

The Relationship between English Learning Anxiety and the Students' Achievement on Examinations*

Mostafa Amiri

Basic Science Department, Gonabad University of Medical Sciences, Gonabad, Iran

Behzad Ghonsooly

English Department, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—Research in educational settings points out that some affective factors influence the students' performance positively or negatively. Anxiety, considered as one of the factors affecting the students' achievement, includes levels of communicative anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English class or classroom. Hence, the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between English language anxiety and the students' achievement in their examinations. To this end, 258 freshmen majoring in different fields of medicine at Gonabad University of Medical Sciences were recruited as the study participants. Two instruments were employed to collect data. The first one was the Persian version of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale questionnaire (FLCAS) completed during the semester to determine the anxiety level on a five-point Likert scale, and the second was an achievement test administered at the end of the term. The obtained results were analyzed using correlation, t-test, and descriptive statistics through SPSS software V.19. The results showed that high anxiety affected the students' achievement ($r=0.348$, $p<0.001$). Moreover, the English classroom anxiety proved to be much more significant than other anxiety levels ($r=0.36$). Nonetheless, the mean value of fear of negative evaluation was higher than those of other FLCAS components. Finally, some implications and suggestions were set forth for teachers/students to take into account so that they might reduce English learning anxiety in classrooms.

Index Terms—English learning anxiety, examinations, FLCAS, students' achievement

I. INTRODUCTION

Learning a foreign language can be regarded as a complicated process which is affected not only by linguistic factors but also by some other non-linguistic ones which may be considered as cognitive, metacognitive, and affective. One of the most important affective factors which influence the students' academic performance in second language learning is anxiety. To find out about the relationship between anxiety and achievement, many studies have been carried out (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Young, 1991). Also, anxiety has been one of the most extensively researched areas in the last few decades.

Recent research indicates that the problems related to anxiety enjoy a high frequency, and the test anxiety is one of these problems (Fathi Ashteyni & Emamgholivand, 2002). Test anxiety includes unpleasant emotional experiences, feelings, and worries in situations in which one's performance is being evaluated. The test anxiety refers to any condition which causes a person to fear about his capabilities the outcome of which is a decrease in one's ability to cope with stressful conditions such as test-taking situations. Some researchers believe that tests cause individuals to study better while others claim that decreasing the anxiety helps the person to perform better. Thus, a person suffering from test anxiety can be regarded as the one who knows the material well but his high anxiety and worry cause him not to perform satisfactorily while taking an exam (Cheraghian et al. 2008). Moreover, as a person assumes a test to be more threatening, the more anxious and less confident he will be before the examinations (Fathi Ashteyni & Emamgholivand, 2002). Many factors may cause high test anxiety and accordingly lead to poor performance on the examinations some of which are as follows: low self-confidence, insufficient amount of study, negative attitudes toward school or college, fear of failure in future exams or the previous experience of failure (Cassady & Johnson, 2002).

Taking into account the above-mentioned points and the existing causes of anxiety, investigating the students' test anxiety can be a useful and positive measure toward identifying this trait and its related factors so that not only this problem and similar ones can be eliminated through better planning and special counseling but also learning can be accelerated and the expenses decreased.

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Therefore, this study aims at investigating the relationship between the students' anxiety and their final test performance while taking into consideration five levels of anxiety, namely, communicative anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English class or classroom.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a plethora of research in the areas related to anxiety; hence, to grasp a broad overview of anxiety, its definitions, types, causes, and foreign language anxiety will be addressed first. Next, in light of them, some of the studies conducted in the area will be reviewed.

A. Anxiety Definition

The Encyclopedia Britannica 2008 ultimate reference suite provides the following definition for anxiety: "a feeling of dread, fear, or apprehension, often with no clear justification". Moreover, it has been defined by different scholars in the field of language learning and educational psychology. Generally, the term "anxiety" is defined by Scovel (1978) as "apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object" (p. 34). Specifically, Spielberger (1972) defines anxiety as "an unpleasant emotional state or condition that is characterized by subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, and worry, and by activation or arousal of the automatic nervous system" (p. 482). As for the classroom or learning environments, and according to Horvitz (1986), anxiety is regarded as "a distinctive complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 128). Considering the various definitions offered, the one proposed by Horvitz (*ibid*) implies that anxiety is aroused by learning processes which are manifested in class. Regardless of different definitions for anxiety, it is of different types and degrees.

B. Types of Anxiety

From one perspective, anxiety has been classified into three different kinds: trait, state, and situation specific anxieties. Trait anxiety, according to Eysenck (1979), is a personality trait or as Scovel (1978) maintained indicates "a more permanent predisposition to be anxious". State anxiety is referred to the experience of apprehension at a specific occasion in time; and situational anxiety is the one experienced in a well-defined situation (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). Brown (2001) believed that state or situation-specific anxiety is the result of experience in a certain condition or event. From another viewpoint, anxiety has been grouped as facilitative and debilitating (Scovel, 1978; Alpert and Haber, 1960). As the names show, the former causes improvement in the learners' learning and performance and makes the learners conscious whereas the latter impedes learning and performance in various ways.

C. Causes of Anxiety

In different studies, researchers have come with a variety of factors causing anxiety in language learning classrooms: based on Bailey (1983), anxiety in class can be aroused by competitiveness, tests, and learners' perceived relationship with their teachers. Besides, Horvitz, Horvitz and Cope (1986) attributed the causes of anxiety to several factors such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation according to which they developed a Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which includes thirty-three items. In addition, Price (1991) names the following as the causes of anxiety: "a) the difficulty level of foreign language classes, b) personal perception of language aptitude, c) certain personality variables (e.g., perfectionism and fear of public speaking), and d) stressful classroom experiences." Young (1991) refers to the following as the possible causes of anxiety: "a. personal and interpersonal, b. learner beliefs about language learning, c. instructor beliefs about language teaching, d. instructor-learner interactions, e. classroom procedures, and f. language tests."

D. Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign language anxiety is defined by MacIntyre (1999) as "worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language". Horvitz, Horvitz, & Cope (1986) defined it as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of language learning process" (p. 128).

Awan et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between foreign language classroom anxiety and the students' achievement using a short form of FLCAS and an inventory of situations that causes anxiety. They reported a negative relationship between language anxiety and achievement. They also found that females are less anxious than males in learning English and the main cause of anxiety was speaking in front of other students in class.

Zhao (2007) in her study of anxiety among high school students in China found that the fear of negative evaluation was the most prevalent cause of anxiety, boys experienced more anxiety of English classes than girls did, and anxiety of English classes and tests was a debilitating factor in language learning. Consequently, she concluded that highly-anxious learners do not obtain much achievement; and their low achievement causes them to be more anxious in the process of language learning.

In an article entitled "English language learning anxiety among Iranian EFL freshmen university learners", Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012) claimed that while the freshmen experienced more anxiety on being negatively evaluated they found no significant difference in foreign language learning anxiety regarding gender; nonetheless, the participants

were anxious and nervous in terms of language skills. However, they stated that males were more anxious in case of communication and tests whereas females showed more anxiety in English classes and fear of being negatively evaluated.

Comparing the anxiety in ESL classrooms and mainstream situations, a significant relationship was found between achievement and English language anxiety (Pappamihiel, 2002). She believed that as achievement increased anxiety decreased, and academic sources such as English classes increased anxiety, too. Arnaiz and Guillén's (2012) study investigating the foreign language anxiety regarding individual differences indicated that participants showed an average level of anxiety in which females were more anxious than males; and that lower level students proved to be more anxious.

Cheragian et al. (2008) conducted a research investigating the relationship between test anxiety and educational performance among university students. Their findings pointed out that most of the students had low and moderate levels of anxiety. Also, they found no significant relationship between test anxiety and the students' total average score; however, high anxiety led to an increase in the students' poor performance. The researchers suggested that in addition to special attention to this problem, more studies should be conducted to identify the related causes and provide strategies for decreasing anxiety among students (ibid).

Another study carried out in the psychiatry clinic of Mashhad University of Medical Sciences investigated the group therapy based on the overall consciousness through study skills in decreasing the students' test anxiety. The results showed that the group based on overall consciousness in experimental group had less anxiety in the examinations compared with the group based on study skills in control group (Ataei Nakhaei et al., 2010).

This study is an attempt to investigate the present state of art regarding anxiety among the students at Gonabad University of Medical Sciences and its relation with their achievement in examinations. Accordingly, the following research questions and null hypotheses were put forward:

E. Research Questions

Q1: Is there any relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations?

Q2: Is there any relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations regarding gender?

Q3: Is there any relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations regarding the components of anxiety?

F. Null-hypotheses

H₀1: There is no relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations.

H₀2: There is no relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations regarding gender.

H₀3: There is no relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations regarding the components of anxiety.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

The participants were a convenient sample of 258 freshmen of both genders (193 females and 79 males). They majored in nursing (N=27), operating room (N=26), general health (N=27), environmental health (N=25), professional health (N=24), midwifery (N=26), laboratory sciences (N=25), anesthesia (N=28), emergency (N= 35), and medicine (N=27) courses at Gonabad university of medical sciences, Gonabad, Iran. They were aged from 18 to 22 years old.

B. Instrumentation

The data were collected using two instruments. First, we employed the Persian version of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale questionnaire (FLCAS) which was completed during the term to determine the level of anxiety based on a five-point Likert scale (ranging from completely agree to completely disagree). This scale was a 33-item questionnaire whose items were categorized into five subsections, namely, communicative anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English class or classroom. Specifically speaking, the questionnaire included 33 statements which fell into the following categories: 8 items (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32) were related to communication anxiety, 9 items (3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33) to fear of negative evaluation, and 5 items (2, 8, 10, 19, 21) to test anxiety. With regard to 11 items remained, they were classified as a group named anxiety of English classes (Zhao, 2007). The reliability of this scale was determined in a pilot study prior to data collection ($r=.89$).

The second instrument was an achievement test (hereafter, AT) which was administered for general English and pre-requisite English courses at the end of the term. The general English test consisted of some subsections including vocabulary (in forms of matching and fill-in-the-blanks items), grammar (in form of open-ended questions), translation (in forms of word meaning and sentence translation), and reading comprehension (in forms of multiple-choice, true/false, and essay-type questions). The pre-requisite English test encompassed three subsections, namely, multiple-choice questions (N=40), unscrambling the sentences (N=4), and open-ended ones (N=4).

C. Procedure

Several steps were taken in this study. First, the English version of the FLCAS had to be translated into Persian. In so doing, the questionnaire was given to three university teachers holding MA degrees in TEFL for translation into Persian. Then, the researcher himself compared the translations and decided on better translations for items and made some modifications where necessary. Later, the final version was administered to a group of 114 freshmen who were similar to the target population in a pilot study at Gonabad University of Medical Sciences and a reliability index of .89 was obtained. Later, this newly-translated and reliable questionnaire was administered to 258 freshmen majoring in different fields of medical sciences at the same university during the term. And finally, the participants sat for the achievement test which nearly took 65 minutes to be answered at the end of the term.

D. Data Analysis

To investigate whether there was any relationship between the students' level of anxiety and their performance on the achievement test, some statistical analyses, such as correlation, t-test, and some descriptive statistics (means and rank ordering) were performed using SPSS software V.19.

IV. RESULTS

The above-mentioned analyses are presented below under inferential and descriptive statistics titles.

A. Inferential Statistics

As for the first research question, a correlation was carried out between the participants' scores on the AT and the FLCAS questionnaire. The obtained results revealed a significantly negative correlation coefficient ($r=-0.348$). So, the first null hypothesis was safely rejected (See Table 1).

TABLE I.
THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE AT AND THE FLCAS QUESTIONNAIRE

		AT	FLCAS
AT	Pearson Correlation	1	-.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	258	258
FLCAS	Pearson Correlation	-.348**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	258	258

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regarding the second research questions, a t-test was run between the participants' scores in the AT and FLCAS regarding gender. The results (Table 2) point out that the males and females' performance was different while no significant difference was found between the two genders in FLCAS questionnaire. Hence, the second null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE II.
THE T-TEST RESULT BETWEEN THE AT AND FLCAS REGARDING GENDER

Instrument	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
AT	Male	90	14.5833	2.3035	.042**
	Female	168	15.1830	2.2158	.045**
FLCAS	Male	90	92.1556	20.3187	.085
	Female	168	96.9524	21.7604	.080

** $p < 0.05$

With respect to the third research question, that is, to investigate which component of the FLCAS influenced the participants' test achievement more, some correlational analyses were performed, the results of which indicated that all the components significantly and negatively affected the students' score on the AT. Table 3 delineates the results based on which the third null hypothesis was rejected.

TABLE III.
THE CORRELATION RESULT BETWEEN THE FLCAS COMPONENTS AND THE AT

FLCAS Component	Correlation Coefficient
Communication Anxiety	-0.26**
Fear of Negative Evaluation	-0.35**
Test Anxiety	-0.34**
Anxiety of English Classes	-0.32**
English Classroom Anxiety	-0.36**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

B. Descriptive Statistics

At first, the subjects' performance in FLCAS components is presented with regard to gender through mean, and SD. The results indicate that the females' mean and SD exceed those of males except for English Classroom Anxiety; and "Fear of Negative Evaluation" obtained the highest mean, while "English Classroom Anxiety" enjoyed the lowest mean. Table 4 displays the results.

TABLE IV.
THE PARTICIPANTS' PERFORMANCE IN FLCAS COMPONENTS REGARDING GENDER

FLCAS Component	Gender	N	Mean	SD
Communication Anxiety	Male	90	2.83	.68
	Female	168	3.03*	.69**
Fear of Negative Evaluation	Male	90	2.84	.76
	Female	168	3.10*	.80**
Test Anxiety	Male	90	2.70	.81
	Female	168	2.80*	.84**
Anxiety of English Classes	Male	90	2.85	.55
	Female	168	2.92*	.59**
English Classroom Anxiety	Male	90	2.61	.84
	Female	168	2.55	.84

*. Higher mean
**. Higher SD

Next, the mean and the SD of the components of FLCAS were calculated to explore which component enjoyed the highest mean and SD. So, the components were rank ordered based on the means differences. Table 5 exhibits the results.

TABLE V.
THE RANK ORDER OF THE FLCAS COMPONENTS

FLCAS Component	N	Mean	SD	Rank Order
Communication Anxiety	258	2.96	.69	2
Fear of Negative Evaluation	258	3.01	.80	1
Test Anxiety	258	2.76	.83	4
Anxiety of English Classes	258	2.89	.58	3
English Classroom Anxiety	258	2.57	.84	5

Then, based on the above ranks, the components were presented to examine which items in each component obtained the highest mean and SD. The results are presented in Tables 6-10.

TABLE VI.
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF FEAR OF NEGATIVE EVALUATION IN FLCAS

Item	Fear of Negative Evaluation (9 items)	Mean	SD
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	2.28**	1.18
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	3.07	1.17
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	2.78	1.31
15	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	3.10	1.05
20	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	3.14	1.30
23	I always feel that the other students speak the language better than I do.	2.84	1.12
25	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	3.12	1.11
31	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	2.65	1.16
33	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	3.60*	1.05

*The item with the highest mean
**The item with the lowest mean

TABLE VII.
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF COMMUNICATIVE ANXIETY IN FLCAS

Item	Communicative Anxiety (8 items)	Mean	SD
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	3.11	1.18
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	3.63*	0.99
14	It would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.	3.06	1.09
18	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	2.58	0.97
24	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	2.37**	1.07
27	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	2.61	1.11
29	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	3.33	1.13
32	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	3.01	1.02

*The item with the highest mean
**The item with the lowest mean

TABLE VIII.
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF ANXIETY OF ENGLISH CLASS IN FLCAS

Item	Anxiety of English Class (7 items)	Mean	SD
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	2.92	1.17
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	2.07**	1.02
11	I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	3.44*	0.98
12	In language class, I can get so nervous when I forget things I know.	3.22	1.12
16	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	2.53	1.26
22	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	2.98	1.15
30	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	3.05	1.11

*The item with the highest mean

**The item with the lowest mean

TABLE IX.
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF TEST ANXIETY IN FLCAS

Item	Test Anxiety (5 items)	Mean	SD
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	2.77	1.16
8	I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	2.16**	1.11
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	2.99*	1.41
19	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	2.66	1.11
21	The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	2.24	1.30

*The item with the highest mean

**The item with the lowest mean

TABLE X.
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF ENGLISH CLASSROOM ANXIETY IN FLCAS

Item	English Classroom Anxiety (4 items)	Mean	SD
6	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	2.62	1.14
17	I often feel like not going to my language class.	2.32**	1.11
26	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	2.50	1.13
28	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	2.86*	1.01

*The item with the highest mean

**The item with the lowest mean

Finally, all the FLCAS items were arranged from the highest to the lowest means. The results showed that item number 9 (I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class) obtained the first rank out of 33 with a mean of 3.63 out of 33 items; and item number 5 (I often feel like not going to my language class) possessed the lowest mean (2.07) which ranked 33rd.

V. DISCUSSION

As stated earlier, the study first tried to discover any potential relationship between the students' anxiety and their achievement in examinations. A second aim was to address the role of gender, and the last one was exploring the relation between achievement in examinations and the FLCAS components. Thus, in what follows these objectives will be touched upon.

In terms of the first research question, the obtained results showed a significant and negative correlation coefficient between the students' score in anxiety scale and their performance in their final examination. The finding is consistent with those of Horwitz (1986), Horwitz (2001), MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), MacIntyre, Noels, and Clément (1997), MacIntyre (1999), Zhao (2007), Pappamihel (2002), Awan et al. (2010), Spielberg (1983), Shahnaz and Bhatti (2014), Aida (1994), Chen and Chang (2009), (Clément, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977 & 1980: cited on Onwuegbuzie et al. 1999 and 2000), Horwitz (2001), and Trylong (1987), to name just a few. Accordingly, the negative effect of foreign language anxiety on achievement and language learning is also confirmed through the findings. Furthermore, we observed a negative relationship between anxiety and achievement, a finding which is in line with those of some other studies (Aida, 1994; Chen & Lin, 2009; Isselbaecher, 2004; Yan & Horwitz, 2008; Nisi and Yamini, 2009; Cheragian et al., 2008; and Yazdani & Soleimani, 2011). However, few studies reported a positive relationship between language anxiety and language achievement (Liu, 2006; Oxford, 1999).

As for the gender role, the results delineated that there was a significant difference between males and females in their achievement through which females showed more anxiety than males, a finding which is in line with those of Arnaiz and Guillén (2012), Wilson (2006), Shahnaz and Bhatti (2014), and Cheng (2002) and inconsistent with those of Campbell & Shaw (1994), Zhao (2007), and Awan et al. (2010), which showed that males experienced more anxiety than females. Still some studies like that of Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012), and Aida (1994) reported no significant difference between males and females in their mean score of foreign language anxiety. The "Fear of Negative Evaluation" obtained the highest mean and rank order which corresponds with the findings of Zhao (2007) and Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012).

Considering the third aim of the study, all the components of FLCAS (communicative anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, test anxiety, and anxiety of English class or classroom) significantly and negatively impacted the students' achievement in examinations. In other words, as the students' anxiety related to any of FLCAS components increased,

their scores in the examinations decreased. This finding is in accordance with those of Zhao (2007) in terms of test anxiety and anxiety of English classes, with those of MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) regarding class anxiety, and with those of Chastain (1975) in terms of test anxiety.

With regard to the descriptive statistics of the FLCAS items, the findings will be presented considering the components of FLCAS with the highest means:

In the “Communicative Anxiety” component, item 9 (out of 8 items) enjoyed the highest mean: “I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class” ($M=3.63$) and item 24 (“I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students”) had the lowest mean (2.37). Both of the items indicate that speaking English especially in front of class is the most embarrassing and potential cause of anxiety something which is quite consistent with the findings of Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012), Young (1990), MacIntyre and Gardener (1991 and 1994), Cubukcu (2007), Robles (2005), Jones (2004), and Awan et al. (2010).

Out of 9 items in the “Fear of Negative Evaluation” component, item 33 (“I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven’t prepared in advance”, $M=3.60$) obtained the highest mean; and item 3 (“I tremble when I know that I’m going to be called on in language class”) had the lowest mean ($M=2.28$).

Of the 5 items in “Test Anxiety” component, the items with the highest and the lowest means were: items number 10 and 8: “I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class” ($M=2.99$) and “I am usually at ease during tests in my language class” ($M=2.16$), respectively. The item 8 with the lowest mean was also confirmed by Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012) and Cheng (2008), Liu (2006).

Among the seven items of “Anxiety of English Class”, item 11 possessed the highest mean: “I don’t understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes” ($M=3.44$) and item 5: “It wouldn’t bother me at all to take more foreign language classes” had the lowest mean ($M=2.07$).

As for the “English Classroom Anxiety”, the items of highest and lowest means were 28 and 17: “When I’m on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed” ($M=2.86$) and “I often feel like not going to my language class” ($M=2.32$), respectively. The lowest mean found is in line with that of Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012), Cheng (2008), Liu (2006) and Tsui (1996, cited in Ohata, 2005).

Considering the item means and rank orders in general, item number 9 (I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.) ranked first in mean value which is in line with what Koch and Terrell (1991), Price (1991), and Young (1990) reported. On the contrary, item number 5 (It wouldn’t bother me at all to take more foreign language classes) placed last which shows that students would rather not take part in any more English classes, something which may be due to their high-anxiousness in English language classes.

VI. CONCLUSION

Drawing on the above-mentioned results and discussion, we inferred the following to reduce the foreign language anxiety. Firstly, as Zhao (2007), Young (1994), and Yamat and Shirani Bidabadi (2012) contented, teachers should be supportive of students’ learning processing and create a safe, relaxed, and friendly classroom atmosphere for them so that the students feel secured to express themselves orally. Secondly, as for the speaking in class, the students should not be forced to speak English or give oral presentation individually; conversely, they should be encouraged to work cooperatively in groups and participate in class discussions and not fear making mistakes (Jones, 2004), and more emphasis should be directed to listening and speaking. Hence, teachers should tolerate the mistakes made by the students and inform them that making mistakes is inevitable in learning a foreign language. Thirdly, since “Fear of Negative Evaluation” ranked first among the components of FLCAS, teachers should avoid evaluating negatively the students’ manners in class as reported by Daly (1991). Fourthly, teachers should inform students that anxiety, though inevitable, is to some extent positive and facilitative; and if it exceeds a certain limit it could be negative and debilitating, both of which are almost inevitable in language learning so the students should be provided with some strategies to cope with anxiety-provoking situations appropriately so that they would not resort to avoidance behavior, as noted by Scovel (1991). Fifthly, the students should be provided with comprehensible input geared to their level of language proficiency and capacity as Anwar et al. (2010) claimed. Last but not least, the students’ culture and its disparities and commonalities with those of the target language should be taken into consideration by teachers as some individual and gender characteristics may be different from one culture to another (Ohata, 2005; Jones, 2004; Young, 1991; and Truitt, 1995). However, the readers should be reminded of the fact that the findings of this study were based on a population of Iranian EFL freshmen learners majoring in different fields of medical sciences.

APPENDIX A. THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS) DEVELOPED BY HORWITZ IN 1986

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don’t worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I’m going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don’t understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn’t bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class, I can get so nervous when I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. It would not be nervous speaking in the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak the language better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25. Language class move so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

APPENDIX B. THE PERSIAN VERSION OF THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS) TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED FOR THE STUDY

- این پرسشنامه سنجش میزان اضطراب یادگیری در درس زبان انگلیسی
برسشنامه جنبه تحقیقاتی داشته و اطلاعات مربوط به شما بطور محرمانه باقی خواهد ماند. لطفا در نهایت دقت و صحت با گذاشتن ضربدر در
نام و نام خانوادگی: رسته: سن:
1. وقتی در کلاس زبان خارجی صحبت می کنم، هیچ وقت به خود اطمینان کامل ندارم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 2. از اشتباه کردن در کلاس زبان نگران نیستم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 3. وقتی می دانم قرار است در کلاس زبان اسم مرا صدا بزنند، لرزه بر اندام می افتد. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 4. وقتی آنچه معلم به انگلیسی می گوید نمی فهمم دچار ترس می شوم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 5. از اینکه در کلاسهای زبان بیشتری شرکت کنم، احساس بدی ندارم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 6. در طول کلاس زبان متوجه می شوم راجع به چیزهایی فکر می کنم که هیچ ربطی به کلاس زبان ندارد. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 7. فکر می کنم که همکلاسی هایم از نظر زبان از من بهتر هستند. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 8. غالباً در حین آزمون زبان احساس راحتی می کنم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 9. وقتی آمادگی ندارم ولی مجبورم در کلاس زبان صحبت کنم دچار ترس و بیم می شوم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 10. نگران عواقب مردودی در امتحان زبان هستم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 11. نمی فهمم چرا بعضی ها راجع به کلاس زبان اینقدر ناامید هستند. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 12. اگر چیزی را که می دانم در کلاس زبان فراموش کنم خیلی آشفته می شوم. کاملاً موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملاً مخالف هستم
 13. برای داوطلب شدن برای پاسخ به سئوالات در کلاس زبان انگلیسی خجالت می کشم.

- کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
14. صحبت کردن به زبان انگلیسی با انگلیسی زبانان باعث اضطراب و نگرانی من نمی شود. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
15. وقتی نمی فهمم معلم دارد چه چیزی را تصحیح می کند آشفته می شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
16. حتی اگر برای کلاس زبان کاملا آماده باشم باز هم دچار اضطراب هستم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
17. اغلب احساس می کنم دوست ندارم در کلاس زبانم حاضر شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
18. وقتی در کلاس زبان انگلیسی صحبت می کنم نسبت به خود احساس اطمینان می کنم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
19. از اینکه معلم زبان تمام اشتباهات مرا تصحیح کند هراس دارم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
20. وقتی نزدیک است که اسم مرا در کلاس زبان صدا بزنند قلبم به تپش می افتد. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
21. هر چقدر بیشتر برای آزمون زبان مطالعه می کنم، گیج تر می شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
22. برای اینکه خیلی خوب در کلاس زبان آماده شوم هیچگونه فشاری بر من وارد نیست. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
23. همیشه احساس می کنم همکلاسی هایم بهتر از من انگلیسی صحبت می کنند. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
24. از اینکه جلوی همکلاسی هایم به انگلیسی صحبت کنم خیلی خجالت می کشم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
25. درس زبان آنقدر سریع به پیش می رود که گاهی می ترسم از درس عقب بمانم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
26. نسبت به سایر کلاسهایم در کلاس زبان خیلی بیشتر نگران و مضطرب هستم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
27. وقتی سر کلاس زبان صحبت می کنم مضطرب و مشوش می شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
28. هنگام رفتن به کلاس زبان، احساس اطمینان و آرامش خیال می کنم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
29. وقتی تمام کلماتی را که معلم می گوید نفهم آشفته می شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
30. از تعداد زیاد قواعدی که برای یادگیری یک زبان خارجی لازم است احساس ناتوانی به من دست می دهد. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
31. وقتی به زبان خارجی صحبت می کنم می ترسم دیگر دانش آموزان به من بخندند. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
32. احتمالا از بودن و صحبت کردن با انگلیسی زبانان احساس راحتی می کنم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم
33. وقتی معلم سوالی بپرسد که خود را برایش آماده نکرده ام دچار اضطراب می شوم. کاملا موافق هستم موافق هستم نظری ندارم مخالف هستم کاملا مخالف هستم

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Mostafa Amiri graduated with a BA degree in TEFL from Sistan and Baluchestan University, Zahedan, Iran, in 1992. He got his MA degree in TEFL from University for Teacher Education (UTE), Tehran, Iran, in 1995. Currently, he is a PhD candidate of TEFL at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (the International Campus), Mashhad, Iran. *His areas of interest are teaching/testing reading, and teaching ESP courses.*

He is a FACULTY MEMBER at Gonabad University of Medical Sciences, Gonabad, Iran, where he teaches English courses at BS and MS levels. He has presented papers in some international conferences.

Behzad Ghonsooly is a professor at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. He got his PhD in applied linguistics from Stirling University. He has published several books and articles in different local and international journals. His main research interests are language testing, ESP, and translation studies.