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A CASE STUDY ON COLLABORATIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES TO REDUCE
EFL LEARNERS' FOREIGN LANGAUGE SPEAKING ANXIETY IN A
UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

THESIS BY

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I

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II

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ÖZET
ÜNİVERSİTE DÜZEYİNDEKİ İNGİLİZCE YABANCI DİL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN YABANCI DİL KONUŞMA GERGİNLİKLERİNİ AZALTMAK İÇİN UYGULANAN İŞBİRLİKÇİ GRUP ÇALIŞMALARI ÜZERİNE BİR DURUM ÇALIŞMASI

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Eğitimcilerin pek çoğu eğitim ortamlarındaki faktörlerden etkilenmektedir. Bu faktörler çoğunlukla öğrencilerin motivasyonu, tutumları ve başarılı dil öğrenme süreçlerini gerçekleştirmek için harcadıkları çabalar üzerinde etkilidir. Aynı zamanda bu faktörler, gelecek süreçleri ve yeni öğrenilen kavramları zihinsel bloklar oluşturarak engelleyen bir role sahiptir. Eğitimciler olarak, sınıf içerisinde öğrencilerin fikirlerini rahatça ifade edebilecekleri, yüksek motivasyon ve dil öğrenimine karşı pozitif tutumlar edinebilecekleri ve bu sayede başarılı dil öğrenicileri olabilecekleri etkili sınıf ortamları oluşturmak bizim sorumluluğumuzdadır. Bizim rolümüz aynı zamanda öğrenmeyi kolaylaştıran, öğrenme süreçlerinin hedeflerine başarılı bir şekilde ulaşmayı sağlayacak olan uygun stratejilere öğrencilere kazandıran ara buluculuktur.

Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türk öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma sınıflarındaki konuşma gerginliklerinin sebeplerini araştırmaktadır. Gerginliğin kaynaklarını tespit etmek için kullanılan veriler ışığında, öğrencilerin dil iletişim becerilerini geliştirmeye yönelik olumlu tutumlar kazandırmak ve olumsuz faktörleri elimine etmek amacıyla bir eylem araştırması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Bunları gerçekleştirirken, çalışma boyunca muhtemel cevapların aranacağı iki araştırma sorusu belirlenmiştir. Gerginliğin kaynakları Yabancı Dil Sınıfı Gerginlik Ölçeği (FLCAS) ve hedef grup mülakatı ile belirlenmiştir. Ardından, sınıf içerisinde 6 hafta boyunca küçük grup işbirlikçi aktiviteler uygulanmış ve öğrencilerden aktivitelerin etkililiği ile ilgili notlar alabileceği günlükler tutmaları istenmiştir. Araştırmacı bir eğitimci olarak, öğretim uygulamaları

sürecinde gözlemlediğim durumlarla ilgili notlar almak için tarafımdan da bir günlük oluşturulmuştur.

Verilerin sonuçları, öğrencilerin yaşadıkları gerginliklerin sebeplerinin çeşitli ve değişken olduğunu göstermiştir. Fakat yine de, sonuçların daha açık sergilenebilmesi için 3 ana kategori belirlenmiştir. Bu kaynaklar kişisel ve kişiler arası sebepler, öğretmenin dil öğretimi ile ilgili inançları ve sınıf içi uygulamalar olarak belirlenmiştir. Aynı zamanda öğrencilerin aktiveler ile ilgili düşünceleri, küçük grup işbirlikçi aktivitelerin yabancı dil sınıflarında etkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yabancı Dil Konuşma Gerginliği, Motivasyon, İşbirlikçi ve Küçük Grup Aktiviteleri.

ABSTRACT
A CASE STUDY ON COLLABORATIVE GROUP ACTIVITIES TO REDUCE EFL LEARNERS' FOREIGN LANGAUGE SPEAKING ANXIETY IN A UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

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A great number of educators experience some affective factors in educational settings. These factors mostly effective on the learners' attitudes, motivation and efforts to achieve the goals of language learning process. These factors also play a hinderer role to grasp the newly learned items into the mind by constructing a mental block against the upcoming process. As educators, our responsibility is to provide learners with an effective classroom environment in which learners can express their ideas freely, adopt a high motivation and positive attitudes towards language learning and become successful language learners. Our role is also to be a moderator to facilitate learning and enable learners to use appropriate strategies to achieve the goals of language learning more successfully.

The goal of the present study was to investigate these possible affective factors causing to the Turkish students' anxiety arousal in English speaking classes. In the light of the findings of the instruments used for identifying the sources of anxiety a case study was conducted. Within this case study an action research was embedded to eliminate the factors negatively affecting students' feelings and attitudes towards constructing communicative language skills. In doing so, two research questions were built up to seek for possible answers throughout the survey. The sources of anxiety were identified by the items of FLCAS and focus group interview questions. Then, some small group collaborative activities were conducted throughout 6 weeks in the class and students were told to keep personal diaries to take notes about the effectiveness of the

activities. As a researcher teacher, I also kept a journal to take notes about my observations I noticed during the process of teaching implementations.

The findings of the instruments demonstrated that the reasons of anxiety-arousal of the learners were various and flexible. But still, three main categories were identified to present results more explicitly. The origins of the anxiety were personal and interpersonal reasons, teachers' beliefs about language teaching and classroom procedures. The ideas of the learners for the activities also showed that small group collaborative activities work well in foreign language classes.

ABBREVIATIONS

FLCAS: Foreign Language Anxiety Scale

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and the significance of the study, the research questions and the operational definitions, all of which are explained separately to give detailed information.

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."

"When I'm in my Spanish class I just freeze! I can't think of a thing when my teacher calls on me. My mind goes blank."

"I feel like my French teacher is some kind of Martian death ray: I never know when he'll point at me!"

"It's about time someone studied why some people can't learn languages."

(Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p.125)

Foreign language anxiety has been an area of interest and a growing body of research since the 1980s. Language anxiety is a many-sided discussion issue and a frequently encountered problem for foreign language teachers all around the world. "Foreign language anxiety is conceived as a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986, p. 128). Language anxiety, in their opinion, should be considered separately in education because it is a kind of learning experience, which is unique in its nature. As Horwitz et al. (1986) states, "although many people may be good learners in other situations, strongly motivated and have a sincere liking for speakers of the target language; they claim to have a mental block against learning a foreign language" (p. 125). For this reason, studying on language anxiety within a specific frame may be better to determine the sources of anxiety and understand the nature of it.

When there is a mental block surrounding the learners' mind not to let them to grasp new items of a language and express them freely in their communication, there will be negative reflections on their language achievement. Because anxiety can be an obstacle for effective performance and achievement, classroom anxiety is a topic that deserves continuing investigation (Andrade & Williams, 2009). If this is the case, focusing on language anxiety problem is considerably important.

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1989), language anxiety comes after language learning experience. In other words, language anxiety does not start with the language itself. Instead, the attitudes and the emotions of learners are shaped as they are exposed to the target language. As Aydın (2001) claims, if the experiences of students are negative in terms of learning a new language, language anxiety may begin to develop. It is not easy to find out the sources of language anxiety. The learners' characteristics, the teachers' attitude in the classroom or the teaching procedures used may play roles to bring out language anxiety. "Although there are still many unanswered questions and different views about how anxiety interferes with language development, it is not known enough to conclude that foreign language anxiety is experienced by many language learners and affects their attitudes, motivation and, therefore, their efficacy in this learning process" (Aydın 2001, p. 57). Language teachers work with many types of learners as Horwitz (2013) state, in a wide variety of settings and "language learners differ with respect to emotions, language aptitude, learning styles, approaches to language learning and their age" (p. 3). Since there are so many variables affecting the teaching learning process deeply, we need to study every variable in detail under separate covers.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

The major problem in my teaching context is related to the students' high level of English speaking anxiety. First year students at Tourism and Hotel Management Vocational School in Adıyaman University take 24 hours of English lessons. However, the students have high level of English speaking anxiety, despite their frequent exposure to the target language. For example, when I asked to a first year student his father's name in a conversation, he paused and he stated that he had forgotten his father's name. He was in panic and he didn't know what he could do to cope with the situation. When I asked him the reason why he felt so anxious, he said that he forgot everything when he

had to speak in English. The other students also complain about the same feeling by stating that they don't feel comfortable when they need to speak English.

The situation does not differ when they become second year students i.e. students still feel anxious when they have to speak in English. Regarding the physical environment created for the second, the third and the fourth grade students, the situation gets worse. Because after completing the first year, the students follow English lessons in crowded classes. In addition to crowded classes, they only have 4 hours of English classes. For these reasons, it is not easy to create an effective classroom environment within which students find the opportunity to practice the newly introduced language items.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

This case study has two aims. The first aim is to investigate Turkish university students' sources and degree of speaking anxiety while learning English. The second aim is to find out possible solutions to reduce students' speaking anxiety levels.

1.4. Research Questions

Two research questions arise to find out the range and the degree of Turkish students' English speaking anxiety and to reduce their anxiety problems. The research questions of the present study are as follows:

1. What are the sources and the degree of English speaking anxiety of the participants in English language classes?
2. How can I reduce the students' English speaking anxiety?

1.5. Operational Definitions

In the present study, the following terms should be considered in their meanings suggested below.

Foreign Language Anxiety: Foreign language anxiety is defined as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning" (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994, p. 284). Foreign language anxiety is a main cover term to be analyzed in detail as it sights to the feelings, emotions, and attitudes, physiological and inter and intrapersonal sides of learners. Anxiety is also characterized as "the subjective feeling of tension,

apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system" (Spielberg, 1983, cited in Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p.125).

Collaborative Learning: Oxford (1997) suggests that "collaborative learning has a 'social constructivist' philosophical base, which views learning as construction of knowledge within a social context and which therefore encourages acculturation of individuals into a learning community" (p. 443). In collaborative learning students work with their peers to succeed a shared goal via interaction, interdependence and team work among all group members instead of working individually. Oxford also interpreted that to provide students with interaction these four elements should be understood well: language tasks, willingness to communicate, style differences and finally group dynamics.

Dillenburg (1999) also claims that "the words 'collaborative learning' describe a situation in which particular forms of interaction among people are expected to occur, which would trigger learning mechanisms (p. 5)" and "a situation is termed 'collaborative' if peers are more or less at the same level, can perform the same actions, have a common goal and work together" (p. 7). Dörnyei (1997) focused on the crucial role of group dynamics and the motivational system created by peer cooperation. It was argued in the study that the contributions of smalls groups to achieve the language learning goals had a great importance in the last two decades. Similarly, Horwitz et al. (1986) discusses that the social processes and classroom dynamics possibly play an important motivational role. Clement, Dörnyei and Noels (1994) also aimed to lower anxiety and higher self-confidence by the help of group cohesion.

Motivation: According to Dörnyei (1997), 'motivation' is used in educational and research contexts, but still there is not a definite definition found to this term. However, it is usually declared that the motivation is responsible for giving direction to human behavior by supporting people with energy.

Gardner and Lambert (1972, cited in Horwitz, 2013) came up with two types of language learning motivation: "instrumental motivation and integrative motivation" (p. 8). Instrumentally motivated students learn language for pragmatic reasons such as getting a good job, passing an exam etc. On the other hand, interactively motivated students learn language to learn its people and culture. Horwitz (2013) also states that most scholars believe that when the level of motivation is compared to the type of

motivation, the former is more important than the latter. Additionally, "intrinsic and extrinsic motivation" (p. 9) are declared to have influences on feelings.

CHAPTER II

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Early Perspectives on the Relationship between Anxiety and Language Learning

Since the mid-1970s, there is an extensive research on examining the relationship between anxiety and language learning performance. Most of the researches on language anxiety have been conducted on the oral aspects of language anxiety. But still, the past studies on foreign language anxiety did not come up with a certain definition of anxiety because of the complicated nature of the study area until a specific type is identified for the issue of language learning. As MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) claim "reviews of the literature on foreign language anxiety show a considerable number of ambiguity arising from conflicting results of past studies" (p. 251). In the light of the review of sixteen studies, Young (1991) also proposed, "research in the area of anxiety as it relates to second or foreign language learning and performance was scattered and inconclusive" (p. 426).

Additionally, most of the early studies dealt with the relationship between anxiety and language learning achievement and some of them found negative correlations between anxiety and achievement while the others found positive ones. For example, Chastain (1975) studied the relationship between test anxiety and its influences on language learning and the results were inconsistent showing three types of correlation as positive, negative and almost no correlation between anxiety and language performance. On the other hand, Kleinmann (1977) obtained positive correlations between foreign language anxiety and language learning. He investigated the avoidance of using English syntactic structures of a group of Spanish and Portuguese students and a group of Arabic students. He put forward the claim that "facilitating anxiety" directed learners into using those structures without avoiding.

In the light of the review of the available inconsistent literature on anxiety, Scovel (1978) proposed researchers to become specific in measuring the type of anxiety since the anxiety is a cover of conflicting variables. Aydın (2001, p. 15) listed some of these conflicting variables as follows:

- the use of various instruments measuring different types of anxiety (i.e. state, trait, test anxiety, facilitating or debilitating, classroom anxiety),

- the different contexts in which anxiety is examined (i.e. foreign or second language environment),
- the different variables taken into account (i.e. the age of the subjects, different skills evaluated, proficiency levels of the learners, or teaching methodology),
- the inconsistency in design of the research examining whether only one variable, or a number of variables are effective (i.e. motivation, anxiety, personality, self-esteem etc.).

Scovel (1978) also applied the term affective variables and described the term 'affect' as "a cover term under which is swept a wide range of disparate constructs and behaviors" (p.129). Horwitz (2001) found the suggestions of Scovel helpful to apply to a measure specifically attributed to the type of anxiety as language learning. MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) also argued that the instruments used to measure language learning should be particular to the area of language learning. In a further study, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) developed the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to measure this language learning anxiety and they found out negative correlations between anxiety and language performance. In this manner, they suggested that foreign language anxiety had a distinct nature in its own frame. This specified measuring attempt through a constructed instrument of FLCAS, moved the literature one step further to enlighten the coming researches on language learning anxiety.

2.2. Types of Anxiety and Effects on Language Learning

After reviewing the literature on the development of language anxiety and the effects of anxiety on learning process and achievement, the importance of overlooking on the issue cannot be ignored. So, the issue of language anxiety that constructs a mental block for learners needs to be addressed from a variety approaches and perspectives.

2.2.1. Debilitating and Facilitating Anxiety

An insight to be applied to define the term of anxiety is to look at debilitating and facilitating anxiety. The literature termed these two types of anxiety as "bad" and "good" types of anxieties. According to Scovel (1978), "facilitative anxiety motivates the learner to 'fight' the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behavior. In contrast, debilitating anxiety motivates the learner to 'flee' the new learning task; it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behavior" (p.

139). Scovel believes that facilitating and debilitating anxiety work together once the former serves to motivate, the latter warns the learners simultaneously in the process of getting new facts about the environment. It is claimed that the level of anxiety is important because if there is enough anxiety to increase the motivation, it helps the learners to get better learning. Contrarily, if the degree of anxiety is high, the learners are affected negatively in their performances.

Horwitz et al. (1986), on the contrary, argues that unless the task is not so complicated, facilitating anxiety can be helpful for language learning. But still, facilitating anxiety can contribute to language learning very slightly. As "anxiety" is a negative term, it can solely be matched to "debilitating anxiety". It has a bad effect on language learning process stimulating learners worry and tension in the involvement of them into the activities.

2.2.2. Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Social Evaluation, and Test Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986) identified a distinct framework particular to language learning and described three components of foreign language anxiety, which overlap, on each other to a certain degree. The components are respectively *communication apprehension, fear of negative social evaluation* and *test anxiety.*

Communication apprehension is defined as "a type of shyness characterized by fear of, or anxiety about communicating with people" (p. 127). MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) state that communication apprehension is "the inability either to express oneself or comprehend another person leads frustration and apprehension" (p. 252). According to Horwitz et al. (1986) people who are in trouble with speaking possibly experience more difficulty in a foreign language class because they feel out of the control in communication and closely monitored by the others. Moreover, the emerge of frustration and apprehension may derive from the personal awareness that one will have difficulty in understanding others and making oneself understood effectively in the target language. Maybe, for this reason, many talkative people are not talkative enough in a foreign language class.

Fear of negative social evaluation is described as the "apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively" (Horwitz, et al. 1986, p. 128). According to

MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) students are in fear of negative social evaluation "because students are unsure of themselves and what they are saying, they may feel that they are not able to make the proper social impression" (p. 253). When communicating within a native language, it is generally not difficult for the one to understand others and make oneself understood but when the context of language is not the same; the outcomes of the communicative behaviors are shaped accordingly. So, anxiety related behavior changes from culture to culture. As Horwitz, et al. (1986) states "because individual communication attempts will be evaluated according to uncertain or even unknown linguistic and socio-cultural standards, second language communication entails risk taking and is necessarily problematic" (p. 128). According to Burns and Goh (2012) "learners who suffer from language anxiety perceive speaking in a second language to be an uncomfortable experience and are not prepared to make mistakes because of perceived social pressure" (p. 27). It is further suggested that the teachers should take a holistic approach to anticipate the anxiety stimulating situations.

As the last one of these three components of Horwitz, et.al (1986), test anxiety is defined as "the type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure" (p.127). Due to the possibility of making errors of even the brightest students especially in oral tests, provoke students' both test and oral communication anxiety. In other words, it is rooted from the fear of failure in an academic evaluation. The apprehension over academic evaluation is usually believed to emerge in the cases of using different materials, types of questions, the unfamiliar testing ways and test items. Moreover, the students' high expectations from test performance at the level of perfection drive them to despair of failure.

MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) examined the theory of Horwitz on language anxiety and pointed out that communication apprehension and fear of negative social evaluation were closely belonging to the foreign language classroom anxiety. They perceived these components specific to foreign language classes but test anxiety was not related to the type of tests administered in foreign language classes. They argued that oral examinations foster communication apprehension and fear of negative social evaluation. Because there is an inverse relationship between anxiety and performance, the learning outcomes appear in troubling speeches during these exams.

2.2.3. Trait, State and Situation Specific Anxiety

Over the course of many years, foreign language anxiety has been investigated from different points of views. Some of them have been identified as trait, state and situation specific anxiety. According to Keramida and Tsiplakides (2009) anxious students are more likely to become anxious regardless of situation are called as having trait anxiety. Namely, anxiety is a kind of characteristic feature or to some extends shows serious disorder. Trait anxiety is further defined as "a general tendency to perceive situations as threatening" (Spielberg, 1968, 1977, p.1). Phillips (1992) defines the term trait anxiety as "a relatively stable tendency to exhibit anxiety in a large variety of circumstances" (p. 14). In other words, trait anxiety is defined as an individual tendency to be anxious in any situation regardless of having a definite reason.

State anxiety is, on the other hand, described as "a temporary condition experienced in specific situations" (Spielberg, 1968, 1977, p.1). State anxiety is a feeling of uneasiness that can be experienced under a particular circumstance as a response to a particular situation (Spielberg, 1983). Keramida and Tsiplakides (2009) identify the term of state anxiety as a social type of anxiety that emerges within reasonable limits under certain conditions. For example, a person may be not anxious in ordinary cases but may get anxious if a public address is asked. Phillips (1992) defines the term of state anxiety as a situation specific trait anxiety; in other words, when a person suffers from state anxiety, he/she will demonstrate a tendency to exhibit anxiety, but only in certain circumstances. So, it can be combined by saying that state anxiety is a personal tendency to be anxious in a specific time and situation whereas trait anxiety is defined as being anxious in any situation. That is, state anxiety can be evaluated as a subcategory of trait anxiety.

According to Occhipinti (2009) in comparison with trait and state anxiety, the situation specific approach has helped the investigators to investigate various aspects of foreign language learning and have consistent results of their studies. Specifically, language anxiety can be included in situation specific anxiety to study on this anxiety separately from other academic anxieties. Based on their clinical experience with university level foreign language students, Horwitz et al. (1986) suggested that foreign language anxiety should be viewed as a situation specific anxiety arising from uniqueness of the formal learning of a foreign language. The situation specific anxiety should be considered as substantially independent of other types of anxieties and

"probably no other fields of study implicate self-concept and self-expression to the degree that language study does" (p.128). This characteristic makes the anxiety caused by foreign language learning a distinctive phenomenon from other academic anxieties.

Regarding to the literary resources, the findings of some scholars come up with the identification of situation-based apprehension, especially at the time of speaking. The investigators examined the situations that make learners more or less anxious about communication and identified five different characteristics of anxiety-provoking situations. These characteristics were reported in the survey of Bekleyen (2004) as in the following:

- People may start being nervous while they are speaking a language after they become conscious that someone may be "judging" their performance
- People are more comfortable in familiar settings and if they encounter "new situations or problems", the first tendency is to remain quiet
- People are likely to become more silent if they do not know "what they are being judged on"
- If people think that they are engaging in an activity where their "competence is low", they generally prefer not to be the focus of attention
- Students who previously have had positive experiences when learning languages are likely to be less anxious than are those who recollect "fear, anxiety and failure from prior experiences" (Bekleyen, 2004, pp.32-33).

Keramida and Tsiplakides (2009) state if only some certain factors are presented, learners, suffering from situation specific anxiety, may evaluate certain events as anxiety producing. Therefore, there might be something particular to the language learning experience that makes some students anxious. It is an important issue because foreign language anxiety is the reason for students' negative emotional attitudes to language learning.

2.2.4. Tobias' model of anxiety (Input, Processing and Output Stages)

In Tobias' model (1986, cited in MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) the effects of anxiety are described in three stages: Input, Processing and Output. In this model, Tobias notes that these stages are randomly defined and it is hard to put clear-cuts among them such as the point at which one stops and the other starts. Namely, these

three stages are closely related to each other since the former affects the latter. Therefore, this model should not be considered as discrete sections.

"The input stage is meant to represent the learner's first experiences with a given stimulus at a given time. Input is concerned with the initial presentation of items in memory. At this stage, external stimuli are encountered and internal representations are made; attention, concentration, and encoding occur" (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994, p.286). At this stage, anxiety-arousal may cause a deficiency in attention, missing input and rotten process of information in the next stages, as a result, deficits in the production. Language learning difficulties may arise at this stage if the language is spoken too quickly or written materials constructed with complex sentences are applied to the tasks. According to Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley (2000a), if anxiety is produced at this stage, it may reduce the efficacy of input. Therefore, at this stage the level of anxiety affect the student's ability to receive, to concentrate on, and to encode the stimuli.

Processing stage comprises of "the cognitive operations performed on the subject matter: organization, storage, and assimilation of the material" (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994, p. 286). This stage involves internal manipulations of items taken in at the previous stage. Tobias proposes that anxiety diminishes cognitive processing on tasks, which are more heavily dependent on the memory, more difficult, and more weakly organized. Each of these raises the demands on the time of processing and the time spent to comprehend a message or new vocabulary items would indicate the activity at this stage in second language contexts. Onwuegbuzie et al (2000a) identify anxiety at this stage as "the apprehension experienced when cognitive operations are performed on the external stimuli; that is, when students typically are attempting to organize and to store input" (p. 90). Namely, anxiety at this stage may reduce the efficiency of memory processes to solve the task.

Output stage covers the production of the materials previously learned and the outcomes of the previous performance give direction to this stage. At this stage language learners are required to show their ability to use the second language by retrieving the items from memory and organizing the output. According MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) at this stage high level of anxiety may hinder the ability of students to speak or to write in the target language.

Eysenck (1979, cited in MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) offered that anxiety-arousal is interrelated with self-related cognition like excessive self-evaluation, concern for possibility of failure, and others' evaluation. So, the attention of an anxious individual is divided between task-related cognition and self-related cognition, reducing the efficiency of cognitive performance. In addition, it is further claimed that students are aware of this interference, and try to compensate by enhancing their efforts. In that way, anxiety may facilitate performance but it does not mean that making more effort equals to achieving more. Therefore, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) studied on these anxiety-arousal variables in their survey.

In the light of Tobias' model of anxiety, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) examined the specific cognitive processes experienced in language acquisition in terms of those three stages. These stages were analyzed in a set of nine tasks. The aim of categorizing the tasks into separate stages was to isolate and measure the stages of language acquisition through a new anxiety scale in each stage. They found significant correlations between "the stage-specific anxiety scales" and "stage specific-tasks" (e.g., input anxiety with input tasks). At the first stage, students were asked to translate a poetic passage for the study. Anxious students were in difficulty to comprehend long sentences and keep verbal items in their short-term memory. They solely transferred a small number of verbal statements into the next stage. Anxious students also fell behind recognizing a new word easily presented in the second language. MacIntyre and Gardner explain the reason of why they felt so anxious. Anxious students were afraid of making mistranslations since they were required to guess the meaning of unknown words and it may have caused them to avoid answering not to make mistakes in their guesses. Anxious students made extra efforts and took more time to study the words and the complete the task but they obtained lower scores than the more relaxed students. To summarize, MacIntyre and Gardner suggest that even the base of second language knowledge is the same with low anxious students; high anxious students experience more difficulty in all stages.

2.3. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

With a close review of the review on language learning anxiety, Young (1991) came up with six sources of language anxiety, which are not directly related to speaking. But still, it is necessary to be aware of the sources to find out the possible

ways to eliminate these hindering factors and increase the motivation of the students to make them speak. The skills of language can only be developed in a whole frame covering the suitable learning and teaching environments. So, looking at these six sources of anxiety given below is the issue of deserving a high attention:

- Personal and interpersonal anxieties (e.g., self-esteem, comparison to others, negative social evaluation, competitiveness, fear of failure, communication apprehension).
- Learners' beliefs about language learning (e.g., self-evaluation, the expectations of the learners, perfectionism).
- Instructor beliefs about language teaching (e.g., relationships of instructor with learners).
- Instructor-learner interactions (e.g., giving feedback, correcting errors).
- Classroom procedures (e.g., classroom implementations).
- Language testing (e.g., types of questions, test items, type of conducting tests) (Young, 1991, p.427).

Using Young's six sources of anxiety as a theoretical guideline, these six items will be discussed in literary terms in the following sections.

2.3.1. Anxieties Caused by Personal and Interpersonal Reasons

2.3.1.1. Self-perceived Proficiency

As Young (1991) points out when students begin with a self-perceived low ability level in a foreign language, they are highly expected to be candidates for language anxiety. Anxious language learners mostly try to catch their idealized self-image. They easily get out of the concentration for the tasks in their responsibility, focus on the perceived deficits in language skills and the potential for failure inevitably come true as a consequence. Thus, perception of self-ability shapes learners' aptitudes towards the learning and use of a foreign language.

Similarly Tóth (2007) argues that learners may feel anxious about using the target language if they believe that they are lack of enough competence in language skills. In this case, they perform poorly and the feelings of potential failure appear consequently. Therefore, it is reported that there are negative correlations between self-perceived competence in language learning and anxiety level. If students have low

expectations of their foreign language learning ability, they perceive their success as poor in foreign language learning.

Clement et al. (1994) investigated the social psychological constructs of Hungarian students' English acquisition in the culturally homogeneous Hungarian setting. They assessed learners' attitude, anxiety and motivation toward learning English, along their perception of classroom and cohesion. Their argument supported the others' studies on the point that self-confident students demonstrate a higher achievement in their language learning outcomes when they directly contact with the target language. It is further claimed, "this contact is relatively frequent and pleasant, self confidence in using the second language, operationally defined in terms of low anxious affect and high self-perceptions of second language competence would develop" (p. 422). In their study, while little anxious students assessed their English language proficiency positively, satisfied with the level of English proficiency, motivated highly to learn English and tended to frequent contact with English, anxious students behaved contrarily. This being the case, it can be proposed that self-confidence in using the target language has parallel lines with language learning achievement.

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) language learning occurs cognitively and depends on encoding, storage and retrieval processes. Anxious students' attentions are disturbed easily when they encounter with a complicated task since they are grasped with other factors affecting the cognitive processes. So, anxiety interferes students' real ability to demonstrate in their performance while studying on their tasks. Self-related cognition and task related cognition are associated with each other in contra-ways.

2.3.1.2. Self-Comparison to Others and Competitiveness

Bailey (1983, cited in Tóth, 2007, p.129) defines the term as a learner's "desire to excel in comparison to others." These learner characteristics are described as explicitly comparing oneself to classmates and personal expectations, prevail other learners and worry about tests and scores, especially with reference to others. To Bailey's understanding, if competitive learners perceive themselves as less competent in comparison with others, anxiety comes up because they feel unable to compete. Furthermore, their self-comparison to other classmates and personal expectations may

go beyond the competitiveness and result with unfriendly attitudes towards other students.

As Price (1991) reports, most of the participants in the survey believed that their language skills were behind the others in class and they were worried about what the others would think about them when they made mistakes. Therefore, it was found out that self-comparison to others played an anxiety-arousal factor causing students feel less competent than the others.

2.3.1.3. Learner Beliefs about Language Learning

"Students' lack of participation in speaking activities may very well be the result of deep-seated beliefs and fears that lead to great anxiety whenever they have to perform in class" (Burns and Goh, 2012, p. 29).

In this sense, learner beliefs about language learning are claimed to be a major contributor to language anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986; Horwitz, 1988; Young, 1991). As Horwitz (1988) states, learners' preconceived notions about language learning might influence a learner's effectiveness in the classroom. For instance, a student believes that learning a language firstly involves learning new vocabulary will expend most of the learner's energy on acquiring vocabulary; on the other hand, adults who believe the mastery of younger learners will likely begin language learning with rather negative expectations of their own success. These instances will possibly lead learners to conceive language learning as a kind process requiring special abilities and as if they do not possess these necessary abilities.

Furthermore, as particularly reported by Horwitz (2013), language learners differ in many important ways that may impact their beliefs about language learning. In this sense, learner characteristics are defined as affective (or emotional) factors, cognitive factors and metacognitive factors. Emotional factors involve students' feelings about language learning. Cognitive factors cover the different ways of processing information and perceived to be less changeable than other differences of learners. Finally, metacognitive factors are described as the category referring to language learning strategies, study skills, and beliefs about language learning. Therefore, learner characteristics have a great influence on learners' beliefs about language learning.

In Horwitz's study (1988) the subjects mainly focused on speaking with an excellent accent and correct utterances, conceived the others' mastery of language use

as better than their own success, defined the required time to become fluent in the target language as two years, and believed the necessity of translation from English. Mostly, these factors were given as the reasons why students felt anxious about language learning. On these grounds, it can be claimed that many learners may feel so threatened due to their previous beliefs that make them unable to learn a language.

Similarly, Young (1991) points out that language learning anxiety results when beliefs and reality clash. In other words, students can have unrealistic expectations about their performances in a language class. When these expectations are not satisfied with the results, it may lead to negative feelings about learners' abilities and intelligence. For example, is the students are beginner and not enough motivated, they will not sound like a native speaker. If they believe that the most important aspect of a language is pronunciation, they will inevitably feel frustrated and stressed. The same frustration might appear if they believe they should be fluent in two years. So, it can be understood that unrealistic settings of beliefs can lead learners to feel threatened by the challenge of learning a new language.

In an interview placed in the study of Tsui (1996), the participant's beliefs about the performance of English in the classroom setting were as:

"Interviewer: What stops you from speaking up?

ESL student: 'Cos my classmates also not speak up…they affect me very much… Sometimes I really frighten… I am afraid my classmate will laugh… I think my English level is not good, so I am shy to talk English… I hate English very much because I think English is quite difficult to learn… Educational system is stressful…because many people if fail in English…they effect (sic, affect) their life.

Interviewer: Are you worried about failing in English?

ESL student: Very… very much"(cited in Tsui, 1996, p. 145).

This interview exemplifies the preconceived notions of the learners about language learning and why they avoid showing their effectiveness in language classroom. The others' negative evaluation, learners' self-comparison to others, learners' characteristic features, the attitudes of learners towards language and language learning and so on may influence the effectiveness of language learning.

In Daubney's (2002) study, it was reported that the fear of academic evaluation and the others' negative evaluation were the main factors conditioning their perceptions. Students perceived their level of English as lower than it should be. Other variables

might also contribute to their reluctance to speak such as their expectations for themselves or fear of making mistakes. All these factors were closely interconnected, influenced each other and came out as behavioral reflections of participants in the classroom.

According to Horwitz (2013) misconceptions can cause to a number of important problems for both language learners and teachers. Students usually tend to follow some learning strategies related to their beliefs about language learning. For example, when students believe that language learning is referred to vocabulary learning, they possibly spend their time on memorizing words. She also affirms that learners with unrealistic beliefs are more anxious than other learners. To help students develop more realistic expectations for language learning, some suggestions are made by Horwitz as:

- Talk with your students about the process of language learning.
- Make discussions about language learning.
- Determine your students' beliefs in order to explain the purpose of classroom activities more effectively (Horwitz 2013, p.16).

In the light of the literature suggestions, it can be concluded that language anxiety may be caused by personal and interpersonal reasons such as self-perceived proficiency of language learners in learning and using a foreign language, their self-comparison to others and competitiveness in the classroom, learner characteristics and their beliefs about language learning and teaching process.

2.3.2. Instructor Beliefs about Language Teaching

"How the teachers perceive their role in the classroom, for example, as a friend, counselor, authority, corrector, facilitator, and so on can create anxiety in the language learners" (Aydın, 2001, p.47). In this manner, instructor beliefs about language teaching and learning are also one of the most important sources of language anxiety. According to Young (1991) "instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly when they make any error, who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control, who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching, and who think their role is more like a drill-sergeant's than a facilitator's may be contributing to learner language anxiety" (p.428). Therefore,

the social context of the classroom that set up by the teacher may have an enormous effect on the learners.

As articulated by Ohata (2005), instructor beliefs about language teaching can be a type of source creating language anxiety for language learners. Ohata clearly declares "the teacher's assumption on the role of language teachers may not always correspond to the students' needs or expectations toward the teacher" (p. 7). To illustrate, once a teacher perceives his/her role in class is to constantly correct students' mistakes, some students might become rather anxious about their class performance.

Young (1991) further identified role-related beliefs causing anxiety-arousal. These misbeliefs are; for example, the instructor is supposed to correct all mistakes made by the students and make them sometimes frightened; the instructor is responsible for doing the great part of talking during teaching; the instructor's role is to be a drill-sergeant; and the instructor should avoid of group or partner work not to lose the control of class.

2.3.3. Instructor-Learner Interactions

Students' perceptions of the interactions that originate between their teachers and themselves and their personal feelings about their teachers substantially influence their effectiveness in language learning. Some studies claim that error corrections are inevitable during teaching (Koch & Terrell, 1991; Horwitz, 1988), however the way of correcting students' mistakes is frequently argued to be a part of provoking anxiety.

Tsui (1996) claims that students' fear of making mistakes and being negatively evaluated can be teacher-induced. Teachers' unrealistic expectations lead to inhibit students' participation. For example, the following diary shows the case how it occurs:

Though my attitude might be gentle and encouraging, I was expecting some correct answers most of the time. Given the (sensitive) nature of class, they would feel the strain and were less willing to contribute unless they felt they have got the "right answer" (Tsui, 1996, p.151).

Teachers' intolerance of silence is also a factor contributing to increase of students' anxiety. In Tsui's study, many teachers reported that they themselves disliked or were afraid of silence and that they felt very uneasy or impatient when they fail to get a response from students. For this reason, when a response was not forthcoming,

teachers asked the question to the other, provided the answer themselves or repeated or modified the question.

Tsui argues that the teachers had a misconception that "an effective teacher should be able to solicit immediate responses from students and that a responsible teacher should be talking all the time" (p. 153). It means that students will wait in long silences in the classroom that will foster the teacher to talk more.

The other factors affecting the interaction are repetition of questions and changing the direction of the questions to a brighter student. If the teacher forces the students to answer the questions without letting them enough time to think on the question and ask even more questions, the students might be frightened and feel incompetent for language skills. Also, the self-esteem of the learners might be damaged if the teacher changes the direction of the question to another.

According to Wörde (2003), a relax classroom environment is a key in reducing anxiety and it is most probably related to how the teacher conducted the class. It is further argued that teachers should provide a supportive environment and not employ threatening teaching methods to increase the foreign language experience. In her study most of the participants wished "the teacher speak more slowly, use English to clear up key points and for homework assignments, to layer and reinforce the material aid comprehension and retention, to provide instructional material more relevant to their life and goals, and to be aware of individual learning styles" (p. 9).

Aida (1994) also noted that future research should place emphasis on "potential interactions between anxiety and other student characteristics such as learners' beliefs about their own language ability, self-esteem, help-seeking behaviors, and knowledge and use of language learning strategies" (p. 164). When anxious students do not know how to ask questions to clarify their homework or how to use the material, they may be anxious in the classroom. In some cases, students may need assistance from the instructor, but cannot ask for help since they conceive help seeking is a demonstration of weakness or lack of competence. They may get confused in the class and feel worried about the teacher discovering their problem.

2.3.4. Classroom Procedures

In foreign language classes, students are usually obliged to perform in the target language via oral quizzes, oral presentations in front of the teacher or the other students

or the activities requiring simultaneous speaking. This is not easy for students to perform in an unnatural classroom setting and it turns out to be anxiety-provoking activities for the learners. Especially, anxieties associated with classroom procedures focus mostly on speaking in the target language in front of a group (Young, 1991). Therefore, students feel great levels of anxiety when they have to speak in front of a group in the target language.

To examine the students' ideas of foreign language anxiety, Price (1991) interviewed ten French college students and found out that anxiety was not only related to speaking activities. Instead, it was more related to speaking in front of teachers and classmates. It is further reported that speaking in front of the others was a type of anxiety provoking activity for the students because the learners were afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation during their speech, and being made fun of their accent. They were aware that they were not native like speaker in French and that feeling hindered them to speak freely.

Daubney (2002) designed a study to find out the reasons of anxiety and inhibitive factors in oral communication in the classes. In his study, he tried to foster a classroom atmosphere assisting to learning, thought provoking, communicative, stimulating and challenging, enjoyable. First of all, he tried to determine the degree to which anxiety and other hindering factors contribute students' unwillingness to speak in the classroom. As a conclusion, it was suggested that classroom procedures play a vital role in academic success. A supportive and friendly environment should be set up in classrooms in which students behave comfortably without being constantly evaluated and making mistakes is accepted as a natural part of learning process. Similarly, Aida (1994) reported that for some students the classroom setting presents itself as an anxiety-provoking situation because it includes perpetual evaluations from others except that the learner him/herself.

Koch and Terrell (1991) conducted a survey to examine which activities were more anxiety provoking and came up with the result that oral presentations in front of the classmates and teachers and oral skits were the most anxiety provoking activities in foreign language classrooms. At the same time, students were afraid of being called on respond orally and having oral quizzes in the target language. But still, the former activities were more challenging and threating for the learners in comparison with the latter ones. However, because the investigators used the less threatening techniques of

Natural Approach in the study to reduce learners' anxiety, students behaved more comfortably in foreign language classes and became more proficient in the target language. The researchers observed a great instability in their learners' reactions to the activities but the pair-work and personalized discussions cited by the participants were more practical and conducive to learn the target language. They perceived that small groups were more useful as they were less judgmental and instructional; conversely, large groups were equal to the whole class. Similarly, Occhipinti (2009) reports that working in small groups or in-couples enables learners to speak more freely in the target language and know each other in a better way. According to Young (1990), students would feel less worried about speaking in the target language if they knew the classmates better.

As reported by Palacious (1991, cited in Horwitz, 2001), rather than specific instructional activities, a well arranged classroom environment might reduce students' foreign language anxiety levels. Palacious found several classroom characteristics to reduce the anxiety level of the learners. One of them was the level of perceived teacher support which was quite important for the learners to offer them sincere support and interest; the others were lack of competition and clear task orientation.

In regard to Horwitz (2013), there is no way to eliminate anxiety completely; however, there are several things that teachers can make use to assist learners feel more comfortable using the target language. In this manner, teacher support and understanding are considerably important. She articulates some practical guides that may help teachers reduce anxiety by creating a supportive classroom climate. These might be summarized as in the following:

- Acknowledge students' discomfort. Many students are relieved to learn that they are not the only ones experiencing anxiety.
- Acknowledge students' feelings of culture shock and offer opportunities for students to talk about their experiences.
- Use FLCAS to help identify anxious learners and to start a discussion about anxiety.
- Help students develop more realistic expectations for language learning.
- Arrange contacts with more advanced students so that students see that people like them can learn the language.
- Correct errors gently.

- Use humor and games to distract attention away from individual speakers.
- Use small group and pair activities rather than whole-class activities.
- Have students imagine becoming anxious while speaking and overcoming that anxiety (Horwitz, 2013, p. 12).

2.3.5. Language Testing

According to Young (1991), "in language testing, the greater the degree of student evaluation and the more unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety produced" (p. 429). Within this context, it can be argued that anxieties can be resulted from aspects of language testing.

As Aydın (2001) noted students are likely test anxious because the numbers of oral and written tests or quizzes are high and even the most successful students frequently make mistakes. Additionally, she articulates that "the unfamiliar test items, test formats, different materials and question types with which students have no experience" (pp. 48-49) are believed to be common sources of anxiety.

Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that foreign language anxiety generally appears in testing situations. Actually, "students know a certain grammar point but forget it during a test or an oral exercise when many grammar points must be remembered and coordinated simultaneously" (p. 126). Students also confess that they know the correct answer; nevertheless, because of nervousness or carelessness, they put down the wrong answer on the test. Then, they tend to compensate errors by over studying, but it doesn't lead to get improved results.

As Ohata (2005) states, because of unrealistic expectations or beliefs of students on language learning, they may give wrong answers even if they know the correct answer. In general, many students are afraid of tests but the ones who take them in a foreign language might feel more threatened, challenged for the reason that they need to recall and organize grammar points at once during the limited test period.

2.4. The Impact of Demographic Variables on Language Learning Anxiety

In the context of communication apprehension, there are some studies examining demographic variables. For instance, the relationship between age and gender related anxieties and foreign language anxiety show either homogenous or mixed pictures. When focused on the age variable, the results of the studies generally show an inverse relationship between age factor and foreign language anxiety. According to Horwitz

et.al. (1986), "adults typically perceive themselves as reasonably intelligent, socially-adept individuals, sensitive to different socio-cultural mores" (p.128). Therefore, the age factor has a negative effect on communication, as adult learners are aware of the evaluation of others at the time of constructing their mental operations spontaneously in communicative situations in which they are not prepared to get involved in the communication. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000a) studied on the college students who were studying in French and they revealed that older students felt higher anxiety in German and Spanish classes in comparison with the younger students' anxiety level. Onwuegbuzie Bailey and Daley (2000b) also noted that it is possible for adults to perform more poorly than younger ones on a variety of cognitive tasks requiring quick response, which happens naturally in learning environments.

Regarding the gender factor on language anxiety, literature resources put forward the claim that female learners behave more comfortably in the target language while male learners feel more disrupted in foreign language contexts. MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, and Donovan (2002) studied the effects of variables such as gender, age, language, anxiety, degree of willingness to communicate (WTC) and the other variables and reported that "whereas boys' overall WTC and anxiety levels remain constant across the three grade levels, girls show an increase in WTC and decrease in anxiety from grade 8 to grade 9" (p.557). On the other hand, Adia's (1994) reported in her study that there was no significant gender difference in language anxiety. Their mean scores for males and females were close to each other. Nevertheless, there was a significant influence of gender on course grades. Female students got higher scores than did males. Gobel and Matsuda (2003) concluded their study with a finding that female students in their first year were common predictors of performance for four skills and content classes. Thus, gender turned out to be a key element to success. According to Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000b), women incline to use more conscious strategies and women have a greater tendency to language learning than do men.

CHAPTER III

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological design of the study. First, the research design, the context of the study and the participants are introduced. Then, data collection tools and data analysis procedures are presented in detail.

3.2. Research Design

The first aim of this case study was to investigate Turkish university students' sources and degree of English speaking anxiety while learning English. The second aim was to find out possible solutions to reduce students' English-speaking anxiety levels. A case study was designed to find out the possible sources and degree of students' foreign language speaking anxiety. According to Bryman (2008) "the basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case" (p. 66). Baxter and Jack (2008) also articulate "the qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources" (p. 544). It is a helpful type of research design to reach the findings if the interest of the study is on the "case." It provides the researcher with a variety of data sources to get more satisfying and reliable findings. The researcher engaged in the cycles of an action research within this case study so as to find out possible solutions to reduce students' foreign language anxiety levels. Burns (2010) states that, "action research can be a very valuable way to extend our teaching skills and gain more understanding of ourselves as teachers, our classrooms and our students" (p. 12) and "action research involves taking a self – reflective, critical and systematic approach to exploring your own teaching contexts" (p. 13). As Dick (2002) claims, researchers can conduct an action research while acting and researching at the same time with the use of well-practiced task. For the educational setting of action research, Hien (2009) proposes that "action research well matches with education and benefits both teachers and students in their teaching and learning since it meets the needs of education and enables continuity in research with its cycling process and the suitability of action research to education reveals in its nature, characteristics, 'circle within circle' process." (p. 97). Through using such an effective tool to research in educational settings teachers have the possibility to "investigate their own practice in new ways, looking deeper in what they and their

students actually do and fail to do" (p. 104) and "it is critically suitable for educational situations where teachers wish to bring about action in the form of change or improvement in their teaching" (p. 98). In the light of these definitions, it can be claimed that teachers are in need of being fresh and updated for developing new understandings in education and be practical for the problems that are met frequently in classes. Teaching a new thing is not a one-directed way to follow. There are lots of factors affecting the teaching environments, teachers and students. In this manner, applying action research may help the educators to develop strategies applicable to the classroom situation for solving the problems and support teacher development by putting them into practice actively.

3.3. Context of the Study

This study was conducted at Tourism and Hotel Management Vocational School in Adıyaman University. Tourism and Hotel Management Vocational School is a cover term for two separate departments called *Food and Beverage Management Department* and *Travel Management and Tourism Guiding Department*. The programs of these departments take four academic years to complete and there is not a separate English language preparatory class. In the first year, students have twenty-four hours of English classes per week. The language courses offered to the students employ an integrated approach to teaching English. The study was conducted in the program in which English language course is obligatory. The students take 24 hours of English lessons per week consisting of 12 hours of grammar (main course) 8 hours of reading and speaking and 4 hours of writing and listening. Students have about 14 quizzes each term.

In the first year of the program the students in each class of both departments are divided into two separate classes as A1 and A2, with the belief that high number of students in one class is not appropriate for creating an effective language-learning environment. Dividing the classes into two groups to reduce the number of the students helps both the teachers and the learners to have a relaxed classroom atmosphere, which result in active student participation during the lessons. After completing the first year, the second year students are combined again and they follow English lessons in crowded classes. In addition to crowded classes, the second, the third and the fourth year students have only four hours of English classes. Students lose their motivation for learning English as a result of an increase in the number of students in classes and a

decrease in English language course hours. They also forget what they have learned in the first year language course till the end of their study at the university.

3.4. Participants

The participants of the study were 56 Turkish university students from Tourism and Hotel Management Vocational School in Adıyaman University. They were second year intermediate level students in the department of Travel Management and Tourism Guiding. In their first year of university education, they had different English language proficiency levels, ranging from beginners to intermediate. They had 24 hours of English lessons each week. Each classroom had about 30 students and they completed the year at intermediate level language proficiency. In their second year at university, the students received only 4 hours of English lessons per week as required in the syllabus of the program. The weekly course hours were divided into 2 categories as speaking and listening with high emphasis on speaking. The goal of the English language course was to produce communicatively competent learners through exposure to comprehensible input. In 2013-2014 academic year, learners were not divided into the classes as A1 and A2. So, the number of the students was high and the course hours were quite limited regarding the goals set in the curriculum.

In this study, university level students were chosen on purpose because foreign language anxiety in a classroom context is a common problem frequently encountered by adult learners. According to Aydın (2001), for adults having mature thoughts and an immature foreign language knowledge, self-expression becomes a big problem causing learners experience difficulties in presenting themselves to the others, and in turn, feeling of language anxiety. The personal reflection of self-expression at this age level is an issue to focus on in detail. Since a learning environment is not a mechanical place to follow certain ways, different kinds of factors like individual, situational, social or instructional etc. affect learning process in many aspects.

At the beginning of the term, students were informed about the study but they did not hear about the nature of the study. They were told that this study was necessary to develop their language skills and participating in this study would be beneficial for them. In the first scheduled lesson, the students were asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) to learn about the sources and degree of their English language anxiety. And also, they were asked to keep student diaries for their speaking classes.

Some colorful cards were delivered to them to be used, as student diaries in the form of colorful cards would be more attractive for the learners to write on. At the end of the lessons, students took notes on the cards for the speaking activities performed in the classes. Student diaries also helped learners to become aware of their own attainments that they reached in the language classes. Moreover, they had a chance to evaluate what they did and how it went during their speaking performances.

3.5. Data Collection Tools

The data for this study was collected from 4 sources. These were Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), Students' Diaries, Focus Group Interviews, The Researcher's Observations and Notes respectively. In the following sub-sections each of these data collection tools are presented in detail.

3.5.1. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

The first data collection tool was a Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which was developed by Horwitz, Hortwitz and Cope (1986) to enable researchers to identify the sources and the extent of subjects' foreign language anxiety in a foreign language classroom. The Foreign Language Anxiety Scale is a valid and a reliable high quality tool (see Appendix 2). On the researcher's request, necessary permission was received from Elaine Horwitz to use FLCAS in the present study (see Appendix 3).

The students were administered the translated version of FLCAS (Appendix 1) to prevent any possible misunderstandings on the part of the learners. At this phase, back translation technique was used. The first step in the back translation technique was to translate all the items in the FLCAS into Turkish. The Turkish version of questionnaire was firstly given to a Turkish Language Research Assistant to check the accuracy and comprehensibility of the statements to avoid of possible misunderstandings. Secondly, the Turkish version was given to 2 English Language Instructors and translated back into English. Then, both translations were compared with the original version. Finally, the translated versions of FLCAS were translated into English again. There wasn't any mismatch between the translated and original forms of FLCAS.

There were three parts in the FLCAS. In the first part, there were six questions, which required the demographic variables of students such as background information about themselves such as their age, gender, the city they live in and the professions of

their parents. Also, the students were asked to give brief information about their areas of interest and their attitudes towards learning English language in their previous educational lives (primary school or high school) in terms of previous foreign language studies and their expectations from English lessons on university level.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of 33 items based on a 5-point Likert type-rating scale ranging from strongly agree (1), agree (2), neutral (3), disagree (4) and strongly disagree (5). The items in the questionnaire were categorized into 3 main titles. These categories were presented respectively as *anxieties* caused by *personal and interpersonal reasons*, *instructor's beliefs about language teaching* and *classroom procedures*. The first category *anxieties caused by personal and interpersonal reasons*, were divided into sub categories as *self-perceived proficiency*, *self-comparison to others and competitiveness* and *learner beliefs about language learning*. The sub category of the second category was *instructors' attitudes towards correcting errors of the learners.* The last category *classroom procedures,* was also sub categorized as *speaking in front of the others.* Except for these categories, there was a category under which the other reasons causing to anxiety-arousal were presented. In this independent category, *the test anxiety, learners' attitudes towards English classes in comparison to the other classes* and *ideas of the learners for the number of grammar rules in English classes* were presented in detail by the related items of FLCAS.

In the third part of the questionnaire students were asked to make additional comments on the same topic, if they had any.

3.5.2. Students' Diaries

After defining the students' anxiety levels by the help of FLCAS, some classroom implementations were conducted in the class for six weeks. During the six-week study, 32 randomly chosen students out of 56 were asked to keep diaries. Those students were asked to take down notes on what they did and how they evaluated the activities after each lesson.

3.5.3. Focus Group Interviews

An interview checklist (Appendix 5) developed by Aydın (2001) was employed during the focus group interviews. The number of the students participated in focus group interviews was 14 out of 56 and that made ¼ of the total number of the participants. The subjects already expressed their ideas in FLCAS but via such kind of a

checklist, they had a chance to comment verbally on things that they had forgotten to mention or hesitated to write in diaries. The group answered the questions in the Turkish version as it was used in Aydın (2001) to make subjects feel more comfortable while expressing their ideas (see Appendix 4 for the Turkish version of the checklist and Appendix 5 for the English version of the checklist).

3.5.4. The Researcher's Observations and Notes

As a researcher, I also had a notebook to write my observations in the class; the differences that I realized and the conversations took place in or out of the class. The observational notes helped me to follow the process of constructing new activities in a planned way. When I noticed that an activity didn't work, or there was not a change in the general attitude of learners towards speaking activities, the notes guided me to look at the previous weeks and change my direction in the teaching process. I also noted my weekly instructional schedule in detail as the aim, level, materials needed, preparation, interaction patterns, time and procedure. I conducted six weeks teaching procedure and mostly applied collaborative activities in-group or pair-works since the numbers of 56 students were not suitable for individual study.

3.6. Action Research Procedures

In the process of planning the speaking activities of six weeks, some of the ideas were inspired from the guidance book named *The Activist* authored by Hasanbaşoğlu (2013). The book suggested an outline for speaking activities with a collection of teaching ideas.

3.6.1. Week One

Aim: To provide students with a speaking activity including grammar and vocabulary practice.

Materials Used: Blank slips of paper (one for each student)

Procedure: The blank slips of paper were distributed to students so that each student had one. Then, students were asked to write a Wh- question on a blank slip of paper. After completing the question writing process, students asked the question on their slip to a classmate and received the answer. After they got the answer to their questions, students exchanged their slips. They repeated the same procedure for each question they got (asking questions and exchanging questions). When there was no question to ask, the activity ended.

Students had blank slips of paper because writing their own questions on the slips of paper would be better to comprehend the nature of the activity and make more practice. This activity was a whole class communicative and interactional activity. During the implementation of this speaking activity, the classroom was full of English because exchanging questions helped to create a sense of fun to the activity. The questions on the slips of paper lend students to short discussions. This communicative activity was not only speaking activity but also a vocabulary and grammar practice for previously learned language items.

3.6.2. Week Two

Aim: To enable students to practice giving directions and descriptions.

Materials Used: A copy of the sampling pictures like an animal, object, a material used at home etc. to be described by the teacher and drawn by the learners through the descriptions and blank A4 size paper.

Procedure: At the beginning of the lesson, students were told that a picture would be described by the teacher for them to draw. After the first picture was described, students were asked to show their pictures to the teacher. Then, the teacher showed the original picture to the class and the students chose the one, which was closest to the original picture. After the first picture, a volunteer came to the board and described another picture to the class. This was a sampling instruction for the class.

In the second step, students were divided into four groups and asked to draw their own pictures. Meanwhile, the teacher went around the class and checked the suitability of the pictures to be described. Finally, each group had two pictures and two volunteers from each group described the pictures to the other groups. For each picture that looked similar to the original, groups got one point and the group, which had the highest score, was the winner in the end. Since the English proficiency level of the students was intermediate, abstract pictures worked quite well in this activity. This was a whole class and group work activities enabling all students participate in the activity.

3.6.3. Week Three

Aim: To enhance students' creative and critical thinking within communicative activities.

Materials Used: A set of lateral thinking problems.

Procedure: A sample of lateral thinking problem was introduced to the students to solve it together as a class. After modeling the activity, students were put in groups of five. Each group was asked to create their own problems and read them aloud to the other groups to find answers to the problems. When the other groups couldn't guess the answer, a group member read the clue to help them find the answer. In this activity, students firstly tried to understand the problems and then suggested possible answers to the problems.

3.6.4. Week Four

Aim: To enable students to use their own creativity to develop a story.

Materials Used: Clue cards on which the directions were given for the formation of the story and blank A4 size paper.

Procedure: At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher started to narrate a story and stopped after a few sentences. Then, the students were asked to continue to complete the story by the help of the clue cards to follow the directions as to how to proceed. The aim of this activity was to be a model of creating a story and help students to catch the format of writing a story via the helps of clue cards. After completing the first story, students were divided into the groups of four and asked to create new stories. Every student in each group added 2 or 3 sentences to the story and exchanged the story with the other groups. In that way, each story of each group was completed with the contributions of the other groups. In the end, the stories were read aloud to the class and there was very surprising endings of the stories. Some challenging comments were made after the stories. These comments led students into discussions and the class was full of English with this communicative activity.

3.6.5. Week Five

Aim: To develop students' critical and creative thinking via different perspectives.

Materials Used: Six colors of cartoons (white, red, black, green, yellow and blue).

Procedure: In this lesson, six thinking hats technique was used. Six thinking hats is a powerful technique to look at solutions from a number of important perspectives. Regarding the age and English proficiency level of students, this technique was suitable to be conducted as a speaking classroom implementation.

First of all, students were divided into the groups of six and six colors of cartoons were distributed to each group. Students were asked to shape the cartoons as hats. Then, they were told that each color of cartoon was for a symbolic function. The white hat was realistic and focused on the facts. The red hat was associated with feelings, intuitions and emotions. The yellow hat was for a positive view of things. The black hat was used for critical judgment. The green hat was for creative thinking and generating new ideas. The blue hat was about process control and used for thinking about thinking. After explaining the function of each color, each group was asked to raise a problem related to the Tourism sector. Thus, students had the opportunity to focus on their own working area. After each group raised a problem, each student in each group gave ideas according to the color of the hat they wear so as to find out possible solutions to the problem. They tried to find solutions to the problem on the board by introducing themselves to the class like "I am Mr. White or Miss Red etc.". With this communicative activity, students had a chance to talk about the problems they encountered or possibly would encounter in their profession. So, the activity took their attention and motivated them so much for the activity.

3.6.6. Week Six

Aim: To enhance students' self-expression skills in front of a group of audience.

Materials Used: Cards for supporting or not supporting ideas (strongly disagree, disagree, agree and strongly agree).

Procedure: Two groups of four students were assigned beforehand to prepare a persuasive speech on a controversial statement. The first group talked about the pros of the statement while the other group gave ideas for the cons of the statement. The rest of the class listened to the groups' speeches and some of the students took notes. At the end of the groups discussion period, the note takers summarized their ideas, came to the board and took their place by showing their cards as strongly disagree, disagree, agree or strongly agree for pros or cons of the statement according to their ideas. While showing their cards by standing next to the group, which they supported, each student explained the reasons to the classmates why did they come up with these ideas. Then, the classmates asked questions to the supporters and discussion turned out to be a whole class discussion.

3.7. Data Analysis Procedure

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the data gathered through from the second part of the questionnaire. The data elicited from the first and third section of the questionnaire was subjected to content analysis.

Data gathered from the researcher's observations and notes, students' diaries and focus group interviews with the students were subjected to content analysis. Content analysis is defined by Elo and Kyngä s (2008) as a method that can be used inductively or deductively with either quantitative or qualitative data. The researchers also continue to define content analysis in detail by stating that both inductive and deductive processes have preparation, organizing and reporting phases. The preparation phase is nearly the same in both phases but in inductive analysis the concepts are derived from the data while deductive content analysis uses the previous knowledge at the background. That is; inductive content analysis operates when there is no previous study related to the phenomenon. Conversely; deductive content analysis is useful to examine the previous study in a different case.

CHAPTER IV

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are explained in detail through clear analyses of the instruments used in the study.

4.2. Analysis and Findings of the Study

The main goal of the study was to determine the sources and degree of learners' foreign language anxiety arising in English speaking classes and find out possible solutions to overcome this problem. To achieve the goal of the study, the research tools were divided into 2 main parts to be analyzed and there were two research questions for each part.

The first part of the analysis was conducted for the sake of a case study and served the first research question of the study. In this part of the study, the sources and degree of students' English speaking anxiety were analyzed through the categories articulated in the previous chapter and then each of these categories presented under separate titles. To succeed this part of analysis, the related item(s) of FLCAS and the focus group of interview questions were analyzed and discussed in a detailed way under each title. There were 33 items in the questionnaire of FLCAS and 7 open ended questions in the focus group interview related to the sources and degree of foreign language anxiety of learners. Actually, there were 8 questions in the focus group interview but the last question was about the second part of the study. Tables showing the frequencies and percentages of the answers of the learners illustrated each related item(s) of FLCAS.

In the second part of the study, there was an action research to help learners overcome their anxiety problems. This part served the second research question of the study. In the light of the findings of the first part of the study, some teaching implementations were conducted to the class through some collaborative activities in the second part. In the meantime, students were asked to keep diaries to find out if the activities worked out or not from their own perspective of view. As a teacher researcher, I also kept a teacher diary to take notes about my observations in classes. Also, the last question of the focus group interview was asked to the participants to get more clear answers about the use of small group activities in speaking lessons. Of course, the

interviews and diary entries conducted in Turkish to let them express their feelings and ideas better.

Before starting to analyze the items of FLCAS, the reliability and validity rates of the questionnaire and demographic variables of the participants were explained below to get a more clear understanding of the data.

4.3. Findings from the Questionnaire FLCAS

In Babat's (2012) study, it was stated that the reliability of data could be obtained by the stable results of the items for each participants. There shouldn't be any ambiguity in the meanings of the items. The item should have the same meaning for each participant in the study. When the reliability coefficient of the items is low, they should be omitted out. For this reason, before conducting the questionnaire to the subjects, it should be tested to determine whether the items in the questionnaire are reliable or not.

Ural and Kılıç (2006) expressed that the reliability coefficient of the items should be between 0 and 1 of the value ranges. The reliability rates increase when the results come closer to the value range of 1.

According to Hair, Anderson, Tahtam and Black (1995), the most common method in testing the reliability is Cronbach's Alpha and the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire should be a>0,70. In this study, the rates of the questionnaire were tested and the result of Cronbach Alpha was found as, 812. In other words, the results indicated that the questionnaire was reliable.

4.3.1. Demographical Characteristics of Participants

According to the answers given for the first part of FLCAS, it can be concluded that learners don't have a satisfying educational background. Because of this reason students usually experience difficulty in learning new subjects. Also, the social background also demonstrates that they don't have high living standards. The negative effects of these factors can't be denied for a quality of educational understanding. The learners' attitudes learning English also weren't so satisfying in the previous years. Most of them complained that their teachers weren't usually real English language teachers and they had to learn English in a mechanical way such as learning Math. Also, they didn't have enough time of English previously. This additional information was elicited from the first part of FLCAS.

Randomly selected 56 participants filled in the FLCAS for this study. The results indicate that %32,1 of the participants (18) were female while %67,9 of them (38) were male. Figure 1 as in the following presented the rates of the gender distribution;

The Gender Distribution of the Participants

Female ■ Male
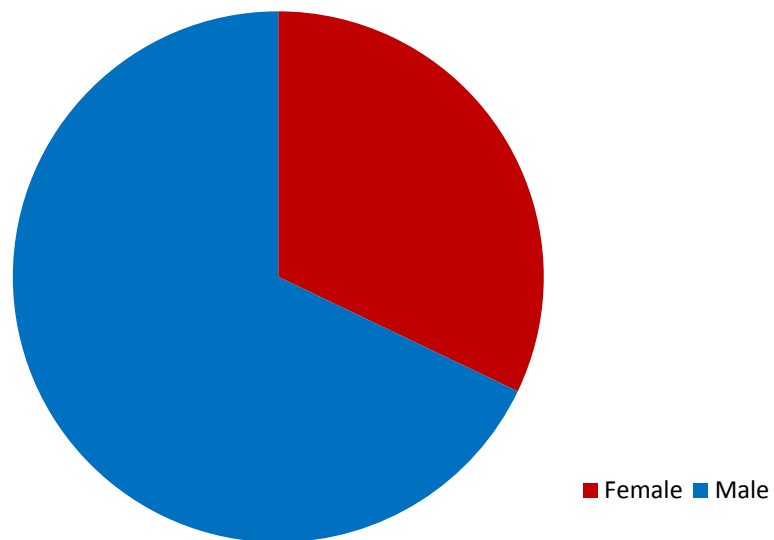
Figure 1: The Gender Distribution of the Participants in FLCAS

The participations of the study were in different age groups. There were 36 participations between the ages 11 and 20, which made %65,3 of the total number of the subjects. On the other hand, 20 participants were between the ages 21 and 30, which made %35,7 of the total number of the participants. Figure 2 below illustrate the age distributions of the participants.

The Age Distribution of the Participants
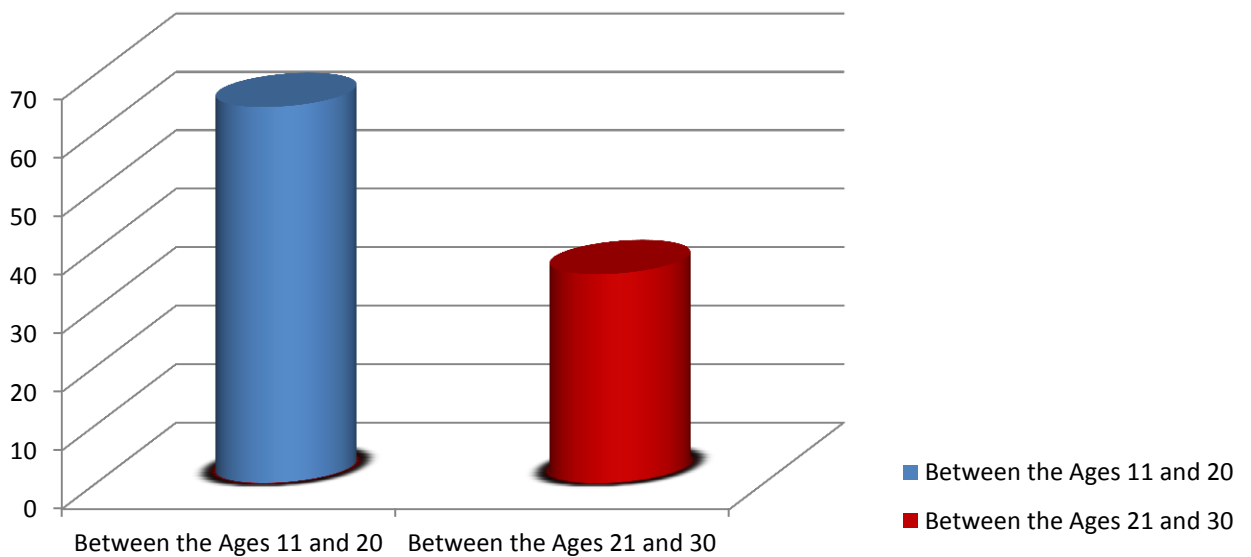
Figure 2: The Age Distribution of the Participants in FLCAS

Before starting to analyze the data, the demographic variables of the subjects were given by Figures 1 and 2. Also the reliability and validity rates of the questionnaire were analyzed previously not to encounter any problem with the coming sections. After completing all additional information about the subjects and FLCAS, the detailed analysis was started to operate throughout the rest of this chapter.

4.3.2. The Sources and Degree of English Speaking Anxiety of Turkish Students in English Speaking Classes

Learners articulated in the data entries that the anxiety they felt in speaking classes was caused by personal and interpersonal reasons; teacher's beliefs about language teaching and teacher-learner interaction; and classroom procedures. These reasons were analyzed as three main categories in the following sections.

4.3.2.1. Self-Perceived Proficiency

As it was articulated by Young (1991), once students start out with a self-perceived low ability level in learning a foreign language, they are inevitably expected to be candidates for language anxiety. Young (1991) further suggested that the learners mostly try to catch their idealized self-image and so get out of the concentration easily, focus on the perceived deficits in language skills. Expectedly, the potential for failure

come true as a result. Therefore, perception of self-ability plays a vital role in shaping learners' aptitudes towards foreign language learning.

To understand what the learners think about their self-ability, the 2nd interview question was asked to the focus group. The question was *"Do you ever get anxious while speaking English in the classroom and forget what to say? How does this affect you?"* Nearly all the students were highly anxious for speaking English in the classroom. They reported that they feel anxious very often. Actually, the class to which I conducted the survey is the most successful class in their department. They generally have high grades in their exams and participate to the lessons actively. But still, only a few of students stated that they feel usually relaxed while speaking English. Their answers were as in the following:

Student 1: *Yes, it happens. Even if it affects me badly at that time, I create a new sentence by using different words. I will never give up learning English.*

Student 2: *It depends on the person that I am talking to. I usually feel relaxed when I talk to a friend. However, I am afraid of making mistakes while speaking English in exams.*

Student 9: *Sometimes, but it is not so bad.*

Student 11: *I have been working in tourism for five years. I had lots of conversations with tourists and never got anxious. But, when I have to pass an exam, I feel quite worried and stressful. Therefore, I forget the words and get badly affected.*

These students were generally relaxed while speaking English but they were concerned about passing exams. The rest of the interviewers explained their anxiety level with the reasons as it was given below:

Student 3: *Yes. Sometimes, I cannot think even in Turkish. Naturally, it affects me very badly. I don't know how to overcome this problem.*

Student 4: *Yes. It happens very often and makes me sad. Because, it doesn't happen when I am alone. Because of anxiety, I forget the words and get confused easily.*

Student 5: *Yes. It affects me a lot. When I start to make a sentence, I forget a word and everything gets confused. I feel shame and blush. I feel as if the whole class despises me.*

Student 6: *Yes. It generally happens and affects me very badly at all times.*

Student 7: *Sometimes happens. I may forget the words or what to say.*

Student 8: *It happens very often. Especially, in speaking exams I forget what to say and feel bad.*

Student 10: *In English lessons, my brain completely stops. Even thinking is hard for me. If I answer in Turkish, I can easily give answers in a detailed way.*

Student 12: *Yes. I forget because of anxiety. I try to remember what I forgot.*

Student 13: *Yes. I get desperate. At that time, I feel embarrassed towards the teacher.*

Student 14: *Yes. Sometimes it happens. Consequently; a fear starts towards English. Even I try to hide myself not to answer the questions.*

Students' answers clearly demonstrated that they feel a high a level of anxiety in speaking classes. In this case, it is very difficult to create a stress free environment because self-perceived deficits in language skills hinder learners' effectiveness during lessons. As literature review suggested, people who are in difficulty with speaking presumably experience more difficulty in a foreign language class because they feel deficits in communication skills and closely monitored by the others (Horwitz et al., 1986).

FLCAS items 1, 11, 12, 17, 22, 28 and 31 were related to the learners' assessment of self-proficiency in speaking skills. As can be seen in the Table 1, % 33,9 of the subjects strongly agreed and % 17,9 of the subjects agreed with the item *"I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class"(FLCAS, 1).* It means that % 51,8 of the subjects are not sure of themselves while speaking in English class. Similarly, % 26,8 of the learners strongly agreed and % 32,1 of the learners agreed with the item *"In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know"(FLCAS, 12).* It makes the %58,9 of the learners are in trouble with the language that they even forget things that they know.

The FLCAS item 17, *"I often feel like not going to English class."* was strongly disagreed by %42,9 of the students and disagreed by %26,8 of the students. It indicated that %70,7 of the students weren't in favor of not going to English class. It is good that they don't have such a feeling towards English class. The FLCAS item 28, *"When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed."* was strongly disagreed by % 10,7 of the subjects and disagreed by % 28,6 of the subjects. On the other hand, %32,1 of the subjects was neutral for this item.

Table 1: FLCAS Items Related to Self-Perceived Proficiency

FLCAS Items	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
1: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.	19	10	12	8	7	33,9	17,9	21,4	14,3	12,5
11: I don't understand why some people get so upset over English classes.	12	8	15	14	7	21,4	14,3	26,8	25,0	12,5
12: In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	15	18	8	6	9	26,8	32,1	14,3	10,7	16,1
17: I often feel like not going to English class.	3	2	12	15	24	5,4	3,6	21,4	26,8	42,9
22: I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.	15	9	12	12	8	26,8	16,1	21,4	21,4	14,3
28: When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	7	9	18	16	6	12,5	16,1	32,1	28,6	10,7
31: I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.	11	11	9	11	14	19,6	19,6	16,1	19,6	25,0

SA= Strongly Agree   A= Agree   N= Neutral   D= Disagree   SD= Strongly Disagree

Similarly, Clement et al. (1994) investigated the social psychological sides of Hungarian students' English acquisition and came out with the results that low anxious students assessed their English language proficiency positively. They were satisfied with the level of English proficiency, better motivated to learn English and tended to deal with English. But high anxious students behaved contrarily. Furthermore, In Daubney's (2002) study, it was reported that students perceived their level of English as lower than it should be. In this case, it can be suggested that self-confidence in using English is closely relevant to language learning achievement.

4.3.2.2. Self-Comparison to Others and Competitiveness

As Price (1991) noted in the study, the majority of the participants believed that their language skills were behind the others in class. For this reason, they were concerned about what others would think about them when they made mistakes. Consequently, it was determined that self-comparison to others played an anxiety-arousal factor causing learners feel less competent than the others.

As language teachers, we experience lots of competitions among students. To some extent, self-comparison helps learners to be better motivated but sometimes makes them anxious about feeling themselves fall behind the others. To examine the degree of self-comparison, the 4th interview question was asked to the learners *Do you compare yourself with the other students?* The answers elicited from the interview were as in the following:

Student 3: *Yes, always. I think the others are better than me at English and I feel myself lack of proficiency. I try to do something but I get bad results.*

Student 6: *Yes, unfortunately. I can't help without thinking that they are always better than me.*

According to those 2 students out of 14, self-comparison is not a good thing for them. When they compare themselves with the others, they feel lack of proficiency. Contrarily, some of the others shared their ideas for this issue positively. They suggested that self-comparison could give them a chance to see the difference and study more to develop their language skills. For example, the 4th student noted that the feeling of incapability in language learning let him to experience a great deal of anxiety. He uttered that self-comparison with good students helps him to be better motivated. Good students become a model for him to study more and be successful. His ideas were presented below:

Student 4: *Even if it is not good for me to fall behind the others, at least I do whatever I can to be like them. So, it creates a better effect on me.*

Some of the others' ideas also are presented below:

Student 1: *Of course, I do. On the basis of our education system, there is a competition and comparison.*

Student 2: *Yes, I do. I think, the competition and comparison tend us to study more.*

Student 7: *Of course. We should compare ourselves to develop our skills more.*

Student 8: *Most of the time I do. It helps me to develop myself.*

Student 10: *I always compare myself with others to see the difference.*

Student 13: *Yes, most of the times. I do that to see my level of proficiency.*

FLCAS items 7, 23 and 25 were related to self-comparison. The 7th item of FLCAS *"I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am"* was strongly agreed by % 23,2 of the subjects and agreed by %25,0 of the subjects. Since the members of the class differentiate in the level English proficiency, it is expected to compare oneself with the others. In this manner, the more important thing is the positive or negative effect of self-comparison on learner's achievement. As can be seen in the Table 2, only %16,1 of the students strongly agreed with the item *"I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do" (FLCAS, 23).* On the contrary with the item 7, the majority of the students rejected the idea that the other students speak English better than they do. On the other hand, it can be understood from the answers given to the item *"English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind" (FLCAS, 25)* the subjects didn't feel anxious about getting left behind the others.

Table 2: FLCAS Items Related to Self-Comparison to Others and Competitiveness

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
7: I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.	13	14	6	7	16	23,2	25,0	10,7	12,5	28,6
23: I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	9	13	13	13	8	16,1	23,2	23,2	23,2	14,3
25: English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	10	13	8	17	8	17,9	23,2	14,3	30,4	14,3

Similarly, in Horwitz's study (1988) the participants mainly focused on speaking with an excellent accent and correct utterances, perceived the others' mastery of

language use as better than their own success. To a great extent, these factors were given as the reasons why students felt anxious about language learning.

4.3.2.3. Learner Beliefs about Language Learning

According to Horwitz (2013) misconceptions can be the reasons for a number of important problems in language learning settings and learners with unrealistic beliefs are more anxious than other learners. Similarly, Young (1991) points out that language learning anxiety results when beliefs and reality doesn't match each other. So, it can be understood that unrealistic settings of beliefs can cause learners to feel intimidated by the challenge of learning a new language. In Tsui's (1996) study, it was expressed that the preconceived notions of the learners about language learning lead them to be reluctant to speak English. Therefore, it was stated that the attitudes of learners towards language might influence the effectiveness of language learning.

In my daily classes, students are usually afraid of making mistakes while speaking. They want to speak as a native like speaker with an excellent pronunciation and accurate grammar. When they make mistakes, they stop talking and get out of communication skills. For this reason, the FLCAS item 2, *"I don't worry about making mistakes in English class."* was examined to determine the degree of the subjects' fear of making mistakes.

Table 3: FLCAS Item Related to Learner Beliefs about Making Mistakes in English Class

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
2: I don't worry about making mistakes in English class	10	11	7	16	12	17,9	19,6	12,5	28,6	21,4

As a result, it was found out that % 21,4 of the learners were strongly disagreed and %28,6 of the learners were agreed with the item. It shows that %50 of the subjects worry about making mistakes in English class. Because of the unrealistic settings of beliefs or high expectations of students may cause to the fear of making mistakes in English class.

The second issue to discuss about is the students' attitudes towards using mother tongue in English classes. The use of mother tongue in foreign language classes is generally a disputable issue for investigators and educators. In my daily classes, I notice that students feel themselves safer if the medium of instruction is Turkish in a foreign language context. When I start to speak Turkish, students often feel more comfortable. During the focus group interview, the 1st interview question *"What do you think about using Turkish in English class?"* was asked to the learners and only 4 out of 14 students were opposed to using mother tongue in English classes. They explained the reasons why they thought in that way as illustrated below:

Student 7: *I don't find useful to use Turkish in English lessons.*

Student 8: *Using Turkish in English classes affects me in a negative way. To my understanding, the most important thing in English is to make more practice and create a classroom interaction. Contrarily; using Turkish is just an easy way to simplify learning, nothing more.*

Student 9: *Using Turkish badly affects me. Unless it is necessary, Turkish should never be used.*

Student 14: *It is not good because once the learner thinks that the teacher knows Turkish, the learner tends to not study or learn English because s/he knows that they already can contact with each other in Turkish.*

In the light of the following statements elicited from the students' answers, it can be argued that students are generally in favor of using Turkish in English classes when the item of English is not clear enough to understand. They do not want to be imposed to Turkish all the time. They support the idea of using Turkish only for the clarification of the input, which is not clear for them. If they miss some points in English, they can easily feel as though they are not good at English. In other words, they try to understand all the points in the target language clearly. These 10 students out of 14 suggested using Turkish in English classes for the reasons below;

Student 1: *If we use Turkish when we have difficulty with English, it clarifies the subject and makes learning easier; but we shouldn't use Turkish all the time.*

Student 2: *We should sometimes use Turkish because there are different levels of students in the class. Using Turkish may help to create a more effective information exchange.*

Student 3: *Turkish sometimes should be used when we do not understand some points; but generally we should prefer English.*

Student 4: *Using Turkish affects me both positively and negatively. It helps me to understand the things when I don't understand. So, I can participate to the classes more actively. If we never use Turkish, I miss some points and get out of concentration.*

Student 5: *Once I don't understand the lesson, using Turkish is useful to get me out of feeling bad.*

Student 6: *We can get familiar with the items of English if we use it frequently. But still, using Turkish is necessary in the lessons.*

Student 10: *Turkish has not a bad effect on me at all.*

Student 11: *When it is necessary, enough use of Turkish is good to understand better.*

Student 12: *Because I am not a master of English, Turkish helps me to understand better.*

Student 13: *Using Turkish is beneficial when we don't understand.*

Except for these statements, related FLCAS items for the use of mother tongue in foreign language classes gave similar results through the answers of the participants. When we look at the items of FLCAS 4 and 29, we can see that the percentage of students' fear for missing what the teacher is saying and trying to understand every word the teacher says is high.

Table 4: FLCAS Items Related to the Use of Mother Tongue in English Classes

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
4: It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English	11	16	10	11	8	19,6	28,6	17,9	19,6	14,3
29: I get nervous when I don't understand every word my English teacher says.	13	13	11	14	5	23,2	23,2	19,6	25,0	8,9

To sum up, the attitudes of the participants towards using Turkish in classes were determined as a source of language anxiety. The high percent of the participants favored sufficient use of Turkish to understand the input clearly in every respect. The others; on the other hand, supported the idea of settling down English as a medium of instruction in all circumstances.

Learner beliefs about native speakers were also subjected to the analysis through FLCAS items 14 and 32. The FLCAS item 14; *"I wouldn't be nervous speaking English with native speakers"* was strongly agreed by % 30,4 of the subjects and agreed by % 14,3 of the subjects. On the other hand, % 21,4 of the learners strongly agreed and % 25,0 of the learners agreed with the item 32.

Table 5: FLCAS Items Related to Learner Beliefs about Native Speakers

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
14: I wouldn't be nervous speaking English with native speakers.	17	8	10	11	10	30,4	14,3	17,9	19,6	17,9
32:I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.	12	14	13	11	6	21,4	25,0	23,2	19,6	10,7

These answers give us a clue that learners are in favor of having native speakers in English classes. They believe when the teacher is a native speaker; they can be forced to speak only English. Contrarily, when the learners know that the teacher knows Turkish, they tend to speak Turkish because the brain follows always the easiest way. Due to this reason, they get out of the chance to make more practice in the target language. As can be seen in Table 5, most of the participants don't bother speaking English with native speakers and feel comfortable around English native speakers.

As a conclusion, as Horwitz (1988) suggested, students come into the class in company with their beliefs and these beliefs about language learning will possibly affect their active participation in the lessons. Once these beliefs contradict with the reality, the anxiety level of the students will likely increase.

4.3.3. Anxieties Caused by Instructor Beliefs about Language Teaching

Instructor beliefs about language teaching and learning may play an anxiety-arousal role in the classroom. As Young (1991) stated "instructors who believe their role is to correct students constantly when they make any error, who feel that they cannot have students working in pairs because the class may get out of control, who believe that the teacher should be doing most of the talking and teaching, and who think their role is more like a drill-sergeant's than a facilitator's may be contributing to learner language anxiety" (p.428). In this manner, the atmosphere of the classroom created by the teacher may have an enormous effect on the students. As claimed by Ohata (2005), instructor beliefs about language teaching can be a kind of source increasing language anxiety for language learners.

4.3.3.1. Instructors' Attitudes towards Correcting Errors of the Learners

When a teacher believes his/her role in class is to correct students' mistakes constantly, some learners can become quite anxious about their language learning performance (Ohata, 2005).

To make clearer the situation in my speaking class, I asked the 5th and 6th interview questions to the subjects during the focus group interview. The answers of the learners to the question 5 *"How does your teacher react to your mistakes? Does she get angry with you? Does she correct the mistakes immediately?"* are illustrated below:

Student 1: *Our teacher always says "There is no need to do panic. Just try to do the best of you, nothing more". She is very tolerable to the mistakes and makes corrections after we finish what we say. She never gets angry.*

Student 2: *She sometimes makes some corrections after we complete our sentence. It helps us to learn better.*

Student 3: *When we make mistakes, she corrects the mistakes very gently without embarrassing us. In this sense, she is very tolerable and doesn't get angry at all.*

Student 4: *She never gets angry with our mistakes. Her way of correction attempted me to learn English and I became more active in the lessons.*

Student 5: *She uses Turkish when we don't understand a point and facilitate learning. She doesn't make us ashamed because of our mistakes.*

Student 8: *She doesn't make corrections constantly. When there is a mistake, first of all, she waits us to finish. Then she explains the mistakes gently.*

Student 10: *She only tries to make us speak. I haven't observed any negative attitudes towards our mistakes.*

Student 12: *She tries to provide us with self-correction.*

Student 13: *She waits us to correct our mistakes on our own. In this manner, she helps us to make a good correction.*

Student 14: *She doesn't get angry at all. She always says that "You can't learn without making mistakes. It is quite normal that you make mistakes frequently". After we complete our speech, she corrects us.*

From the answers of the students, it can be understood that students are satisfied with how their mistakes are corrected. According to my observations, if I make a constant correction, students can't concentrate on the content of what they speak. They only focus on the structure. In communicative activities, if the main focus of language learning is the structure of language instead of the content, students feel themselves lack of ability in language skills. Learners also come up with high expectations from their language performance. In this case, the effectiveness of the activities is broken down and inevitably a stressful classroom setting is created.

The subjects also answered the question 6, *"Do you prefer your mistakes to be corrected immediately?"* during the focus group interview. All of the subjects stated that their mistakes should definitely be corrected. They said that if their mistakes weren't corrected at the time of learning, it could cause to learn wrongly. They particularly expressed that the constant interruption of the teacher wouldn't be good for them. In other words, the time of correction was very important for the learners. They further articulated that the teacher should wait for learners to be aware of the mistakes they made, give some time to correct their own mistakes and then make corrections. Some of the answers of the students are given below:

Student 1: *If I am not corrected when I made mistake, it may cause to wrong learning. We can take the wrong information into our minds and make the false learning permanent in our memory. Therefore, the time correction is very important.*

Student 3: *I definitely prefer to be corrected. But, if the teacher stops me while I am talking or makes perpetually corrections for every mistake, I don't want to speak in the lessons any more. So; the time and amount of the correction is very important for me.*

Student 4: *When we are corrected for our mistakes, it contributes a lot to consolidate our learning. So, the answer is definitely yes.*

Student 5: *If we have enough time to think on our mistakes, correction is really necessary in learning process.*

Student 6: *The way of correction is very important. I don't want to be offended while being corrected. I believe that the mistakes should be corrected.*

Student 11: *If the time and amount of the correction is well organized, I believe the correction may help us to learn more effectively.*

Student 12: *Our mistakes should be corrected; otherwise, we can make the same mistakes again and again.*

FLCAS items 15 and 19 were also related to this issue. % 21,4 of the subjects strongly agreed and % 30,4 of them agreed; while % 30,4 of them disagreed and % 12,5 of them strongly disagreed the item 15, *"I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting".* As can be seen in the Table 6, % 51,8 of the learners in total are in difficulty with understanding the correction correctly. In this case, I sometimes make Turkish explanations to make them understand the subject but at that time they already know that the teacher will explain it in Turkish. This will be an easier way for them to follow. So I generally prefer to explain the subject, which is not clear for them, from a different angle. The item 19, *"I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make"* also demonstrated that % 33,9 of the learners disagreed and % 21,4 of them strongly disagreed the item 19. They already explained in the interview questions that mostly the students were satisfied with the time of error corrections.

Table 6: FLCAS Items Related to Instructors' Attitudes towards Correcting Errors of the Learners

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
15: I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	12	17	3	17	7	21,4	30,4	5,4	30,4	12,5
19: I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	7	9	9	19	12	12,5	16,1	16,1	33,9	21,4

As Young (1991) identified role-related beliefs cause to increase the level of anxiety of the learners. Instructors' misbeliefs about their role in terms of correcting all mistakes of the learners make students usually frightened. Similarly in Daubney's (2002) study, it was clearly argued that a supportive and friendly environment should be created in classrooms to enable students behave comfortably without being constantly evaluated. It was suggested that making mistakes should be viewed as a natural part of learning process.

In this study, students' ideas for error correction weren't negative. They generally liked how they were corrected.

4.3.4. Anxieties Caused by Classroom Procedures

In foreign language classes, learners have to perform in the target language through oral presentations in front of the others or the activities demanding simultaneous speaking. This is sometimes quite hard for students to perform lessons and it becomes anxiety-provoking activities for the students. Price (1991) interviewed ten French College students to investigate the subjects' ideas of foreign language anxiety. It was found out that anxiety was not caused by only speaking activities. Rather, it was more relevant to speaking in front of the teachers and the other students. It was noted that speaking in front of the others was a sort of anxiety provoking activity for the learners because the learners had high expectations in pronunciation during their speech, and were afraid being made fun of their mistakes. That feeling hindered them to speak freely.

According to Young (1991), anxieties particularly related to classroom procedures focus mostly on speaking in the target language in front of the others. For this reason, learners feel a high level of anxiety if they are obliged to speak in front of the others in the target language.

Related to this issue, interview question 3, *"Do you get anxious while speaking in front of the other students?"* was asked to the subjects in the focus group interview and the following answers were elicited from them as presented below;

Student 1: *Yes, sometimes. However; it helps me to develop myself if I speak or listen to the others.*

Student 2: *I usually don't feel anxious because I believe that we will learn this language by speaking to each other.*

Student 13: *Yes. But I believe that if I am more active in the class, I will fix it.*

As it can be understood from the answers of these learners, speaking in front of the others helps them to develop their communicative skills. The degree of anxiety they feel at the time of speaking is not the main focus of these learners. The more important thing is how their skills will develop by the help of speaking to the others. The following students were illustrated to show what they feel and think about speaking in front of the others;

Student 3: *The fear of making mistakes during speaking makes me anxious.*

Student 7: *Unfortunately I feel anxious at the time of speaking in front of the others. They are my friends but nobody wants to make mistakes.*

Student 10: *It makes me anxious. I don't want to be looked at my face.*

Student 14: *Sometimes. Because I know that I can express myself better in Turkish.*

These examples showed that they are anxious about making mistakes in front of the others. The belief of low self-ability and fear of making mistakes cause them to feel anxious. The following students were also given below to demonstrate their changing attitudes towards speaking in front of their classmates:

Student 4: *To certain extend yes. In the past, it happened more frequently but now it is better.*

Student 8: *Previously, I was anxious but I overcame the problem by becoming more active in the class.*

As it can be seen in these examples, while some students presented different reasons for their anxiety, the others rejected to be anxious. Mostly, they believed that if they become more active during the lessons, they would overcome the problem of feeling anxious at the time of speaking. As it can be understood from the answers of the subjects, the majority of the focus group experienced the feeling of being anxious while speaking in front of the others.

FLCAS items 3, 9, 20, 24, 27 and 33 were also quite related to this issue. As can be inferred from Table 7, some students experienced a great level of difficulty with spontaneous speaking without making any preparation in advance. For example, % 28,6 of the subjects strongly agreed and % 32,1 of them agreed with the item 9, "*I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class*". It makes % 60,7 out of %100 of the subjects. It can be claimed that they don't feel themselves secure when

they are obliged to spontaneous speaking. They can't concentrate on what they will speak because of the constructional operation of the ideas in their minds. The similar item 33, *"I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance"* was also strongly agreed by % 21,4 of the learners and agreed by % 26,8 of them. On the other hand, % 33,9 of the learners disagreed and % 12,5 of them strongly disagreed the item 24, *"I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students"*.

Table 7: FLCAS Items Related to Speaking in Front of the Others

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
3: I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.	15	13	3	15	10	26,8	23,2	5,4	26,8	17,9
9: I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.	16	18	9	7	6	28,6	32,1	16,1	12,5	10,7
20: I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.	9	13	7	18	9	16,1	23,2	12,5	32,1	16,1
24: I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.	5	16	9	19	7	8,9	28,6	16,1	33,9	12,5
27: I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English class.	12	15	8	14	7	21,4	26,8	14,3	25,0	12,5
33: I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	12	15	9	13	7	21,4	26,8	16,1	23,2	12,5

These results exemplified the situation that I encounter in my classes. Being prepared is very important for them to express their feelings and ideas more freely. The students generally complain about remembering the words necessary to speak at the time of speaking. So they need to be prepared for the lessons in advance. Daubney (2002) designed a study to define the reasons of anxiety and hindering factors in speaking process. In the study, it was tried to foster a classroom environment assisting to learning, thought provoking, demanding, communicative, stimulating and challenging. Firstly, he tried to find out the degree of anxiety and other inhibitive factors contribute students' unwillingness to speak in the classroom. Finally, it was proposed that classroom procedures are at the center of the way to academic success.

4.3.5. The Other Reasons Causing to Anxiety-Arousal

If we are talking about the feelings of human being, it is not surprising that there isn't only one reason in background. So far, the personal and interpersonal reasons of the learners, teacher beliefs about language teaching and classroom procedures were analyzed through the data gathered from the subjects in the study. Now it is time to have a look at the other reasons causing anxiety-arousal of the learners.

As Horwitz et al. (1986) suggested foreign language anxiety mostly appears in testing situations. Actually, students already know the things related to grammar points but forget them during an oral performance as many grammar points should be remembered and operated simultaneously. It is not easy for learners to recall and organize important grammar points at once during the limited time of test period.

Test-anxiety has a distinct structure in itself and should be examined separately from the other subjects. Therefore, test-anxiety was only discussed under the statements of FLCAS items 8, 10 and 21 in this study. As it can be seen in Table 8, most of the participants experience a great level of anxiety in testing situations. For example, the item 8 *"I am usually at ease during oral exams in English"* was strongly disagreed by % 39,3 and disagreed by % 25,0 of the subjects in the study. In this case, the ratings elicited from the item 8 showed % 64,3 out of % 100 of the subjects were anxious about speaking in testing situation. Similarly, the item 10 *"I worry about the consequences of failing English class"* was agreed by % 35,7 and strongly agreed by % 28,6 of the learners. It was the same as the item 8 that % 64,3 out of %100 of the learners worried about the consequences of failing English class. Furthermore, the ratings for the item

21, *"The more I study for English tests, the more confused I get"* showed that % 39 of the subjects disagreed and % 25,0 of them strongly disagreed with the item 21. The result was again the same with the other items. % 64,3 of the learners were confused about the way they study for the exams.

Table 8: FLCAS Items Related to Test-Anxiety

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
8: I am usually at ease during oral exams in English.	11	4	5	14	22	19,6	7,1	8,9	25,0	39,3
10: I worry about the consequences of failing English class.	16	20	7	7	6	28,6	35,7	12,5	12,5	10,7
21: The more I study for English tests, the more confused I get.	6	4	10	22	14	10,7	7,1	17,9	39,3	25,0

To sum up, in the light of these rating scales, it can be argued that the students feel a great level of anxiety for testing situations. Since the learners are obliged to pass English class with oral examinations, they feel very tense and nervous about speaking in the oral exams. I experienced even the crying students in the exams. As a committee, we tried to help them to facilitate their exams but it didn't work at all. So, this subject is really important to be focused on in a separate study.

In order to understand general attitudes of the learners towards English classes, the FLCAS items 5, *"It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes"* and 26, *"I feel more tense and nervous in English class than in my other classes"* were asked to the learners. It was aimed to find out how do they feel for English classes in comparison to the other classes.

Table 9: FLCAS Items Related to Learners' Attitudes towards English Classes in Comparison to the Other Classes

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
5: It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes	30	14	3	5	4	53,6	25,0	5,4	8,9	7,1
26: I feel more tense and nervous in English class than in my other classes	10	17	3	14	12	17,9	30,4	5,4	25,0	21,4

The ratings elicited from the subjects indicated that % 53,6 of the subjects strongly agreed while % 25,0 of them agreed with the item 5. It means that % 78,6 of the students had positive attitudes towards English classes in general terms. On the other hand, it can be seen with the item 26, half of the subjects felt tense and nervous in English classes in comparison to the other classes.

One of the factors affecting the learning process deeply is attention. When the learners get out of attention, they can lose their ties with the learning process. Sometimes, I ask a question to a learner and s/he says, "I am sorry, I missed what you said. I was thinking something else". As far as I observed, it happens very often during the classes. To get the ideas of the learners about this subject, the 7th interview question, *"Do you ever get lost in the lessons? Why?"* was asked and some of the responds of learners were presented below:

Student 1: *I don't have problem with attention because our teacher tries to focus us on the lessons so successfully.*

Student 2: *Our teacher always makes good contributions to classes and I don't experience any problem with focusing the lesson*

Student 4: *Sometimes, I focus on something else. It happens because sometimes I don't understand the lesson. It is totally my problem.*

Student 5: *When I miss a word, I miss the rest of the subject. I don't know why but I don't feel myself OK with vocabulary knowledge.*

Student 6: *Unfortunately, it happens to me. There is not only one reason for this. For example, the deficits in my vocabulary knowledge affect me very much. And also, our teacher or friends speak fast. So, I have difficulty with taking attention to the lesson.*

Student 9: *It happens when I can't adapt myself to the lesson.*

Student 14: *There are some classmates who are very good at English. When they make long dialogues with the teacher, I get out of attention. When I listen to the successful friends who speak English fluently, my motivation also decreases.*

FLCAS item 6, During English class, *"I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course"* was asked to learners to see to what extend it happens. The scores weren't so high in terms of distraction. In this sense, this item is a bit more satisfying compared to some of the others.

Table 10: FLCAS Item Related to Learners' Attention

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Items	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
6: I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course	7	14	13	15	7	12,5	25,0	23,2	26,8	12,5

Lastly, I observed that students were bored of the numbers of the rules they have to learn in English classes. They always complained that there was no need to learn so much grammar rules to know a language. They were right about this issue. They didn't have to learn about the language, but they have to learn language. For this reason the ratings of the item 30, *"I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English"* were mostly in favor of not learning too much rules. % 17,9 of the subjects strongly agreed and % 30,4 of them agreed with this item. The results of this item are presented below:

Table 11: FLCAS Items Related to the Number of Grammar Rules in English

	Frequencies					Percentages (%)				
FLCAS Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	SA	A	N	D	SD
30: I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English.	10	17	9	13	7	17,9	30,4	16,1	23,2	12,5

To sum up, in order to find an answer to the 1st research question of the study, FLCAS items and 7 open-ended focus group interview questions were analyzed through three main categories; personal and interpersonal reasons, instructor beliefs about language teaching and classroom procedures. Apart from these categories, there were some other reasons to be discussed by the items of FLCAS. Under a separate title these reasons were also discussed in detail (see Section 4.3.5.).

4.4. The Use of Collaborative Activities in English Speaking Classes

In the light of the findings revealed in the 1st part of the analysis, the second part of the study was conducted as an action research to help learners overcome their anxiety problems. The second part of the study served the 2nd research question. While conducting this action research, some small group collaborative activities were implemented in the classroom. The data gathered from the students' diaries and teacher's journal were analyzed to find out the possible outcomes for the effectiveness of the activities.

4.4.1. The Use of Small Group Collaborative Activities

As suggested in literature, using small group activities is one of the most effective ways to set up real-life like classroom atmosphere and lead the subjects to involve in the tasks without feeling tense and nervous. For instance, Horwitz (2013) suggested using enjoyable activities and games to distract attention away from individual speakers and small group or pair activities instead of whole-class activities. Koch and Terrell (1991) further reported in their survey that small groups were more practical since they were less judgmental and instructional. On the contrary, large groups were equal to the whole class. Similarly, Occhipinti (2009) noted that working in small groups or in pair works provides learners with speaking more freely in the

target language and give an opportunity to know each other in a better way. Moreover, Young (1990) expressed that learners would feel less nervous about speaking in the target language when they knew the classmates better.

On the basis of these suggestions, action research was conducted through small group activities. However, by thinking that every class has its own atmosphere, students' ideas were taken through the 8th focus group interview question *"Which one do you prefer in the lessons: individually, in pairs or in small groups?"* Only one out of fourteen students preferred to study individually and two of them also preferred to study in pairs. The rest of the interviewees were in favor of studying in small groups.

After completing each lesson, students were asked to make some comments about the activities conducted during lessons. They took notes in their notebooks. And they shared their notes with me. To illustrate the ideas of the learners about the use of small group activities, some of the students' diaries are presented below:

Student 2: *I think the collaborative activities in small groups were very useful to foster our thinking skills. As a member, everybody was responsible for contributing to the task. Meanwhile, we had the chance to create a cooperation and collaboration among us. Classroom interaction was also set-up in an enjoyable way. Our attention was taken to the subjects effectively because of the fun part of the activities.*

This statement demonstrates that some students are aware of importance of fostering thinking skills. At university level students are expected to be aware of the necessity of thinking skills to achieve their learning goals. The learner also emphasized the importance of fun part of the activities in foreign language classroom settings similar to the following students' expressions:

Student 5: *It was definitely more practical than the other studying methods. Because, the words and topic we learned in group became permanent in minds. At the same time, the class was full of fun.*

Student 8: *While we were enjoying the lesson, we learned the subjects on the other side. It was more natural and enjoyable. On the other hand, when we studied in groups, we had the chance to make more practice in English. Also, I was at ease in the group because I feel worried when I have to speak individually. That was much better.*

Some of the statements are also given below to illustrate the students' ideas about the advantages of group work activities to foster their communicative abilities.

They claimed that they learn better by the help of group dynamic since they feel free to express their ideas within a group without being judged by an authority or the whole class. Moreover, the necessity of creating an effective interaction among the learners was emphasized clearly in their statements. Their ideas are presented as in the following:

Student 1: *I oppose to studying individually. If I study in a group both my friends in the group and me can learn better. In group-work activities, we can both listen to each other and talk. It provides us with an effective cooperation.*

Student 4: *Studying in groups was very useful because we could learn from each other in a warm and free atmosphere. Also, it is not easy for me to speak in front of the others. Instead, I prefer to speak in the group.*

Student 7: *I like communicating with my classmates in the group and learning from them. To my understanding, collaborative activities should always be implemented in the lessons because language can't be learned with communicating and interacting with others.*

Some of them further claimed that the group work activities are useful for them to compensate the deficits in their language skills. They argued that while they learn from the others, the others also learn from them during practice activities. Their ideas are illustrated below:

Student 11: *The group dynamic encouraged us to speak English. At the same time, we learned new words from each other and made peer-correction. Also, the information exchange was constructed more effectively.*

Student 13: *Group-work always helped me to learn more effectively. Because, it gave the opportunity to notice the deficits and compensate them. It created a "collaborative understanding" in the classroom setting.*

Student 15: *The lacks in language skills can be compensated by the help of group-work activities. In this manner, we expressed our ideas more freely.*

On the other hand, a few of them stated they don't find group-work activities useful. They don't completely reject the use of group-work activities but favor to study individually in some cases. For example:

Student 3: *I need sometimes to study individually because everybody has different learning styles. I don't feel myself comfortable if the group members are much more*

successful than I am. I don't want to study with the ones whose language skills are worse than me. Then, I can't learn anything from them. So, I suppose I have an independent personality.

Student 6: *I find studying in groups practical only in making dialogues. Because I believe in my own abilities in language learning. On the other hand, during group-work activities every group member gave different ideas and for that reason there wasn't a definite result at the end.*

As can be understood from the reflections taken from some of the students' diaries, the majority of the students support the use of group-work activities in lessons. Most of them stated in their diaries that classroom interaction is the only way to develop their skills in speaking the target language. We might conclude, learners' evaluations for the use of small-group collaborative activities are rather positive.

4.4.2. The Learners' Evaluation of the Activities

In their diaries the learners indicated that they mostly like the activities in the lessons. They took notes each week and made brief comments about the activities. The most favored part of the activities was the materials freely selected for the activities. Students noted that they were bored of following the course book. They didn't want to stick to only one material during lessons. The class was already speaking class, and there was no need to stay connected with the course book. Some of the diary entries given below illuminate the finding:

Student 1: *These activities were very different from the classical ones. In classical teaching ways, the one who speaks most of the time is the teacher. Learners are just passive listeners to follow the book in front of them and listen to the teacher. I was very tense in the first lesson but in time it disappeared. Because the activities were very challenging and grasped our attention to the subjects.*

Student 15: *The topics were hidden inside the games and activities and it was a remarkable effort. This was the first time that I liked English so much. There were competitions, games, different dialogues and a completely stress free classroom setting. These techniques showed me that if foreign language is taught in that way, there can be nobody that doesn't know that language.*

Student 16: *In the beginning of the term, I had a lack of confidence. I never believed that I could perform in the language efficiently. But I overcame this problem through*

the activities which based on performance and practice. When I come to the board or the teacher ask a question, I don't feel nervous at all. Actually, I didn't know that I could speak English. In other words, by the help of these games and activities I gained self-confidence, I became aware that I can speak English, my desire to be volunteer in the lessons increased and my speaking anxiety noticeably decreased.

Student 18: *I appreciated that our teacher tried to make each of us speak. Even if we were reluctant to speak, somehow she tried to involve us in the activities. She didn't force us at all. On the contrary, she gently helped us to be active during the activities. In time, I noticed that there was nothing to be scared. She made lots of drillings for modeling. Sometimes she asked questions individually and sometimes to the class. In the last two weeks I was volunteer to answer the questions.*

The entries stated above are only a few of the exemplifications pointed out in learner diaries.

4.4.3. The Learners' Evaluation of the Classroom Setting

Inevitably, positive and negative elements work together in educational settings. In my study, the big size of the class, the seating arrangement and the limited time available for English lessons hindered the use of activities effectively. In some diaries, students complained about these negative factors as in the following:

Student 9: *We were in difficulty to communicate with each other because we have to sit on the line of seating desks. Especially, group members sitting on the each side of the desk experienced this badly. In some cases, we had to speak loudly to hear each other and it caused to the noise in the class. In collaborative activities, the seating order should be round-shape. Sorrowfully, I have to criticize this situation.*

Student 10: *The big size of the class was very irritating for me. Because of the big number of the students, we had limited time to present our tasks to the class. In foreign language lessons, the classes should be divided. Because foreign language learning is not the same with the other subjects. But still, I have to affirm that under these conditions, the teacher tried to do her best and it worked a lot.*

Student 17: *We will be tour guides in the future. So, we need to learn this language very well. But I see that we have only 4 hours classes every week. This situation makes it impossible that we learn this language effectively. The activities were very helpful for us but the time is not enough to internalize what we learn in the class.*

4.5. The Researcher's Observations and Notes

As a teacher researcher, I kept a journal to note what I observed in the classroom after each lesson. Conducting an action research was a different experience for me. But, it was very useful at the same time to develop new strategies and apply different techniques in my teaching practice. As Burns (2010) states action research is a very useful type of survey to extend our teaching skills, gain more experience as teachers and understand our classrooms and students' better. Hien (2009) also proposes that action research is a circling process and well matches with education because it both helps to teachers to develop new strategies applicable to the classroom settings and meets the needs of the learners.

According to my observations, in the first week of the term, almost all of the students were out of interest and unwilling to speak. They couldn't even focus on the activities in the first and the second week. From third week on, they started to enjoy the activities more. As a teacher, my role was to facilitate learning. I wasn't in the center of the teaching process. I tried to be a model to start the activities and then guided them to perform the activities by themselves.

The weekly plans and steps I went through for the action research were presented in Chapter 3. While implementing these activities, I paid attention to the warm-up sections because if I didn't catch the attention and interest of the learners, the whole process would be broken down. Warm-up activities were communicative activities such as telling a story, vocabulary games, Wh- question answer drillings in competitions etc. Since the learners are going to be tour guides or work in tourism-related jobs, I tried to give learners real-life situations with the necessary vocabulary items. It was useful for them to practice in these situations in real-like classroom settings.

When I completed the action research cycles after six weeks, I noticed that students were ready to perform new activities. We made a whole classroom discussion about the effectiveness of the activities at that week. How did the activities help them to develop their communicative skills? In what ways they didn't work? and so on. It was a great pleasure for me to hear that they were very satisfied with the small group collaborative activities. Especially, they emphasized that all the learners had the chance to speak at least once each week. One of the learners said that he didn't speak English at all in English speaking class throughout the whole semester. It was very surprising for

me that the student had never spoken in a speaking class. He expressed that the class was already crowded, they studied the course book only and he was also nervous about speaking English. So, it was quite normal that he didn't have the opportunity to share his ideas with the class.

To sum up, I might claim that small group collaborative activities created an efficient classroom environment for language learning. The aim of the activities was to develop the students' communicative skills as well as decreasing the degree of their anxiety. I found these activities quite useful.

CHAPTER V

5. CONCLUSIONS

This chapter firstly provides a brief summary of the present study. In doing so, the conclusions deduced from the instruments of FLCAS, focus group interview, students' diaries and the teacher journal are clearly presented. As a teacher researcher, the limitations that I encountered during the research are also explained comprehensively in the following section. Finally, some suggestions for further studies are made in this chapter to enlighten the coming studies.

5.1. Conclusions

Because of its complex nature, it is not surprising that language anxiety cannot be easily assessed. As Young (1991) articulates, language anxiety depends on different reasons such as ethnic or social background, prior language experiences, learner characteristics and classroom settings. For these reasons, it is not an easy way to reach definite conclusions through flexible findings. But still, some certain factors can be determined as sources of the learners' anxiety arousal such as learner characteristics, learners' beliefs about language learning, teachers' beliefs about language teaching, classroom procedures, test anxiety and some other reasons.

In the present study, to determine the sources of anxiety and eliminate these factors two research questions were built up and examined through four research tools. The research questions were:

1. What are the sources and the degree of English speaking anxiety of the participants in English language classes?
2. How can I reduce the students' English speaking anxiety?

Without identifying the origins, the problems cannot be sorted out. For this reason, the first aim of the study was to reveal the sources of the anxiety-arousal of the learners. With the aim of seeking for the answers of the first research question, FLCAS items and focus group interview questions were comprehensively analyzed and the findings demonstrated that the sources of the learners' anxiety were variable. As in Occhipinti's (2009) study, foreign language anxiety is a common feeling that affects learners in different ways. In other words, the sources of anxiety are various, but the feeling is common that affects learners in a variety of ways.

The results of the present study showed that the subjects weren't highly anxious for each category of the reasons defined in the previous chapter; but even if the number of the anxious learners weren't high, the problems cannot be ignored in educational settings. For all the categories, nearly half of the students were anxious about speaking English for different reasons. In the study, both the interview questions and related FLCAS items supported each other to enlighten the reasons why the learners felt anxious during English lessons. The subjects gave reasons for their anxiety arousal from different perspectives of views.

After defining the sources of anxiety, to find out the possible answers for the second research question, some small group collaborative classroom activities were conducted in the courses as it was suggested in the literature. As Clement et al. (1994) suggested group cohesion helps learners to lower anxiety and higher self-confidence. According to Occhipinti (2009), working in small groups and dealing with interesting topics foster classroom interaction and allow learners to know each other while practicing in the foreign language. Similarly, in the present study, students were in favor of performing in small group collaborative activities and they came up with constructive comments in their diaries. They expressed that these activities developed the ability of their self-expression within small group constructions as well as creating a more real-like classroom environment. They had the chance to know each other and learn from each other at the same time. As a researcher teacher, I also noted in my journal that the learners paid a high attention to the activities and expressed their ideas more freely within small groups. The fun part of the activities also cannot be neglected. I believe that enjoyable activities, games and competitions live at the heart of teaching process in all age levels.

5.2. Limitations of the Study

Although the findings of this study made favorable contributions to decrease learners' speaking anxiety through collaborative speaking activities in English classes, some limitations of the study should be taken into consideration. One limitation of the study was that this study was limited only to a certain classroom context and the findings cannot be generalized to all contexts. Therefore, the educational setting in the study was specific to only this environment. In this frame, the number of the learners

was not sufficient to make generalizations, as it requires bigger sampling of participants.

On the other hand, the classroom was too crowded for implementing speaking activities efficiently. It was difficult for me, as a teacher researcher; to go through the ways students follow during pair or group works.

The other limitation was the allocated time for English speaking class in the second grade, which was only 4 hours. So, while performing the activities during lessons, the time was a kind of inhibiter to create a satisfying classroom environment. It was really hard to draw students' attention to the activities and get pleasing results at the end. So, it can be claimed that in educational contexts there are plenty of factors affecting the efficiency of the study.

5.3. Suggestions for Further Studies

In the present study, it was difficult to conduct efficient classroom activities because of the overcrowded class. Suggestions for further study should include researches on the same problem but with a small size of class. The number of the participants was also not sufficient for achieving the goals of the study in general terms. Whereas, conducting this study with a bigger size of different classes would likely provide findings with additional aspects of foreign language anxiety. Namely, the study could be conducted with more colleagues and in more classes, thus the colleagues can compare the situations in their classes and construct a cooperation to sort out the problems if there is any. Sharing the ideas of the teachers might influence the techniques they use in their classes and help them to develop their teaching styles in a variety of ways.

Additionally, the practicing period of the activities might be extended to get more satisfying results at the end of the survey. Both the allocated time of the syllabus and the weeks in which the activities were performed, were very limited to achieve the best results of the research.

To summarize, I suggest the researchers to investigate this issue in their survey and contribute both to their teaching experiences as well as developing learners' foreign language skills and to the literature from various aspects.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1. Appendix 1: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Turkish Version

Sayın katılımcı, aşağıda soruları yer alan anket çalışması öğrencilerin İngilizce dersinde yaşadıkları konuşma gerginliğinin derecesini ölçmektedir. Çalışmalarınızın tamamıyla bilimsel amaçlarla kullanılacağını ve paylaşılmayacağını belirtir, katılımınız için teşekkür ederiz.

Cinsiyet: ☐ Kadın   ☐ Erkek

Yaş:

Yaşadığınız yer:

Anne & Babanızın mesleği:

Bundan önceki (lise, ortaokul vb.) eğitim sürecinde İngilizce dersine karşı ilginiz ve tutumunuzu nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?

………

………

………

………

İngilizce dersinden beklentileriniz nelerdir?

………

………

………

		Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
1.	İngilizce dersinde konuşurken hiçbir zaman kendimi tam olarak emin hissetmiyorum					
2.	İngilizce dersinde hata yapma endişesi yaşamıyorum.					
3.	İngilizce dersinde sıranın bana geleceğini anladığımda kaygılanıyorum					
4.	Öğretmenin İngilizce konuşurken, ne söylediğini anlamadığımda korkuya kapılıyorum					
5.	İngilizce derslerinin artması beni rahatsız etmiyor					
6.	İngilizce dersinde kendimi dersle alakası olmayan şeyleri düşünürken buluyorum					
7.	Diğer öğrencilerin İngilizce konusunda benden daha iyi olduklarını düşünmekten kendimi alamıyorum					
8.	İngilizce konuşma sınavlarında genellikle heyecan duymuyorum					

9.		Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
10.	İngilizce dersinde hazırlıksız konuşmak zorunda kaldığımda paniğe kapılıyorum					
11.	İngilizce dersinden başarısız olmamın sebep olacağı sonuçlara katlanmak konusunda endişeliyim					
12.	Bazı insanların İngilizce derslerine karşı neden bu kadar kaygı duyduklarını anlamıyorum					
13.	İngilizce dersinde bildiklerimi unutacak kadar gerileyebiliyorum					
14.	İngilizce dersinde sorulara gönüllü cevap vermekten çekiniyorum					
15.	Anadili İngilizce olan biriyle konuşmak beni endişelendirmiyor					
16.	Öğretmenin düzeltme yaptığı şeyi anlamayınca moralim bozuluyor					
17.	İngilizce dersi için çok hazırlıklı olsam bile gerginlik hissediyorum					
18.	İngilizce dersine gitmek genellikle içimden gelmiyor					
19.	İngilizce dersinde konuşurken kendimden emin olduğumu hissediyorum					
20.	Öğretmenin yaptığım her hatayı düzeltmeye hazır olmasından korkuyorum					
21.	İngilizce dersinde sıra bana geldiğinde kalbim yerinden çıkacakmış gibi hissedebiliyorum					
22.	İngilizce sınavı için ne kadar çok çalışırsam o kadar kafam karışıyor					
23.	İngilizce dersine çok iyi hazırlanmak konusunda sıkıntı yaşamıyorum					
24.	Diğer öğrencilerin İngilizceyi her zaman benden daha iyi konuştuklarını hissediyorum					
25.	Diğer öğrencilerin karşısında İngilizce konuşurken kendimden oldukça emin hissediyorum					

		Kesinlikle katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılmıyorum	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum
26.	İngilizce dersi o kadar hızlı ilerliyor ki geride kalmaktan korkuyorum					
27.	İngilizce dersinde kendimi diğer derslerde olduğumdan daha gergin ve kaygılı hissediyorum					
28.	İngilizce dersinde konuşurken kafam karışıyor ve gerginleşiyorum					
29.	İngilizce dersine gelirken kendimden eminim ve kendimi rahat hissediyorum					
30.	Öğretmenin söylediği her kelimeyi anlamadığımda sinirleniyorum					
31.	İngilizce konuşmak için öğrenmek zorunda olduğum kuralların sayısıyla boğuluyorum					
32.	İngilizce konuşurken diğer öğrencilerin bana gülmesinden korkuyorum					
33.	Anadili İngilizce olan kişilerin yanında muhtemelen rahat hissederim					
34.	Öğretmen önceden hazırlanmadığım konular hakkında sorular sorduğunda geriliyorum					

Görüş ve Önerileriniz:

7.2. Appendix 2: Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). English Version.

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more English classes.
6. During English class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during oral exams in English.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing English class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over English classes.
12. In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in English classes.
14. I wouldn't be nervous speaking English with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about them.
17. I often feel like not going to English class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in English class.
19. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.
21. The more I study for English tests, the more confused I get.
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.
25. English class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in English class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English class.
28. When I am on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word my English teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak English.

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.

33. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

7.3. Appendix 3: Necessary Permission Note Received from Elaine Horwitz to Use FLCAS in the Present Study

Subject to the usual requirements for acknowledgment, I am pleased to grant you permission to use the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale in your research. Specifically, you must acknowledge my authorship of the FLCAS in any oral or written reports of your research. I also request that you inform me of your findings. Some scoring information about the FLCAS can be found in my book Becoming a Language Teacher: A Practical Guide to Second Language Learning and Teaching, 2nd edition, Pearson, 2013.

7.4. Appendix 4: Interview Checklist. Turkish Version.

1. İngilizce dersinde Türkçe kullanılması seni nasıl etkiliyor?
2. İngilizce onuşurken heyecandan söyleyeceklerini unutup kaldığın oluyor mu? Bu seni nasıl etkiliyor?
3. Diğer öğrencilerin önünde İngilizce konuşmak seni heyecanlandırıyor mu?
4. Kendini hiç diğer öğrencilerle İngilizce konusunda kıyaslar mısın?
5. İngilizce dersine herhangi bir hata yaptığında öğretmeniniz bunu nasıl karşılıyor? Kızıyor mu? Hemen düzeltiyor mu?
6. Hatalarının hemen düzeltilmesini ister misin?
7. Hiç İngilizce dersinde ne olup bittiğini anlayamadığın oluyor mu? Sence bu neden oluyor?
8. İngilizce dersinde hangi tür çalışmayı tercih edersin?
   a. Bireysel   b. bir arkadaşınla beraber   c. gruplar halinde

7.5. Appendix 5: Interview Checklist. English Version.

1. What do you think about using Turkish in English class?
2. Do you ever get anxious while speaking English in the classroom and forget what to say? How does this affect you?
3. Do you get anxious while speaking English in front of the other students?
4. Do you compare yourself with the other students for English?
5. How does your teacher react to your mistakes in English classes? Does she get angry with you? Does she correct the mistakes immediately?
6. Do you prefer your mistakes to be corrected immediately?
7. Do you ever get lost in the lessons in English lessons? Why?
8. Which one do you prefer in English lesson?
   a. Individually   b. in pairs   c. in groups