines those stages as Behaviouristic CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL. Initially, CALL included simple repetition and drill activities. As reinforcement and repetition

were the two basic premises of Behaviourism, the applications in the first stage made extensive use of repetitive practices with congratulatory notices for correct answers. The primacy of the usage over form introduced the second stage of CALL, since the advent of Communicative approaches made the need for communication clearer. Hence, communicative activities that prompted a shift from teacher-fronted teaching to student-fronted learning shaped the second stage. More recently, however, Constructivist approaches to language learning have called for meaningful construction of the learning process by learners. That is constructivism supports more active participation of learners in constructing the learning environments. In addition to this paradigm shift, the widespread use of computers and multimedia tools has brought about the third stage. Currently, there is still a move forward as it is quite difficult to foresee what is coming next and how it will shape language classrooms. All these concerns will later be discussed in detail in the Literature review part. Nevertheless, the researcher needs to explicate that the integration of computer applications into language learning is the other major driving force in this study.

As it is clear now, this paper attempts to find out the relationship between two interest-raising issues in language learning; namely, foreign language communication apprehension and integration of the computer into foreign language learning. Therefore, the researcher intends to see how a vastly used computer-mediated communication tool, Skype, may affect language learners with the basic goal of allaying their foreign language communication apprehension. Also, the question of how foreign language learners will react to using them in their learning process appears as a further point to be delved into within this study.

1.1. Background of the Study

"I just know I have some kind of disability: I can't learn a foreign language no matter how hard I try." (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986: 125)

The excerpt is quoted from Horwitz et. al. (1986) in order to indicate a commonly cited reaction among learners of a foreign language. Both the literature and researchers' own experience yield the conclusion that foreign language learners

have some constraints on their speaking competence, which far outreach the issue of grammar or vocabulary knowledge. Even those learners who score high points in standard paper-based tests fail to produce a few sentences in a real communication. Cases where foreign language learners feel frozen or locked-up in a communicative situation are not uncommon. There may even be some extreme cases where students in a foreign language classroom refuse to say a single word. As being one of the by then instructors at one of the institutions the present study was conducted, the researcher was surprised at the observation that students majoring in English Language Teaching (ELT) and English Language and Literature Departments (i.e. prospective teachers of English) preferred speaking Turkish (their mother tongue) to English while answering a question uttered in English. Furthermore, some highly successful students' complaint that they could not simply speak out the sentences that they prepared in their mind intrigued the researcher's attention.

Having gone through some literature over similar cases, the researcher decided to conduct the current study in order to offer some practical remedies for the aforementioned problems. What foreign language literature suggested and what the students in the researcher's classes stated were all indicative of "foreign language anxiety". As Horwitz et. al. (1986: 231) put it, foreign language anxiety is the negative feelings of tension and apprehension specific to language learning context. Language anxiety is claimed to have conflicting impacts on foreign language learning process as several studies (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991c; Chastain, 1975) show perplexing results. However, the general tendency reveals a negative attitude towards the impact of foreign language anxiety.

On the other hand, foreign language education as well as all other fields of education has undergone drastic changes in line with technological developments. Foreign language learning has witnessed a radical modification from the blackboard-mediated, teacher-based teaching through television-mediated learning to highly autonomous computer-mediated, student-centered learning. Even more is expected as the concept of home schooling is argued nowadays (Butler, 2000). Considering all these developments and changes, the researcher, a keen supporter of integration of

computer applications into foreign language classroom was set to familiarize his students with a commonly used computer-mediated communication tool, Skype, as a remedy for their complaints over being unable to speak English as fluently as they wished.

Another point taken into account in the background of the present study is the status of English because it is granted as a foreign language in Turkey. More precisely, English learners in Turkey complain about not having enough opportunity to practice oral skills because the only chance for most of the students to use English is the classroom context. Bearing in mind the curriculum and time restrictions in the classroom, it turns out that the learners need a magical power to speak English fluently. That is why the researcher embraces the Skype meetings in this study as an extracurricular activity for the participants.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

Foreign language anxiety, in particular communication apprehension, plays an important role in both receptive and productive processes of language learning. Quite a few studies (Horwitz, 2001; Phillips, 1992; Young, 1991) have found significant correlations between language anxiety and several factors (such as achievement, motivation) in language learning process. However, a surface literature review reveals the dearth of studies targeting specifically at Turkish learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). On the other hand, there is a lack of research on the relationship between foreign language anxiety and computer-mediated communication despite the considerable use of such communication by language learners today. This paper, therefore, attempts to compensate for the insufficiency of studies in both areas.

Firstly, the researcher intends to draw a picture of how language anxiety affects foreign language (FL) learners' communicative skills, particularly speaking. To date, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no attempt has been made to incorporate voice over IP (VoIP) tools into foreign language classrooms in Turkey with the basic intention of developing communicative skills. Thus, the second goal of this study is to gain insights into possible reactions of the participants to using such tools for the

stated purpose. Above all, the present study investigates whether the integration of one of the commonly used VoIP tools i.e. Skype may have any impact on overcoming communication apprehension.

1.3. Research Questions

Given its purposes, the present study seeks to come up with possible answers to the following questions:

1. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in low anxious learners?
2. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in moderately anxious learners?
3. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in highly anxious learners?
4. What is the impact of computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools on learners' attitudes towards the target language?

1.4. Hypotheses and Assumptions

The researcher holds the following set of priori hypotheses about the results of the study. However, it should be made it clear that at no point of the study did the researcher share these assumptions with the participants to assure that the results could in no way be interfered.

1. Despite high levels of target language knowledge, a great majority of foreign language learners experience foreign language anxiety. As the vital skill for the smooth flow of communication, speaking exacerbates anxiety levels associated with foreign language learning.
2. Computer-assisted language learning applications and instruments positively affect foreign language learning process.
3. Computer-mediated communication tools may prove an invaluable contributor to attain a better foreign language performance.

4. Computer-mediated communication tools may help alleviate communication apprehension levels. More precisely, such tools may yield positive results in reducing communication apprehension as they provide extensive opportunity for communication.

1.5. Limitations

Being the first study to integrate computer-mediated communication tools to decrease communication anxiety levels in Turkish learners of English as a FL, this study has several limitations. Firstly, the particular sample group consisting only of participants majoring in English was too small in number to enable generalizable results. The homogeneity of the group might have a negative impact on the reliability and validity of the results since English majors might be more motivated to take part in such studies. The respondents' personal interpretations of the questionnaire items might have also interfered with the results.

Although this study was conducted on participants from two different countries, it ignored cultural differences between the participants, which might have affected the flow of the conversations in the virtual meeting sessions. However, the researcher did pay attention to avoid including personal topics (such as religion) lest they should lead to feelings of offence in either interlocutor in the meeting sessions. The fact that no information was gleaned about participants' preferred learning styles, personality traits and their attitudes toward using computers put an extra restriction on the study. Although each might have a strong impact, the researcher presumed that simply admitting to partake in a study involving periodical meetings with a foreigner through the computer was a factor strong enough to evidence the participants' outgoing personalities and feelings of comfort with using the computer.

Still another major limitation to this study was that it did not offer an introduction about how to use Skype, the voice over IP (Vo-IP) tool used in the study. As several studies (such as Sagarra & Zapata, 2008) revealed the need for an adaptation period while using computer-assisted programs, it could have been beneficial to provide an introduction session. Yet the researcher did not need to offer

an introduction session as all participants were already familiar with similar tools used for virtual communication. On the other hand, one of the basic pitfalls in the virtual meetings was associated with auditory and visual quality. Rarely though, there were some cases in which the participants complained about bad sound or vague vision of their partners. However, these complaints were related more to the quality of internet connection than to the program used. Finally, both ends in the virtual meetings were non-native speakers of English. At first place, this may have provided some advantages. For instance, the pairs could better understand the challenges of learning English as a FL, since both sides were non-native speakers. Talking to native speakers, nevertheless, could offer valuable gains such as more pragmatic knowledge, better pronunciation, and more assistance in cases of misunderstanding or difficulties.

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

PART I

2.1. Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety is the general psychological factor that is associated with such irritating feelings as fear, apprehension and uneasiness. Beck & Emery (1985) suggest that anxiety is an individual's affective reaction that stems from perception of a threat. Given that the perception does not have to be based on an actual danger, even the thought of the threat may lead to anxiety. Hilgard, Atkinson & Atkinson (1971 cited in Scovel, 1991: 18) introduce a sense of ambiguity related to anxiety, since they define it as "a vague fear that is only indirectly" connected to an object. Williams (1991) further develops the concept of ambiguity arguing that the simple perception of anxiety may cause further anxiety. Spielberger (1983: 1) states that what triggers anxiety is the automatic activation of the nervous system by the individual's subjective feelings.

Eysenck (1979) claims that anxiety affects the cognitive processes. He (1979) states that anxiety leads to a division in one's mind because some portion of his/ her attention is occupied by tasks irrelevant to learning while the other part focuses on the subject to learn. According to Eysenck's (1979) hypothesis, the abovementioned negative feelings linked to anxiety distract learners from fully focusing on learning the subject, and therefore hinder effective learning. Based on Eysenck's observations on the division of attention in learning, MacIntyre (1995) introduced a "divided attention scenario" (1995: 96) in language learning contexts, which hypothesizes that anxiety experienced in language learning distracts language learners' attention, and leads to lower achievement (and performance) in the target language.

Indeed, foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a salient and pervasive phenomenon in language learning contexts (Saito & Samimy, 1996: 240). Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986: 128) define FLA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs,

feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process." This comprehensive definition reveals some important features of FLA. Firstly, it presupposes that FLA has a highly complex nature. Young (1992: 157) underlines that FLA is a complicated set of psychological factors specific to language learning. MacIntyre & Gardner (1994b) further argue that FLA affects all aspects of language learning since they (1994b: 283) outline FLA as "the feelings of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language context including speaking, listening and learning."

Another important aspect in Horwitz et.al.'s (1986) definition is that FLA occurs due to the unique nature of language learning process. In other words, FLA is prompted and/or aggravated by the dynamics of language classrooms. As language classes are different from other classes (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, 1999; Price, 1991) owing to the continuous monitoring and immediacy embedded in their very nature, FLA can be distinguished from other types of anxiety. For example, the idea that the language classroom is constantly being monitored either by the teacher or peers imposes extra consciousness on learners whenever they attempt to say or ask something. That is why some learners, particularly those with a perfectionist tendency, feel discouraged to speak unless they are sure that their words are perfectly tailored and well-organized (Horwitz et.al., 1986: 127). Closely related to the classroom dynamics, the fear of humiliation in language classrooms is another major factor affecting FLA. Learners with an extrinsic motivation attach extra importance to others' perceptions of them. Therefore, the risk that they may sound ridiculous due to a mistake in the language classroom becomes a determinant factor. These and the like factors (i.e. the difference of language classrooms, constant monitoring in the language classroom, and fear of humiliation) clearly make language classrooms a more challenging setting for anxious learners as they may feel weak and indeed defenseless.

On the other hand, Williams (1991: 25) contends that FLA results from a situation in which an external factor is, or is perceived to be, more demanding than one can handle. In the same vein, Gardner & MacIntyre (1993: 5) state that FLA is

experienced when a student is required to use the target language "with which he is not fully proficient." More precisely, FLA is driven by learners' perception that the requirements of the immediate situation are beyond their capacity. Likewise, Horwitz (2001) argues that students' negative perception of their own communication abilities is one of the driving forces behind FLA. To illustrate, FLA is linked to a feeling of insufficiency in learners as they think that they do not have the essential resources to live up to the demands of the situation they are in. Therefore, it appears that learners' negative perceptions about their ability, no matter how proficient they may actually be, play a key role in the severity of FLA they experience. Accordingly, Oh (1990: 56) suggests that FLA leads to "feelings of inadequacy, fear of failure and emotional reactions."

Despite the vast amount of research on FLA, there are still several lingering questions about its nature. Some researchers distinguish between state and trait anxiety, while others add a third classification which they call situation-specific anxiety. Still others use the terms "facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety" to define the nature of FLA. At the other end of the continuum, there are some linguists who refuse to use the word "anxiety" to refer to the negative feelings experienced in foreign language learning. For example, Rardin, Omaggio-Hadley and Terrell (in Young, 1992: 160-163) prefer to use the following words as an alternative to anxiety: "alertness", "incentive", and "attention", respectively. In addition, Spielmann & Radnofsky (2001: 263) use "dysphoric/ euphoric tension" instead of anxiety. However, several studies (Horwitz et. al., 1986; MacIntyre Gardner, 1991b) conducted by different researchers have proven that FLA does unquestionably exist.

As for the nature of FLA, Schwarzer et. al. (1982 cited in Yan, 2006: 710) make a distinction between state anxiety and trait anxiety. State anxiety stems from a temporary situation in which one goes through feelings of "worry, apprehension, nervousness and tension" (Young, 1986: 441). State anxiety ceases when the stimulus is extracted from the context. That is state anxiety refers to a transitory situation marked by unpleasant emotions caused by certain conditions, which is replaced by peace when the stimulus leading to the anxious emotions is removed

(Spielberger, 1983). Pappamihiel (2002: 330) purports that learners who have state anxiety can successfully differentiate whether a threat is beyond their capacity to handle or not. Conversely, trait anxiety refers to one's overall vulnerability to anxiety irrespective of the situation (Schwarzer et. al., 1982 cited in Yan, 2006: 710). That is to say, trait anxiety stands for a sustained tendency to be anxious because it is a personality feature. In this sense, most researchers (Young, 1986) consider FLA an aspect of state anxiety. Horwitz et. al. (1986) and Bailey, Daley & Onwuegbuzie (1999) further argue that FLA in essence is a situation-specific anxiety, which surfaces through psychological symptoms of state anxiety, in that it ceases as soon as learners are released from the language classroom.

When it comes to the categorization of FLA in terms of its contribution to the learning process, two types of FLA, facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety, become prominent. Facilitating anxiety refers to feelings of worry and apprehension which promote higher success in the language classroom. The underlying theory behind facilitative anxiety is that the failures students experience due to anxiety may better motivate them to try harder, as Young (1986: 440) contends that it leads to improved performance. Debilitating anxiety, however, refers to the cases in which an increase in anxiety obstructs effective language learning. Therefore, debilitating anxiety acts as a hindrance for efficient language learning. Whereas several studies have found debilitating impacts of FLA on language learning (Bailey et.al., 1999; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991c; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Rodriguez, 1995; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003; Saito et.al., 1999: Young, 1986), others occasionally report facilitating anxiety (Chastain, 1975; Hewitt & Stephenson, 2011; Kitano, 2001; Kleinmann, 1977; Spielberber, 1983; Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001; Tucker, Hamayan & Genesee, 1976).

Nevertheless, there is a conflict over the findings on the impacts of FLA with regard to the consistency of results between earlier research and recent studies. In earlier research (Chastain, 1975; Kleinmann, 1977; Spielberber, 1983), FLA was reported to have a negative impact on some students, while positively affecting others. Likewise, some studies (Albert & Haber, 1960; Scovel, 1978) revealed that

facilitating and debilitating anxiety could simultaneously affect the same individual. More specifically, Scovel (1978: 138-139) stated that facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety worked "in tandem." In other words, anxiety motivated students to try harder while at the same time its existence discouraged them from attending to language classrooms. Though such inconsistencies prevailed in early research, more recent studies (Aida, 1994; Cheng et.al., 1999; Horwitz, 2001; Onwuegbuzie et.al., 1999; Phillips, 1992) have consistently disclosed that FLA has a debilitating impact on language learning. Furthermore, Horwitz (1990) firmly rejects the idea that any facilitative anxiety exists in language learning. However, it must be borne in mind that a moderate level of anxiety may prove beneficial because some research (Gregersen & Horwitz: 2002) reveals that low-anxious learners notice their mistakes but feel too relaxed to correct them. As Donley (1997) highlights, FLA is not so simple as to be completely negative. Therefore, it is more plausible to conclude that a certain amount of anxiety is an advantage, whereas excessive amounts may give rise to negative results (Chastain, 1975; Lien, 2011).

Despite such inconsistencies, FLA merits further research because the findings of several recent studies (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995) have revealed that FLA is a sound determinant in FLL achievement. For example, Horwitz (1991) contended that FLA accounted for a quarter of the variance in language performance. Similarly, in a study on the influences of several cognitive, affective, personality and demographic factors on FL achievement, Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley (2000: 10) reported that FLA was the second best predictor of language achievement as it accounted for more than ten percent of the overall variance.

As with the subcomponents of FLA, it may be better to fall back on the categorization Horwitz et. al. (1986) suggested. In their study, which constitutes the basis for the growth in the number of studies that yield consistent results, Horwitz and her associates (1986: 127) come up with three subcomponents of FLA: test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension. Horwitz et.al. (1986: 127) define test anxiety as "a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure." It is the factor underlying the negative feelings, behaviors and

attitudes toward taking tests. However, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989) argue that test anxiety is not specific to language learning settings. Rather, people with test anxiety may experience it in any evaluative situation. Hence, MacIntyre & Gardner (1989: 268) recommend that test anxiety be regarded as a part of general anxiety.

However, fear of negative evaluation has more to do with the social aspect of language learning. It refers to the avoidance learners display in communicative contexts because they are concerned about others' evaluative judgments about themselves. Jones (2004: 31) associates the fear of negative evaluation with a fear of appearing foolish in the eyes of others due to one's incompetence. Indeed, one's awareness that the teacher and peers are listening to him/her triggers his/her anxiety. Learners with fear of negative evaluation consider the social environment in the classroom threatening because they feel that they are put on the spot, and that the teacher and their classmates are making evaluative judgments about their performance. Such learners are also afraid of making mistakes because mistakes may harm their image in the minds of the teacher and their classmates. Therefore, one can easily assume that FLA is associated with one's concept of social face, which refers to the way in which the society perceives an individual.

Jones (2003: 34) basically argues that FLA is a threat that endangers one's face in another culture. Given that foreign language classroom is a setting ruled by the principles of the target language culture, any attempt to use L2 in the classroom may impose a risk for learners' concepts of self i.e. face (Horwitz et.al. 1986: 128). Bailey (1983: 97) posits that when learners develop a negative self-image due to failures in the FL classroom, they are likely to suffer from FLA. Young (1991: 429) and Kojima (2007: 98) indicate that smiling and nodding are among the reactions that learners use to save their self-image. Gregersen (2003: 29) reports that anxious learners show an unwillingness to participate in communication in order to maintain the self-image they create in the classroom. MacIntyre, Noels & Clement (1997), however, distinguish between the four major skills in terms of the danger they impose on one's concept of self. They (1997: 279) argue that reading is the least threatening skill, since learners have the opportunity to re-read and therefore, they do

not have to make their difficulties in comprehension public. However, speaking is the skill that makes learners' self-image most vulnerable to risks. Various studies (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Phillips, 1991; Woodrow, 2006) reveal that language learners view speaking as the most anxiety-provoking task. Indeed, speaking is a multi-faceted activity because it requires learners to put several processes into action simultaneously: they need to choose the word that best conveys the meaning, use the appropriate syntactic structure and produce intelligible pronunciation all at the same time. Hence, all these processes place an excessive burden on language learners and put their social image at risk, which, in turn, increases their levels of FLA. Finally, communication apprehension, which will be deeply tapped in the following sections, basically refers to feelings of tension and worry one experiences when he/ she is required to speak and listen to the target language in a communicative situation

2.1.1. Common Symptoms

Saito & Samimy (1996: 240) sort manifestations of FLA into three major categories: psychological symptoms, psycholinguistic symptoms and behavioral symptoms.

a- Psychological Symptoms: Commonly observed psychological symptoms associated with FLA involve excessive sweating, blushing, dry mouth, contracted muscles, increased heartbeats and shaking (Chastain, 1975; Foss & Reitzel, 1988; Gardner, 1985; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986; Von Worde, 2003).

b- Psycholinguistic Symptoms: Psycholinguistic symptoms of FLA are regarded as a hindrance for accurate and fluent usage of the target language (L2). These symptoms include stuttering during communication, production of distorted sounds, inability to use prior knowledge, freezing up when required to speak in L2, and reluctance to speak (Arikian & Gorman, 2001; Omwuegbuzie et.al., 1999; Phillips, 1992; Rardin, in Young, 1991).

c- Behavioral Symptoms: Behavioral manifestations of FLA include competitiveness, over-sensitivity to others' views, feeling inferior to others in the

classroom, refusing to prepare homework, avoiding contact with the teacher and students, sitting in the very back row to avoid participation, and responding the instructor's questions in the simplest way (Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, 1986; Leary 1982, in Young, 1991; Phillips,1991; Von Worde, 2003; Terrell, in Young, 1991; Young, 1992).

In addition, several studies (Horwitz, 1988; Horwitz et.al., 1986; Young, 1991) report that highly anxious learners tend to have unrealistic beliefs about their FL abilities. Kern (1995) and Truitt (1995) report that learners with high levels of FLA set unrealistic goals regarding the time required for learning a L2, since some students may think that they can achieve native-like proficiency in a fairly short time. Also, researchers (Bailey et.al., 2003; Onwuegbuzie et.al., 1999; Young, 1991) maintain that anxious learners prefer to delay taking language courses as much as possible and even attempt to change their majors in order to avoid FL courses.

There are some other factors that contribute to the severity of language anxiety one experiences. Several studies (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2004; Kim, 2009) suggest that classroom atmosphere and instructor attitudes significantly affect levels of language anxiety. Another prominent factor that increases FLA is the feeling of uncertainty prevalent in FL classrooms (Pajares, 1996; Pekrun, 1992). Similarly, the status gap between interlocutors (such as the one between the teacher and students in the classroom) may exacerbate FLA (MacIntyre & MacDonald, 1998). Jang (2001) contends that contextual variables like the number of people in a conversation, the purpose of speaking and interlocutors' familiarity with the content may aggravate FLA. However, it is important to note that the existence of merely one of the abovementioned factors is not enough to conclude that learners have high levels of language anxiety.

2.1.2. Coping Strategies

As to the possible ways of coping with foreign language anxiety employed by language learners, various studies report several strategies. Avoidance is one of the most commonly documented strategies in cases of FLA. Argaman & Abu-Rabia

(2002) state that anxious language learners may neglect doing homework, and skip language classes to relieve their anxiety. Similarly, Pappamihiel (2002: 345) maintains that adolescent language learners prefer to avoid the learning environment as it increases their anxiety. Horwitz et al. (1986: 131) mentions that in severe cases of FLA, learners may either give up the class completely or even change their major. Another strategy that anxious language learners use is over-studying (Horwitz et.al., 1986: 131). In a Japanese classroom, Saito & Samimy (1996) observe that anxious learners tend to study harder in order to compensate for their insufficient performance. Likewise, Horwitz & Young (1991) argue that anxious learners prefer over-studying to taking the risk of making mistakes in the classroom. Finally, using the native language is another strategy that learners with higher levels of FLA employ in order to reduce their levels of FLA. For example, Gregersen (2003: 28) states that highly anxious participants resort to their native language as a response to FLA more often than less anxious ones.

2.1.3. Foreign Language Anxiety and Its Correlates

Foreign language anxiety has been observed to be interacting with quite a few affective, cognitive, personality and demographic variables. Nevertheless, almost no findings about the relationship of FLA to other variables seem to be clear-cut. Researchers such as Horwitz et.al (1986) and Scovel (1978) reiterated that studies up until their time failed to provide a precise definition and a validated measure of FLA. In addition, Skehan (1989: 116) complained about simplicity in FLA studies, arguing that FLA research utilized tools from general psychology such as Sarason Test Anxiety Scale (Sarason, 1961) to measure FLA. Only after the development of the "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)" (Horwitz et.al., 1986) could research on the relationships between FLA and other variables yield consistent and validated results.

The relationship between language anxiety and achievement is of the utmost importance because a great majority of studies (Abu-Rabia, 2004; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991c) report that FLA is, in some way or other, related to FL achievement. Most of the research on the relationship between FLA and achievement (Aida, 1994;

Pappamihiel, 2002; Phillips, 1992; Price, 1991) has found a negative correlation i.e. students with low levels of achievement experience high levels of anxiety. Lin, Endler & Kocovski (2001) construe that those who report higher levels of FLA have lower proficiency in L2. According to Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, high anxiety hampers achievement in L2 because high affective filters interfere with input intake. Additionally, FLA is negatively correlated with course grades and results of standardized achievement tests (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Young, 1986). On the other hand, high levels of anxiety may obstruct the reproduction of previously-learned subjects (Gregersen, 2003; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b). With regard to the quality and quantity of the speech, Phillips (1992) claims that FLA may result in low oral performance in L2. However, there are some studies (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, 1999) which reveal positive correlations between FLA and achievement, or no correlation at all (Sparks, Ganschow & Javorsky, 1993; Steingberg, 1982; Young, 1986). It is obviously difficult to determine a clear-cut causal relationship between FLA and achievement due to some unexpected variables (Horwitz, 2001). Accordingly, various researchers prefer to call the relationship between FLA and achievement as "reciprocal" and "a vicious circle" (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994b; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Onwuegbuzie et.al. 1999).

Another significant relationship has consistently been observed between foreign language anxiety and self-perception. Learners' expectations and assumptions about their language learning affect their level of FLA. A number of researchers (Casado & Dershiwsky, 2004; Cheng et. al., 1999; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003; Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999) argue that students' belief in their capacity to learn is negatively correlated with the levels of FLA they experience. Donovan & MacIntyre (2005) and Bailey et. al. (1999) emphasize that learners' positive perceptions about their own language learning competence decrease their levels of FLA. In a study with Turkish EFL learners, Kunt (1997) unveils that learners' perceptions about their ability in the target language are negatively correlated with their FLA levels.

Moreover, Onwuegbuzie, et. al. (1999) suggest that learners' expectations of their future performance are inversely related to FLA. However, it should be noted that learners are more likely to fail in assessing their ability accurately as they are vulnerable to overestimate or underestimate their competence. In a study conducted by Phillips (1992), one of the participants who previously thought that she was a complete failure received a remarkably high score. Hence, this interesting finding supports the proposition that FLA does not necessarily decrease or disappear at all in high academic achievers (Cheng, 2002; Dewaele et. al., 2008; Onwuegbuzie et. al., 1999; Onwuegbuzie, Paterson, Watson & Schwartz 2000; Saito & Samimy, 1996). In the same vein, Horwitz & Young (1991) suggest that even highly advanced learners may suffer from high levels of FLA. Several studies (Cheng, 2002; Onwuegbuzie et.al., 1999; Saito & Samimy, 1996) indicate a linear increase in the levels of FLA with education level, though there have been a few studies (Elkhafaifi, 2005: MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a) which report a negative correlation between education level and levels of FLA.

One of the most prominent factors that exacerbate the levels of foreign language anxiety is the contrast between one's identity in the native language and the target language. As fluent and successful communicators in their native language, learners in foreign language classrooms are well aware of the fact that they are under constant risk of failure at any point of communication. Samimy & Rardin (1994: 380) state that the insufficiency in conveying the meaning of a message in L2 thoroughly results in "ambiguous feelings." In other words, the inadequacy of the restricted self in the target language enhances levels of anxiety (Horwitz et.al., 1986; Price, 1991) because language learners are aware and uncomfortable with the idea that they are not native speakers of the target language. As a result, they feel more vulnerable to the threats caused by the inability to communicate themselves successfully (Foss & Reitzel, 1988).

Various studies (Ely, 1986; Liu & Jackson, 2008) conspicuously reveal that language anxiety is inversely related to risk-taking. Saito & Samimy (1996: 246) indicate in a study with learners of Japanese that learners with high levels of anxiety

take fewer risks in the language classroom than their less anxious counterparts. Likewise, several studies (MacIntyre et. al., 1997; McCroskey & Richmond, 1990) have suggested that language anxiety has a negative correlation with learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in L2. Put differently, language learners with a high level of anxiety will display less willingness to participate in L2 conversation (Yashima, 2002). The content of communication is also closely associated with FLA as various studies (MacIntyre et. al., 1997; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986) indicate that highly anxious learners are likely to communicate less informatively than low-anxious learners. For instance, Chen & Lee (2011: 438) stated that participants in their study felt more relaxed and showed lower levels of anxiety while talking about familiar topics.

Nonetheless, LA is reported to be positively related to the students' age. In other words, older language learners have higher levels of anxiety (Deweale, 2007a; Onwuegbuzie et.al., 1999). Furthermore, Deweale et. al. (2008: 936) posit that learners who use L2 more frequently are likely to have less anxiety. Several other researchers (Levine, 2003; Liu & Jackson, 2008) argue that more practice in L2 decreases FLA. In the same fashion, various studies (Aida, 1994; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991b) report that FLA declines as learners' experience in language learning increases. In this regard, multilingual learners who have had more experience with FLL suffer less from FLA (Deweale, 2007b; Dewaele et. al., 2008). As to the levels of anxiety in those learners who have visited the target country, conflicting results have been reported. While some researchers (Aida, 1994; Onwuegbuzie et.al., 1999) observe that visits to the target country reduce FLA, others (Saito & Samimy, 1996) indicate a positive correlation. For example, Kitano's (2001) study, which investigated the anxiety levels of college students studying Japanese, revealed that high-anxious learners who had visited Japan felt augmented levels of anxiety. Kitano (2001: 558) stated that having been to Japan increased anxiety levels of highly anxious learners since they thought that as more experienced learners, they were expected to perform much better.

The role of gender in foreign language anxiety research is another point that yields highly inconsistent results. Whereas several studies (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Cheng, 2002; Donovan & MacIntyre, 2005; Elkhafaifi, 2005) propose that females have higher levels of FLA, others report no relationship (Cheng, 2002; Dewaele, 2002). Still others (Kitano, 2001) claim that males are more anxious than females. The inconsistency of the results can be explained by the general impression that females more readily express their feelings of anxiety while males show reluctance to confess such feelings (Clark & Trafford, 1996; Williams, 1996). Moreover, in an attempt to study the fluctuations in language anxiety levels of Mexican female learners of English, Pappamihiel (2001) noticed that the levels of FLA varied greatly in different settings. She (2001: 31) observed that though gender did not have a significant impact in ESL classes, female learners showed over concern about L2 use in mainstream classrooms. There is also a potent relationship between culture and FLA. Many researchers (Horwitz, 2001; Kim, 2009; Kunt, 1997) propose that levels of FLA varied amongst different cultural groups. For example, Kunt (1997) reports moderate levels of FLA among Turkish learners of English while Rueda & Chen's study (2005) reveal higher levels of FLA in Asian learners of English. As a consequence, one can infer that language anxiety is inversely related to cultural differences in language classrooms.

As for the impact of classroom atmosphere, various studies (Koch & Terrel, 1991; Price, 1991; Young, 1990) reveal that what happens in the classroom is significantly related to the levels of FLA. Given that language learners feel that they are perpetually being monitored (Daly, 1991), language classrooms by their nature exacerbate FLA. Consequently, unfamiliar activities in the classroom may lead to high levels of foreign language anxiety. Besides, Dewaele et. al. (2008: 942) hold that learners who learn the target language only in classroom settings are more anxious than those who learn it in mixed settings (i.e. in a combination of naturalistic and classroom contexts) most likely because of the highly formal nature of language classrooms compared to real life communication. Now that language learners tend to compare themselves to others in the classroom and make negative judgments about their own language learning abilities (Bailey, 1983; Price, 1991), learners' unrealistic

opinions about themselves contribute to their levels of FLA. Bailey (1983: 27) predicates that competitive behaviors driven by comparing oneself to other, highly skilled learners exacerbate anxiety in language classrooms. Moreover, anxious learners' unrealistic goals such as perfect pronunciation and excessive knowledge of vocabulary and grammar trigger higher levels of FLA (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). Therefore, such competitive and perfectionist tendencies may disrupt the peaceful climate, and augment the levels of anxiety in language classrooms.

As a major factor in establishing the desired classroom climate, teacher attitudes also play a significant role in the levels of FLA. Abu-Rabia (2004: 714) purports that teachers' attitudes in the classroom can be considered a strong predictor of FLA. Various researchers (Samimy & Rardin, 1994; Thompson, 2000; Young, 1986) posit that positive and supportive teacher attitudes, when combined with classroom activities that cater for learners' preferred learning styles, significantly contribute to the reduction of FLA. Another equally salient factor that may exacerbate FLA is the teachers' approach to error correction. Several researchers (Horwitz et.al., 1986; Krashen, 1998) maintain that error correction is inversely related to the levels of FLA, and recommend that teachers pay extra attention while correcting learners' errors. Omaggio Hadley (in Young, 1992: 165) indicates that the teacher may unintentionally contribute to FLA by focusing more on errors than the positive aspects in learners' responses. Phillips (1991) and Young (1990) suggest that teachers should adopt an appropriate attitude while correcting errors, which Oxford, Oh-Park, Ito & Sumrall (1993: 369) call "diplomatic correction." Much research (Fang, 2010), however, reveals that students view the correction by the teacher as crucial because it suggests highly informative feedback. Therefore, the issue in error correction is not whether teachers correct learners' errors or not, but rather how they correct them.

In addition, motivation is unanimously reported to be significantly correlated with FLA. Several studies (Gardner, Day & MacIntyre, 1992; Levine, 2003; Samimy & Rardin, 1994) report negative correlations between FLA and motivation. Gardner & MacIntyre (1993) assert that language learners with low levels of anxiety are

likely to be more motivated, whereas highly anxious learners have low levels of motivation. All in all, language learning itself is a highly controversial phenomenon as it challenges one's concept of self and involves high rates of risk-taking (Horwitz et.al., 1986). Nonetheless, further consideration of the aforementioned correlations between FLA and other variables may enhance understanding of the nature of language learning and thereby, help educators create a classroom environment more conducive to effective language learning.

2.1.4. Communication Apprehension

Communication apprehension (CA) is shaped by high levels of tension and worry one experiences when he/ she is required to speak and listen to the target language in a communicative situation. Richmond & McCroskey (1998: 37) define communication apprehension (CA) as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with real or anticipated communication with one person or persons." Also called communication anxiety, CA can most generally be described as the overly high levels of fear and anxiety linked to an actual or anticipated communicative event with a single person or a group of people (McCroskey, 1977). CA is considered to be a part of social anxiety, which is driven by "interpersonal evaluation" (Leary, 1982: 102) in a social context. Moreover, CA is associated to some extent with the fear of negative evaluation because in the classroom, communication apprehensive learners are concerned about the possibility of "being evaluated not only by their peers, but also by their instructor (Young, 1990: 550)."

Communication apprehension in the FL classroom occurs when a learner does everything but cannot utter a few words or a sentence such as answering a question. CA is rooted in learners' perceptions that they will fail to communicate themselves in the target language thoroughly. In other words, it is not a matter of desire because one may still feel apprehensive in a communicative setting even though he/ she has a great appetite for communicating. CA varies depending on the "mode of communication" (Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999: 421). To illustrate, while some learners suffer from high levels of anxiety in a writing class, others may experience the highest levels of anxiety in the listening class. However, previous studies (Ellis,

1994) reveal that language learners feel the most anxious in speaking classes. Similarly, several studies (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Price, 1991) consistently indicate that language learners experience communication anxiety when they are involved in a task requiring them to speak in front of the class.

Nevertheless, this is not to claim that communication apprehension occurs simply because learners are speaking in the target language. Young (1990: 551) maintains that speaking causes high levels of anxiety on the part of learners because speaking requires "on the spot" and "in front of the class" performance. To clarify, learners do not merely speak in the target language in language classrooms, about which they feel naive and incompetent, they also speak in front others. Given that speaking in front of an audience is a major challenge which amplifies levels of CA one experiences in the language classroom (Lucas, 1984), language learners may suffer higher levels of anxiety because they need to perform their speech in front of the teacher and their peers. Young's (1990) finding supports this claim, since she reports that learners working in pairs or small group have lower levels of anxiety than those who are involved in whole-class activities.

Communication apprehension is not a stable phenomenon (Foss & Reitzel, 1988: 447). Although it is true that communication apprehensive learners feel anxiety and reticence during communication, the level of anxiety they experience fluctuates. For example, whereas some apprehensive learners may report suffering from the most anxiety when they start a conversation, others may find concluding a conversation extremely challenging. Gregersen & Horwitz (2002: 562-563) maintain that communication apprehensive learners seldom start conversations. After the communicative event is set and learners get into the mood, one can assume that the levels of anxiety language learners suffer from will decrease. However, certain acts in a conversation may provoke higher levels of anxiety. For example, apprehensive learners, when directly asked a question in the classroom, may have aggravated levels of anxiety and reticence. Likewise, the volume of anxiety one experiences differ depending on the content of speaking (Jang, 2001). Chen & Lee (2011: 438) indicate that apprehensive learners feel at ease when talking about familiar topics

(like their family), whereas they exhibit higher levels of anxiety while talking about more challenging issues such as their plans for future. Hence, it is evident that although CA does exist due to various reasons, it is not operating constantly throughout a conversation. It is at those moments of peace that apprehensive learners may enjoy the pleasure of communicating in the L2.

There are several features associated with communication apprehensive learners (CALs). Firstly, CALs have low levels of self-esteem (Foss & Reitzel, 1988). They are unsure of their potential to carry out a conversation in the L2 successfully. In fact, they are pre-occupied with the misconception that they are less effective than others in the classroom. It is no surprise that apprehensive learners undervalue themselves and expect nothing but failure in language classrooms. As a result, several researchers (Bailey, Onwuegbuzie & Daley, 2003) observed that CALs tend to withdraw from communicative settings. They prefer avoiding communication because they think that their FL skills are too poor to succeed.

The negative expectations of apprehensive learners give rise to a dilemma (Hilleson, 1996; Liu & Jackson, 2008). On one hand, they feel afraid of making mistakes and prefer to be reticent because they perceive themselves to be less competent in L2. On the other hand, their anxiety grows since they do not practice and thus, fail to improve their proficiency level. This, in turn, leads to a "vicious circle" (MacIntyre, Noels & Clement, 1997: 278). A lack of practice exacerbates the feeling of timidness they have over their proficiency, whereas higher levels of this fear pave the way for less practice. As a result, they fail to notice the progress they have made throughout the process.

Another feature that could help to identify CALs in language classrooms is linked to their preferred classroom procedures. McCroskey & Anderson (1976) report that CALs favor for classrooms with a large group of attendees. Obviously, apprehensive learners feel safer in a crowded classroom as they are aware that they will be under closer monitor in classrooms with a smaller group of learners. Also, it is less likely that CALs are asked to speak in front of others in a large group. Additional factors such as time restrictions, requirements imposed by the curriculum

and higher possibility of other learners' volunteering reinforce CALs' assumptions about the larger classroom and make it a preferred setting.

Closely associated with anxiety experienced in communicative settings, success in communication is based on communicative competence defined as "everything a speaker needs to know to communicate appropriately within a particular speech community" (Klee, 1998: 339). Considering that Vasek (1980 cited in Lucas, 1984) puts the criterion for communication as the mutual understanding of both ends, simply mastering grammatical rules and knowing an abundant number of words does not mean that learners are ready for successful communication. Communicative competence comes to the fore in communication situations because Klee (1998: 342) maintains that successful communication requires a certain amount of pragmatic knowledge beyond linguistic knowledge. In other words, learners need to gain awareness about the cultural values of the target language because culture is a determinant factor in one's perception of communication (McCroskey & Richmond, 1990: 74).

The issue of culture linked to CA in language classrooms has two dimensions. From a language teaching and learning aspect, cultural awareness refers to uploading certain amounts of cultural knowledge to learners. Every language learner needs to know what word and grammatical structure they should prefer in a given communicative setting. Otherwise, misunderstanding and even feelings of offence may be widespread. The other aspect of cultural awareness in language classrooms implies some concern about learners' cultural background. Several researchers have observed varying degrees of communication apprehension due to the culture, to which learners belong (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Roach & Olaniran, 2001). At this point, it is beneficial to refer to the distinction between collectivistic cultures and individualistic cultures. Generally linked to countries influenced by Confucian philosophies such as China, Japan and Korea, collectivism focuses on the interdependence of members of a society. It prioritizes the good of society over the good of individuals, whereas individualism puts individuals to the fore. While

achievement in collectivistic cultures is attributed to the society, individualistic cultures attach importance to individuals' self-fulfillment.

Although people from collectivistic cultures attribute events to external factors, which means that they assume they have very little control over their own behaviors, individualistic people ascribe events to internal processes. Umeda (1998) underlines that Japanese people do not consider it appropriate to identify themselves with specific features, or express opinions divergent from those of the dominant society. In a study to compare the perceptions of self-esteem in collectivistic cultures and American culture, Bean (1992) reports that in contrast to the enthusiasm displayed by the American counterparts, Japanese people are embarrassed to express any unique feature. In the same vein, researchers (Gudykunst, 1998; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988) agree on the finding that learners from collectivistic cultures suffer more from CA than those from individualistic cultures. In particular, people from Asian countries labeled as highly collectivistic are more prone to communication apprehension (Chan & Eysenck, 1981; Kubota, 1999; Truitt, 1995) most likely because of their over sensitivity to others' opinions about them (Gudykunst, 1998) as well as cultural beliefs such as considering talking a hindrance for thinking (Kim, 2002). For example, Zhou, Knoke & Sakamoto (2005) conclude that Chinese learners as members of a collectivistic culture experience high levels of CA. Also, the reflections of a Taiwanese learner in Ito's (2008: 83) study indicate that the differences fostered by culture (such as preference of an obedient student in Taiwanese contexts compared to a student with divergent views in an American classroom) amplify the level of CA.

Moreover, communication apprehension is reported to be in close relationship with several factors. Firstly, CA is a factor remarkably contributing to overall foreign language anxiety (Foss & Reitzel, 1988; Mettler, 1987). One's level of CA positively correlates with the level of foreign language anxiety (FLA) she experiences. Secondly, CA, when combined with communicative competence, may be a strong predictor of one's willingness to communicate (WTC) (Baker & MacIntyre, 2000; MacIntyre, Baker, Clement & Conrod, 2001). Researchers (McCroskey &

McCroskey, 1986; Steinberg & Horwitz, 1986) assert that a strong negative correlation between CA and WTC exists. In their study to determine the relationship between international teaching assistants' levels of CA and WTC, Roach & Olaniran (2001) conclude that the higher the levels of CA one suffers from, the less willing he/she will be to participate in oral communication. CA is also a factor in avoiding communication (McCroskey, 1977: 79). Furthermore, Ericson & Gardner (1992) indicate that high levels of CA lead to higher dropout rates.

Last but not the least, learners' self-perceptions are affected by their levels of CA. That is lower levels of perceived competence in learners lead to higher communication apprehension. For example, Olaniran & Roach (1994) investigated the relationship between CA and perceptions of academic performance among Nigerian high school students. Their findings revealed that CA was inversely related to students' expectations about their academic performance. Actual academic achievement of learners' with high levels of CA is reported to be low, as well. In a pioneering study on CA, McCroskey & Anderson (1976) documented low levels of overall GPA in highly communication apprehensive college students. Accordingly, one can deduce that communication apprehension has a debilitating impact on language learning and therefore, negatively affects learners' success in FLL (Foss & Reitzel, 1988: 437).

2.1.5. Possible Suggestions

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) and communication apprehension (CA) share a number of commonalities such as sensitivity to uncertainty, unfriendly teacher attitudes and competitive classroom atmosphere, and tendency to unrealistic goal setting, all of which increase students' anxiety in the language classroom. Moreover, Alghothani (2010: 25) argues that CA constitutes a greater portion of overall FLA. Therefore, this section reviews a certain set of suggestions derived from the literature as possible ways of allaying both FLA and CA.

One of the most important suggestions for decreasing the levels of CA is to utilize pair and small group work. Various studies (Koch & Terrell, 1991;

Pappamihiel, 2001; Price, 1991; Young, 1990) have stressed the importance of incorporating pair and small group work into the language classroom in that learners working in pairs or small groups will have more opportunity to communicate with each other. Berg (1993: 27-28) argues that dividing the classroom into small groups fosters learners' participation, and allows the instructor to more closely follow students' progress because the teacher has more time to devote to each learner in the classroom. Classroom environment is another factor that has a salient impact on the levels of FLA and CA (Aida, 1994; Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2004). Friedman (1980: 21) maintains that providing a friendly and relaxed classroom atmosphere is the key to overcoming anxious learners' reticence and promoting oral participation.

Now that ambiguity in activities induces high levels of anxiety in the classroom, the instructor should set clear instructions with comprehensible input. Vogely (1998: 75) indicates that the teacher should make the input comprehensible because lack of understanding will increase anxiety. Several other researchers (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Young, 1991) have documented that ambiguity in the objectives and instructions of the language course and incomprehensible input give rise to higher levels of apprehension. On other hand, the introduction of more opportunities to practice may help to decrement apprehension levels. In a study of the role of anxiety in oral competence classes, Phillips (1991: 7) argues that incorporating more practice may lower levels of FLA. Also, she delineates that teachers should put extra effort in increasing learners' familiarity with communication strategies. She further contends that if learners know how to react in certain parts of a conversation, they will suffer less from CA.

In addition, instructors i.e. the mediators between learners and target language in the classroom setting may have a determining effect on abating high levels of anxiety. On one hand, several studies (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Price, 1991; Young, 1991) indicate that teachers who continuously encourage learners by constantly providing incentives to try harder and emphasizing positive aspects in their performance can significantly remedy learners' anxiety in the language classroom. On the other hand, it is also likely that ignorant teacher attitudes can lead to an increase in the levels of

anxiety. For instance, Gregersen & Horwitz (2002: 569) state that it is highly possible that teachers with perfectionist tendencies may unconsciously prompt such tendencies in their students, as well. Moreover, calling on students randomly may increase levels of anxiety (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, 2000; Von Worde, 2003) because they may feel singled out, and develop negative attitudes toward the language classroom. For this reason, teachers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors have a significant impact on learners' anxiety level and thus, teachers require to be better trained about how to approach anxious learners and what to do to help these learners and support their learning process (Abu-Rabia, 2004; Young, 1991). For example, teachers' attitudes towards error correction are extremely important because if error correction is not provided tactfully, it may discourage learners and diminish their engagement in classroom activities. Hence, teachers should be careful to create the impression that errors are natural and are signs of development in order to increase comfort with making errors (Alghothani, 2010; Brown, 1994).

Furthermore, there are some pedagogical approaches to foreign language teaching which specifically intend to reduce the levels of foreign language anxiety. Community Language Learning (CLL), The Natural Approach (NA) and Suggestopedia are the most widely recognized teaching methods that reduce language anxiety (Elkhfaifi, 2005; Horwitz et.al., 1986). In many cases, the application of these methods has yielded promising results. For instance, Samimy & Rardin (1994) used CLL with adult learners, and observed a decrease in the learners' anxiety levels, which they attributed to the CLL activities used in the classroom. However, they noticed that the results were not positive with all participants because some learners reported aggravated levels of anxiety due to the drastically changed teacher role and the over-emphasis on group work. They evinced that some of the participants felt disoriented by the teacher because the teacher had "an unusual role" (Samimy & Rardin, 1994: 387) which contributed to their confusion in the language classroom. Also, some participants reported that the emphasis on group work was "a hindrance" (Samimy & Rardin, 1994: 387) since learners with high proficiency levels complained that they had to wait for less proficient classmates.

Similarly, Koch & Terrell (1991) investigated the impacts of NA on anxiety levels of language learners. They concluded that the method did not work successfully with all learners because some participants expressed reluctance to participate in activities such as role-playing and charades, which were initially developed to reduce anxiety. Spielmann & Radnofsky (2001) confirmed the point as they discovered that activities with a sense of "playfulness" (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001: 268) proved anxiety-provoking for some learners because they "felt infantilized" (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001: 267) in the language classroom.

Still another counterproductive trend may be the current emphasis on developing conversational abilities (Horwizt et. al., 1986; MacIntyre et.al., 1997). In spite of a number of advantages, providing learners with more opportunities to communicate may lead to heightened levels of axiety (Kojima, 2007; Shams, 2006). Hence, it may be more beneficial to attend to learners' preferred learning styles and be more open to different ways of communication instead of focusing only on face-to-face communication.

PART II

2.2. Computer Assisted Language Learning

Foreign language education has witnessed several pedagogical trends in line with the developments in other fields. For example, the Behaviorist approach initially intended to account for overall learning, yet then it was used to explain the processes involved in language learning. The communicative approach rose as a result of attempts to make learners more active in the classroom and was integrated into language teaching classrooms with the notion that the basic goal of language learning was to make students communicate in a foreign language. Likewise, integration of technology into the classroom started in other fields. However, its introduction into language classrooms has garnered much curiosity, and research on the role of technological tools in language classrooms has developed considerably over the past four decades.

Although pioneering studies (such as The Standford Project (Atkinson & Hansen, 1966) and PLATO (Guo, 2010)) aroused in the late 1950s, a lot has been done since then in order to make the best of technological devices in language learning. Beginning with the early use of tape recorders and movie projectors, language teachers have embraced a number of technological tools including radio, televisions, and computers in order to increase the efficiency of language learning (Guo, 2010: 12). The trend has grown to such an extent that mobile phones, IPods and portable music players have all been used intensively. Niemuth (2010: 24) stresses that the integration of computer assisted language learning (CALL) is becoming more important because computers become more widespread, the price is going down, and students have a great interest in using computers. Conole (2008: 136) asserts that technology is now "at the heart of students' lives." Thus, their expectations about computer assisted learning are growing "sophisticated in terms of interface, design and functionality" (Rogerson-Revell, 2007: 58). Considering that everyone is using technological tools such as mobile phones and IPods, language educators could not help employing technology in the classroom. Indeed, it would be

unreasonable to resist the utilization of technological tools for many reasons, including:

- They are of great interest for students.
- They further motivate students.
- They provide teachers with easy and safe access to students i.e. learners can easily be contacted via such tools as e-mail or SMS.
- They hold great potential for quick interaction and sharing as technological tools enhance communication between students and the teacher, and/or between one student and another classmate.

The incorporation of technology into the language classroom has been referred to in a number of ways, despite a relatively short period of use. Some of the names coined include computer assisted instruction (CAI), computer mediated communication (CMC), technology enhanced language learning (TELL), network based language teaching (NBLT), distance education, and mobile assisted language learning (MALL). Even though each label lays emphasis on a different aspect of technology use, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has been the most widely used term as it encompasses all the above mentioned connotations. Additionally, Levy & Hubbard (2005: 144) argue that it is pointless to coin new names with every new development, since it may lead to confusion. Hence, the present study uses CALL as an "acronym" (Rose, 2000: 8) to refer to all sorts of applications of technology in language classrooms.

Therefore, the researcher defines computer assisted language learning (CALL) as any attempt to incorporate technological tools into language classrooms with the fundamental goal of fostering effective learning. CALL has proven an invaluable yet intriguing factor in language learning, since it brings the whole world into the classroom with only a few clicks. Several researchers (Brown, Fuller & Vician, 2004; Chappelle, 2001; Stepp-Greany, 2002) have conducted studies to highlight the relationship between language learning and CALL applications. Many more (Harrsion & Thomas, 2009; Li, 2010; O'Rourke, 2008) have delved further into CALL's impact on major language skills. Although some arguments about its nature,

and the pros and cons of using it still linger in the language education field, CALL has been introduced into the conventional classroom setting with much interest and excitement.

Yet the integration of CALL has not been stagnant as it keeps abreast of the pedagogical and technical developments (Leahy, 2004: 290). Therefore, the researcher will first draw a picture of the historical development of CALL to give the reader a clear understanding of the stages CALL has gone through. In relation to the developments in language teaching pedagogy and technology (Rogerson-Revell, 2007: 59), CALL compromises three developmental stages: Behavioristic CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL (Warschauer, 1996: 3).

2.2.1. Developmental Stages of CALL
2.2.1.a. Behavioristic CALL

Prevalent between the late 1950s to the early 1970s, Behavioristic CALL takes Behavioristic principles as its basis, since Behaviorism was the by then prevailing approach in language teaching. Behavioristic CALL mainly focuses on repetitive drills and activities (Egorov, Jantassova & Churchill, 2007: 257). It involves explicit grammar teaching because it prioritizes form over use. Congratulatory responses following every correct answer feature as one of the most distinctive aspect of Behavioristic CALL. Another noteworthy aspect is associated with the role of the computer in the classroom. In Behavioristic CALL, the computer is utilized as "a tutor" (Warshcauer, 1996: 4) because the computer is the main agent for delivering the material to be learned. Basically, new language input is presented via the computer in Behavioristic CALL.

2.2.1.b. Communicative CALL

Critiques of Behaviorist approach to language learning have brought about the introduction of a new stage in CALL applications: Communicative CALL. Guo (2010: 12) purports that Behavioristic CALL is not much different from the movable type printing practiced in the 1700s because both require rote memorization and mechanical practice. Communicative CALL, however, focuses on the active

involvement of learners in the learning process. Prevalent between the 1970s to the 1980s, Communicative CALL emphasizes functional use of language and thus requires no explicit teaching of forms (Underwood, 1984: 52). In this regard, it attaches more importance to using forms rather than merely learning grammatical structures. In Communicative CALL, the computer appears "as stimulus" for communication (Egorov et. al. 2007: 258) because it prompts conversation and discussion with others in verbal and written modes.

2.2.1.c. Integrative CALL

Though Communicative CALL facilitated communication greatly, it was still deficient in that the computer was used in "an ad hoc" manner (Warschauer, 1996: 5). However, the fact that personal computers blossomed, and the the widespread use of the Internet, once a dream, became a common attribute of daily life has marked a sound change in CALL applications in language classrooms. As a matter of fact, the more or less simultaneous appearance of personal computers with multimedia facilities and the widespread use of the internet has opened a new era in technology use in language classrooms (Rogerson-Revell, 2007: 60). As multimedia computers, considered as one of the hallmarks of integrative CALL, covers the prospect of "graphics, sound, animation and video" (Egorov et.al., 2007: 259), they have promoted more concrete and lively presentation of information in language classrooms. Thanks to better understanding and efficient learning on an individualized basis in integrative CALL, it is no surprise that there has been an increase in learner motivation to attend and to be an active participant in language classes. Indeed, multimedia computers have proven to be an invaluable tool that intends to empower learners to learn more efficiently (Kern & Warschauer, 2000; Warshacuer, 1996).

Inevitably, no single stage of CALL can be separated from the other distinctly. As Egorov et. al. (2007: 259) argue, it is not easy to distinguish between the stages and the roles the computer plays in a clear-cut manner. For example, the repetitive activities, which characterized the first stage of CALL applications, are still important in current computer assisted language classrooms. However, each stage

elaborates on a different aspect of CALL (Rahimi & Hosseini, 2011: 184) such as the development of appropriate software in one stage yet developing learning tasks that activate all four major skills in another stage. Warschauer (1996 :3) claims that the features of one stage are "subsumed" within the other, rather than being thrown away. Consequently, it is better to view the stages of CALL as the floors of a single building.

2.2.2. Influences of CALL on Foreign Language Education

A myriad of studies have been conducted on CALL, with subjects ranging from its impacts on the learning process to learners' and teachers' perceptions about its integration in language classrooms. Numerous studies (Ferris, 1994; Sullivan & Pratt, 1996; Tozcu & Coady, 2004; Warschauer, Donaghy & Kuamoyo, 1997) report moderate to significant influence of CALL applications on language learning process. Warschauer & Meskill (2000) contend that the integration of CALL technologies increases learners' engagement in classroom practices and therefore, promotes better learning. Nagata (1996: 62) indicates that students learning in a computer assisted classroom achieve higher levels of grammatical accuracy. Lee et. al., (2011: 876) illustrate that using computers yields a dramatic reduction in the number of grammatical errors students make. Li (2010: 271) deems that CALL programs significantly promote extensive reading and vocabulary learning. Moreover, several studies (Abraham, 2008; Knight, 1994) demonstrate that students who use computer mediated glosses and dictionaries instead of print-based glosses have better word retention. However, a few researchers (Oxfod, 2006; Abrams, 2003) report no significant difference between computer-assisted and traditional classrooms. Kang-Mi & Shen (2006) conclude that computer assisted practices may not necessarily result in improvements in performance; instead, computers may remarkably improve learners' perceptions of the learning environment. Similarly, Sagarra & Zapata (2008: 106) contend that computer assisted instruction significantly contribute to learners' motivation.

One point that needs consideration is the question of adaptation to computer mediated learning environments (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Zapata & Sagarra,

2007). Learners inevitably need a period of adjustment and guidance the first time they are introduced into CALL environments. Oxford (2006: 360) claims that "the integration of technology into the curriculum must be a coordinated effort with sufficient training". Other studies (Sagarra & Zapata, 2008) confirm the need for a period of adaptation to educational technology. In a study that investigated the impacts of computer assisted instruction on the target language grammar accuracy, Sagarra & Zapata (2008) noticed that although there was no statistically significant difference between computer assisted classrooms and traditional classrooms in the first few months of application, learners in the computer assisted classroom outperformed those in the traditional classroom in the long run. Consequently, they attributed the contradictory differences to the "novelty effect" of education technology and concluded that learners in computer assisted classrooms might require a period of adaptation to the implementations of the new technology (2008: 102).

Research into the relationship between CALL and learning indicates that CALL applications positively correlate with both learners' and teachers' perceptions of language learning (Akbulut, 2008; Ayres, 2002; Chen, Belkada & Okamoto, 2004; Jameison, Chapelle & Preiss, 2005; Wiebe & Kabata, 2010). In a study on Turkish EFL students and teachers' reactions to the use of interactive whiteboards (IWBs), Mathew-Aydinli & Elaziz (2010) demonstrated that both students and teachers had positive attitudes towards using IWBs. Fang (2010) studied learners' attitudes toward the use of computer enhanced programs to improve writing skills, and reported significantly positive attitudes towards computer assisted writing programs. Wang & Heffernan (2010: 806) indicated that more than half of the Japanese participants in their study reported great willingness to be contacted about their learning by mobile emails any time of the day without taking it as a disturbance to their private life and thus, they concluded that language educators should make more active use of digital tools, in particular mobile phones, in the learning and teaching processes. Indeed, all of the above mentioned findings echo Olsen's (1980: 345) early conclusion that students are "fascinated with" and "enthusiastic about" using computers for language learning purposes.

However, some studies (Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Mahfouz & Ihmedieh, 2009) report negative attitudes towards the integration of educational technologies into language classrooms. Pena & Yeung (2010: 104) stress that the assumption that all learners will benefit form CALL applications may be unrealistic because some learners may simply favor conventional classrooms or feel insecure in their capabilities to use computers. Pennington & Brock (1990) stress that in a merely computer-assisted setting, in which there is no teacher interference, learners may accept whatever the computer offers them without questioning if it is true or not. Moreover, Murday, Ushida & Chenoweth (2008: 137) maintain that a "purely online" course may not be favorable due to concerns with the fundamentally interactive nature of language classes. Therefore, numerous researchers (Presby, 2001; Scida & Saury, 2006) have suggested that a hybrid course in which face-to-face classroom teaching is accompanied by the online modes of teaching may be more beneficial.

2.2.3. Why to Use CALL?

There are a large number of benefits that language teachers can gain by introducing CALL applications into their classroom. One of the most prominent advantages is that CALL destroys the conventional concept of the classroom as a place merely for learning. Obviously, CALL has eradicated the perception that language learning can only occur in the classroom because its integration provides a borderless environment (Wang, 2006; Warschauer, 2000). Wong & Looi (2010: 421) contend that the integration of technological tools enables learners to learn anywhere and anytime, which they call "seamless space". Therefore, in a CALL setting, language learners defined as "citizens of a global classroom" (Jimin, 2007: 111) enjoy the freedom of getting access to learning wherever and whenever they wish. Another major contribution of CALL is the increased levels of learner autonomy (Milton, 1997; Williams, 2005). Learners using CALL devices are more aware of their learning process since they are in control of their own learning. Although a few researchers (Pollock & Sullivan, 1990) argue that learners with boosted levels of control of their own learning may not attain efficient learning, numerous studies

(Chang & Ho, 2009; Yeh, 1994) have revealed that increasing learner autonomy through CALL applications yields better learning. In this regard, CALL provides individualized learning where learners can decide on their own path and pace of learning (Rogerson-Revell, 2007: 60). Since the early days of CALL usage, the basic premise of CALL has been to provide an environment where learners learn at their own preferred way and rate. For example, Atkinson & Hansen (1966: 7), who conducted one of the first studies in the field, emphasize that their project is "organized in such a way that instruction is on an individual basis with each child progressing at his own pace through a subset of materials designed to be best suited to his particular aptitudes and abilities."

Furthermore, much research (Skehan, 2003; Warschauer & Meskill, 2000) unequivocally indicates that CALL fosters learners' active engagement with language learning as it utilizes interactive activities. For example, Hanson-Smith (2003: 25) discusses that email interaction in language classes fosters "an ideal language learning environment", since it gives learners the chance to revise and fine-tune their sentences. Perhaps the most significant benefit of CALL is the change it brings about in learners' attitudes towards error correction. Although only a few studies (Fang, 2010) have revealed learners' negative attitudes towards computer-based feedback, a large amount of research (Matsumura & Hann, 2004; Torlakovic & Duego, 2004) reports that learners react positively to computerized feedback. As Wong & Looi (2010: 430) explain, computerized feedback relieves the negative impact of embarrassment stemming from teacher correction in the classroom and therefore, "makes errors work for the student, not against them."

Although numerous benefits of CALL have been mentioned, there is still an intensive resistance to employing CALL devices. Apparently, some researchers (Gillespie & McKee, 1999) are still dubious about the use of CALL applications in the classroom. However, Jimin (2007) draws attention to an interesting point about instructors' refusal to using CALL applications. He highlights that using CALL continuously forces instructors to spend extra time on preparations and that is why, they appear less willing to utilize CALL (2007: 112). Bax (2003: 25) ascribes the

reluctance to integrate CALL to the evolving nature of educational technologies as teachers feel overwhelmed by the rate of technological developments. In addition, some researchers (Olsen, 1980; Oxford, 2006) elaborate on misconceptions and lack of information about CALL integration. In a study to develop prospective English teachers' capabilities to utilize CALL in Kazakhstan, Egorov et. al. (2007: 257) emphasize that a great number of language practitioners view the integration of technology "as a burden" and "as a problem" since they lack the knowledge of how to use it effectively. Therefore, in the following section, the researcher discusses possible concerns and pitfalls associated with the integration of CALL.

2.2.4. Drawbacks of CALL Applications

Apparently, the introduction of the computer into language classrooms has caused much argument among foreign language (FL) educators in that there are some concerns over the efficiency of CALL, its role in the classroom in relation with the instructor, the financial burden and its implementations. As it is a subject of ongoing studies, researchers identify a number of shortcomings with CALL. The foremost concern over CALL integration is its cost effectiveness (Jimin, 2007: 112). Although a huge amount of money is risked in CALL, it may sometimes generate unexpected results. Thus, language practitioners display great concern over its financial burden. At the same time, the observation of some poor results in CALL classrooms may be an enervating factor for other institutions planning to install CALL devices (Olsen, 1980: 343). Furthermore, insufficient technical support is a major problem in CALL classes, since there is often a huge lack of technical personnel and knowledge in cases of an unexpected breakdown. Indeed, Warschauer (2004: 384) indicates that the costs of maintenance are much higher than the amount paid for buying the computer and necessary peripherals. Mathew-Aydinli & Elaziz (2010: 239) reveal that technical breakdowns may lead to problems in the classroom. Another problem with CALL commonly mentioned by language teachers is the lack of appropriately constructed programs (Rogerson-Revell, 2007). Although it is true that there are plenty of computer-mediated courses and programs, most of them are of poor quality. Moreover, the abundance of programs may also lead to confusion in that it

may be highly demanding for a language teacher to choose the one that best suits his/her students (Warschauer, 1996; Hanson-Smith, 2003).

On the other hand, CALL may complicate the issue of classroom management in language classrooms. Now that CALL classrooms operate on an individualized basis, language teachers may encounter problems in ensuring that everyone is working on the learning material (Jimin, 2007: 112). Another challenge that CALL programs need to overcome is the drastic resistance on the part of instructors and school principals. As mentioned before, some language teachers oppose the idea of using technological tools in their classrooms due to such reasons as the novelty of computer assisted education (Sagarra & Zapata, 2008), their lack of training and awareness about CALL programs (Higgins, 1988), the unstable and constantly developing nature of technology (Rogerson-Revell, 2007). Finally, language educators display unwillingness to launching CALL programs because of the fear that it may diminish the interaction in the classroom. Computers may force learners to work in isolation because learners are left alone with the computer in CALL classrooms (Hampel-Hauck, 2004; Trotter, 2002). However, a large number of studies reveal that the integration of the computer with multimedia and internet prospects into language classrooms can override the unfounded issue of isolation (Beauvois, 1992; Hanson-Smith, 2003).

2.2.5. The Replacement Issue

Many language teachers and principals advocate that the computer may make the teacher redundant in the language classroom (Olsen, 1980). Put simply, several educators and practitioners maintain that the computer may ultimately be a replacement for the language teacher. As a result, they strictly reject the idea of utilizing computers for teaching purposes. The prevalence of concern has unfortunately affected the integration and improvement of CALL applications in the classroom to some extent. Warschauer (2004) illustrates how the negative attitudes of language program directors influence computer usage as he (2004: 383) says that these "technology gatekeepers" prevent teachers from accessing computers. He (2004: 383) continues, "conservative inertia within schools and the broader education

system can hinder the effective use of new technologies." Olsen (1980: 343) states that quite a few school directors fear that computers will replace the teacher or at least disrupt the flow of communication in the classroom. Moreover, several other researchers (Bax, 2003; Oxford, 2006) criticize the negative attitudes of principals and language practitioners towards incorporating the computer into language classrooms, and they claim that it plays a restrictive role in CALL development.

However, much research (Brierley & Kemble, 1991; Dhaif, 1989; Warschauer & Ware, 2006) reveals that it is close-minded to view the computer as a menace inasmuch as the fear that the computer will replace the teacher is unfounded. For instance, Rahimi & Fatemeh-Hosseini (2011) proclaim that an investigation of Iranian high school students' attitudes towards CALL has revealed that students negatively react to the idea of computers as an alternative to the teacher. Furthermore, Scrinicariello (1997) contends that the computer is merely one of the tools used to foster learners' achievement in the learning process. Given that the computer does not hold the power to live up to the immediate and communicative needs of language classrooms (Gunduz, 2005), it is illogical to ruminate that the computer can replace the teacher with its mechanic, unemotional and artificial intelligence.

Nonetheless, one should note that the role of teachers in CALL classrooms has undergone some changes in accordance with the changes in the role of the computer. Though the teacher used to be the only source of information in the language classroom, the computer now serves as another source to the knowledge (Oxford, 2006: 360). In this regard, CALL has helped to shift the role of language teachers from that of a taskmaster to one of a mentor and program organizer (Hanson-Smith, 2003; Hubbard, 1988).

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

This study involved a total of 18 students, 7 males and 11 females, enrolled at two different institutions. The researcher administered the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale in two different universities on separate days in November, 2011. Based on their responses to the FLCAS, the researcher determined three students as highly anxious, three as moderate anxious and three as low anxious from each university. Out of the 18 participants, 9 were Turkish students studying at a public university in mid-central Anatolian region while the remaining 9 students were studying at a public university in southern Russia. The researcher matched each student from one group with a student in the other group so that every Turkish student had a Russian counterpart. No participant knew his/her partner beforehand. That is when the study started, all partners in each pair were strangers to one another. Having collected the nicknames that the participants used on Skype, the researcher sent every participant their partners' Skype name and thus, ensured that each participant added and admitted her partner to their contact list on personal Skype account. Due to confidentiality concerns, the research juxtaposed the participants by pseudonyms like "Student 1, Student 2" rather than using their actual names in this paper (See Table 1).

This study used purposeful sampling because the researcher selected the participants from English Language Teaching (ELT) and English Language and Literature (ELL) departments. With this regard, both participant groups were homogeneous. The reasons to select only English-majoring students include the researcher's familiarity with and accessibility to the participants, and his presumption that those majoring in English may be more willing to improve their communicative skills in English. Of all the participants, the earliest age to begin learning English was 7 while the oldest was 16. The youngest participant was 18 years old when the study began, and the oldest one was 29 years old.

Although they were all majoring in ELT or ELL departments, they speculated different and indeed, interesting reasons for studying English. Among the commonly referred reasons, the participants stated that they majored in English because:

Table 1. Demographic variables

Name	Current Age	Age to begin learning English	Perceived proficiency level	Perceived anxiety level
Student 1	21	7	Advanced	Low
Student 2	21	11	Advanced	Low
Student 3	21	10	Intermediate	Low
Student 4	23	11	Intermediate	Moderate
Student 5	19	10	Pre-intermediate	High
Student 6	25	12	Intermediate	Low
Student 7	20	8	Upper-Intermediate	Moderate
Student 8	23	12	Pre-intermediate	Low
Student 9	18	10	Pre- intermediate	High
Student 10	28	13	Intermediate	Moderate
Student 11	18	9	Pre-intermediate	High
Student 12	18	10	Intermediate	Moderate
Student 13	23	10	Pre-intermediate	Moderate
Student 14	24	12	Pre-intermediate	Moderate
Student 15	29	16	Intermediate	Moderate
Student 16	22	11	Pre-Intermediate	High
Student 17	18	10	Intermediate	High
Student 18	18	10	Intermediate	High

- they wished to attain an academic career,
- they wished to study and live abroad,
- English was a highly prestigious international language,
- they wanted to be a good teacher of English,
- they planned to write books, novels and articles in English,
- they simply liked learning languages.

3.2. Instruments

Many studies (such as Cheng et. al., 1999; MacIntyre et. al., 1997; Onwuegbuzie, Daley & Bailey, 2000) on language anxiety have recruited quantitative techniques through the use of scaled measures. Yet using merely quantitative techniques in the investigation of relatively subjective patterns such as language anxiety (Lowe & Ang, 2012: 122) may fail to produce satisfactory results. That is FLA refers to internal dynamics of language learners and thus, merely utilizing numerical tests which are detached from the ultimate goal of language learning i.e. gaining communicative competence may be insufficient (Samimy & Rardin, 1994: 381). Moreover, merely quantitative techniques may fall short of highlighting subjects' feeling and ideas being questioned.

In contrast, qualitative data collection techniques enable to gain some insights about subjects' emotions and thoughts that can hardly be revealed through scaled questionnaires (Hewitt & Stephenson, 2011: 4). They may also produce some factors which the researcher as an outsider may not expect to find. However, there are also serious concerns over adopting a qualitative-only method. Firstly, qualitative techniques are vulnerable to modifications by the subjects. For example, there may be improvised or consciously exaggerated responses. Some important points may be ignored, or simply forgotten as the subjects presume that they are not worth mentioning. Furthermore, Porte (2002: 236) argues that subjects may respond in the way, they think, would serve the researcher's goals. Also, qualitative techniques are relatively debatable in terms of reliability and generalazibility of findings (Spielmann

& Radnofsky, 2001: 261). Therefore, this paper is a mixed-type study as it has adopted multiple data collection techniques making it a quantitative study strengthened by qualitative data. This study provides triangulation, a validity procedure in which the researcher elicits data from different resources (Cresswell & Miller, 2000: 126), by employing a completion questionnaire in order to back up and illuminate the findings obtained from the FLCAS and QPT scores.

In this study, data came from a prominently used measure of anxiety, an internationally used proficiency test and a completion questionnaire as well as a background information questionnaire. This study used computerized forms of questionnaires as the researcher himself typed them on Google Documents. That is the study distributed and collected all the instruments via e-mail. Below is detailed information about each instrument used in this study.

3.2.1. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) is a widely used anxiety scale specifically developed to measure the anxiety levels associated with foreign language classrooms (See Appendix 1). Intending to compensate for the lack of a validated measure of anxiety specific to language learning (Horwitz, 1986: 559), the FLCAS comprises 33 items indicating communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. It is scored on a five-point Likert-type scale. Unless there is an item left unanswered, the mean scores in the FLCAS range from 33 to 165 on a continuum extending from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". The score of "5" always represents high anxiety, whereas "1" means low anxiety. Some items in the FLCAS (i.e. items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28 and 32) need reverse scoring so that a higher score always represents higher levels of anxiety. For instance, the item "I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers (item 14)" is reverse-scored so that a "strongly disagree" response receives a score of 5 indicating high anxiety. The researcher has adapted the FLCAS into EFL classes by replacing the words "language" and "foreign language" with the word "English". Thus, the item "I am usually at ease during tests in my language classes." reads as "I am usually at ease during tests in my English classes."

The reasons for utilizing the FLCAS in this study involve high internal reliability, validity and test-retest reliability across studies (Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1991; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999; Rodriguez & Abreu, 2003). Cheng (2002) and Hewitt & Stephenson (2011) have found internal reliability alpha coefficients .96 and .93, respectively. Also, Horwitz et. al. (1986) have reported internal reliability alpha coefficient of .93 and a high test-retest reliability coefficient after eight weeks (.83) (129).

Although numerous studies (Aida, 1994; Phillips, 1992) have utilized the FLCAS, there are two main concerns one needs to take into account while using it. Firstly, some researchers (Aida, 1994: 163) claim that the FLCAS is basically a measure of speaking anxiety because 20 out of 33 statements measure anxiety levels linked to speaking situations (Saito, Horwitz & Garza, 1999: 202). Liu & Jackson (2008: 79) maintain that speaking-related statements surmount the FLCAS. Rodriguez & Abreu (Rodriguez, 2003: 366) suggest that the predominance of speaking-related items in the FLCAS puts into question its capability to reveal about other anxiety-producing skills. However, Cheng et. al.'s study (1999: 438) indicates that the FLCAS is beyond being simply a measure of speaking anxiety. Rather, they (1999) state that it is a measure of overall anxiety about the language classroom "with a strong speaking anxiety element" (438).

The other issue about the FLCAS is the lack of a standard principle for scoring (Ganschow & Sparks, 1996: 202). That is there are no clearly defined cutoff points to distinguish among high-anxious, moderately anxious and low-anxious students. Chu (2008: 102) suggests that a process of dividing one's total FLCAS score into the number of items may make up for the deficiency. Chu (2008: 102) argues that an average below 3 indicates low anxiety, between 3-4 moderate anxiety and above 4 high anxiety. To have a clearer idea about the scoring procedure, the researcher got in personal contact with Elaine K. Horwitz, one of the scholars who developed the FLCAS, through e-mail, and received the following response:

"To determine a student's anxiety level, add up their responses to all the questions, remembering to first reverse-score the items that need reverse-scoring,

then divide the total by 33 (the total number of questions). Students with averages around 3 should be considered slightly anxious, while students with averages below 3 are probably not very anxious. Students who average near 4 and above are probably fairly anxious, and you should begin to work with them to find a way to reduce their anxiety." (Horwizt, 2012)

Benefitting from both Chu's (2008) ideas and Horwitz's invaluable reflections, the researcher used the following margins to define high, moderate and low levels of anxiety in the participants;

120 points and above: highly anxious,

66-119 points: moderately anxious,

65 and below: low-anxious.

Although the current study focused on communication apprehension, the researcher did not use any particular instrument to assess the participants' communication apprehension levels because seven items in the FLCAS (i.e. items 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27 and 32) were specifically reflective of communication apprehension. Liu & Jackson (2008: 76) found that those items particularly measured communication apprehension, and explained 37% of the total variance. Also, Saito, Horwitz & Garza (1999: 202) indicated that a great majority of the items in the FLCAS tapped on listening and speaking in the target language. Moreover, Horwitz (1991) reported significant correlations between the FLCAS and The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (McCroskey, 1970). Feeling convinced by such findings, the researcher did not need to use an extra communication apprehension test in this study.

3.2.2. The Quick Placement Test

Sparks & Ganshcow (1995) speculate that it is not easy to determine whether learners with high proficiency experience low anxiety or highly proficient learners have high anxiety. Furthermore, Saito & Samimy (1996) maintain that highly proficient learners may suffer high anxiety. Hence, the researcher administered an

overall proficiency test in order to ensure that the paired participants would not have any problems in mutual understanding during the virtual meetings. Also, conducting a proficiency test eliminated the risk that matching the participants with a less/more proficient partner might interfere with the anxiety levels throughout the virtual meetings. Developed by Oxford University Press and University of Cambridge Local Examination Syndicate (2001), the Quick Placement Test (QPT) Version 2 seemed to be one of the best nominees to use for this purpose.

There are several features that make the QPT superior to other proficiency tests. Firstly, it evaluates reading, vocabulary and grammar with a total of 60 questions. The QPT presents questions in a contextualized fashion so that the questions will be more meaningful for test takers. For example, the first question reads as:

"You can look, but don't touch the pictures

A) in an office,

B) in a cinema

C) in a museum" (Correct answer: C)

Also, the QPT is a proficiency test validated across nations, since over 5000 students from 20 countries responded it. In the scoring of the QPT, the researcher scored "1" for correct answers and "0" for incorrect answers. Based on the participants' QPT scores, the researcher matched the couples in a manner that each participant met a partner who had similar overall QPT scores.

3.2.3. Background Information Questionnaire

Designed by the researcher in accordance with the needs of the current study, the Background Information Questionnaire (BIQ) consists of 10 questions. It probes into personal data including the participants' current age, gender, country of birth, and their mother tongue (See Appendix 2). The BIQ reveals about their age to begin learning English and their reasons for majoring in English. Also, it sheds light on the

participants' perceptions about their current proficiency and anxiety levels in English. The penultimate item questions which specific language skill, they think, arises the most anxiety. The BIQ finally asks the participants if there is any specific point for the researcher to know as the researcher thinks the private information elicited through this item highlights crucial points to be taken into account while matching each participant with a partner.

3.2.4. Completion Questionnaire

Created by the researcher, the Completion Questionnaire (CQ) comprises seven items (See Appendix 4). The CQ drills into the participants' opinions about their experiences with computer-mediated communication because variables like communication apprehension are highly subjective and thus, cannot be tapped properly by merely statistical means. In the form of self-reports, the CQ asks the participants about the differences between communication in the virtual meetings and traditional classrooms. It questions if the topics in the virtual communication sessions have affected their performance. Moreover, the CQ attempts to unfold the participants' evaluation of their own performance compared to their partner as well as the differences they have perceived in their manners between the first and last meetings. Finally, the CQ concludes up by garnering the participants' ideas about advantages/ disadvantages of computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools, and possible suggestions to reduce apprehension levels linked to communication in L2.

3.3. Design of The Study

The study began in the fall semester 2011-2012. The researcher advertized for volunteer participation through personal contacts and listservs. Among those answering the e-mails positively, the researcher opted for the Russian participants as they were taking classes from a colleague and thus, it would be much easier to administer the questionnaires and keep track of the virtual meetings. After collecting the participants' Skype name and their e-mail accounts from the colleague, the researcher got in personal contact with them. As to the Turkish participants', they

were all enrolled in one of the classes, "Advanced Reading and Writing I", the researcher was lecturing during the period of data collection. Firstly, the researcher sent all participants the computerized form of the FLCAS. Out of 81 respondents, the researcher selected three highly anxious, three moderately anxious and three low-anxious students from each institution. Therefore, the study included a total of eighteen participants, nine from Turkey and the rest from Russia. The reason why this study recruited three groups differing in anxiety levels (i.e. high anxiety, moderate anxiety and low anxiety) was to see which group improved the most in terms of communication apprehension levels. Also, the researcher was particularly curios if any new issue would arise in the low anxiety group at the end of the virtual meetings.

Then, the researcher sent each participant the background information questionnaire (BIQ) and the Quick Placement Test (QPT). In the consent form (See. Appendix 4) each participant had received, the researcher clearly conveyed that the participants would get no grades for their scores and responses to the questionnaires so that the responses could be truly reliable. The study coupled each Turkish student with a Russian counterpart depending on their FLCAS and QPT scores in a way that they had a partner with similar proficiency level (See Table 2). Based on Dornyei & Kormos's (2000) proposition, the study paid scant attention to match a high anxious participant with a moderately or low-anxious partner. Dornyei & Kormos (2000: 296) postulated that if both ends were highly anxious, the quality and length of conversations might be negatively influenced. This study assumed that a moderately or low-anxious student would help her partner throughout the virtual meetings. One of the strengths of this study was the flexibility of meeting schedule as no strict time was imposed on the participants. Rather, the study enabled the pairs to decide on the day and time for the meetings so that they could feel more in control. The researcher did not appear physically in any virtual meeting session because this could lead to superfluous levels of anxiety in pairs.

The researcher sent the contents for each meeting the day before the meetings (See Appendix 3). The reason for giving the topics in advance was to prevent the

aggravating impact of lack of knowledge on learners' anxiety levels throughout the meetings because several researchers (Horwitz et. al., 1986: 126) advocated that learners felt better when they had familiarity with the topics. As mentioned before, the study employed informal virtual meetings outside the classroom since the researcher believed that this form of communication could better mirror daily conversations and thus, provide real connections to the L2.

Table 2. Matched couples for the weekly meetings

Partner List Based on Their FLCAS Results		
1. Couple	Student 1	Student 16
2. Couple	Student 2	Student 18
3. Couple	Student 3	Student 17
4. Couple	Student 10	Student 9
5. Couple	Student 7	Student 12
6. Couple	Student 8	Student 11
7. Couple	Student 13	Student 5
8. Couple	Student 14	Student 4
9. Couple	Student 15	Student 6

The study utilized Skype for the periodical meetings. Skype is a voice over IP tool which provides synchronous and asynchronous contact. It offers a virtual face-to-face communication as well as an output log for written communication. This

study, however, did not allow written communication because the ultimate goal was to improve students' speaking skills by alleviating their anxiety levels linked to communication in the target language. Also, Skype enables users to make phone-calls when the addressee is not available online. This can be a remarkable aid as it provides direct contact when one of the partners does not appear online.

By the time they were through the study, every participant had had eight virtual meetings each lasting roughly for one hour. Following a total of eight virtual meetings, the participants answered the FLCAS and completion questionnaire. Finally, all 18 participants completed the study when they sent the completion question back to the researcher.

CHAPTER IV

4. USING COMPUTER-MEDIATED COMMUNICATON to ALLEVIATE COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION

4.1. Findings

This study used Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test to analyze the data collected. The study employed Wilcoxon test because the number of participants was small, and the data did not show normal distribution. The Wilcoxon test helped to see the differences between pre- and post-test results of each group separately so that a better understanding of the progress (if any) in the results of each group (i.e. low-moderate- high anxiety) could be reached.

The analysis of pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of low anxiety group revealed a significant difference (z= 2,207, p< .05). When the mean average and sums of the FLCAS scores were taken into account, the findings showed that the difference was negatively ranked (See Table 3). That is the pre-test scores of low anxiety group were higher than the post-test scores, which implied a decrease in the FLA levels of low anxiety group. Depending on these findings, the researcher concluded that the virtual communication meetings via Vo-IP tools had an important influence on the levels of communication apprehension in low anxiety group.

Table 3. Wilcoxon Analysis Results of Low Anxiety Group

Pre- test and Post-test	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	p
Negative Ranks	6	3,50	21,00	2,207*	,027
Positive Ranks	0	,00	,00		
Ties	0	-	-		

*: Based on positive ranks.

The Wilcoxon test analysis of the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of moderate anxiety group indicated that there was a meaningful difference between pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of the participants (z= 2, 201, p< .05). The analysis demonstrated that there was a negative ranking in the pre- and post-test results of the moderately anxious participants (See Table 4). The pre-test FLCAS scores of the

moderate anxiety group were higher than the post-test scores. Just as in the low anxiety group, the virtual communication meetings via Vo-IP tools significantly helped to reduce the levels of communication apprehension of the moderate anxiety group. However, the findings revealed that the difference between pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of the moderate anxiety group was not strong enough to label them as "low anxious". In other words, although there was a salient recovery in the communication apprehension levels of the moderate anxiety group, it was not significant enough to change their status from moderate anxiety to low anxiety.

Table 4. Wilcoxon Analysis Results of Moderate Anxiety Group

Pre- test and Post-test	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	p
Negative Ranks	6	3,50	21,00	2,201*	,028
Positive Ranks	0	,00	,00		
Ties	0	-	-		

*: Based on positive ranks.

Finally, the findings of the Wilcoxon test analysis about whether there was a variance in the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of high anxiety group displayed a significant difference (z= 2, 207, p< .05). Consideration of the mean average and sums of the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores yielded a negative ranking in high anxiety group (See Table 5). That is the post-test FLCAS scores of high anxiety group were considerably lower than the pre-test FLCAS scores. Therefore, it was deduced that the virtual communication meetings via Vo-IP tools noticeably alleviated communication apprehension levels of high anxiety group. The difference between the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of high anxiety group was remarkable

Table 5. Wilcoxon Analysis Results of High Anxiety Group

Pre- test and Post-test	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Z	p
Negative Ranks	6	3,50	21,00	2,201*	,028
Positive Ranks	0	,00	,00		
Ties	0	-	-		

*: Based on positive ranks.

in that the participants who were initially identified as highly anxious were recognized to be moderately anxious following an eight-week virtual communication training. That is the virtual communication meetings via Vo-IP tools made a major

enough contribution to the communication apprehension levels of high anxiety group to shift their apprehension level from high to moderate.

4.2. Results

Before focusing on the results of the study, the researcher wishes to remind the reader of the questions that lays the ground for the current study.

1. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in low anxious learners?
2. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in moderately anxious learners?
3. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in highly anxious learners?
4. What is the impact of computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools on learners' attitudes towards the target language?

4.2.1. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in low anxious learners?

The comparison of the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores of low anxiety group shows that there is a moderate but meaningful decrease in the levels of FLA (See Figure 1). The responses to the FLCAS are given with a focus on communicative situations. Also, the FLCAS itself has a strong emphasis on speaking situations (Aida, 1994). Thus, the difference in the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores indicates that the participants in low anxiety group have made a great benefit from computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools. Although the participants in the low anxiety group were at the high end of the low anxiety with an average of 64 before the meetings, they ended up with a better anxiety level as their average declined to 59 after the meetings. This small but statistically important difference in their FLCAS scores could be attributed to the computer-mediated communication sessions they had because the sessions were the only radical change about their education throughout that time. For example, Student 5 received 52 from the FLCAS after the

virtual meetings whereas she initially scored 63. In the same fashion, the difference in the pre- and post-test scores of Student 4 implied a worthwhile improvement regarding his communication apprehension level.

Figure 1. Low anxiety group pre- and post-test FLCAS scores
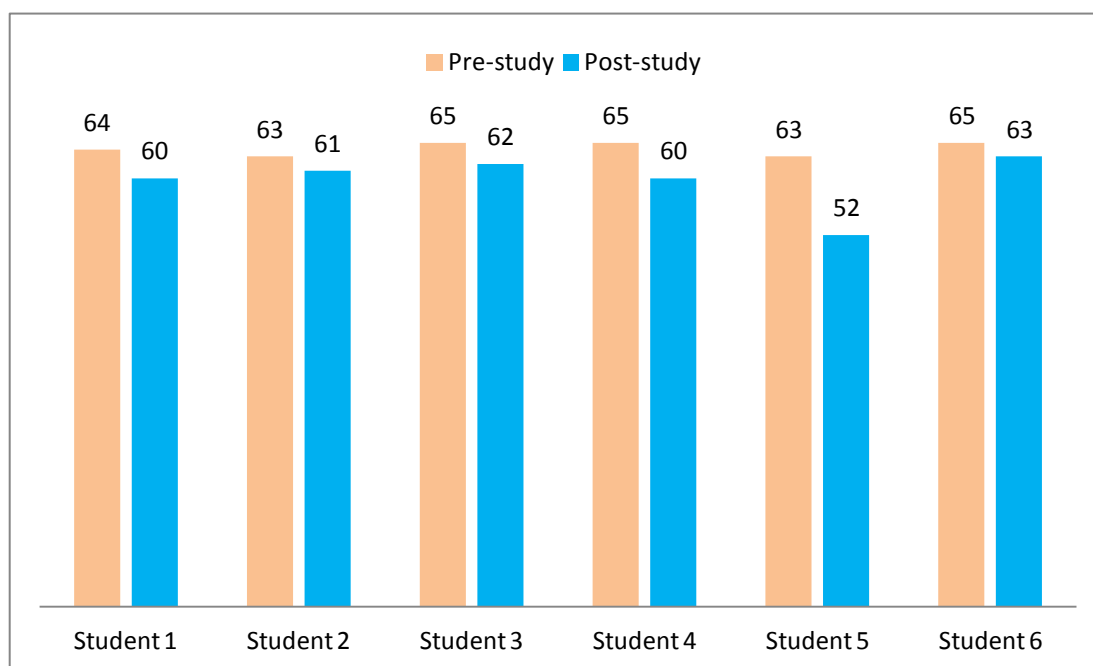
Although there was a moderately positive improvement in the anxiety levels of low anxiety group following the computer-mediated communication meetings they had with their partners, some interesting points worth consideration surfaced from their responses to the completion questionnaire. Their responses revealed that making mistakes during a conversation in the target language was not a major concern. That is the participants in the low anxiety group were recognized to feel comfortable about making mistakes (See appendix 5). For instance, Student 2 says that "Though there were some cases, where I made mistakes, I just continued speaking. It was okay as long as my partner understood me." This cohered with Gregersen (2003) as she found that highly anxious students focused more on the form while low-anxious students paid more attention to the meaning. Moreover, the responses of the participants in low anxiety group in this study revealed that low-anxious participants were not concerned about their performance in L2 compared to their partner. That is they did not make any evaluative judgment about themselves

based on their partners' performance. However, an interesting finding deduced from the questionnaire was the arousal of "pronunciation/ accent" issue. Unlike the moderate and high anxiety groups, the participants in the low anxiety group stated that in some cases, it was difficult to understand their partner due to the unfamiliar accent, which could be attributed to the fact that the accent of Turkish speakers of English might be different from that of Russian speakers.

One of the items (i.e. item 7) in the completion questionnaire delved specifically into the participants' advices about how to alleviate communication apprehension as the researcher believed that the participants' opinions could be more important than purely numerical findings. The responses of low anxiety group to the item offered invaluable suggestions for allaying communication apprehension levels. The participants in low anxiety group suggested that teacher encouragement might be a salient factor in decreasing learners' apprehension levels as Student 6 said that "So before start to learning a new language, teachers have to encourage the learners, do not throw them cold water on." This suggestion verified Young's (1991) proposition that teacher attitudes played a remarkable role in learners' anxiety levels. Moreover, the low-anxious participants (Student 1, Student 2 and Student 3) stated that practice, particularly with native speakers, would be a key factor to reduce anxiety. An interesting idea to increase the opportunity to practice in the target language came from Student 5 as she claimed that student exchange programs such as Socrates-Erasmus should be used.

4.2.2. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in moderately anxious learners?

The pre- and post-test FLCAS results of the moderate anxiety group indicated a remarkable decrease both individually and in the overall group averages (See Figure 2). The dramatic decrease from an average of 105,5 in the pre-test FLCAS scores to an average of 74,5 in the post-test results of the whole group clearly revealed that the participants in the moderate anxiety group notably benefitted from the computer-mediated communication meetings. The difference can be better depicted in the individual level. For example, Student 11 previously identified to be

at the high end of moderate anxiety levels with a FLCAS score of 110 made a noteworthy progress, and received 74, a score closer to the low end of moderate anxiety levels, following the computer-mediated communication meetings. Likewise, Student 10, who scored 114 in the FLCAS before the meetings, received 77, which implied an approximation from high end of moderate anxiety levels to the low end. Therefore, it was clearly observed that computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools made great contribution in mitigating the levels of communication apprehension in the moderate anxiety group.

Figure 2. Moderate anxiety group pre- and post-test FLCAS scores
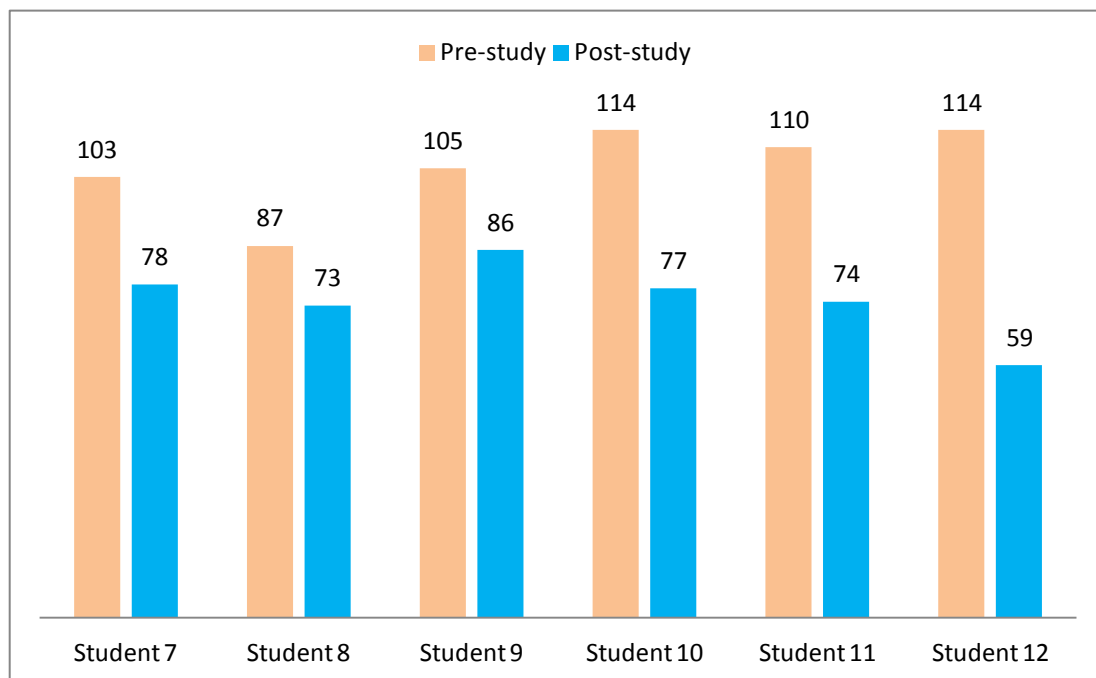
Nevertheless, one should notice that there was no change in the status of the moderately anxious learners considering the score margins used to define one's anxiety level as low, moderate and high. That is to say, the analysis of the pre-test and post-test scores of the moderately anxious participants implied that the decrease in their anxiety levels based on the FLCAS was not significant enough to shift their anxiety level from moderate to low (except for Student 12, who received 59 in the post-test administration of the FLCAS). The controversy that no status change regarding the participants' anxiety level occurred despite the huge shrink in the post-

test FLCAS scores (i.e. from 105,5 in the pre-test to 74,5 in the post-test) should be attributed to the tool used to measure the participants' anxiety levels. As mentioned in the methodology section of the present study, there was no clearly defined score range for researchers using the FLCAS to conclusively distinguish among low, moderate and high anxiety. Furthermore, the approximate score range (i.e. 66-119) the researcher used to define the moderate anxiety levels might be too broad to yield a sensitive division of specific anxiety levels. Therefore, the fact that the analysis of the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores did not represent a change in the moderately anxious participants' anxiety status despite a remarkable decrease revealed a restriction about the FLCAS as a measure of foreign language anxiety. Hence, the researcher concluded that employing different scales with a more sensitive division of different anxiety levels could yield better results with regard to the anxiety levels of the moderately anxious participants in this study.

The responses the moderately anxious participants gave to the completion questionnaire shed light on some critical points about communication apprehension. Firstly, their responses revealed that moderately anxious participants in this study differentiated between the classroom environment and the informal environment provided in the virtual communication sessions. They stated that it was easier to speak in the virtual communication sessions, since there was nobody to monitor their speech. This finding verified Price (1991) as she (1991) substantiated that the atmosphere in the classroom was a major contributor to foreign language anxiety. Moreover, the participants in the moderate anxiety group showed some concern over the content of speaking as some participants stated that some of the topics in the conversations were more challenging than others (See Appendix 5). For example, Student 11 said that "Topics concerning politics were difficult because I'm not really good at it and don't know much about it. I felt myself very awkward." This finding replicated Steinbeck & Horwitz's (1986) premise that the content of speaking might affect students' anxiety levels, since some amount of knowledge in the topic to be covered in a conversation could make up for high levels of anxiety.

However, the moderately anxious participants had controversial ideas about making mistakes, since some responded that making mistake was not an issue in the virtual conversations, whereas others expressed fear about their mistakes. This could be attributed to the varying degrees of self-confidence in the participants as Casado & Dershiwsky (2004) ascertained that one's opinions about his/ her own performance affected the levels of anxiety he/ she might experience. An interesting point in the responses of the moderate anxiety group was that they seemed to compromise on the importance of practice in the target language as a suggestion for mitigating the levels of communication apprehension. In this regard, Student 9 offered watching films, listening to music and chatting with foreign people. Yet, the most discernible suggestion came from Student 8 as she stated that "make joke if we don't know what to say." Her statement echoed with Kojima (2007) as she asserted that learners made jokes and smiled when they did not know the answer to a question in the language classroom.

4.2.3. To what extent does computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools affect communication apprehension levels in highly anxious learners?

The analysis of the pre- and post-test FLCAS scores show that the biggest difference has occurred in the high anxiety group compared to the low and moderate anxiety groups (See Figure 3). The average of the high anxiety group in the FLCAS diminished from 138,1 in the first application to 84,3 in the post-test application, which represented the positive impact of the computer-mediated communication sessions. Differences in the individual basis supported the drastic decrease in the communication apprehension levels of the participants with high anxiety. For instance, Student 14 went along way in alleviating his communication apprehension level because his scores in the FLCAS declined from 138 to 77. Furthermore, Student 18, who received a very high score (i.e. the highest score of all) before the meetings, scored 92 after the virtual communication sessions, which showed that she succeeded a great recovery as a result of the virtual conversations. Similarly, the post-test FLCAS results of the rest of the high anxiety group indicated a major progress. Indeed, the post-test FLCAS results highlighted that there occurred a status

change in all the participants with high anxiety rates, since they all attained to moderate anxiety levels after participating in the computer-mediated conversations.

As mentioned before, the greatest progress was noticed in the high anxiety group because all the members of this group made a significant enough improvement to decrease their anxiety levels. Their progress from high to moderate anxiety levels was also expected to make a great contribution in allaying their negative attitudes towards communicating in English as Chastain (1975) hypothesized that moderate levels of anxiety might increase learners' motivation and thus, help them achieve higher performance. Moreover, they could better enjoy communicating in the target language because a great deal of research (MacIntyre, 1994b; Yashima, 2002) documented that high levels of anxiety acted as a hindrance for proper communication.

Figure 3. High anxiety group pre- and post-test FLCAS scores
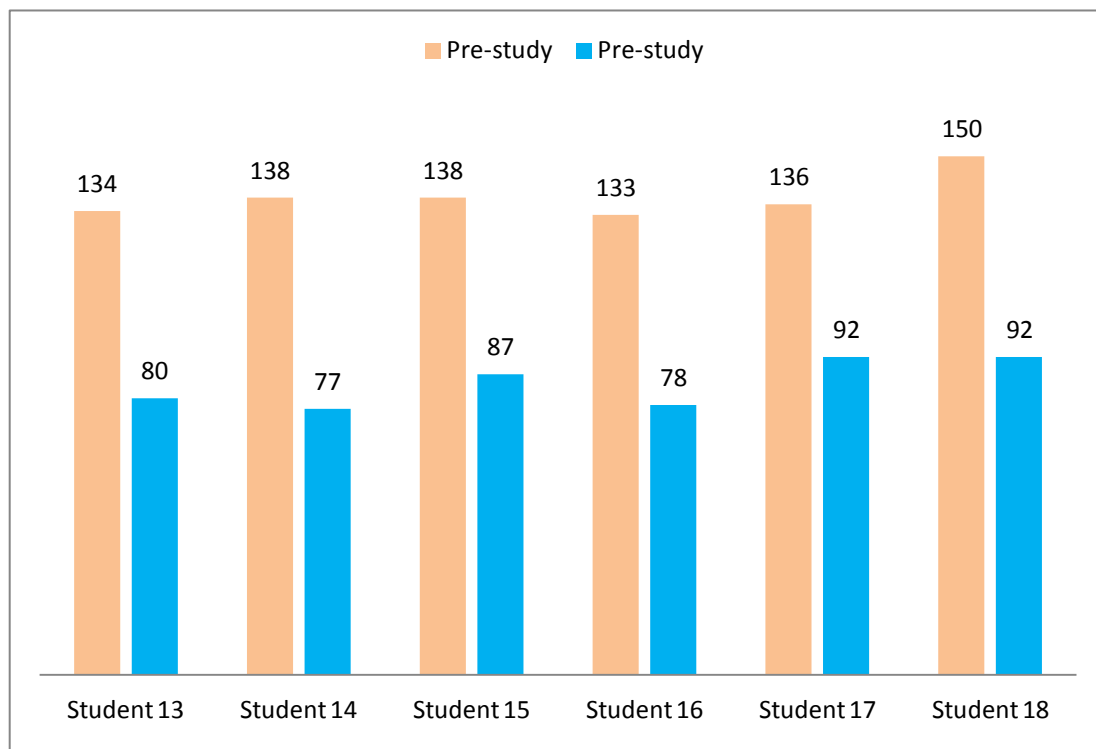
As to the responses of the highly anxious participants to the completion questionnaire, a set of precious insights into the internal feelings of highly anxious

learners were gathered. Almost all participants in the high anxiety group reported that in the first few meetings, they were concerned about their performance compared to that of their partner's as they felt their partners were better. In other words, the highly anxious participants repeatedly stated that they made comparisons between themselves and their partners, and thought that their partners were doing better than they did. Student 18, for instance, said that "Many times, I felt that she was better than me." Similarly, Student 16 reported that "Unfortunately, I thought that my partner's speaking was better than me and I felt myself bad." The assumptions of highly anxious participants about their own performance shed light on the role of competitive behaviors in one's anxiety level. Therefore, the results of the present study were in consistence with previous research in the field as several researchers (Bailey, 1983) indicated that learners with high anxiety levels tended to make comparisons between themselves and others in terms of their performance in L2, and undermine their performance.

The highly anxious participants in this study had a major concern about making mistakes. Their responses illustrated that the extreme fear attached to making mistakes prevented them from enjoying the pleasure of communicating in the target language as Student 17 said that "At the beginning, I wasn't active. I was afraid of speaking wrongly." The finding about the highly anxious participants' fear about making mistake corroborated Horwitz et. al.'s (1986) study. They (1986: 130) put forth that the fear of making mistake was prevalent in learners with high anxiety. Another interesting corollary of the present study was the implication on the role of the classroom environment in communication apprehension. The participants in high anxiety group admitted that the classroom environment increased their anxiety. For example, Student 16 stated that "Certainly, I felt more relax than speaking in the classroom. In the classroom, I feel ashamed of myself when I make a mistake because my friends may laugh at me." This added reliability to Koch & Terrel's (1991) conclusion as they (1991) emphasized that the sense of formality in language classrooms might trigger increased levels of anxiety.

Finally, the participants in the high anxiety group came up with marginal solutions for lowering high levels communication apprehension. For instance, Student 16 implied that performing self-talks could be a way of alleviating high levels of apprehension as she claimed that "We should speak English opposite to the mirror. I know it is weird but it is beneficial." Also, Student 15 suggested that using English outside the classroom would be beneficial as she underlined that "I think students need to practice outside the classroom."

4.2.4. What is the impact of computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools on learners' attitudes towards the target language?

The present study intended to help the participants decrease their communication apprehension levels and thereby, enable them to develop positive attitudes towards communicating in the target language. The statistical analyses revealed that the study hit the mark as there was an unequivocal decrease in the posterior FLCAS scores (See Figure 4). An analysis of the participants' responses to the completion questionnaire revealed a contrast in their opinions before and after the computer-mediated communication meetings, particularly in the moderate and high anxiety groups. The participants in both groups were initially biased against their communicative competence, in particular speaking skill. For example, Student 8 stated that "I thought that my partner couldn't understand my "terrible" English." Also, Student 13 expressed concern over her ability to correspond to her partner properly as she stated that "I was afraid that I couldn't answer her questions or understand her." However, their responses to the questionnaire explicitly indicated that their negative attitudes were incrementally replaced by more positive ones after each virtual meeting. Student 8 revealed that "But next times I felt more and more confident." Likewise, Student 13 responded that "But later on, it got better and I looked forward to the next meeting. I felt that my speaking was getting better." As it is clear from the participants responses, computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools such as Skype has provided the participants' with a significant amelioration in their attitudes towards communicating in the target language.

Figure 4. Overall pre- and post-study FLCAS scores
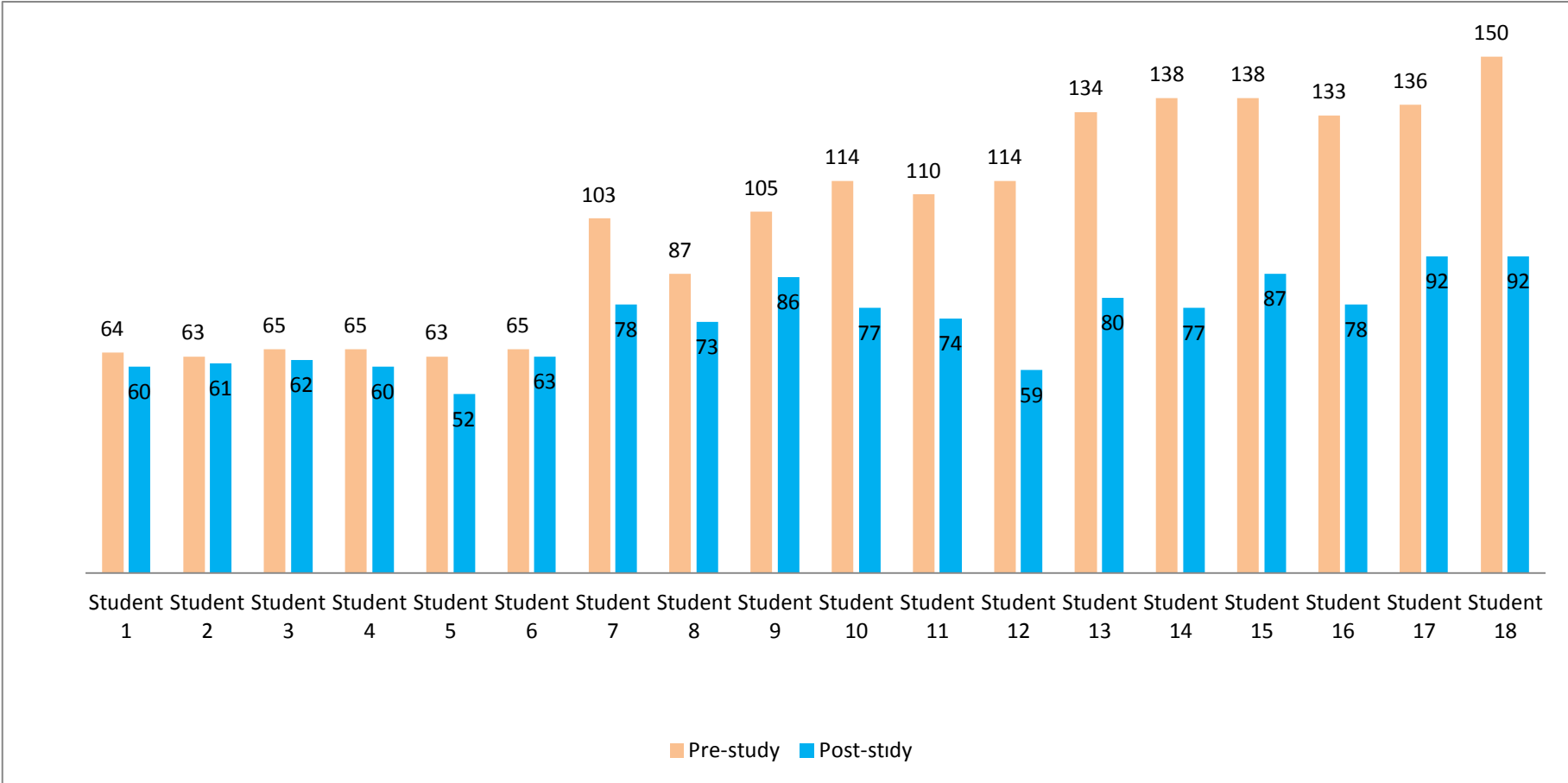
CHAPTER V

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. Summary and Discussion

The present study basically attempted to reveal about impacts of computer-mediated communication on levels of communication apprehension in foreign language learners. Analyses of both the FLCAS scores and participants' self-reports provided important insights about the communication apprehension levels of the participants in each group including interesting guidelines to remedy their apprehension levels. Computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools helped all three groups with different anxiety levels make significant progress as the study observed serious amelioration in communication apprehension levels of the participants. There was a small but statistically significant decrease in the FLCAS scores of the low-anxious participants. Similarly, the moderate anxiety group greatly improved their apprehension levels, since there was a considerable difference between their pre- and post-test FLCAS results. Though the difference was not statistically significant enough to change their status from moderate to low anxiety, it brought their mean FLCAS scores from the threshold of highly moderate anxiety to low-moderate anxiety.

As to the high anxiety group, both individual and whole-group FLCAS scores decreased in a way leaving no space for hesitation in terms of the usefulness of computer-mediated communication. The study revealed that the improvement in the FLCAS scores of the high anxiety group was statistically significant because every member of the group ended up with moderate levels of communication apprehension. As previous research (Chastain, 1975; Scovel, 1978) in the field put forth that moderate anxiety in foreign language learning contexts was a desired phenomenon, the present study added credence to the use of computer-mediated communication with a focus on alleviating high levels of communication apprehension in foreign language learners. Moreover, the fact that there was a decrease in the apprehension levels of all three groups, be it statistically significant or not, leaded to the conclusion that keeping abreast of the developments in

educational technologies (such as the use of Vo-IP tools in language classrooms) might considerably help to equip foreign language instructors with favorable and practical solutions in the classroom. In the same fashion, this study well-established that using computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools in order to decrease students' communication apprehension levels brought in various additional profits including:

- more opportunities for the participants to practice the target language in real-life situations,
- increase in the participants' motivation to continue studying the target language as they tasted the language with real-life like topics,
- a remarkable save in precious classroom time in that the virtual meetings were held at home,
- provision of intercultural awareness.

Regarding the participants' self-reports about their views on the virtual meetings and their communication apprehension levels, the data elicited through the completion questionnaire were highly informative. It was realized that the participants in low anxiety group in contrast to the highly anxious participants were not concerned about making mistakes while communicating in the target language. This finding was in consistence with Alghothani (2010) as he maintained that highly anxious students were more concerned about and thus, vulnerable to make mistakes. He (2010) suggested that foreign language instructors tactfully create an environment in which highly apprehensive students could feel free to make mistakes. The moderately anxious participants, however, revealed perplexing results as they were unclear about making mistakes. This could be attributed to their lack of self-confidence about their L2 capabilities as Liu & Jackson (2008) proposed that apprehensive learners might feel afraid of making mistakes due to their perception of insufficient L2 proficiency. In this regard, the participants' negative self-perceptions might be another contributor to communication apprehension as MacIntyre et. al. (2007) contended that more anxious learners undermined their language learning competence while low-anxious learners tended to overrate their ability.

Moreover, the current study revealed that competitiveness might be a factor distinguishing highly anxious learners from low-anxious learners. Whereas the participants in high anxiety group reported that they continuously compared themselves to their partners, particularly in the first few meetings, low anxiety group speculated that they focused more on sustaining the virtual conversations than on making comparisons between themselves and their partners. This finding echoed with Price's (1991) study as she suggested that competitive behaviors in the form of comparing oneself to others in the language classroom featured as a major trait of students with high anxiety. Therefore, it may be beneficial to communicate students that in the language classroom, one should work for all rather than for himself because foreign language learning itself requires more cooperation than competition.

An interesting corollary of the present study was the observation that unlike the participants in the moderate and high anxiety groups, the low-anxious participants complained about pronunciation differences. In other words, the participants with low anxiety stated that inappropriate/ different pronunciation by their partners made it difficult to understand them. The issue of pronunciation in the low anxiety group was incongruent with the literature, since pronunciation was a concern previously associated with highly anxious students. Gregersen & Horwitz (2008) reiterated that students with high anxiety were identified with setting unrealistic goals such as perfect pronunciation. However, this study reported that it was low anxiety group asking for native-like pronunciation. The distinct finding in this study might be ascribed to the fact that low-anxious participants were at the same time highly proficient in English and thusly, more interested in their pronunciation, whereas the moderately and high-anxious participants were still striving to take the risk of making up a few sentences in the virtual communication sessions.

Another salient result of the study was that the participants in moderate and high anxiety groups were found to distinguish between the classroom environment and computer-mediated communication setting. The participants in both groups reported that they felt much safer in the computer-mediated settings. They stated that they felt more like talking to a close friend than a foreigner in a language different

from their mother tongue because in the classroom, they suffered from the risk that they could be interrupted or despised due to a simple mistake they made. This was in line with Koch & Terrell (1991) as they concluded that the dynamics in the language classroom had a sound impact on foreign language learners. In the same vein, Ariza (2004: 106) explicated that a warm and supportive classroom environment helped learners feel less threatened and freer to participate. Hence, computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools stood out as an attractive alternative to the traditional classroom setting.

Furthermore, the reflections of the participants with moderate anxiety levels yielded an attention-intriguing finding about their opinions on communicating in the target language. Their responses to the completion questionnaire implied that the moderately anxious participants differentiated among contents of conversation in the virtual meetings. In other words, the moderately anxious participants reported that their levels of communication apprehension were affected by the content of communication. It was realized that difficult topics (such as politics and visa policy between countries) were considered more challenging and thereof, caused escalated levels of communication apprehension. This finding confirmed Chen & Lee's (2011) proposition that unfamiliar topics promoted higher levels of anxiety. Bearing this in mind, it can be suggested that foreign language instructors pay close attention to cover topics with which students feel more familiar so that they will create some room in which even highly anxious students can volunteer to speak. Henceforth, anxious students can realize that they manage to speak in the target language, which in turn helps them overcome their negative feelings connected to L2.

With regard to the participants' suggestions as possible solutions to mitigate high anxiety levels, some commonly cited yet valuable ideas were coined. Firstly, further practice in L2 was suggested as a panacea, since the participants with varying levels of anxiety referred to its importance. Indeed, previous research seemed to resonate with their point as Elkhafaifi (2005) contended that providing more chances for practicing target structures proved effective in reducing students' anxiety levels. Closely associated with practicing L2, performing self-talks such as speaking against

the mirror was another suggestion the participants made to allay high levels of communication apprehension. An imaginative suggestion pointed to the importance of increasing intercultural mobility among learners. That is one of the participants enthusiastically stated that benefitting from student-exchange programs like Socrates-Erasmus might be a good chance to reduce anxiety levels linked to communication in L2. Further extension of this suggestion pinpointed the importance of using educational technologies (as the researcher did by means of Vo-IP tools in this study). Indeed, it becomes more important to resort to facilities such as Vo-IP tools in cases where there is only limited opportunity to contact with the target language. Hence, what the researcher has done in the present study may be a strong standpoint for those wishing to go for using such tools.

Besides, the participants' suggestions attached paramount importance to the role of teacher in the foreign language classroom. The participants asserted that teacher encouragement might play a crucial role in reducing high levels of communication apprehension. They supported that in most cases, teacher was the only source of contact with the target language. Therefore, teacher encouragement could help students to recover from high levels of communication apprehension. In this respect, the present study replicated Samimy & Rardin's (1994) claim that continuous support provided by the language teacher might decrease students' levels of anxiety in the classroom.

All in all, computer-mediated communication surfaced as a sound alternative to the traditional classroom environment. Giving the participants the flexibility of having the virtual meetings anywhere and anytime they wished, computer-mediated communication contributed to the concept of the world as a global classroom. Moreover, computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools not only contributed to the participants' positive attitudes towards communicating in the FL but also increased their confidence in their own FL communication competences because it provided them with the chance to be actively engaged in real and purposeful use of the target language. Finally, it enabled the participants to make friends from different countries, and share and exchange ideas in the medium of the target language.

5.2. Implications for Further Research and Suggestions

This study may be repeated to pursue the anxiety levels of the same participants as they continue their study in the same institutes so as to examine if there is any change in their anxiety levels in the following years, and any new issue arises in the following years. The study may also be duplicated with a larger number of participants across grade levels in order to validate the results.

Additionally, replicating this study with native speakers of English and through different data collection tools can be beneficial in getting hints about the impact of different study conditions on the results obtained in this study. As this study is limited to English majors, repeating the study with learners majoring in different areas can help endorse the reliability and generalizability of the findings.

5.3. Conclusion

The current study was an attempt to reduce students' apprehension levels connected to communicating in a foreign language as it gave them a chance to have weekly communication sessions by means of a widely used Vo-IP tool, Skype. The study found significantly positive influence of computer-mediated communication on communication apprehension levels in FL. Specifically those initially identified to be highly anxious were noticed to make remarkable progress throughout the process because their anxiety levels sharply decreased after an eight-week period. Also, this study reported noteworthy reduction in the communication apprehension levels of the participants with low and moderate anxiety levels.

The fact that the only requirement to employ computer-mediated communication (in the way used in this study) was a computer with a Vo-IP tool, like Skype, which was offered free of charge on the internet, demonstrated that computer-mediated communication could easily be incorporated into foreign language classrooms. In the same fashion, computer-mediated communication provided the participants with a sense of real communication as they talked to their partners simultaneously. Computer-mediated communication via Vo-IP tools was also a significant alternative to the traditional classroom because it offered time- and

border-free communication. The computer-mediated communication meetings held through a Vo-IP tool gave the participants the pleasure of real achievement as the mere means of communication throughout the meetings was the target language itself.

Moreover, this study suggested that computer-mediated communication might be a unique source of promoting intercultural awareness. It became explicit that the participants from two different countries learned about different values, lifestyles and traditions of the country in which their partners lived. Therefore, the experience through computer-mediated communication fostered their sense of empathy and openness to different perspectives, which might be viewed as a hidden objective of foreign language education.

Briefly, the present study concluded that incorporating computer-mediated communication by means of Vo-IP tools (such as Skype) into foreign language education might yield fairly beneficial results. Particularly in alleviating high levels of communication apprehension, this study highlighted that computer-mediated communication helped foreign language learners go a long way. This study also suggested that computer-mediated communication could offer precious opportunities to live up to learners' desire to increase their intercultural awareness in the process of learning a foreign language.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986)

	Please, choose the option that best suits you. Strongly Disagree: 1 Disagree: 2 Neither agree nor disagree: 3 Agree: 4 Strongly Agree: 5	SD	D	N	A	SA
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
6	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am usually at easy during tests in my language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I don't understand why people get so upset over foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
12	In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	1	2	3	4	5
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	1	2	3	4	5
17	I often feel like not going to my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I feel confident when I speak in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
21	The more I study for an language test the more confused I get.	1	2	3	4	5

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

Appendix 2

Background Information Questionnaire

Please, answer the following questions to reveal about your personal information as it can help interpret results.

1- How old are you?

2- What is your sex? a) Male / b) Female

3- What country are you from?

4- What is your native language?

5- At what age did you start studying English?

6- Why is/ are your reason/s for majoring in English?

7- How do you perceive your current proficiency level in English (advanced/ intermediate/ elementary)?

8- How do you perceive your anxiety level in English (high/ moderate/ low)?

9- What is the most anxiety-provoking skill for you?

   a- Reading

   b- Writing

   c- Speaking

   d- Listening

10- Is there any specific point you want the research to know?

Appendix 3

Topics for the Weekly Meetings

Week	Topics
1	- a general introduction, - similarities in your lifestyles (your hobbies, daily routines etc) - differences in Turkish and Russian education systems (especially, foreign language education)
2	- the process of getting a job in your country - traditional children's game in your country - the impact of technology on the lifestyle in your country
3	- Christmas conventions in your country - plans and gifts for the New Year's day - differences in New Year celebrations
4	- Accommodation facilities for university students in your country - Advantages and disadvantages of home-schooling (distance education) - Difference between being young or old considering in terms of knowledge, experience, and power
5	- role of men and women in your country (with regard to business life, households etc.) - features of your ideal spouse - Marriage system and traditions in your country
6	- factors affecting people to have more or less children in your country - The most interesting period of time in your life - Solutions to decrease divorce rates all over the world
7	- Possible ways of being satisfied with what the life offers, - Influences of clothing style on people - Differences between being the leader or a member of a group
8	- The political system in your country (i.e. the election system, how to be a president etc.) - Advantages and disadvantages of being self-employed (i.e.) running your own business) vs. working for others - The visa policy of your country

Appendix 4

Consent Form

Dear participant,

I invite you to participate in a study on the foreign language anxiety among English majoring students. This study is designed to investigate the impact of computer-mediated communication of students majoring in English as a FL. The reason why you are requested to partake in this study is the fact that this study focuses on the experiences of ELT students as they are supposed to be prospective teachers of English. Within the study, you will be asked to make weekly meetings with a person from another country through Skype.

Once accepting to participate in the study, you certainly have the chance to give it up at any point. I assure you that the results of the study may only be published for scientific reasons. But no information about your identity will be disclosed unless you give permission. Apparently, there is no risk in participating in this study. Also, your participation in the study will not have any impact on your scores in the courses you take. But the results may be beneficial as the study may provide you with exotic experiences of communicating through English.

I would be happy to reply if you have any further questions about the study. I can be contacted via e-mail at sacapan@selcuk.edu.tr.

Sincerely Yours,

Res.Asst. S.Ahmet ÇAPAN

By signing in below, you will admit participating in the study described above and give your consent for the data obtained to be used for scientific purposes.

Participant' Name:…………………………..

Signature:………………………………….....

Date:………………………………………..

Appendix 5

Completion Questionnaire

1- How did you feel about speaking English in an informal environment with a friend on Skype instead of a formal classroom environment with a teacher?

2- Did the topics affect your speaking performance? How would you react if the researcher hadn't sent you the topics before the meetings?

3- Were there any cases you compared yourself to your partner during the meetings?

4- How can you define your mood in the first and last meetings? What adjectives would you use to describe your mood?

5- Can you describe pros and cons of this study by comparing your feelings and ideas before and after the meetings?

6- How do you perceive your current anxiety level (Low-Moderate-High anxiety) compared to your anxiety level before the meetings?

7- What are your advices about how to reduce communication apprehension levels?

Appendix 6

The Participant Responses to the Completion Questionnaire

Student 1

1- I don't think much about grammar while speaking. So, it was not much different.

2- There was no difficult topic. But I learnt some new words from the topics we talked about. I don't think it would be difficult without topics.

3- I didn't compare our English.

4- At first, I was a little nervous but in the last it was like a talk with a friend.

5- Firstly, I made a new friend. I feel more confident in speaking and understanding foreign speech. I also had a good practice in speaking. But it was difficult to understand Turkish accent because I realized that we spoke English differently.

6- I have low anxiety now. But I was not anxious in the beginning.

7- It depends on a person. But practicing English outside can be good.

Student 2

1- Actually, at first the environment of meetings was quite formal (even more formal than in class where I knew everybody), but after a couple of meetings when we really got to know each other better and became friends I felt quite relaxed.

2- No, because almost all of the topics were about general life. If the researcher hadn't sent the topics, probably it would be difficult at the beginning. But later on, we could find some topics to speak.

3- No I never thought so. Though there were some cases, where I made mistakes, I just continued speaking. It was okay as long as my partner understood me. I can only say that my partner knows as much words as I do and she knows all the rules of English.

4- Before the first meeting I felt a little nervous as I didn't know what was waiting me. But later during the meetings the time flew fast and it was never boring. Especially, the last meeting was the most interesting I think because we could speak freely.

5- a) It was very interesting to meet a person from another country with another culture, traditions, etc. And I'm proud that now I have so far-away but very good friend. b) After the meetings, definitely now I feel that if you know English there are no boundaries in communication c) it's good practice, very good.

6- I was a little bit anxious in the beginning but now I am certainly low anxious.

7- Just talk as much as possible! Particularly with friends or, on the opposite, with less-known people - with someone in front of who you won't feel embarrassed.

Student 3

1- It was more pleasant to speak English with a friend than speaking in the classroom because it is very formal in the classroom. For example, sometimes exercises from textbooks are rather boring.

2- I think topics didn't affect me because we should be ready discuss any topic in our life. the topics helped especially at the beginning but if there weren't any topics I think it'd be great as well.

3- No, I never compared myself to my friend.

4- Before the first meeting I thought I would be ashamed if my partner was better than me. But as we spoke with her, I felt better. In the last session, I was satisfied of results, and comfortable.

5- I learned new information and I had some practice in English. Also, I worry less about my English level. But it could be better if I spoke with a native speaker because both I and my partner were nonnative speakers.

6- I have low anxiety now. But before the meetings, I was moderate.

7- Students should have more practice, especially with native speakers.

Student 4

1- I noticed that speaking in a formal classroom environment makes me more anxious than in an informal environment because I dont feel anxious while I'm speaking to a friend. Forgetting words or expressions doesn't bother me in informal environment.

2- Yes, it did. The last topic (talking about political systems) was more difficult than others. I noted that I need to learn more words to express my opinions about this topic. Talking about different kinds of topics was useful for me such that I had to learn words and expressions in different areas. If I dont know the topic before the meetings, it wouldn't be difficult but my speech would last shorter. If I know what I am going to talk about I prepare something to say and this makes conversations lasting longer.

3- Yes, sometimes we compared our speakings. Generally she said me 'you are better than me' and I said her the same. But we both tried to help each other when we had difficulty to say something and our conversations lasted in the same way. but sometimes our pronunciations differed slightly probably because of the national peculiarities of native languages.

4- Firstly i was calm just before the conversation. But by the time it started I felt exited and anxious. So we had some disconnectedness in some part of our conversation. But later I felt ease and calmer than the previous meetings. In the last meeting I didn't abstain by thinking mistakes and I felt more comfortably and calmer leading a mutual fluent conversation like talking to a friend as if I have already known for years.

5- There are many advantages. Before the meetings I didn't have an idea about what I can talk to a foreign person. I didn't know what kind of things I can tell about. This study gave me ideas about what I can tell to a foreign person. I learnt how I can say my feelings to a foreign person and how I can reflect when s/he say something. I used to use Turkish gestures and reactions before the meetings even if I talked to a foreign person. So I learnt how to reflect (surprising, exciting, approving, refusing etc.) while I am talking to a foreign person. Therefore I feel

calmer during the conversations. Now, I have a friend from Russia. It makes me feel good.

6- I think my current anxiety level is lower than my anxiety level before the meetings.

7- I think it is the one way to provide an environment for students to have mutual conversations with foreign students. There are too many people in the world trying to learn foreign languages. If they have a chance to meet with each other systematically, definitely they can reduce foreign language anxiety in the course of time. Generally we learn many different points of foreign languages at the schools like grammar, listening, writing, reading etc. but no practice. Even if teachers want students to have practice they dont mind about it. But if they have chance to talk to foreign people, they can have practice in a funny way and also by making friends.

Student 5

1- I felt very comfortable. and I was so relaxed in speaking with skype. Also in lessons, it is the same.

2- Absolutely I have difficult topic. In last meeting was about election system, although I have some knowledge but I couldnt tell much.

3- I didn't make any comparison between him and myself.

4- In the first meeting, I felt a bit nervous. But last meeting I was so relax and I had no stress. I could talk and I could tell what I want.

5- I have liked the meetings. I make new friends and I felt better after the meetings because I could tell what I want. I felt I can do, I can talk and now I have no fear talk to foreign people.

6- In the first meeting my anxiety level was a bit high. But now, I feel so comfortable. My anxiety level is so low.

7- I think the best way is just to practice more, to speak more… only this will help. Grammar and spelling etc are good but speaking with the real person is the most important and effective! and for speaking with real person, Erasmus is a good way.

Student 6

1- When I talk in classroom, I must care of my words because some students laugh when I make a mistake. but when I talk with my friends, I can talk how I think at that moment without choosing my words. But both of the ways, I want to be understood by my partner.

2- Yes, talking about an unfamiliar topic affect my speaking performance. For example talking about political system in our country was difficult for me. Because, if I am not interested in something, I do not know enough words for talking about it. For first sessions, it could be difficult to talk without the topics.

3- Yes many times I thought about that. Because my partner was better than me, she was more relaxed and she did not forget any words, or she did not need to check a word from dictionary when we were talking.

4- In first meeting I was afraid that I would not understand my partner. but session by session I felt myself more relaxed.

5- I learn many things about myself in this study. When I talk with someone face to face I am relax. Because when I am talking I use not only verbal language but also body language such as gesture and mimic. So talking with someone by phone etc. without observing reactions is difficult for me. Before this study I did not know it. Now I learned and liked it. Of course making a new friend is one of benefit. I learned new things about culture and country, of my partner.

6- I believe my anxiety level before meeting was not high but now, I feel better.

7- I think anxiety affects the quality of learning foreign language. So before start to learning a new language, teachers have to encourage the learners, do not throw them cold water on. Because the fair of making mistake do not let students learn and enjoy it.

Student 7

1- Informal English is more easy than formal because if I speaking in the classroom, I must be obey the grammar rules.

2- Our topics were enjoyable and daily topics. So, topics positively affected me to speak. But if I didn't know topics, it wouldn't be a problem.

3- Yes I often compared me and her during the meeting our English level. I felt she was better.

4- In the first meeting I was very anxious and stressful because I think my English not enough to speak but during the meeting I realized that my English enough to meeting.

5- This study affected me positively because I learned new things. Now, I feel comfortable when I am speaking English. I improved my vocabulary.

6- Before the meetings I was very anxious and excited but after this meeting I feel very comfortable speaking English.

7- If we want to reduce foreign language anxiety, we should watch series, movie and listen to songs. Maybe we find new friends and usually speak with them.

Student 8

1- I am embarrassed when I am not understanding how to do task if teacher speaks in English. I am feeling a bit panic! And I need more time to understand. But in Skype, I felt better. Although I made mistakes, my friend understood me anyway. We could ask to speak more slowly and repeat hard words.

2- Especially hard themes were about policy of visa, political system. I tried to remember hard words and something about political, but I am not interested in it, that is why I was not competent. I was a bit ashamed. I think it would be very difficult to talk without topic. We should know any theme of meeting.

3- At the beginning of our meetings I thought I was better in English than her. But to the end of meetings I disagreed with myself. She was very interesting in discussing, she knew lexicon very good.

4- In the first meeting I felt very nervous and was anxious about my pronunciation. I thought that my partner couldn't understand my "terrible" English. But next times I felt more and more confident. When I was nervous I was laughing for making everything to joke and relieve stress. In the last meeting we spoke without any stress and were very friendly.

5- After the meetings, I have positive feelings for English now. It is the most important for me. My future work could be related to communication with native English. I want to speak without problems. Also, I may need to read English literature or web-sites for work. And of course, I am very glad to get a new friend for practice English in future. Also, I have learned something new about Turkey and its traditions. I very liked to talk about it. During the meetings, I had chance to discuss in English without dictionary and I feel I improved. It is very beneficial for my English, I think. One bad thing in the meetings was that sometimes pronunciation of my partner was so difficult for me and I asked to repeat it a few times.

6- I think my level is Moderate now. In the past, I would be nervous and lose confidence when I couldn't say a word and my teacher was waiting for me. I would feel humiliated.

7- The main advice is we should be more friendly and should make joke if we don't know what to say. We shouldn't be quick in speech and try to concentrate on our thought. I think it helps to be more confident if we are strongly sure about what to say.

Student 9

1- In the classroom, I'm very excited and my speaking is very bad because of my excitement. Skype is wonderful situation because she behaved as if my friend.

2- Yes the topics affected my speaking performance. For instance it was easy to talk about traditions. I successfully explain her traditions in my country. But I was nervous about some topics like politics. If the researcher hadn't sent me the topics before the meetings, it would be more difficult because it would be difficult to find topics in the beginning. But later it would not matter.

3- Yes I always compared myself to my partner during the meetings. of course, she spoke more fluently and correctly according to me. Her speaking was very great according to mine.

4- I can define excited and very anxious in the first few meetings. In the later meetings, I was relax and comfortable.

5- Pros of this study, my vocabulary and my speaking improved. Also, I found opportunity to know a Russian person. Also, the meetings increased my self-confidence because I can speak better now. But sometimes understanding was getting hard on skype because of bad internet connection.

6- I think certainly low anxiety. Because my speaking and vocabulary improved.

7- I think it can be done by watching film, listening music and chatting with foreign people.

Student 10

1- Communication in an informal atmosphere makes me feel freer and more confident. but there is no control over the correctness of speech. So, both classroom and informal environments have special advantages.

2- Yes, the topics of conversation affected my speaking performance. When discussion topics interested me, meetings passed easily and emotionally. And since the topics were due to the common things, it was easy to communicate. But it could be a bit more difficult if I hadn't received the topics before meetings.

3- I think that the level of language proficiency for me and my partner was about the same. But I didn't compare myself with him. Maybe, only his vocabulary is richer than mine.

4- The first meeting was exciting and anxious, because I had no experience of such communication. All other talks were held in a friendly atmosphere.

5- Plusses: I had the opportunity to learn about Turkish traditions and peculiarities of perception of the world. Participation in such project helps to feel more confident. It's very fun. And I realized that there are no special barriers to such projects. Minus: no control over the correctness of speech.

6- My anxiety level was average before, and now it remains quite low.

7- To reduce foreign language anxiety, there should be more active practical classes and the appropriate mental attitude.

Student 11

1- I think speaking in the informal environment is more comfortable. Because my partner is my friend and there isn't formality between us. But in the classroom, teacher can correct my mistakes.

2- Topics concerning politics were difficult because I'm not really good at it and don't know much about it. I felt myself very awkward. Also, sometimes I felt difficulty to speak about some cultural differences as I didn't know what would sound correct or incorrect. I am afraid it would be much more difficult if I didn't know the topics beforehand.

3- Yes I often compared myself to my partner because I felt she spoke better than me.

4- In the first meeting, I was so nervous and stressful. but in the last meeting, I was comfortable. And I think it was so enjoyable.

5- I made new friend and I developed better feelings for speaking because I can speak better than the first time. I think all parts were enjoyable and useful. For example, during the meetings I learned new words and now I am more relax for speaking. and I learned about a new culture. I am so happy to be part of this study.

6- Before the meetings it was high. but now I think it is average.

7- I think we should do a lot of reading and writing activities. And we should make practice a lot.

Student 12

1- I liked to talk English in informal environment because in classroom there are a lot of people and they are watching me while I am talking. But if I talk with my friend on skype, only one person watches me and it is not a big problem. I think I feel anxious when I talk against a group of people but I feel relaxed when I talk face to face with one person.

2- Yes, topics affected my speaking performance. Actually I feel anxious in more detailed subjects like traditions of our country etc. Actually, it would so hard to talk without the topics. Because we always followed the topics, of course we talked about other subjects but we never leave the main topic. So if he hadn't sent us the topics, I would talk harder.

3- I always compare myself with my partner but I find her better than me because she has better pronunciation. She had exercise with native speakers before but I didn't talk with native speaker face to face before. She made mistakes, too. But I made mistakes more than her. So I think she is better than me in talking English.

4- Answer: in first meeting I felt so anxious and stressful, but in last I exactly feel relaxed and I talked so relax. But first time I couldn't remember the simple words. At last I find myself better than the first.

5- I think this study has lots of pros. Firstly, it improves our talking skill. I see so big differences between before and after talking. It is about my English and my skills. For social perspective, I gain courage for communicate with other people. I talk more easily with stranger people. I also make one great friend. I think better about talking English with another person.

6- I think there are huge differences before and after the meetings. I feel relaxed now while talking foreign people.

7- The way of reduce foreign language anxiety is doing exercises more and more. It will break your anxiety and give you courage to talking. The possible activities are making connections with foreign people and talking with them about different subjects.

Student 13

1- I feel better when I speak with my friend in Skype because my friend doesn't give me a score but speaking with teachers is a bit exciting.

2- Yes the topics affected my speaking performance. Topics which I handle easily make me happy. but some topics like visa policy make me nervous. If the researcher didn't send me topics, it would be more difficult because topics were helpful for me. But after a few meetings, we could speak without the topics anyway.

3- Yes I compared myself to my partner during the meetings. Actually, I didn't think my partner better than me because she is not a native speaker like me, so we are almost the same.

4- The first meeting was like a nightmare. I was afraid that I couldn't answer her questions or understand her. I felt almost every bad emotion such as anger, nervousness, anxiety, and stress. I felt awful in the first meeting. But later on, it got better and I looked forward to the next meeting. I felt that my speaking was getting better.

5- These meetings brought me a lot of benefits. Before the meetings, I would be very nervous and embarrassed when I spoke English. but now if I meet a foreigner, I can speak with her without being nervous and anxious. This affects my social life too because I have a new friend and I learned lots of things about her country, her life at school.

6- Before the meeting my anxiety level was high but current level is low because now, I learned that speaking with strangers is not like a nightmare. As I observe my improvement in English, I feel better.

7- We can invite students from other countries. At schools, our teachers should be more insightful because exam scores are not everything. Students can make a mistake as they are student. If teachers are sensitive, students overcome their frights, and anxiety will be clear out.

Student 14

1- It is more easy and interesting to speak with friend in an informal environment, because we can discuss our own private themes. But if we talk in the classroom, teacher can correct my mistakes; I think we should mix informal and formal conversations.

2- There were some difficult topics. Of course this fact affected my speaking performance. I tried to improvise. As I never prepared for meetings, it wouldn't be too difficult to talk about topics if I didn't receive any topic.

3- I never compared myself to my partner, and never thought that she was better or worse than I.

4- In the first meeting I was stressful a little. But after a few meeting passed, I was waiting for every next meeting impatiently.

5- It is very interesting project. I gained feeling my English became better. It is very interesting to meet foreigner! I found out much new about Turkey, about Turkish morals. Also I understand that in every people should learn to speak English.

6- Now I don't have much anxiety.

7- I advise to talk English with foreigners so much as is possible.

Student 15

1- It's more difficult and unproductive for me to speak in the classroom because I need to speak right and only in English. . If I pronounce a word wrongly in the classroom, I will be ashamed of myself. Sometimes, I can't remember a word and I feel very embarrassed. But in Skype, it is easier for me.

2- There is no doubt, that the topics affect the performance. They help to increase my vocabulary because I had to look up the dictionary for unknown words. If the researcher didn't send the topics, it would be more difficult to talk because I prepared for the topics before the meetings.

3- Yes, I compared myself to my partner and I am convinced that he speaks better than me. Also there were some situations in which I remembered a word when I heard it from him.

4- The first meeting: anxious, stressful.

   The last meeting: more relax.

5- After meetings, my speaking English became better, the barrier between me and English reduced. Also, I increased my vocabulary knowledge. I made a new friend because I was talking with a foreigner friend. But in the meetings, sometimes, there was bad internet. And I think my pronunciation was affected negatively because of speaking with a not native speaker.

6- Before the meeting – high

   After the meeting – moderate

7- It can be only practice. I think students need to practice English outside the classroom.

Student 16

1- Certainly, I felt more relax than speaking in the classroom. In the classroom, I feel ashamed of myself when I make a mistake because my friends may laugh at me.

2- Yes, they affected my speaking performance. For example, the topic of eighth week was difficult because I had no idea about this topic. So, I had difficulty in speaking. I wouldn't be able to speak much if it didn't know the topics.

3- Unfortunately, I thought that my partner's speaking was better than me and I felt myself bad. But then I realized that he learned English from a native speaker teacher. So, he was more relax and more successful than me.

4- The first meeting I was so stressful and anxious. But in time I was more relaxed. The last meeting I trusted myself so I didn't feel stressful.

5- This study gave a lot of benefits for me. Before the meeting I thought that I can't speak English. But after the meetings, I have got self-confidence. Now I am not afraid of making mistake. Also, I learned new information about Russian people and I have got a friend from another country. The most important is I can speak English without being ashamed.

6- Now I have low anxiety.

7- We should speak English opposite to the mirror. I know it is weird but it is beneficial. Because if we did it, we see that we can speak English and this is not bad thing. We should speak English with native speaker. Or we should exercise on speaking with a friend.

Student 17

1- Speaking on skype is easier than a formal classroom. In the class, there are a lot of students who are better than me. They can speak fluently. The teacher or other students will correct me when I make a mistake.

2- Yes, sometimes. When I had no idea about the topics, I was very nervous. if the researcher didn't send me topics, it is too difficult to talk. I would be more worried about what to speak.

3- I always compared myself with my partner because he spoke so fluently. He is better than me in speaking.

4- In the first meeting, I was so excited and I forgot some words that I had already known well. I wasn't active because I was afraid of speaking wrongly. So, I couldn't speak. After a while, I became familiar with him. In the last meeting, I was comfortable and relaxed. I was proud of myself after the last meeting because I could speak better.

5- Until the meetings, I had no foreign friends and I had no chance to speak English except for the classroom. The meetings gave me a chance to make a foreign friend and learn about a different culture. Also, I feel that my confidence in speaking increased after the meetings. I really liked the meetings because they weren't like speaking in the classroom. I could make mistakes and talk about normal topics instead of topics in the books.

6- Before the meetings, I had very high anxiety. But now, I think it is better.

7- We should make more practice because we can't speak English in our social life. We should talk with tourists who come to our city. Also, some organizations like Erasmus are a good chance to improve our speaking in English.

Student 18

1- I feel timid when I am in the classroom because I may make mistakes and my teacher may be angry, or my friends may laugh at me. But in the meetings, I was relaxed because my partner didn't correct me. The important thing was that we could understand each other..

2- There were some difficult topics. As I did not know much about them, I was afraid of not speaking fluently. But if I wasn't sent the topics, it would be more difficult to speak. So, I liked it better to have the topics before the meetings.

3- Many times, I felt that he was better than me. He was more social than me. When I could not speak, he was asking me questions. He had better English than me. Also, I learned some new words from him.

4- I was very stressful in the first meeting. I was thinking about what I would say and how I would say it. I was shy while speaking. But in the last meeting I felt peace. I was so relax that I felt as if I was speaking with a normal friend.

5- To me, it was great to speak a foreigner in English because he was not a native speaker. As I did not know him, I could speak more safely. We could understand each other better as he was not a native speaker. After the meetings, I believe that my speaking is much better and I defeated my fear of speaking English. I have more self-confidence now.

6- I was very anxious before the meetings. But I trust myself more now. I can say that I have low anxiety now.

7- I think students need to do practice outside the classroom. In the classroom, teachers only give some information and can't teach students how to speak safely. And, teachers' attitudes are very important. If they react negatively, then students may feel ashamed and would not speak any more.

T.C.
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