Anxiety and its Effects on Adult Learners who are Learning Two Foreign Languages Concurrently

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Abstract

The present study used a mixed research design in order to examine anxiety and its negative impact on adult learners who are learning English and French concurrently in the Department of Translation and Interpretation at Kars Kafkas University, Turkey. In the study, the researcher used an anxiety questionnaire for quantitative data and a semi-structured interview for qualitative data. The descriptive statistics revealed that nearly half of the participants were anxious in terms of communication, testing, and being evaluated negatively while learning two foreign languages concurrently. The inferential statistics showed that gender was not a determinant factor and that grades were not significantly different. The qualitative data analyses revealed that the reciprocal effects of learning two foreign languages might cause anxiety by generating confusion in using the two languages concurrently. While the quantitative data analyses revealed that all students completing the questionnaires had a mild level of anxiety, the qualitative data analyses revealed that the majority of those participating in the interviews experienced a high level of anxiety. The results and the findings are discussed in the light of previous studies conducted in this research context. In addition, some pedagogical implications are suggested.

Keywords: Anxiety, Foreign Language Learning, Adult Learners

1. Introduction

Anxiety has been explored as a feeling based on the fear of anything new, and it has been more broadly identified as personal feelings of tension and worry stemming from the nervous system. Hence, language anxiety is similar to other kinds of anxiety, as clinical experience has indicated that anxious language learners also have symptoms such as a lack of concentration, or feelings of worry and dread during the learning process, and that all these factors might force learners to exhibit avoidance behaviors (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). In this respect, anxiety is not only intuitive but it is logical, as it affects the process of learning, and so anxiety is an outstanding issue in the area of language teaching and psychology (Horwitz, 2001).

The literature reveals that studies conducted on anxiety have found specific causes of anxiety and have associated these causes with a variety of factors. Young (1990) claimed that anxiety was affected by personal and interpersonal factors, such as learners' perspectives and intsructors' attitudes. Gkonou (2013) classified a broad spectrum of reasons for anxiety, and asserted that ''input, language skills, the teacher, mistakes made in class, high reliance on marks, tests, and extrinsic motivation constitute the causes of anxiety'' (p. 65). Similarly, Kayaoğlu and Sağlamel (2013) claimed that linguistic difficulties, cognitive challenges, teachers' roles, competitiveness and insufficient information might lead to anxiety. As well as anxiety-provoking factors, strategies for minimizing the negative impact of anxiety also merit attention. Moreover, these strategies should be developed in such a way that they are integrated with motivating factors, because motivation, achievement, and strategies have been identified as interconnected (Bernaus, Wilson, and Gardner, 2009). In this field, cognitive, affective, and behavioral strategies might be effective in decreasing anxiety (Kondo and Ying-Ling, 2004). Another study conducted by Asif (2017) indicated that anxiety played a significant role in an EFL context. In addition, it was asserted that, on the one hand, a discouraging classroom setting was an anxiety provoking factor, but that, on the other hand, a motivating and encouraging classroom setting, and the role of teachers could be effective in reducing the level of anxiety. The studies conducted on anxiety and its causes have provided a theoretical background against which the issue of overcoming language anxiety may be addressed. Thus, in terms of the anxiety-provoking factors mentioned above, anxiety might be related to internal or external factors, which might force language learners to lose faith in their learning capacity, performance or language aptitude.

Nonetheless, there are still areas open to investigation in relation to the sources of anxiety in the research context. Previous studies have not dealt directly with anxiety and learning the two foreign languages English and French in terms of reciprocal effects upon learning, whether positive or negative. Therefore, unlike previous studies conducted on anxiety and language, the purpose of the present study is to pinpoint the reciprocal effects of anxiety and learning the two foreign languages concurrently. In this respect, the present study might be effective in bridging this research gap by exploring the interaction between anxiety and learning two foreign languages, in this case English and French, concurrently.

The present study hypothesized that anxiety affected foreign language learners. It first focused on anxiety and its negative impact upon adult language learners, and second focused on how learning English and French concurrently affected the learners. Studies conducted in this research context have identified key factors, which have a negative impact on learning a foreign language (Alrabai, 2014; Aydın, 2008, 2013; Gkonou, 2013; Melouah, 2013; Williams and Andrade, 2008). However, this study examined directly the impact of anxiety on students who were learning two foreign languages, English and French, concurrently, and the reciprocal effects of learning these two foreign languages upon students in terms of anxiety. The study involved the following quantitative research questions:

1) Does anxiety affect learners who are learning the two foreign languages, English and French, concurrently?
2) Is there any significant difference in the impact of anxiety upon male and female students?
3) Is there any significant difference for foreign language classes at different grades of learning?

For the qualitative data, the study was designed according to the qualitative research question below.

4) What are the students' feelings of anxiety while learning the two foreign languages on the same program?

2. Literature Review

The early literature in this field revealed how many teachers and students held the strong belief that anxiety formed a hindrance to learning a foreign language, and that learners experienced anxiety at different levels, as individual reactions showed differences (Horwitz et al., 1986). Therefore, the studies in this research context have found different causes of anxiety. In relation to reading, it was found that personal factors (e.g., fear of making mistakes) and text features (e.g., unfamiliar topic and culture) could affect the level of anxiety (Ahmad, Al-Shboul, Nordin, Rahman, Burhan, and Madarsha, 2013). Similarly, Genc (2016) found that learners' personal traits and the nature of texts could increase the level of anxiety. When speaking skills were considered, anxiety was highlighted as a dominant factor affecting communication, and insufficient vocabulary was found to be a main source of anxiety (Akkakosan, 2016). Likewise, a study conducted by Bhatti, Memon, and Pathan (2016) asserted that the main source of anxiety was a lack of communicative practice in various social contexts. Gkonou (2011) asserted that classroom anxiety and speaking anxiety correlated, and that writing anxiety was related to a fear of peer and teacher evaluation. In addition, learners could be anxious in a classroom setting, because they felt that their performance was inadequate through fear of speaking or being left behind in the language class (Liu and Chen, 2014).

All the factors mentioned above indicate that anxiety does not derive from only one cause and that other factors that may have a negative impact on language anxiety must be examined. This is because psychological, pedagogical, linguistic, cultural, and socio-economic factors might affect the level of anxiety (Khan, 2015).

The studies conducted in this respect have proved that language anxiety may arise from a variety of sources, and that it makes a tremendous impact on different skills. Alrabai (2014) conducted a longitudinal study on the sources of anxiety and its impacts on Saudi EFL learners by administering the FLCAS to 1389 participants. In the study, descriptive statistics and explanatory factor analysis were used to examine the level of anxiety. The study showed that EFL learners were highly anxious in terms of three basic sources. Comprehension anxiety, communication anxiety, and negative attitudes were identified as the basic causes of anxiety, together with subcomponents stemming from negative evaluation, speaking anxiety, social-image anxiety, and language test anxiety. Similarly, Liu (2006) carried out a study on language anxiety and its possible sources, in which 547 EFL learners took part and the FLCAS was used for descriptive statistics. To gather qualitative data, observation and semi-structured interviews were held. In the study, four basic factors involving anxiety came to the fore: 1) in speaking classes, most of the students were anxious, 2) students with a high level of proficiency were less anxious, 3) students who were asked to respond to the teachers or assigned to speak in English felt more anxious, but during pair work, they felt less anxious, and 4) students who had been previously exposed to oral English were less anxious.

Another study on the causes of anxiety was conducted by Melouah (2013). The study was a descriptive study, involving 54 randomly selected EFL adult learners and language anxiety in speaking classes. In the study, quantitative data were gathered through a modified version of the FLCAS. The study showed that anxiety had a negative influence on EFL learners' oral performance because of some key factors like a lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, error correction, language proficiency, fear of interaction, fear of the perceptions of others, and fear of speaking to natives.

As well as investigating the factors causing anxiety, studies have been carried out on strategies for coping with anxiety and its negative effects. Kondo and Ying-Ling (2004) conducted one such study, involving 209 Japanese EFL learners and focusing on strategies to eliminate the effect of anxiety. First, the researchers administered the English Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (ELCAS). Second, they used an open-ended questionnaire for the data collection in the study, in which five categories for coping with language anxiety were determined. These were relaxation, positive thinking, preparation, resignation, and peer seeking.

When the negative effect of anxiety on foreign language teaching is addressed, teachers' roles come to the fore as a way of decreasing anxiety in a classroom setting. In this research context, Headley and Campell (2011) carried out a quantitative and qualitative study on the capabilities of 299 primary school teachers for recognizing children with symptoms of anxiety. A questionnaire (Teachers' Anxiety Identification and Referral Questionnaire) developed by the researchers was used. The study revealed that although teachers were capable of determining and making decisions about children who had severe levels of anxiety, it was difficult for them to differentiate children with moderate anxiety symptoms from those with severe anxiety disorders. In this respect, female teachers were found to be better than male teachers. The teachers' qualitative responses indicated that a child's moderate anxiety symptoms might be indicative of a bigger issue. Therefore, it was suggested that teachers needed to be able to identify the children's social well-being, which might be helpful in identifying excessive anxiety problems. The same researchers, Headley and Campell (2013) conducted a similar study, involving 315 primary school teachers and investigating their knowledge of anxiety to determine the symptoms of anxiety in children. A questionnaire (Teachers' Anxiety Identification and Referral Questionnaire) developed by the researchers and inductive thematic analysis were used. The study showed that although teachers knew what anxiety was, they could not distinguish between normal anxiety and excessive anxiety. Instead, they all identified it as a negative experience.

In a similar way, Williams and Andrade (2008) carried out a study, involving 243 Japenese EFL learners from six different universities in Japan. An anxiety questionnaire was administered to obtain descriptive statistics and the chi-square test was used. The study found the following three results:1) anxiety might be related to the output and processing stages, 2) teachers might cause anxiety, and 3) EFL learners might be helpless in coping with anxiety. Hence, the study proposed that teachers should know what might cause anxiety and how to take measures to decrease the level of anxiety. Another proposal was that learners should be informed about how to cope with anxiety.

Similar studies have been conducted in the Turkish EFL research context. Aydın (2008) carried out a study that focused on Turkish EFL students suffering from language anxiety. The study involved descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to examine causes of anxiety and its impact stemming from negative evaluation. A total of 112 EFL learners from a state university took part in the study and the FLAS was used to examine the effect of anxiety. The study revealed that negative evaluation had a negative effect on EFL learners and that it was one of the main factors causing anxiety. The same researcher conducted a similar study focusing on factors that might affect the level of test anxiety at elementary schools. A total of 477 EFL learners selected from elementary schools participated in the study which involved the Test Anxiety Scale (TAS) and background questionnaire. Descriptive and correlational analyses were used for the results, indicating that young learners were slightly anxious. In addition, test anxiety was found to be correlated with the factors like grade, gender, age, and economic conditions (Aydın, 2013).

Another study carried out by Çağatay (2015) focused on the speaking anxiety of 147 EFL learners selected from the English preparatory classes for different departments of a state university (i.e., teaching, engineering, psychology, chemistry, and economics). Data for descriptive and inferential statistics were gathered through the 18 items of the FLCAS. The study pinpointed that students felt anxious when speaking to a native speaker, whereas they felt at ease in communication with their peers. In addition, male participants were found to be less anxious than female.

Similarly, Kayaoğlu and Sağlamel (2013) carried out a qualitative study on anxiety in speaking classes. To collect the data, the researchers used semi-structured interviews with 30 EFL students. The study indicated that linguistic difficulties, cognitive challenges, teachers' roles, competitiveness, and insufficient information correlated with language anxiety.

Subaşı (2010) conducted a quantitative and qualitative study on the causes of anxiety in Turkish EFL students' oral practice. The whole study was designed around the two major issues of self-perceived speaking ability and negative evaluation. In the study, 55 participants took part, a multiple-choice survey was administered to all participants, and 15 of 55 participants were interviewed. The study revealed that self-perceived speaking ability and negative evaluation might affect the level of anxiety felt by EFL learners.

Şenel (2012) carried out a quantitative and qualitative study on the oral communication problems and anxiety that EFL students at university were exposed to. The participants, who were selected from senior class students in the English Department, were administered a questionnaire and interviewed for data collection. The study revealed that the main source of oral communication anxiety was teachers and the curriculum. To overcome the negative impact of anxiety, it was proposed that as native speakers might be more tolerant and provide more opportunities than non-native speakers, native speakers might be effective in decreasing the level of anxiety that EFL learners suffered from.

Elaldi (2016) conducted a study on the anxiety that EFL adult learners were exposed to. The study involved 98 EFL students from preparatory class to fourth grade. The data were gathered through the FLCAS. The results showed a moderate level of anxiety and indicated that senior class students were a little more anxious than those in the preparatory class. In addition, male participants were found to be more anxious than female.

As this review indicates, the FLCAS (Horwitz et al.,1986), which examines three facets of anxiety, has gained its place in the theoretical literature. In the light of the findings of the aforementioned studies on anxiety, it may be concluded that anxious students are the products of both environmental factors and individual traits. Therefore, the reciprocal effects of anxiety and foreign language learning must not be examined solely in relation to external factors; rather, learners' internal factors should also be taken into consideration as potential causes of anxiety.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The participants were adult learners selected from the Department of Translation and Interpretation at Kafkas University, Turkey. The study covered all grades in the department, in which the students learn English and French concurrently. The participants had background knowledge of English before university and they had passed the university entrance exam on this basis. However, they had started to learn French for the first time at university. A total of 133 adult learners, aged from 18 to 27, voluntarily joined the study. Twenty-five of the 133 participants were randomly selected for the interviews.

3.2 Instruments

The literature has shown that many studies have been carried out on anxiety, especially after the development of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, which is a Likert-type scale with 33 items that examine anxiety in terms of three facets: ''communication apprehension, test-anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation in the foreign language classroom'' (Horwitz, et al.,1986, p.129). In this study, the FLCAS was used to gather quantitative data, because it has gained its place in the theoretical literature (Tran, 2012), and has proven its reliability in examining anxiety (Aida, 1994). In this respect, the researcher used the original form of the FLCAS. According to Horwitz, et al., (1986) ''Communication apprehension involves items 1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, 32; test anxiety involves items 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28; and fear of negative evaluation involves items 2, 7, 13, 19, 23, 31, 33'' (as cited in Cao, 2011, pp. 79-80). The scale was scored from 1 to 5 points as *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, No Idea, Agree, and Strongly Agree.*

The researcher used face-to-face, semi-structured interviews to obtain qualitative data. In the interviews, the interviewees were allowed to use their native language Turkish, because they could express their feelings better. The researcher translated the responses given by the interviewees into English. To gather the qualitative data through interviews, the central qualitative question was considered, and the following sub-questions were posed to the interviewees:

1) How do you feel in language classes?
2) What are the difficulties in language classes?
3) How do you feel when making mistakes in language classes?
4) How do you feel in exams?
5) Are you confused while speaking in English or French? Do you use an English word instead of a French word? (or vice versa)

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The study covered the 2016-2017 academic year and was carried out according to the following procedure. For the first step, quantitative data were collected through the FLCAS, which was administered to 133 university students (55 male and 78 female). For the second step, the data collected through the questionnaires were input into the SPSS program for the analyses of descriptive and inferential statistics. For the third step, interviews, which lasted for between ten to twenty minutes for each interviewee, were used to collect the qualitative data. All responses gathered from the interviewees were transcribed and then classified according to the recurring themes in the interviews. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed and discussed in the light of previous studies.

3.4 Data Analyses

The research was designed using a mixed method approach (Creswell, 2009). The reliability of the present study was checked and it was found that the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.75. The researcher used descriptive and inferential statistics for the analyses of quantitative data. As the questionnaire was a Likert-type scale, the response *No idea* was not computed in order to attain objective data, and the levels of the questionnaire were examined according to frequency, standard deviation, and mean. In addition, a t-test and an ANOVA test were performed for the inferential statistics.

The qualitative data were analyzed according to *Field Methods* (Ryan and Bernard, 2003), which suggested four basic steps: 1) determining themes and sub-themes, 2) discovering the most important themes, 3) constituting the hierarchies of themes, 4) placing the themes into a theoretical model.

4. Results

The initial step in the study involved the questionnaire (FLCAS), which was administered to the learners from the preparatory to the senior classes in the Department of Translation and Interpretation. After the questionnaire had been administered to all students, the data were computed to examine descriptive and inferential statistics. The following tables present the descriptive statistical results of the FLCAS. Table 1 gives the descriptive statistics for communication apprehension; Table 2 gives the descriptive statistics for test anxiety; Table 3 gives the descriptive statistics for fear of negative evaluation. For inferential statistics, Table 4 gives the results of the t-test, and Table 5 gives the results of the ANOVA test.

4.1 Analyses of Quantitative Data

Table 1. Communication Apprehension

Items		SA	A	NI	D	SD	Mean	Sd	General mean	General Sd.
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class	f	16	36	26	35	16	3.00	1.39		
	%	12	27.1	19.5	26.3	12				
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language	f	9	37	29	35	21	3.09	3.45*		
	%	6.8	27.8	21.8	26.3	15.8				
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class	f	18	45	25	25	19	3.16	1.42		
	%	14.3	33.8	18.8	18.8	14.3				
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers	f	20	47	32	26	5	3.52	1.22	3.18	1.51
	%	15	35.3	24.1	19.5	3.8				
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting	f	20	41	27	24	17	3.22	1.43		
	%	15	30.8	20.3	18	12.8				
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class	f	24	48	32	16	8	3.66	1.25		
	%	18	36.1	24.1	12	6				
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students	f	11	32	46	24	15	3.00	1.40		
	%	8.3	24.1	34.6	18	11.3				
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class	f	9	17	34	48	23	2.39	1.27		
	%	6.8	12.8	25.6	36.1	17.3				
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says	f	23	32	27	30	19	3.09	1.49		
	%	17.3	24.1	20.3	22.6	14.3				
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language	f	6	37	50	30	5	3.11	1.19		
	%	4.5	27.8	37.6	22.6	3.8				
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language	f	11	36	39	23	22	3.75	1.18		
	%	8.3	27.1	29.3	17.3	16.5				

Table 1 gives the descriptive statistics for communication apprehension in learning a foreign language. While items 14, 18, and 32 examine the participants' positive feelings, the other items, 1, 4, 9, 15, 24, 27, 29, and 30, are based on learners' negative feelings about foreign language learning. The responses given to the items show that nearly half of the students do not feel completely at ease while speaking in a foreign language, in that they suffer from nervousness, a lack of self-confidence, and feelings of self-consciousness.

Item 1 refers to the learners' general feelings in language classes. It indicates that half of the students feel unsure of themselves when speaking in language classes. Items 4, 15, and 29 reflect learners' feelings when they do not understand what is being said or corrected. Nearly half of the participants claim to be anxious because of not understanding, which indicates that an insufficient level of proficiency may affect anxiety. Item 9 shows that more than half of the participants might panic if they have not prepared for the language class in advance. Items 18 and 24 show that a small number of the students relate the source of their anxiety to feeling self-conscious and to lacking self-confidence. Item 27 indicates that anxiety may cause confusion in language classes. Item 30 shows that some students find the rules in language overwhelming. They relate the source of their anxiety in speaking to the formulation of the language through the grammatical rules that they feel to be obliged to use. Items 14 and 32

show that communication with a native speaker can decrease anxiety. While the majority of the participants claim that they are at ease while speaking to a native speaker, others claim that they feel nervous.

When the general mean score of the items (m: 3.18) is considered, it is seen to be slightly above a score of three, indicating that nearly half of the participants are anxious in speaking because of the anxiety-provoking factors mentioned above. Unlike the other items, the value of the standard deviation is above a score of three only in item 4 due to homogeneity.

Table 2. **Test Anxiety**

Items		SA	A	NI	D	SD	Mean	Sd	General mean	General Sd.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	f	7	24	33	39	24	2.47	1.31		
	%	5.3	18	24.8	29.3	18				
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes	f	18	47	40	16	5	2.66	1.17		
	%	13.5	35.3	30.1	12	3.8				
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	f	9	27	30	42	18	2.65	1.32		
	%	6.8	20.3	22.6	31.6	13.5				
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	f	13	39	42	26	4	3.37	1.22		
	%	9.8	29.3	31.6	19.5	3				
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	f	12	46	23	31	16	3.06	1.34		
	%	9	34.6	17.3	23.3	12				
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	f	20	45	33	19	8	3.54	1.27		
	%	15	33.8	24.8	14.3	6			2.93	1.27
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	f	23	49	24	28	8	3.47	1.28		
	%	17.3	36.8	18	21.1	6				
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	f	8	31	22	39	28	2.54	1.35		
	%	6	23.3	16.5	29.3	21.1				
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	f	6	18	36	42	24	2.33	1.25		
	%	4.5	13.5	27.1	31.6	18				
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	f	13	39	32	29	20	2.96	1.41		
	%	9.8	29.3	24.1	21.8	15				
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	f	7	30	40	33	16	2.75	1.32		
	%	5.3	22.6	30.1	24.8	12				
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	f	15	38	29	36	10	3.12	1.32		
	%	11.3	28.6	21.8	27.1	7.5				
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	f	10	26	39	43	12	2.76	1.30		
	%	7.5	19.5	29.3	32.3	9				
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	f	6	17	38	54	14	2.41	1.15		
	%	4.5	12.8	28.6	40.6	10.5				
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	f	26	48	39	14	3	3.87	1.09		
	%	19.5	36.1	29.3	10.5	2.3				

Table 2 gives the descriptive statistics related to the students' test anxiety. While items 5, 8, 11, 22 and 28 refer to the learners' positive feelings, the other items, 3, 6, 10, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 25, and 26, refer to their negative feelings.

Items 3 and 20 indicate that nearly half of the participants are afraid of being called on in foreign language classes. Items 5, 11, 17, and 28 indicate that fewer than half of the students think that joining language classes makes them anxious. However, most of the participants think that they are at ease in language classes. Considering items 8, 10 and 21, it is clearly seen that some students fear failing in exams, which may be a key factor leading to anxiety in foreign language classes. In addition, the other items, 6, 16, 22, 25, and 26 indicate that fewer than half of the participants feel anxious for other reasons, such as a fear of having nothing to do, prejudice towards language classes in spite of being well prepared, feeling pressure or tense, and a fear of being left behind. Notably, item 12 shows that a high number of students fear forgetting what they know, which might be another important factor leading to anxiety in language classes.

The general mean score of the items is near to a score of three (m: 2.93), indicating that fewer than half of the participants are anxious during exams, while the others are not. Table 2 reveals that exams and their consequences might have a negative impact on students, and that they might be regarded as barriers in language learning. The results show that students may feel anxious before a language class, indicating that the students accept failure in advance even though they have prepared well. It also reveals that these students are prejudiced against language classes, and that the acceptance of failure in advance makes them anxious.

Table 3. Fear of Negative Evaluation

Items		SA	A	NI	D	SD	Mean	Sd	General mean	General Sd.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	f	31	41	17	35	8	3.45	1.35		
	%	23.3	30.8	12.8	26.3	6				
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	f	5	22	36	37	26	2.36	1.28		
	%	3.8	16.5	27.1	27.8	19.5				
13 It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	f	10	33	33	41	16	2.80	1.32		
	%	7.5	24.8	24.8	30.8	12			2.71	1.35
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	f	15	21	34	40	20	2.69	1.42		
	%	11.3	15.8	25.6	30.1	15				
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	f	6	26	36	36	26	2.46	1.32		
	%	4.5	19.5	27.1	27.1	19.5				
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	f	12	20	16	43	40	2.31	1.37		
	%	9	15	12	32.3	30.1				
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	f	11	36	39	23	22	2.90	1.44		
	%	8.3	27.1	29.3	17.3	16.5				

Table 3 gives the descriptive statistics related to the learners' feelings about negative evaluation. Items 2 and 19 indicate that fewer than half of the students are anxious due to fear of making mistakes and being corrected. Items 7 and 23 clearly reveal that a small number of the students believe that other students perform better, indicating that the students who think that others are better are prejudiced against their own capacities for foreign language learning. Items 13, 31, and 33 show that fewer than half of the students fear other students' negative evaluation or teachers' negative reactions, when they are asked to speak or answer.

The general mean score of the items (m: 2.71) is near to a score of three, indicating that fewer than half of the participants fear being evaluated negatively. Considering the results in the table, three components come to the fore as predominant factors making some students anxious in language classes. These are negative evaluation, embarrassment, and the acceptance of failure in advance.

Table 4. The results of the independent samples t-test

Gender	N	Mean	Sd	t	df	p.
Male	55	2.79	.564	-3.937	131	.924
Female	78	3.17	.538			

Table 4 shows the results of the t-test, indicating that there was no statistically significant difference between male and female participants. That is to say, the result of the test reveals that the null hypothesis in the study (*There is no significant difference between gender and anxiety*) cannot be rejected, as the p value is above the statistically accepted rate (p > .05).

Table 5. The results of the One-way ANOVA test

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Square	F	p.
Between Groups	1.867	4	.467	1.411	.234
Within Groups	42.321	128	.331		
Total	44.188	132			

Table 5 shows the results of the ANOVA test. The p value shows that the grades are not significantly different. According to the ANOVA test result, it is possible to say that the null hypothesis (*There is no significant difference between anxiety and grade*) cannot be rejected inasmuch as the p value is above the statistically accepted rate (p > .05).

4.2 Analyses of Qualitative Data

To gather the qualitative data, a semi-structured interview was administered to twenty-five students, selected randomly from amongst the students who had completed the questionnaire on anxiety. During the interviews, the selected participants could use their native language Turkish to express what they really felt. Later, the researcher transcribed the responses given by the participants. In the light of recurring themes, the transcripts of interviews were analyzed according to five categories: 1) Students' general feelings in English and French classes, 2) Difficulties in foreign language classes, 3) Fear of making mistakes in language classes, 4) Test anxiety (participants' feelings towards exams), and 5) The reciprocal effects of the two foreign languages, English and French. The analyses of the qualitative data brought out some basic factors, such as teachers' roles (their attitudes towards learners and reactions to mistakes), insufficient proficiency levels (a lack of vocabulary, poor speaking skills), a lack of self-confidence, being prejudiced against one's own capacities, fear of failure, and transfer between the two foreign languages (the negative effect of similar words in speaking and pronunciation).

4.2.1 Students' general feelings in English and French classes

Students' general feelings concerning foreign language classes are negative due to some anxiety-provoking factors. A high percentage of the students in the interviews claimed to be anxious, because they were afraid of being misunderstood and of making mistakes. Most of them reported that they felt anxious while speaking to the teacher, because they felt under pressure for fear of making mistakes. The participants' general feelings indicate that as well as external factors such as others' negative evaluation, the reason why they feel anxious is related to their own personal traits and proficiency levels to some extent, which leads them to isolate themselves from language classes. The following quotations from the interviews illustrate why they feel anxious in language classes.

''I get nervous while speaking to the teacher, but I am at ease while speaking to one of my friends.'' (*Interviewee 4*)

''I feel embarrassed as I think that I use the language (English) incorrectly, and that my poor pronunciation affects me negatively. Hence, neither my friends nor my teachers can understand me.'' (*Interviewee 8*)

''I fear that I cannot understand my teacher due to my poor English and French.'' (*Interviewee 9*)

''I feel bad in language classes owing to my poor speaking skills. When I leave the lesson, I immediately want to get away from the school to forget the language classes.'' (*Interviewee 14*)

''while speaking to the teachers, I hardly speak and I feel under pressure. Whereas, while speaking to my peers, I am at ease.'' (*Interviewee 18*)

4.2.2 Difficulties in foreign language classes (English and French classes)

As well as the participants' general feelings related to foreign language classes, some specific difficulties were also determined. Participants reported that they had some handicaps in English and French classes. According to the responses given by the participants, the main reasons for these handicaps are insufficient vocabulary and a lack of practice. The following quotations illustrate this view well.

''As I do not know the meanings of some words, I sometimes need help.'' (*Interviewee 1*)

''I sometimes have difficulties because of insufficient vocabulary and practice.'' (*Interviewee 2*)

''I have difficulties because of a lack of vocabulary.'' (*Interviewee 3*)

''Sometimes, I do not remember the words, like an alzheimer patient.'' (*Interviewee 5*)

''I have difficulties while speaking because I stammer due to nerves, and I forget what to say.'' (*Interviewee 7*)

''I have difficulties in French because I am learning French for the first time in my life.'' (*Interviewee 13*)

4.2.3 Fear of making mistakes in language classes (English and French classes)

The participants reported that they were anxious in language classes, because they feared making mistakes. This fear of making a mistake might lead them to hesitate while speaking in English or French. The quotations below illustrate why they feel anxious.

''I generally fear making mistakes. This is because I consider the grammatical rules while trying to form a correct sentence.'' (*Interviewee 1*)

''I fear making mistakes due to being laughed at and the negative reaction of my teacher.'' (*Interviewee 7*)

''I fear making mistakes because of the negative assessment of the class. Hence, I prefer staying silent instead of speaking.'' (*Interviewee 8*)

''I fear making mistakes because I generally form simple sentences and I do not want to speak in simple sentences. In fact, I want to form complex sentences, but I cannot.'' (*Interviewee 9*)

''Of course, I fear making mistakes, especially in the pronunciation of a word. I blush when the teacher corrects my mistakes.''(*Interviewee 13*)

''I am afraid of making mistakes due to the high expectations of teachers and feelings of hesitation in using grammar.'' (*Interviewee 19*)

4.2.4 Test anxiety (Participants' feelings about exams)

The students claimed that exams and low marks were the causes of their anxiety in foreign language classes. The main reason why exams cause so much anxiety is that they accept failure in advance inasmuch as they are prejudiced against themselves and ignore their capacities in foreign language learning. The following quotations illustrate this point of view well.

''I fear failing in exams.'' (*Interviewee 1*)

''Of course, I always fear exams, especially speaking exams. I fear that I will not be able to comprehend what the teacher is saying.'' (*Interviewee 9*)

''I enter the exam accepting that I will be disappointed at the end of the exam. In the end, I become sad after the marks are announced, because they are always the same, bad marks.'' (*Interviewee 14*)

''Before the exams, I generally feel that I will forget everything that I know and this makes me tense.'' (*Interviewee 8*)

''Fear of forgetting what I know makes me stressed'' (*Interviewee 22*)

4.2.5 The reciprocal effects of two foreign languages (English and French)

Most of the students reported that they were confused in word selection and might use a French word instead of an English word, or vice versa. The similarities in both the written form and the pronunciation of some words sometimes cause confusion and learners can lose their concentration by pausing to choose the correct word, which might lead to anxiety in foreign language classes. The following quotations reflect how confusion and a lack of concentration occur.

''I can use similar words interchangeably, but when I realize that I use the word incorrectly, I feel bad.'' (*Interviewee 4*)

''Learning the two languages at the same time may make me use an English word instead of a French word. For example, I used the English word 'wild' instead of its equivalent in French, and everybody in the class laughed.'' (*Interviewee 5*)

''I use French 'Je m'appelle...' instead of English 'My name is...' or vice versa.'' (*Interviewee 9*)

''Because of some similarities, I sometimes use an English word instead of a French word, or a French word instead of an English word. For example, the word 'attention' in English is similar to the word 'attention' in French.'' (*Interviewee 10*)

''I use 'Yes' instead of 'Oui' and it affects me negatively.'' (*Interviewee 11*)

''I use an English word instead of a French word, for example, the word 'university' in English instead of the word 'université' in French.'' (*Interviewee 12*)

''Yes, sometimes I do, many words are similar in terms of origin so I can unconsciously use a French word instead of the equivalent of that word in English.'' (*Interviewee 24*)

''I am confused because some words associate with each other a lot, and they are confusing. When I sometimes attempt to pronounce a word in English, its pronunciation refers to a word in French and it is misunderstood, or vice versa.'' (*Interviewee 25*)

5. *Discussion*

This study aimed to investigate foreign language learners' feelings of anxiety and to determine the factors that cause anxiety in learning two foreign languages concurrently. The data gathered quantitatively indicated that anxiety in the learning process had a negative impact on learners. In addition, through qualitative data, the study focused on learning the two languages concurrently and attempted to examine their reciprocal effects on learners. The results of this study to some extent show similarities to those of studies conducted by Akkakoson (2016), Alrabai (2014), Aydın (2008), Gkonou (2013), and Kayaoğlu and Sağlamel (2013).

The guiding research question in the study—Does anxiety affect learners who are learning the two foreign languages English and French concurrently?—covered the whole study and the quantitative data results revealed that nearly half of the students were anxious due to several key factors which cause anxiety in learning the two foreign languages. In this respect, the quantitative data results in the study were found to be parallel to the key factors classified as ''communication apprehension, test anxiety, and negative evaluation'' in the study conducted by Horwitz, et al. (1986, p.129) and were also consistent with those of previous studies carried out by Alrabai (2014) and Aydın (2008). The quantitative data analyses also identified some sub-components affecting foreign language in a classroom setting. These sub-components were prejudice towards language classes and exams, a lack of self-confidence, and insufficient competency.

Research question 2—Is there any significant difference in the impact of anxiety upon male and female students?—indicated that there was no significant difference related to gender, whereas previous studies by Çağatay (2015), Gursoy and Arman (2016) indicated that females had a high level of anxiety. On the contrary, the study carried out by Elaldı (2016) indicated that while all students in the study had a moderate anxiety level, male students had a higher level of anxiety than female students.

Research question 3—Is there any significant difference for foreign language classes at different grades of learning?—indicated that there was no significant difference at different grades of learning. On the one hand, the ANOVA test disclosed that there was no significant difference at different grades of learning, but on the other hand, the senior class students were observed to be more relaxed and confident during the interviews than those in junior classes, indicating that proficiency level might contribute to a decrease in learners' anxiety levels.

The qualitative data results indicated that the reason why some students felt anxious was related to their lack of vocabulary, especially in French. That is to say, a low level of proficiency might lead to anxiety in foreign language classes. As compared to English, another reason why they were anxious in French was that all participants had started to learn French for the first time at university and they had had no prior background knowledge in French whatsoever. Therefore, learners' background knowledge might be important in alleviating anxiety and its negative impact.

Research question 4—What are the students' feelings of anxiety while learning two foreign languages on the same program?—was closely interrelated to the first research question, and the qualitative data revealed that the majority of the learners were anxious while speaking, taking exams or being evaluated negatively. Fear of negative evaluation made them feel anxious while using the target language, as in the study conducted by Aydın (2008), indicating that negative evaluation had a negative influence on learners. In this sense, the present study identified several anxiety-provoking factors that made the participants feel nervous. First, these anxious students were afraid of making mistakes or of being unable to use the vocabulary which they knew well. Second, the students reported that the negative transfer between the two languages might lead to confusion and so they feared not being understood. Next, some of the students reported that they feared being unsuccessful during exams, even though they knew the answers and had studied well. In addition, some of these students also thought that their proficiency in foreign languages was not sufficient for them to be successful. Finally, the present study highlighted the fact that making a mistake or even the thought of making a mistake made the learners anxious. In this respect, teachers and students' attitudes play a significant role for those who fear making mistakes. Teachers' roles are more important than the other factors. This is because teachers' use of motivating strategies may influence students' motivation and achievement in language learning (Bernaus, et al., 2009). In addition, teachers must identify the causes of anxiety and take measures to minimize the level of anxiety in the learning process (Williams and Andrade, 2008). Furthermore, children's anxiety symptoms may be indicative of a bigger problem and teachers should focus on their well-being, which may assist them in identifying such excessive anxiety problems (Headley and Campbell, 2011).

As well as the above-mentioned anxiety-provoking factors, sub-components such as a lack of self-confidence, prejudice against language classes, a lack of interest, and low language proficiency should be considered in the language teaching and learning process. Students with a high level of proficiency are less anxious than those who do not have enough proficiency in language (Liu, 2006). In this respect, some of the students reported in the interviews that these factors—insufficient language proficiency, a lack of self-confidence and interest—also affected them negatively in foreign language learning. A small number of the participants claimed that they were afraid of forgetting what they knew and doing nothing, even though they had learned it and had prepared well in advance, indicating that some students are prejudiced against themselves and subconsciously ignore their own capacities in the learning process, especially during exams. In this sense, prejudice might come to the fore as a frustrating factor affecting the level of anxiety. To alleviate language anxiety and the feeling of prejudice that foreign language learners may experience during the learning process, students must know the true extent of their *self-efficacy*, which is a theory based on the view that ''perceived self-efficacy affects peoples' choice of activities and behavioral settings, how much effort they expend, and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles and aversive experiences.'' (Bandura and Adams, 1977, pp. 287-288). In the light of *Self-efficacy Theory* (Bandura and Adams, 1977; Bandura, 1977), it may be noted that if language learners can be made aware of their self-efficacy in social and classroom settings, they can easily recognize their capacities while using the target languages; they can understand how they feel when facing a difficulty; they can motivate themselves to cope with this difficulty, and they can design their behavior accordingly.

6. Conclusion

Given the results and findings attained through this study, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) might be regarded as a hindrance to success in language learning. The participants showed a mild level of anxiety based on ''communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation'' (Horwitz, et al., 1986, p.129). In addition to these three basic factors, the first and the most significant obstacle in learning two foreign languages concurrently is transferability between the two languages, here English and French. The transferability between these two foreign languages had a negative effect on learners, and could lead to confusion in that language learners might have difficulty with the pronunciation of some similar words in both English and French.

Second, teachers' expectations about students and students' own negative attitudes can also be regarded as factors leading to anxiety. Teachers' attitudes towards students and towards the probability that they will make mistakes must be kind and encouraging so that a comfortable classroom setting may be created to reduce the level of anxiety. To achieve this, language teaching should be more student-centered, especially at university, and the learning environment should be converted to a place where students use interesting practices and actual foreign language (Jing and Junying, 2016). Finally, as well as the three basic factors mentioned above, factors like proficiency level, background knowledge, and students' prejudice against their capacities also came to the fore as anxiety-provoking factors in the study. All these factors must be taken into consideration in order to be able to motivate learners and to activate their self-efficacy in language to enable them to cope with foreign language apprehension.

Considering the pedagogical implications of the study, the negative effects of anxiety must be alleviated before exams if the real level of performance is to be determined. While dealing with FLCA, the types of anxiety must be determined. Even though all students have different characteristics and may come from different socio-economic situations and cultures, a common solution for all learners must be found so as to decrease the negative impact of anxiety. In this respect, foreign language teachers should consider anxiety and attempt to identify what causes it in their own foreign language classes. Moreover, they must focus on learning methods, develop specific strategies to alleviate the negative influence of anxiety, and then teach accordingly. The last, but the most important point is that they should create a student-centered learning setting.

This study dealt with limited aspects of anxiety (negative impact of learning two foreign languages, here English and French), and involved a limited number of participants. Future studies should apply a longitudinal research model or quasi-experimental research design in order to explore other possible factors, whether positive or negative, that might affect anxiety in a learning process involving two foreign languages.

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