An Analysis Of Efl Learners' Foreign Language Anxiety And Their Motivation To Learn English

Maide Beyza Cayli

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AN ANALYSIS OF EFL LEARNERS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND THEIR

MOTIVATION TO LEARN ENGLISH.

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MAIDE BEYZA CAYLI

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to investigate English-language learners' foreign language anxiety and their motivations to learn English in an American context. The adapted versions of The Motivation/Attitude Questionnaire (Ozturk 2012), and Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz et al 1986) were given to 34 Intensive English Program students at a college in Southeastern United States. The participants in the Advanced and Advanced Plus Level have shown moderate level of Foreign Language Anxiety and Motivation. The results have prevailed that the students with higher proficiency levels have had slightly higher level of motivation. Yet, the participants with a higher level of English proficiency have not found to face less foreign language anxiety levels. Additionally, the participants have not shown high levels of foreign language anxiety, nor low levels of motivation. This study concludes that proficiency level does not constitute an effect on reducing the anxiety levels of the language learners.

Key words: foreign language anxiety, attitude and motivation, FLCAS, second language motivation

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my beloved grandpa *-Devlet Yıldırım* who has always believed in my abilities in the field of Linguistics and beyond, and got me all the books I ever asked for.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As English is the lingua franca of the day, many language learners have opted to study

English in various contexts (Altiner 2018, Basco & Han 2016, Criado & Mengual 2017).

However, learning English is not only challenging but also intimidating to many EFL learners.

Anxiety and motivation play integral roles in second language acquisition and may work to

either facilitate and/or impede additional language learning (Dörnyei 1994; Horwitz et al. 1986).

Moreover, previous research has shown the impact of gender on foreign language speaking

anxiety and motivation (Ozturk & Gurbuz 2013), but there is still need for some research on the

relationship between anxiety and motivation in a North American context. This study

investigates English-language learners' motivations for learning English and the relationship that

their motivations have on their foreign language anxiety.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

In various contexts, students have been observed to attend universities where the language of instruction is English rather than their mother tongue (Kirkgoz 2005). Thus, many EFL learners need to continue to study English after their primary and secondary educations. Even though motivation is considered to be one of the main determiners of second/foreign language achievement (Dornyei 1994), many EFL students are reported to have only a moderate level of motivation to learn English (Ozturk & Gurbuz 2013, Bektas-Cetinkaya & Oruc 2010).

Research has also shown that EFL learners consider their speaking skills as the weakest in a Turkey context. (Kirkgoz 2005). It is also a common phenomenon among any level of Turkish EFL students to be able to understand but cannot speak English (Coskun 2016). Horwitz et al. (1986) reported that anxious students fear being less competent than their peers and are deeply self-conscious when they are asked to speak in a foreign language in front of others. Horwitz et al. (1986) also claim that many students experience fears in their language learning at some point. Numerous studies aim to focus on EFL learners' foreign language anxiety particularly in recent years (Cagatay 2015, Elaldi 2016, Karakas & Alci & Bademcioglu & Ergin 2016). This study will investigate the relationship between the foreign language anxiety of EFL learners and their motivations to learn English.

2.1. Motivation

Dörnyei and Otto (1998, p. 64) defines motivation as "dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised, and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out." Dörnyei (2014) believes that motivation also determines the direction as well as the magnitude of human behavior, stating that "motivation is responsible for why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it." (p 519).

Dörnyei (1998) also adds that motivation is a multifaceted construct, adding that without adequate motivation long-term goals cannot be accomplished. Someone with insufficient motivation cannot achieve his/her long-term goals even if s/he has exceptional abilities. When that is the case, neither an appropriate curriculum nor good teaching can assure student achievement. As being motivated is at the essence of language learning, Dörnyei (1998) states that motivating students should be considered crucial for effective teaching. Furthermore, Dörnyei (1994) conceptualizes a general framework of L2 motivation, which includes three levels. First, at the Language Level, learning goals and language choice have been determined by general motives and orientations. The two subsystems that underlie this level come from Gardner and are called integrative and instrumental subsystems. Integrative motivation is related to the individual's cultural, social and ethnolinguistic components, whereas instrumental motivation is related to extrinsic motives that are mostly about the individual's future career endeavors. At the Learner Level, personality traits like need for achievement and self-confidence affect the learning process. Language anxiety, perceived L2 competence and self-efficacy are some of the aspects that self-confidence entails.

2.2. Foreign Language Anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986, p 128) define foreign language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process." They also state that many people find classroom situations while learning a language very stressful. Additionally, anxiety is frequently expressed by many students and teachers as an obstacle that need to be overcome when learning to speak another language. Since foreign language anxiety is concerned with performance evaluation, whether it is in an academic or social context, three performance-related anxieties have been defined by Horwitz et al. (1986). The first type of anxiety is explained as a type of fear or shyness towards communicating with people, called "Communication Apprehension". People who are usually hesitant to speak in groups are most likely to experience this fear, since they do not have much control of the communicative situation in a language class while their performance is also being monitored. "Test Anxiety" is, on the other hand, another type of anxiety. Achievement-oriented students, especially might suffer from it at higher levels. Since such students set their goals very high, they usually consider anything less than a perfect test performance as a failure. Thus, oral tests might even provoke both test- and oral communication anxiety simultaneously. The third anxiety type is defined as "Fear of Negative Evaluation", in which experiencing such anxiety is not only limited to test-taking situations but also in any social setting such as interviewing for a job or speaking in a foreign language class.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a considerable amount of research conducted on foreign language anxiety, motivation, and gender of learners of English. Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013) investigate the influence of gender on foreign language speaking anxiety and learner motivation. They claim that without motivation, student achievement cannot be ensured, and that investigate foreign language speaking anxiety and motivation are two of the most important affective variables of the language learning process. Their study suggests that gender plays an important role in the anxiety and motivational levels of the students. Ozturk and Gurbuz also state that previous research has revealed that speaking is the most anxiety-provoking source of the language classrooms, and the main focus of those previous studies has been on negative correlations between language anxiety and students' performance in speaking. Ozturk and Gurbuz's study includes 225 female and 158 male participants, with19 of them additionally interviewed. In order to measure the motivational levels of the students, Ozturk and Gurbuz use an adapted version of the Motivation and Attitude Questionnaire (MAQ) by Mendi (2009), which was developed by Dörnyei (1990). To see the anxiety levels of the students while speaking a foreign language, a Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire (FLSAQ) was used (Saltan 2003). FLSAQ was adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which was developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). According to the findings of the research, both genders were found to have a moderate level of motivation. However, female students have statistically higher motivational levels than male students. When it comes to motivational orientation, female

students have had more integrative motivations than males. Nevertheless, no significant difference was detected in terms of their instrumental orientations. Furthermore, female participants were shown to have higher levels of speaking anxiety than male students.

On the other hand, Altiner (2018) finds slightly contrasting results. In her research, by administering Wen's motivation questionnaire (2011), with minor revisions, to 105 voluntary preparatory class students (55 male, 50 female), Altiner aims to investigate whether preparatory school students' motivation differed based on gender. Altiner additionally aimed to investigate what motivational factors predict learners' interest in continuing English learning and their latest midterm scores. Altiner performs a one-way, between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test in order to explore gender differences in motivation. As gender is the independent variable, six dependent variables (positive learning attitudes/experience, interest in culture, travel, and people, interest in contemporary cultural media, milieu, instrumentality, and language requirement) were used to analyze whether a student is a female or a male has any influence on English learning motivations of the students. Based on the MANOVA test results, no significant difference in terms of their English learning motivation between males and females was found. On the other hand, "interest in culture, travel, and people" has displayed the greatest influence on whether or not participants decide to continue learning English. While "positive learning attitudes and experience" had the second most influence, "interest in contemporary cultural media" was found to have the least influence on whether or not participants decide to continue learning English. Looking at the motivational factors that could predict learners' most recent midterm scores, results have shown that whereas "language requirement" has the least influence, "positive learning attitudes" and "interest in contemporary cultural media" had the most influence on learners' latest midterm scores, respectively.

According to Altiner, these results benefit language teachers in fostering their students' language motivation and increasing their exam grades. Moreover, designing a curriculum based on specific groups of students, and including suitable as well as interesting themes, and materials would be very valuable in terms of second language learners' continuity. It has also been claimed that the students who have positive attitudes towards English appreciate language context and follow cultural media to pursue their English language learning. Her findings have supported Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013).

Sakiroglu and Dikilitas (2012) also investigate the language learning motivations of EFL learners based on variables such as gender and proficiency levels. By administering "A Student Motivational State Questionnaire", adapted from Dörnyei and Guilloteaux (2008), to 129 tertiary level EFL students in Turkey, their study tries to explore whether gender and proficiency level of students plays a crucial role on their motivational levels to learn English. The questionnaire includes 45 items with a Likert scale of 4, and participants were chosen based on the levels (A1, A2, B1, B2) of the classes that they had been attending in the preparatory program of the university. They investigate the relationship between gender and motivation in foreign language learning and aim to discover the relationship between level factors and motivation to learn a foreign language, as well the relationship between perceived proficiency and motivation. The results show that female students have significantly higher motivational levels than male students. Although these results are different than the ones that Ozturk and Gurbuz (2013) have found, the findings reveal that students with higher achievement levels also have higher motivational levels even though the statistical analysis does not characterize the difference as significant. It has also been discovered that the students are more likely to have higher motivational levels as their proficiency levels improve.

Bektas-Cetinkaya and Oruc (2010) focus on learners' motivation at both private and state universities in Turkey by collecting their data via a questionnaire adapted from Dörnyei (2001). Participants include 228 intermediate level Turkish students from two different universities. The findings of the study indicate that both the private and state university students are moderately motivated to learn English. However, private university students show a higher motivation to learn English than those at the state university. Even though the students from both universities have expressed that it is necessary for them to learn English, almost all of them have found to be instrumentally motivated since their main motivation to learn English is to get a well-paid job. Additionally, students give various instrumental reasons to learn English; hence the study discovered that students are both instrumentally and integratively motivated. Bektas-Cetinkaya and Oruc (2010) further investigate the role of English in these students' lives, and they note that students spend the most time on listening activities in English at both universities. However, private university students have been found to spending an average of 40 minutes more time studying English than their counterparts in public universities in a week, but the study has revealed that students from both contexts do not dedicate enough time to using English. Thus, the research highlights a contradiction between the desire of the students to learn English and their efforts.

Genc and Aydın (2017), on the other hand, aim to investigate the attitudes and the motivation of 462 students from different majors toward learning English as a foreign language. They aim to investigate the relationship between the students' motivation and attitudes and variables like their gender, parental involvement, academic achievement and the fields that they are studying. Since a negative attitude for the target language might lead to demotivation, the study focuses on learner attitudes toward English learning. Based on the data that has been

obtained via an adapted version of Gardner's (1985) "The Attitude/Motivation Test Battery" (AMI) questionnaire, Turkish students show positive attitudes toward learning English. However, female students have been found to have better attitudes toward learning English than male students. Furthermore, while the students have a moderate level of intrinsic and instrumental motivation, their parental involvement is considerably higher.

Moreover, Kirkgoz (2005) investigates whether instrumental or integrative motivation attracts learners to study at a university where the language of instruction is English. In order to explore the main motivational reasons of the students choosing EME (English Medium Education) majors, this study administers a questionnaire based on Benson's who has identified Japanese students' primary motivational sources. (Benson's study 1991 was based on the theoretical distinctions of integrative and instrumental motivational sources from Gardner and Lambert (1972)). Furthermore, this study investigates whether time plays an important role in the perceptions of the students regarding their language skills and the difficulties that they have experienced over time. Two hundred three students from first through final years have been given a questionnaire. The findings show that students prioritized both integrative and instrumental motivations even though it is always presupposed that the students would be instrumentally oriented to choose a university with EME.

Moreover, many of the students assess their reading and writing skills higher than their listening and especially their speaking skills. Although their confidence seemed to grow over time in terms of their competence in English, students have shown low perceptions of their speaking abilities. Since this might be related to foreign language speaking anxiety, the remaining literature review of this paper will address previous research papers that have dealt with foreign language anxiety.

Cagatay (2015) sought to explore whether students who are in an English preparatory program experience foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA). Her study of 62 female and 85 male students investigates whether FLSA levels differs based on gender. Cagatay administered a questionnaire of 18 items with a 5-graded Likert scale. The total score of the questionnaire ranged from 18 to 90, and the students who had scores below 30 were regarded as experiencing low level of foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA). Scores between 31-60 were considered to be a moderate level of FLSA, whereas scores over 60 is thought to be a high level of FLSA. The analysis of the questionnaire indicated that more than half of the students (69.4%) showed a moderate level of FLSA and 15.6% of the students demonstrated a low level of FLSA as 15% of them show a high level of FLSA. When it comes to the second hypothesis of this study, female and male students were found to differ significantly in terms of their FLSA levels. The results indicate that female students feel more anxious than male students. In order to reduce their anxiety levels, it is recommended that teachers come up with more appealing strategies for each gender. Furthermore, Cagatay wanted to discover if the proficiency level of the students has an impact on the students' FLSA levels. After dividing students into four groups based on their proficiency levels, the statistics show no significant difference in their FLSA based on the proficiency level of the students. Cagatay has also been curious if the students have experienced different levels of FLSA when they talk to a native speaker or in front the class. The final findings of this study point out that the students of a preparatory program feel more anxious when they speak to a native speaker than in front of their classmates. The reason is because speaking to a native speaker poses more of a threat on the part of the speakers. Cagatay suggests that teachers create atmospheres where they can scaffold their students in their oral competence. In order to help students to interact with native speakers more easily, Cagatay emphasizes the

importance of improving the pragmatic knowledge and communicative competence of the students in all classes rather than only in speaking sessions. Moreover, it is also highlighted that encouraging students to take part in authentic conversations with native speakers in more informal contexts like chat blogs or social networking could also help them overcome their anxieties. Additionally, exchange programs could be very helpful as well since students could conduct real projects and make meaningful conversations.

   In another study, Coskun (2016) claims that in Turkey people use the phrase "I can understand English but I can't speak" so often that he considers it as a syndrome. After administering a questionnaire (adapted from Hocaoglu 2015) to 293 high school students at two different state high schools, it has been found out that only 84 of them consider themselves able to speak English. Coskun also investigates their reasons for failure or success in speaking English. The majority of 71.4% of the students who marked "I cannot speak English" agree that English education in Turkey mostly depended on grammar rules. Not having been to an English speaking country for at least a year, the difference of word orders between Turkish and English and the lack of speaking practice opportunities were found to be some of the other major reasons for the failure to speak English. The fifth most marked the reason for the failure to speak English is due to the feeling of anxiety, in which 64.6% of the students agreed that they felt anxious while speaking English. Coskun points out the aforementioned reasons as the causes arising from theoretical knowledge/personal reasons (e.g., 'I do not have an opportunity to practice my English'). He also indicates some other reasons about English education in Turkey as well participants' perspectives about the role of culture such as learning English via Turkish and not listening to English songs, radio, and films sufficiently enough. However, almost 90% of the students who claim that they can speak English have stated that they are eager to speak English.

Moreover, students have also been asked about ways to improve their speaking skills. Some of their suggestions include lessons with a more enjoyable focus and having conversation-based classes instead of grammar-focused lessons. Others recommend watching shows in English, traveling abroad, attending a language school, playing video games, and chatting with foreigners as some of the useful ways of continuing English learning outside of the classroom. It is also stated that their textbooks lack colloquial English. Therefore, the author regards communication-based lessons and creating opportunities for students to speak English outside of the classroom as the major solutions for the syndrome. When it comes to anxiety, it is suggested that activities should be arranged to increase students' motivation while decreasing their anxiety levels accordingly.

On the other hand, Karakas, Alci, Bademcioglu, and Ergin (2016) investigate university students' foreign language speaking anxiety based on different variables. They aim to explore whether students' anxiety levels differ according to their genders and proficiency levels. The question asking if the students who have participated in one year of English preparatory program have a lower level of anxiety level has been examined as well. Lastly, the type of high schools from which the students have graduated have an influence on their foreign language and speaking anxiety is also analyzed. The findings of the questionnaire (Saltan 2003) reveal that gender is a significant variable in terms of students' foreign language speaking anxiety levels. Female students' anxiety levels have been found to be higher than male students. However, receiving one-year English preparatory training was not found to be a significant variant. Language levels of the students and the high schools from which they come from do not show a major impact on foreign language speaking anxiety of the students either.

Furthermore, Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) interviewed 30 university students in order to discover their perceptions of language anxiety in speaking classes. The researchers shed some light on the possible reasons, manifestations and coping strategies of language anxiety in speaking classes. The interviewers discovered that not only does learning English produce anxiety connotations for the majority of the participants, but also that their past experiences leave a negative impact in terms of learning English. When the possible reasons for language anxiety in speaking classes have been asked, the answers were categorized and some of the challenges were listed as linguistic difficulties, cognitive challenges were listed as: lack of information in the L1, competitiveness, and the role of the teachers. In terms of linguistic difficulties, the students stated that not knowing an adequate number of words and challenges in retrieving the right vocabulary are two of the biggest challenges that they experience. Lack of grammatical knowledge and pronunciation mistakes that they usually make while speaking in English seems to disturb them remarkably. One of the students even shares an anecdote about how her classmates burst into laughter when she mispronounced a suffix. Whether it is in the production or the comprehension stage, pronunciation difficulties are noted as one of the biggest anxiety-giving causes of speaking classes. Moreover, the cognitive challenges of language anxiety in speaking classes are grouped under "fear of failure." The students also indicate that those failures mostly occur in front of the class especially while making a presentation. Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) also claim that many of the students believe that language is for communication, and failure in communication make the students feel as if their attempts are in vain. It is noted that an increase in miscommunication might lead students to have a lower level of motivation. Fear of making mistakes are also highlighted as one of the most important hesitations of the students. Furthermore, some students believe that if the teacher encourages

group work, create a supportive environment and assign tasks beforehand, the anxiety levels of the students in speaking classes might decrease. A reason for language anxiety in speaking classes is noted as competitiveness, and according to some of the students, falling behind their classmates can give them a feeling of unease as well. Besides, since some of the students believe that they lack the necessary background information in their native language, they are not able to establish good discussions. It is noted by the authors that such self-perceptions can cause a mental obstacle to go into the task or to participate into activities willingly. Lastly, the study includes some suggestions to decrease language anxiety in speaking classes. The respondents reflect that a friendly teacher who makes the classes more fun than a requirement, would reduce their anxiety levels. On the other hand, teachers who are obsessed with grammar rules would increase their anxiety levels. It is also indicated by the author that vocabulary development should be regarded as crucial when it comes to syllabus designing, as it is considered to be one of the main factors of language anxiety in speaking classes. Finally, a classroom with a friendly atmosphere that encourages cooperation would be helpful in terms of lowering students' anxiety levels during speaking classes.

Another study that focuses on foreign language anxiety is from Elaldi (2016), who investigates the level of foreign language anxiety in students who have been studying the English Language and literature in Turkey. In order to explore the impact of time on foreign language anxiety, the data was collected in two phases for over a four-and-a-half-year period. The first phase of the study included 118 volunteer students who were enrolled in preparatory programs in Fall 2011. In the second phase of the study, 98 fourth grade students who were participants in the first phase took part. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCAS) from Horwitz et.al (1986) is used to investigate whether the anxiety levels of the students based on their gender have

played a role. Both in 2011 and 2015, students were found to have a moderate level of anxiety. However, the study points out that the students' foreign language anxiety levels were slightly higher when they reached the fourth grade, compared to the time when they first started their preparatory program. Contrary to other studies, the analyses of this investigation indicate that male participants are more anxious than the female participants. It was also reported that no decrease in participants' foreign language anxiety were observed. Eventually, no changes in participants' foreign language anxiety occurred as they progressed in English.

Yayli (2012) investigated the foreign language anxiety of summer school students at a Turkish university. Yayli conducted the adapted (Aydin 1999) version of FLCAS developed by Horwitz (1986) as the first instrument of the research, in addition to the use of semi-structured interviews to explore the level of the foreign language classroom anxiety of the participants. All of the 103 students who had taken place in the questionnaire were prospective teachers from different departments where English is a compulsory common class to take during their summer school period. The research also aimed to explore the possible sources and effects of FLCA and if the participants had any strategies to cope with it. Thus, 18 students participated in the semi-structured interviews. The findings of the research concluded that the participants had a moderate level of anxiety, and they felt more anxious to talk to their teachers rather than to their classmates, especially when they were not prepared. Furthermore, the students stated that their past experience with learning English was a possible source for their FLCA. Moreover, 12 out of 18 students mentioned that they do not do anything to cope with their FLCA. Listening to English songs with their lyrics and watching English TV shows with their subtitles are some of the suggestions that the students share. There are also some students who share their anxiety problem with their loved ones to seek relief and guidance. Therefore, it is believed that as long as

the negative experiences in the past exist, students' performances are negatively affected in their foreign language classrooms; not only the teachers of tertiary levels but also the teachers from all levels should be cautious and aware of the FLCA to better help their students in terms of overcoming their FLCA.

Basco and Han (2016) aim to discover 225 Korean college students' self-esteem, anxiety, and motivational levels in accordance with their gender, year, English proficiency level, and KSAT level (Korean Scholastic Aptitude Test). Although the ANOVA test has not shown any significant differences between the year and the students' self-esteem, anxiety and motivational levels, the mean scores has shown that the senior year students had the lowest level of anxiety. It is claimed that the reason why seniors had a lower level of anxiety is thanks to their experiences and maturity. The researchers found out that as the proficiency level of students got higher, they experienced lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of self-esteem and motivation. On the other hand, male students are found to have significantly higher levels of self-esteem and lower levels of anxiety. No significant differences are found between males and females in their motivational levels. It is believed that some cultural aspects might be the reason why some studies have found very different results in terms of gender and their motivational levels. Basco and Han (2016) state that "in a society where more is expected of a male than a female, where a son is more priority than a daughter, the male has to be more on edge than the female." Overall, it has been discovered that when the students have higher levels of self-esteem, their motivational levels are also on a higher level. High level of motivation has also been associated with lower levels of anxiety.

Another study that investigates FL speaking anxiety based on gender and level-based variance focused on 74 Iranian EFL learners. By using a modified version of FLCAS,

Mahmoodzadeh (2012) investigated whether there is a difference on the participants' FL speaking anxiety levels based on their gender and course-level. To what degree the participants attribute their FL speaking anxiety to their interlanguage systems and which of the three constituents of the aforementioned interlanguage systems of the students cause increase into their FL speaking anxiety have also been examined. Results have shown that the participants were not very anxious about their pronunciation or accent when they spoke a foreign language in the classroom. Nevertheless, it has been considered that interlanguage meaning systems of the participants were the potential reason of experiencing FL speaking anxiety, though phonological similarities may also be a reason. Although female students might experience slightly more FL speaking anxiety when it comes to their interlanguage grammar systems, female students have been reported to have less FL speaking anxiety as opposed to males.

On the other hand, Criado and Mengual (2017) investigated the relationship between Spanish students' language anxiety and their EFL speaking skills in compulsory and non-compulsory secondary education. Based on their findings, speaking performances of the students were found to be related to their anxiety. The students who had higher test scores were reported to have less language anxiety and vice versa. Course levels of the students were not found to be related to their language anxiety.

As many EFL students believe that English proficiency would benefit them not only academically but also career wise, it is believed that language learners' motivation for studying or reading English might align with the goals that they have set to achieve the rewards of being proficient in English (Kim 2010). Ideas regarding whether reading motivation of language learners is affected by their academic majors and English proficiency is thus investigated by Kim (2010), surveying 259 Korean EFL students whose major is English. Research found that they

had higher levels of reading motivation in English, although L2 reading proficiency was not found be influential in L2 reading motivation. These results imply that students should not be considered as motivated or unmotivated; however, it was reported that the students with lower avoidance reading levels and more intrinsic motivation were more likely to be proficient readers in their second language.

In conclusion, although research has focused on different variables such as gender, proficiency level, the passage of time, and the type of school that the students attended, it is still not known to what degree motivation has an impact on the foreign language anxiety of EFL learners. Therefore, this research paper will investigate the different levels of motivation and anxiety that the ESL learners experience in the American educational context.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Questions

1. What level of foreign language anxiety do ESL learners at the Intensive English Program (IEP) experience?

2. What is the level of foreign language learning motivation of ESL learners at the IEP?

3. Is there a relationship between ESL learners' foreign language anxiety and their motivation to learn English?

4.2 Participants

This study includes 34 IEP and Study Abroad students as participants. The English proficiency levels of the students are the Beginner Level, Advanced Level and the Advanced Plus Level. The students also differ in terms of their age, gender, country of origin and first language. Four students are Beginner, eleven students are Advanced, and nineteen of them are Advanced Plus level students. As the items on the questionnaires may be incomprehensible for students with less English language proficiency, this research paper did not include the results that have been obtained from the Beginner level students.

4.3 Setting

The study was conducted at an Intensive English Program (IEP) at a state university located in the southeastern United States. The program offers academic language and culture

courses to international students who come to study in the United States. Similar to many IEPs around the nation, the program aims to prepare its students to interact successfully in English.

4.4 Data Collection

The data collection for this research involved two 5-graded Likert Scale surveys (See Appendix A, B). The questionnaires were administered by the researcher during a class period. In order to understand the motivational levels of English-language learners, an adapted version (Ozturk 2012) of the "Motivation/Attitude Questionnaire" (Dörnyei, 1990) was used as the first instrument of the study (see Appendix A). To investigate the anxiety levels of the students the "Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety iv Scale" was chosen as the second instrument for the research. FLCAS was originally created by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) (see Appendix B).

4.5 Data Analysis

In order to measure the motivational levels of the students, an adapted version (Ozturk 2012) of the Motivation and Attitude Questionnaire (MAQ) was chosen as the first instrument of the study. MAQ includes 30 items. Since the questionnaire is a 5-graded Likert scale, the scores of the results range between 30-150, and the students whose scores are higher than 120 will be considered to have high motivational levels to learn English. Scores between 90 and 119 show that students have a moderate level of motivation, and scores below 90 demonstrate a low level of motivation.

The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz et al., (1986) was chosen to be the second instrument of the study. FLCAS includes 33 items. Since the

questionnaire is a 5-graded Likert scale, the scores range between 33 and 165. The students whose scores are higher than 132 are considered to experience high anxiety levels in their classrooms. Scores between 99 and 131 show that students have a moderate level of anxiety, and scores below 99 will demonstrate a low level of anxiety.

Negative statements in the questionnaires will be calculated by reversing before the data analysis. In order to generate the mathematical results, Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet is chosen as the software for the calculations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, the research questions have been answered. After conducting 2 surveys to

30 students, the mathematical analysis has been calculated by using Excel Spreadsheet software.

By interpreting the scores, this study aimed to question the following questions:

1. What level of foreign language anxiety do ESL learners at the Intensive English

Program (IEP) experience?

2. What is the level of foreign language learning motivation of ESL learners at the IEP?

3. Is there a relationship between ESL learners' foreign language anxiety and their

motivations to learn English?

Research Q1: In order to answer the research question 1, the FLCAS was given to 19

Advanced Plus, and 11 Advanced Level students at the Intensive English Program of a

moderately-sized public university in the South. Scores that range between 99 and 131 indicate

that students experience a moderate level of anxiety, hence with the mean score of 97.4,

Advanced level ESL learners were found to experience moderate level of anxiety. The classroom

with 11 participants obtained the percentage of 59.17. Although 5 students reported low levels of

foreign language anxiety, 3 of them found to be a little over 50% anxious. Furthermore, none of

the students reported high level of foreign language anxiety, and the highest mean scores among

moderate level of anxious students were less than 112. Students with the higher proficiency

levels in the Advanced Plus level are observed to experience a slightly higher level of foreign

language anxiety with the mean score of 102.47. Additionally, none of the students in either

levels are found to have a high level of foreign language anxiety. The participants in the Advanced Plus level had a mean score of 62.11%.

However, none of the students from the Advanced level answered item 32 ""I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language," as strongly agree, and only 5 students from the Advanced Plus Level answered this question as "strongly agree". The results in Advanced level shows parallelism with Cagatay (2015) who found that students of a preparatory program felt more anxious when they spoke to a native speaker than in front of their classmates since speaking to a native speaker poses more of a threat on the part of the ESL speakers. Although the participants from the Advanced Plus level are found to have slightly higher anxiety levels, they have been found to be more comfortable when it comes to speaking to native speakers.

Moreover, results from item 2 "I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language," showed that almost all the students experience 'Fear of Negative Evaluation.' as Horwitz et.al (1986) pointed out, making mistakes is a common worry among language learners, only one student from both levels answered this question as 'strongly agree'. Basco & Han (2016) had found that as the proficiency level of students got higher, they have had lower levels of anxiety and higher levels of self-esteem and motivation, though only 2 out of 30 students in this research answered this item confidently.

Furthermore, Item 18 "I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class," was answered as 'strongly agree' by 2 students in the Advanced Level, though no students from the Advanced Plus Level strongly agreed to this statement. Thus, the results show that higher proficiency level does not entail less foreign language speaking anxiety nor more confidence in speaking. The findings conflicted once more with Basco & Han (2016) who had found that as

the proficiency level of students got higher, they have had lower levels of anxiety and higher

levels of self-esteem and motivation.

Table 1: [Foreign language anxiety levels of the IEP students]

FLCAS SCORES	Overall Mean Scores	Mean Scores in %
Advanced Level	97.4	59.17
Advanced Plus Level	102.47	62.11

Research Q2: In order to investigate the second research question, the MAQ was chosen

as the second instrument of data collection. It was given to 19 Advanced Plus, and 11 Advanced

Level students at the Intensive English Program of moderately-sized public university in the

South. The data analysis followed the same procedures as the FLCAS did. Since the MAQ had

30 items, students who scored between 90 and 119 are considered to have a moderate level of

motivation. At the end of the calculations, participants at the Advanced Level found to be

moderately motivated with the mean score of 109.82. Although none of the students reported

having low level of motivation, their overall mean score was 73.21%. While two out of 11

participants observed to have high level of motivation to learn English with a mean score higher

than 120, 10 out of 11 of them had a mean score higher than 100 in the Advanced level. The

participants from the Advanced Plus level are also found to have moderate level of motivation

with the mean score of 111.37. Five out of 19 participants reported to have high level of

motivation. None of the students in either levels have observed to experience low level of

motivation.

These findings are similar with Sakiroglu and Dikilitas (2012)'s results. They have found

that students with higher achievement levels also have higher motivational levels. It can be said

that the students at the IEP are more likely to have higher motivational levels as their proficiency levels improve.

Furthermore, all the participants in Advanced Level either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement on item 1 "If I spent a long time abroad, I would make a great effort to learn the local language," and only two participants from the Advanced Plus level showed disagreement. Altiner (2018) had found that the students who have positive attitudes towards English appreciate language context and follow cultural media to pursue their English language learning. It can be said the students at the IEP shows positive attitude as well as great enthusiasm to learn English.

In addition, the item 15 "Everybody in the USA should learn English, at least at an intermediate level," received no disagreement from the Advanced Level, and only two students from the Advanced Plus level disagreed to this statement. Those results imply that the students who are in an American context are aware of the importance of learning the English language.

Lastly, none of the students from Advanced Level disagreed with item 28 "English proficiency is important to me because it will allow me to get to know about various cultures and people," and 17/19 students from Advanced Plus Level also showed agreement. Similar to what Altiner (2018) found in her study ("interest in culture, travel, and people" had displayed the greatest influence on whether or not participants decide to continue learning English), it can be said that interest in culture/people have big effects on the participants' integrative motivations.

Table 2: [Motivation and attitude levels of the IEP students]

MAQ SCORES	Overall Mean Scores	Mean Scores in %
Advanced Level	109.82	73.21

Advanced Plus Level	111.37	74.25

Research Q3: The statistics indicated that the correlation coefficient between Foreign Language Anxiety and Motivation is -0.161 and revealed a negative correlation between motivation and foreign language anxiety that the students face. Students who have shown moderate or high level of motivations had either the same level of foreign language anxiety or lower levels of foreign language anxiety. None of the participants among 30 students had a higher level of anxiety than their motivational levels. Although the mean scores are not significantly different, the students at the Advanced Plus level have demonstrated slightly higher level of foreign language anxiety, which indicates that proficiency level does not constitute an effect on reducing the anxiety levels of the language learners.

Opposite to the initial hypothesis, the results indicated that as the motivation increases, anxiety decreases, and foreign language anxiety levels do not surpass foreign language learning motivation levels in American context. The students at the IEP experience more motivation than anxiety, and this could be thanks to be in the American context. Since a classroom with a friendly atmosphere encourages cooperation, this could be helpful in terms of lowering students' anxiety levels (Kayaoglu and Saglamel 2013).

As Kayaoglu and Saglamel (2013) also state that many of the students believe that language is for communication, and failure in communication make the students feel as if their attempts are in vain. An increase in miscommunication might also lead students to have a lower level of motivation.

Since students at the IEP have opposite results, the fact that none of the students reported high levels of anxiety nor low levels of motivation indicates that the IEP generated positive student attitudes toward second language learning (Dörnyei 2014).

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

Similar to what Ozturk & Gurbuz (2013) have found, this research paper has also observed that students with higher proficiency levels showed higher level of motivations even though the differences are not significant. Therefore, proficiency level has not constituted an effect on reducing the anxiety levels of the language learners since Advanced Plus learners had higher anxiety levels than Advanced Level students.

Additionally, in fact, Bektas-Cetinkaya & Oruc (2010) have found that the students who attended private universities had higher level of motivations, similar to those findings; the high cost of studying in the American universities could be another reason of why none of the participants showed a low level of motivation.

Furthermore, students who opt to study in the USA usually are well informed that American education system might be very different than theirs. The students might feel more motivated and less anxious than they would in different contexts thanks to being in the United States as successful learning experiences is the reason for some learners to learn a second language (Dörnyei 2014). As Dörnyei (2014) states, everybody is not automatically motivated, and it is important to generate positive student attitudes toward second language learning.

Contrary to what Basco & Han (2016) have found, the students at a higher level of English proficiency have not shown less foreign language anxiety levels. Elaldi (2016) had reported no decrease in participants' foreign language anxiety over the course of four years and

the participants showed no changes in their foreign language anxiety as they progressed in English. Similarly, higher proficiency level does not guarantee lower anxiety levels. These results show similarities to the findings of Cagatay (2015) who discovered no significant difference in students' FLSA based on their proficiency levels. Since a high level of foreign language anxiety might hinder language learning (Hortwitz 1986), teachers should help their students to overcome their anxieties by providing a welcoming classroom environment. Nevertheless, students' performances might continuingly get affected in their foreign language classrooms due to the negative experiences that the students had in the past. (Yayli 2012). This research paper aimed to investigate the levels of foreign language learning motivation and anxiety of English-language learners.

The findings supported the findings of Ozturk & Gurbuz (2013) finding that the students with higher proficiency levels have had slightly higher level of motivation as well. Though the findings contradicted with what Basco and Han (2016) have found, the students from this study with a higher level of English proficiency have not shown less foreign language anxiety levels.

This research contributed to the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) by showing that proficiency level may not have a big impact on of foreign language learning motivation and anxiety of English-language learners.

Limitations of the study

This study did not include results from the beginner level ESL learners. Additionally, the number of the participants are relatively small. More variables like age, country of origin, academic major can be added to determine the reasons of the Foreign Language Anxiety and the

Motivation to learn English among English-language learners at depth. Moreover, semi-structured interviews could also help to understand the reasons of foreign language anxiety and what makes students motivated. Students with more diverse backgrounds can also help to make more comparisons with more consistent results.

Future Research

Future studies might investigate the relationship between self-confidence and foreign language anxiety, hence the areas that the students feel less confident can be investigated. Additionally, the importance of motivation on lowering the foreign language anxiety can be examined. The effects of different cultural settings, schools, and IEPs around the world can be compared with these findings as well.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

<u>The Motivation/Attitude Questionnaire</u>

This questionnaire is prepared to collect information about your motivational level in English language learning. After reading each statement, please circle the number that appeals to you most. There are no right or wrong answers for the items in this questionnaire. Thanks for your contribution.

'**1**': Strongly disagree.

'**2**': Disagree.

'**3**': Not sure.

'**4**': Agree.

'**5**': Strongly agree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. If I spent a long time abroad, I would make a great effort to learn the local language.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I would like to learn as many languages as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
3. After finishing learning English, I'd like to start learning another language.	1	2	3	4	5
4. For me, learning a foreign language is a hobby.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Sometimes learning a foreign language is a burden for me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Learning a foreign language is an exciting activity.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I don't like the process of learning a foreign language and I do it only because I need the language.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Learning a foreign language often gives me a feeling of achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Learning a foreign language often makes me happy.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Studying English is important to me because it provides an interesting intellectual activity.	1	2	3	4	5
11. English proficiency is a part of the general culture.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I am learning English to become more educated.	1	2	3	4	5
13. English proficiency is important to me because it allows me to learn about the current intellectual trends of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
14. English proficiency is indispensable for a person to be able to live a fulfilling life.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Everybody in the USA should learn English, at least at an intermediate level.	1	2	3	4	5
16. The more I learn about Americans, the more I like them.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Most of my favorite artists (e.g., actors, musicians) are native English speakers.	1	2	3	4	5
18. America is among the most exciting countries of the world.	1	2	3	4	5
19. American culture is of vital importance in the world nowadays.	1	2	3	4	5
20. If I could speak English well, I could find a more interesting job.	1	2	3	4	5
21. If I could speak English well, I could travel more for official purposes.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I would have financial benefits if I had a good English proficiency.	1	2	3	4	5
23. My colleagues usually know a foreign language at least at an intermediate level.	1	2	3	4	5
24. My bosses expect me to learn English.	1	2	3	4	5

25. Without knowing English well, I cannot expect a promotion in my job.	1	2	3	4	5
26. The prominent members of my profession know English (at least at an intermediate level).	1	2	3	4	5
27. English proficiency is important to me because it is indispensable for establishing an international reputation.	1	2	3	4	5
28. English proficiency is important to me because it will allow me to get to know about various cultures and people.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Studying English is important to me because it offers a new challenge in my life.	1	2	3	4	5
30. It is indispensable for me to take the state language exam in order to achieve my specific goals	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

<u>FLCAS</u>

This questionnaire is prepared to collect information about your level of anxiety of the English language that you experience in classroom atmosphere. After reading each statement, please circle the number which appeals to you most. There are no right or wrong answers for the items in this questionnaire. Thanks for your contribution.

'**1**': Strongly disagree.
'**2**': Disagree.
'**3**': Not sure.
'**4**': Agree.
'**5**': Strongly agree.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It wouldn't bother me to take more foreign language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	1	2	3	4	5
12. In language class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.	1	2	3	4	5
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I get upset when I don't understand what part of the language that the teacher is correcting.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel nervous when I'm going to be called on in language class.	1	2	3	4	5
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	1	2	3	4	5

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

Appendix C

1. What's your country of origin?

A. China
B. Korea
C. Japan
D. Finland
E. Saudi Arabia
F. Other (Please indicate)

    …………………………………………………………………….

2. How old are you?

    ……………………………………………………………………..

3. What is your first language? (The language you spoke the most at home with your family)

    ……………………………………………………………………..

4. What is your gender?

A. Male
B. Female
C. Non-binary/third gender
D. I prefer not to answer
E. Other

Appendix D

Consent to Participate in Research

Investigator	Advisor
Maide Beyza Cayli	Tamara Warhol, Ph.D.
Department of Modern Languages	Department of Modern Languages
C-115 Bondurant Hall	C-115 Bondurant Hall
University of Mississippi	University of Mississippi
University, MS 38677	University, MS 38677
662-915-7298	662-915-7298
mbcayli@go.olemiss.edu	twarhol@olemiss.edu

- You are being asked to volunteer for a research study. It is up to you whether you choose to participate or not. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled if you choose not to participate or discontinue participation.
- The purpose of this research is to understand why students like you experience foreign language anxiety during their English classes. This study also tries to find out about your motivational levels in learning English.
- It is expected that your participation will last about 20-35 mins.
- You will be asked to answer two questionnaires. Those questionnaires include statements like "*I don't like the process of learning a foreign language and I do it only because I need the language.*" Or "*I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.*" After reading each statement, please circle a number which appeals to you the most. 1 indicates you strongly disagree, 2 indicates you disagree, 3 indicates that you are not sure, 4 indicates you agree, and 5 indicates you strongly agree.
- All information in the study will be collected from you anonymously: it will not be possible for anyone, even the researchers, to associate you with your responses.
- There are no anticipated risks to you from participating in the study.
- You should not expect benefits from participating in this study. However, you might experience satisfaction from contributing to scientific knowledge.
- As an alternative to participation, you could meet me at the Learner Center to take the surveys at another time.

- You do not have to volunteer for this study, and there is no penalty if you refuse. If you start the study and decide that you do not want to finish, just tell the experimenter. Whether or not you participate or withdraw will not affect your current or future relationship with the Intensive English Program, or with the University, and it will not cause you to lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

☐ By checking this box I certify that I am 18 years of age or older.

Statement of Consent
I have read the above information. I have been given an unsigned copy of this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions, and I have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Furthermore, I also affirm that the experimenter explained the study to me and told me about the study's risks as well as my right to refuse to participate and to withdraw.

Signature of Participant   Date

Printed name of Participant

This study has been reviewed by The University of Mississippi's Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB at (662) 915-7482 or irb@olemiss.edu.

Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. When all your questions have been answered, then decide if you want to be in the study or not.

VITA

Maide Beyza Cayli

EDUCATION

Non-degree (2017-2018) in *Applied Linguistics and TESOL*, The University of Mississippi, Oxford, Mississippi.

Bachelor of Arts (June 2016) in *English Language Teaching*, Cukurova University, Adana, Turkey.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Director of the Community English as a Second Language Program, Department of *Intensive English Program*, The University of Mississippi, Fall 2019- present.

Graduate Instructor, Department of *Intensive English Program*, The University of Mississippi, Fall 2018- present.

Graduate Teaching Assistant of Turkish, Department of *Modern Languages*, The University of Mississippi, Fall 2017- Spring 2018.

EXCHANGE/ STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program, The University of Mississippi, Fall 2017- Spring 2018.

Erasmus Student Exchange Program, Department of *English Philology*, The Pedagogical

University of Cracow, Fall 2013- Spring 2014