A COMPARISON OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN TWO DIFFERENT SETTINGS: ONLINE VS CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine and compare the foreign language anxiety (FLA) levels of English preparatory school students in two settings namely online and in person classroom lessons. An explanatory mixed-method research design was adopted to accomplish the aim. Two questionnaires were used in the first part to collect quantitative data, and the sample cohort consisted of 234 students from six Turkish state universities. The quantitative data were examined through descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings showed that moderate levels of FLA were present in both online and in person classroom instruction among participants. It was discovered that the FLA levels in two settings differed in a statistically significant way. In consonance with quantitative results, semi-structured interviews with 10 volunteers were done to collect further data. Thematic analysis was used to resolve the qualitative data from the interviews, and as a result, four key themes – interaction, anxiety, problems, and language points – emerged. Students preferred classroom settings for interaction since they could interact in person classroom lessons. Additionally, it was shown that technical issues such as disconnections and speech interruptions caused distress in language learners.

Keywords: EFL, foreign language anxiety, hybrid learning, online language anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1970s, anxiety has received a great deal of critical attention thanks to the groundbreaking research of Guiora et al. (1972), Chastain (1975), Kleinmann (1977), and Scovel (1978). According to Guiora (1972), learning a language makes people feel dreadful about themselves and the outside world, which leads to unsettling psychological positions. Anxiety is "a subjective experience of tension, fear, nervousness, and worry coupled with an activation of the autonomic nervous system," according to a renowned study by Horwitz et al. (1986). (p.126). Additionally, they sought to define Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) and demonstrated that FLA differs from general anxiety in that it is a particular anxiety reaction. They described FLA as a conceptually distinct variable in this section. They pointed out three situation-specific anxieties: 1. communication apprehension (CA), 2. test anxiety (TA), and 3. fear of negative evaluation (FNE). FLA.

The classroom setting is crucial in the EFL context since students learn the target language almost exclusively in the classroom. The educational setting has the ability to both worsen and improve FLA. Therefore, it is crucial to consider how FLA is impacted by the classroom setting. Students also bring a variety of characteristics to the classroom, some of which may hinder language learning even if they have no bearing on the learning process. There are many factors that can cause anxiety, including the quantity of students,

the activities' goals, the lesson's level of difficulty (Kitano, 2001; Tani-Fukichi, 2005), the nature of the interactions (Koch & Terrel, 1991; Price, 1991), error correction, failure-related anxiety, and personal breakdown (Mak, 2011). Other factors that have been identified as contributing to FLA include student competence levels (Liu, 2006; Pichette, 2009; Toth, 2010), assessment (Liu & Jackson, 2008; Elkhafaifi, 2005), learner attitudes (Yan & Horwitz, 2008), and vocabulary limitations (Kocak, 2010).

As a result of technology development and current needs, learning has grown outside of the classroom and developed in numerous venues, including online platforms. The learner and the educational process are no longer separated by physical obstacles thanks to online education. Online platforms can now access more pupils as a result. Additionally, numerous lectures have been delivered to students online. One of the issues is online content that encourages language acquisition. The online language learning context differs from the classroom setting and has its own unique features in some areas, such as interaction type, feedback, technological proficiency, self-direction, and remoteness, making investigation in this context necessary to improve and enhance language learning.

In comparison to classroom settings, it was discovered that there hasn't been much research on the anxiety factor in online settings (Barkanyi & Melchor-Couto, 2016; Bollinger, 2017; Chametzky, 2019; Doan, 2020b; Donahoe, 2010; Hurd & Xiao, 2010; Hurd, 2007; Majid et al, 2012; Martin & Alvarez-Valdivia, 2017; Pichette, 2009; Russell, 2020; Shirvan & Taherian, 2018; Yang & Quadir, 2018). Despite the fact that online language learning has already been researched prior to the pandemic (Doan, 2016; Hurd, 2007; Pichette, 2009; Russell, 2020), the importance of study in this area has been highlighted as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak (Doan, 2020b).

Anxiety affects language learning, according to decades' worth of research. It is important to look into how anxious learners are because the majority of language learners have expressed feelings of being overloaded or frightened (Horwitz et al., 1986). To find solutions, it's also important to look into the stressful environment that makes students anxious. Numerous studies have shown that anxiety reduces language proficiency (Krashen, 1981), and this effect extends beyond traditional classroom settings to other contexts including distance learning or online learning (Xiao & Wong, 2014). (Hurd & Xiao, 2010). According to a well-known study by Hurd (2007a), anxiety-inducing factors in distance foreign language programs include a lack of quick feedback, difficulty assessing individual growth, remoteness, and a lack of commitment to independent learning. The Covid-19 pandemic has led to an increase in online learning, making it imperative to conduct research on distant language learning anxiety.

It has been known that worry hinders language acquisition and achievement in a classroom setting. Additionally, students revealed that while producing in a foreign language, they struggle, worry, and often experience bodily pain like a rapid heartbeat (Horwitz et al., 1986). Additionally, it has been determined that FLA has a deleterious impact on linguistic achievement (Aida, 1994; Liu, & Zhang, 2013). In order to take the required steps and develop the language learning process to gather the maximum efficiency, it is vital to assess the anxiety levels of language learners both in face-to-face and online learning, as well as to investigate the origins of worry. As a result, the current study concentrated on analyzing the anxiety levels of foreign language students in two distinct situations, namely in-person and online courses.

Given the aforementioned information, this study used the following research questions to achieve the aforementioned goals and add to the field of language learning anxiety:

1. What are the anxiety levels of preparatory school students in state universities in Turkiye?

    1. a- What is the anxiety level of learners in conventional language classroom?

    1. b- What is the anxiety level of learners in online language class?

    1. c- Is there a difference in foreign language anxiety levels between the two types of learning settings: conventional vs online?

2. What are the learners' opinions about the two settings in terms of their language anxiety level: conventional vs online?

METHOD

The study focused to explore preparatory students' language learning anxiety levels in two disparate environments: classroom and online lessons. In order to display learners' anxiety levels, quantitative data was collected and then to examine the anxiety levels in broader manner semi-structured interviews were carried out. In this fashion, an explanatory mixed-method design was adapted. The advantages of mixed methods design have been discussed by a number of academics (Greene et al., 1989; Holmes, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). In their analysis of 57 empirical mixed-method studies, Greene et al. (1989) pointed out that using two models can help researchers grasp their study topics more thoroughly. In a similar vein, Holmes (2007) claimed that clarifying the results through the use of mixed methods is useful. Creswell (2014) also made a broadly similar conclusion, stating that mixed methods design has the "strength of drawing on both qualitative and quantitative research" and that it lessens "the limitations of both approaches" (p. 386). Thus, the study comprised of two phases. An online survey was used in the study's initial phase to gauge the participants' levels of anxiety. Survey design aids in illustrating a population's trends, attitudes, or opinions by numerically analyzing sample. (Creswell, 2014). Numerous advantages of the survey design include affordability, viability, and utility. Most importantly, surveys are frequently used in social sciences to question preconceived notions about behavior and clarify how societies operate. Thus, two Likert-type scales were used to measure the participants' FLA levels. In order to comprehend the viewpoint of the learners better, semi-structured interviews with volunteers were conducted in the second phase of the study. Creswell (2014) notes that qualitative research promotes a thorough understanding of attitudes and behavior. Consequently, semi-structured interviews were employed to gather qualitative data in order to investigate the participants' viewpoints on anxiety in a more comprehensive way.

Given that semi-structured interviews were conducted to learn more about learners' attitudes in two different contexts after the analysis of quantitative data that was acquired using two scales, the current study used a mixed-methods approach, namely an explanatory sequential design.

Participants

Convenience sampling, one of the non-probability sampling techniques, was used to identify the sample group. 234 prep school students from 6 state universities in Turkiye as shown in table 1. that used blended learning took part in the study's first phase on a voluntary basis and answered the questionnaire. Ten volunteers from those students who participated in the study's second phase were interviewed.

Table 1. Age and gender distribution of the participants

	N
Afyon Kocatepe University	8
Anadolu University	21
Eskisehir Technical University	5
Izmir Democracy University	33
Izmir Institute of Technology	104
Izmir Kâtip Celebi University	65

Participants were prep school students engaged in both in-person and online English programs during the spring semester of the 2021–2022 academic year. Accordingly, they had already reached B1 level proficiency. The participants were assigned as B1 level even though each institution has its own testing and evaluation procedures. They were, therefore, considered to have a level of English proficiency sufficient to comprehend and reply to the questions.

The age range of the participants, as determined by the demographic data gathered, was 18 to 25. Male students represented 52.99% (124) of the participants in terms of gender, while female students represented 47.01% (110) of the participants. Table 2 below shows the precise breakdown of participants' ages and genders.

Table 2. Age and gender distribution of the participants

Age	N	Gender	N
18	62	Male	124
19	74	Female	110
20	64		
21	32		
25	2		

Data Collection and Analysis

There were mainly two instruments to collect the quantitative data. The Turkish version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986) developed by Aydin et al. (2017) and the Online World Languages Anxiety Scale (OWLAS) developed by Chametzky (2019) were respectively adopted to measure anxiety levels as the study's objective was to investigate and compare the anxiety levels of the learners in two different settings. The former scale was used to assess participant anxiety levels in classroom practice, whilst the latter scale was used to look into participant anxiety levels in online courses. The two scales are comparable because, according to Chametzky (2019), OWLAS was modified for the online context using FLCAS as the stimulus. Therefore, it was decided that the two questionnaires may be used to measure the anxiety component in two separate contexts.

Participants were asked additional demographic questions as part of a single online questionnaire created from the scales. IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software was used to evaluate the qualitative data from the online survey. Descriptive statistics were used to present the data in a concise manner. To determine whether there was a significant difference in the mean scores in the two situations, the participants' FLA levels were averaged, and a sample t-test was conducted. In the current investigation, one sample t-test was deemed adequate to summarize the results because the two mean scores were collected from the same sample cohort.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the study's second phase to elicit participants' perspectives on the two aforementioned situations. According to quantitative data findings received from the questionnaires, the interview questions were created. The researcher also developed interview rules that included crucial subjects to discuss all throughout the interviews. In light of the pertinent literature review and the objectives of the current investigation, interview questions were subsequently devised. 11 Turkish interview questions about in-person and online English classes were included. The questions were designed after consulting with two subject-matter specialists. Finally, the consent of the research advisor was assured. To make the participants feel comfortable sharing their perspectives, the interviews were held in Turkish. The interviews were done, recorded, and then the transcripts were created. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) which involves six stages namely 'familiarizing with the data set', 'coding', 'generating initial themes', 'developing and reviewing themes', 'refining, defining and naming themes', and 'reporting' was used to examine the transcriptions.

Turkish Version of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

For several reasons, Aydin et al. (2016) created a Turkish version of FLCAS (Horwitz et al., 1986). The study made clear how important it is to administer FLCAS in a variety of locations and scenarios in order to obtain detailed results. It was noted that the data gathered by the original scale would be impacted by proficiency levels, cultural and intercultural factors, and educational situations. Aydin et al. translated and modified the FLCAS items for use in a Turkish EFL environment (2016). 85 third- and fourth-year English language teaching students from Balikesir University participated in the study. Three stages made up the study's methodology: translation, administration, and analysis. The scale was translated into Turkish in the first section by five subject-matter specialists. Then, three panels were used to compare the five translations. The English version of the scale was administered to the participants in the middle of the academic year 2015–2016 after agreement was reached on the items. The Turkish version of the scale was given to the participants

after a one-month delay. SPSS software was used to conduct statistical analysis in the last section. Analysis showed that the Turkish version's Cronbach's Alpha level was .86 whereas the English version was assessed in terms of internal consistency. 77. Findings on construct validity showed that the rotated two factors in the Turkish version explained 73.58 of the Variance. In conclusion, the reliability coefficient for the Turkish version was higher than for the English version. It was agreed that the Turkish FLCAS version made it easy to gauge Turkish learners' levels of anxiety about learning a foreign language. Therefore, the Turkish version of FLCAS developed by Aydn et al. (2016) was used in the current study to test participants' proficiency in foreign language classrooms, and the study's Cronbach's Alpha coefficient showed a sufficient reliability with a value of .94.

Online World Language Anxiety Scale (OWLAS)

Chametzky created the Online World Languages Anxiety Scale (OWLAS) (2019). According to the author, the FLCAS scale was prompted by concurrent disparities and correspondences. The scale consists of 33 questions, similar to FLCAS, plus 4 questions about demographic data, were included in the pilot study. There is no broad description of participants because there are only four questions that ask for restricted demographic information. Since there are many different things that students feel and experience that can create anxiety, Chametzky divided the statements on the scale into 12 categories. These 12 categories were named as follows: 1) comfort, 2) embarrassment, 3) concern, fear, and overwhelm, 4) help, 5) linguistic interference, 6) listening, 7) inadequacies, 8) oral production, 9) the need to practice saying or writing before submission, 10) positive thinking, 11) putting oneself down, and 12) demographics.

Chametzky (2019) conducted a pilot study with seven individuals who had registered in at least one online foreign language class to examine the applicability, validity, and reliability of OWLAS. There is no information regarding the participants' age, gender, or school of attendance because their demographics were not mentioned in the article. As a result, Chametzky (2019) has previously made a point about the sample size. Due to the tiny sample size, Cronbach's alpha was determined to be 1.0 and had a high level of internal consistency. The pilot study's standard deviation, as stated, varied from.4 to 1.83. Four experts in the field reviewed and evaluated the questions' reliability and validity, and changes were made as a result. Accordingly, the scale has been found to be accurate and trustworthy for assessing anxiety related to online foreign language learning. Thus, 234 individuals in the current study were given the OWLAS to measure their degrees of online foreign language anxiety. When the scale's internal consistency was evaluated, the reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of.87, which is considered a satisfactory result.

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken to thoroughly examine the participants' opinions and perceptions of anxiety. The reliability of the study is referred to as validity in research technique. Validity is occasionally cited as a threat to qualitative research because these approaches often do not offer statistics or quantification of responses (see Becker, 1996). However, when researchers use methods that provide detailed description of a respondent's perspective, the validity of the data is increased; information is gathered directly from the source and enables interactive participation (Ahlin, 2019). By asking the same set of questions to new participants during a subsequent round of interviews, it is possible to increase the number of responses on a particular topic, for example, if an intriguing point was raised in one interview but was not covered by the entire sample. These decrease the reliability concerns. The first stage of the current study, which involved analyzing the participants' FLA levels via an online questionnaire, yielded findings and results that guided the construction of the interview questions. Additionally, the researcher created interview guidelines with important topics to cover throughout the interviews. In this way, the interview questions were developed in line with the pertinent literature review and the study's goals. Eleven Turkish questions about classroom and online English lessons made up the interview questions. Two subject-matter specialists were consulted for their thoughts as the questions were being developed. After the necessary revisions were made, they were presented to the advisor. In conclusion, the research advisor's approval was guaranteed. Additionally, the researcher developed some additional questions during the interviews based on the answers of the participants. The interviews were conducted via using an online platform and they were recorded.

FINDINGS

Descriptive statistics were used to illustrate the FLA levels of the prep students, and the mean scores from the questionnaire were computed. Additionally, using descriptive statistics, frequencies and participant percentages were determined in the same way. The number of participants who experienced each of the three categories of anxiety—low, moderate, and high—was also confirmed in order to show the participants' anxiety levels in detail. The results are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3. The level of FLA in in-person classroom lessons

	N	M
FLA in classroom	234	89.34
	Frequencies	Percentages
Low level of classroom anxiety	70	29.92
Moderate level of classroom anxiety	154	65.81
High level of classroom anxiety	10	4.27
Total	234	100

The findings indicate that 234 English preparatory school students who took part in the survey had a mean score of 89.34 in face-to-face English lessons and moderate levels of foreign language classroom anxiety. Additionally, as shown in the table, the study showed that 65.81 percent of participants (f=154) had moderate levels of anxiety. A third of the participants (f=70) also displayed low levels of anxiety, while 4.27 percent (f=10) of them displayed significant levels of anxiety related to learning a foreign language.

Similar to the first inquiry, the second one examined participants' FLA levels but in an entirely different context: online classes. The mean score was determined using SPSS, and identical to the first question, descriptive statistics were used. Table 4 below provides a full analysis of the results.

Table 4. The level of FLA in online lessons

	N	M
FLA in online lessons	234	98.17
	Frequencies	Percentages
Low level of classroom anxiety	18	7.69
Moderate level of classroom anxiety	204	87.18
High level of classroom anxiety	12	5.13
Total	234	100

With a mean score of 98.17 in their online English courses, the results showed that the 234 English preparatory school students who participated in this study reported a moderate level of online foreign language anxiety. Additionally, the majority of students, or more than half of the participants (f=204), had moderate levels of anxiety, as seen in the table. In addition, 5.13 percent of individuals reported high levels of anxiety related to learning a foreign language, compared to 7.69 percent who reported low levels.

One sample t-test was performed because the third question involved comparing the FLA levels in the two situations. According to the research, there was a substantial, robust, and positive correlation between foreign language online anxiety scores and foreign language classroom anxiety scores (r=.645, p0.001). The study showed that the anxiety scores in the classroom and online had a statistically significant average difference (t233=9.484, p0.001). Foreign language classroom anxiety levels were on average 8.83 points lower than scores on foreign language online anxiety (95% CI: 7.00, 19.67).

Table 5. Paired sample t-test

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Classroom – Online	-8.83761	14.25516	.93189	-10.67361	-7.00160

				Significance	
	t	df		One-Sided p	Two-Sided p
Classroom - Online	-9.484	233		<.001	<.001

Semi-structured interviews were done in accordance with the analysis and findings of the quantitative data in order to learn the participants' opinions and impressions. Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis (TA) was used to analyze the interviews (2006). There were six phases of TA used in total. Major themes and sub-themes that emerged from the data were segregated. After the transcripts from the recordings were carefully examined, 4 primary themes and 11 sub-themes were created. Themes are displayed in the following Figure 1.
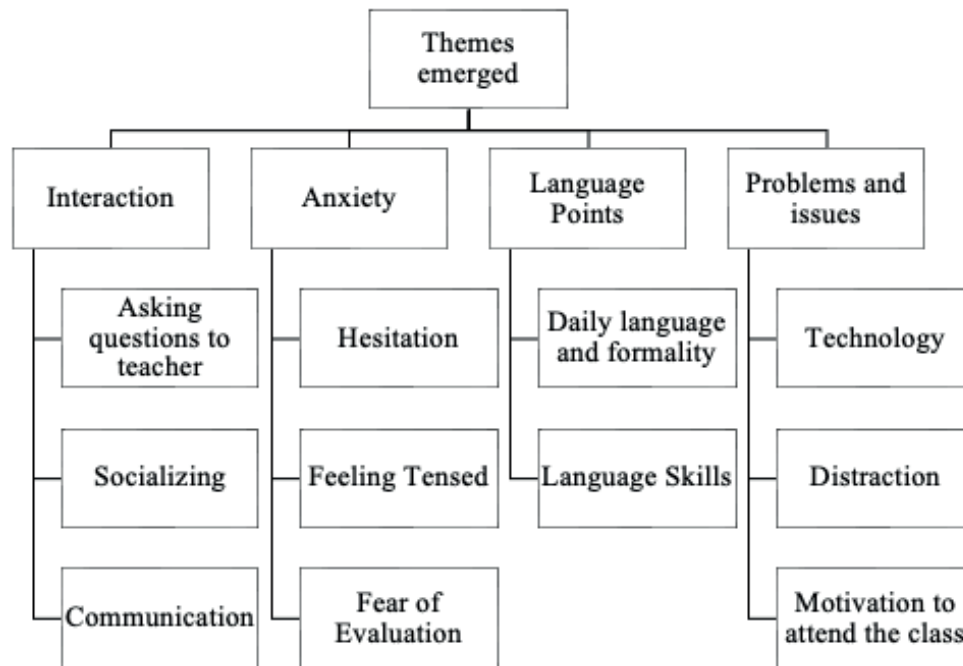

Figure 1. Themes emerged

When they did not understand the learning material in either environment, the learners reported that they refrained from offering any remarks or answering a question in English. In fact, many were hesitant to ask questions, showing that they were confused by the material. In addition, a few pupils said that the aforementioned incident occurred in a classroom context. They went on to say that being in the classroom in front of so many people created stress and directed them to keep quiet. Some students found that this condition improved in the online environment since they felt more at ease there. The learners reported feeling anxious during the sessions when there were unfamiliar language points, such as new terminology. Some students gave this tense sensation a higher definition in the classroom since they had access to online dictionaries and translation tools during online classes. In both contexts, more than half of the students reported refraining from speaking English during class because they were concerned about other people's reactions.

The investigation showed that every learner encountered technical issues with learning the English language during the online lessons. In fact, the participants deemed online schooling to be technologically deficient. All of the students admitted that having their internet connection taken off had upset them. The voice-related problem was the most technical one mentioned. They indicated that they got apprehensive and anxious whenever there was a voice interruption during the online lectures. Voice interruptions and voice resonance occasionally occurred as a result of connection issues, which frequently produced a stressful situation. With regard to assignments and homework, online schooling also has this issue. The students discovered that they were unable to post their assignments or homework as a result of bugs that had developed in the software used to provide online classes.

The preference of the learners was for both in-person instruction and online sessions. Their desire to attend the seminar was one of the factors that influenced their decision. They added that because they didn't open their cameras or tighten their seat belts while taking online classes at their homes or dorms, they felt more at ease. However, five of them admitted that having to get up, get ready, and go to school made them feel inspired and compelled. Since they tried to be in the classroom, their need to commute and move led them to study before class and pay attention to learn English there. The students went on to say that they periodically required a break from the life fluency that was taught in online sessions.

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The descriptive analysis revealed that the students had a moderate degree of FLA during the in-person classroom lectures with a mean FLA score of 89.34. This can be interpreted to signify that even though the mean score was not particularly high, pupils nonetheless experienced anxiety throughout classroom English classes. Students that have modest anxiety may be classified as somewhat anxious (Horwitz, 2008). In other words, there are situations where kids experience stress. In order to learn more about these events and their underlying reasons, semi-structured interviews were conducted. According to the interviews, several students became anxious when they lacked the language needed to complete a task. Korkmaz and Mirici also acknowledged the same source of anxiousness (2021). They also found that students shied away from speaking in front of their peers for fear that their friends would be critical of their public speaking skills. This study revealed the similar outcome, with numerous students admitting they were hesitant to speak in front of their peers in class out of a fear of being judged. Additionally, numerous students admitted to being shy, which made it difficult for them to speak the target language because it made them feel uncomfortable. Due to the fact that the students thought of themselves as shy, their worry could have been a type of trait anxiety. Because of this, during face-to-face classroom instruction, the students felt uneasy in particular circumstances, which explains the finding of moderate-level anxiety. It's crucial to give students stress-relieving activities, like employing comedy in the classroom, to help them (Oxford, 2016).

In scenarios that mirrored those in the classroom, the students showed signs of nervousness, as the interviews revealed. Participants first stated that they preferred the classroom setting for communication because they could employ nonverbal cues like gesture and mimicry. They were hesitant as a result and skipped online lessons. Learning may be just as effective online as it can in a physical classroom, claims Chametzky (2021). However, employing an online venue has a number of limitations (Chametzky, 2016a) and variations (Cochran & Benuto, 2016). Participants also remarked that the technology issues during the online lectures were stressful. To avoid communication breakdowns or sound changes during the sessions, which in the current study had made students uncomfortable, it is crucial to update and improve technology tools for online classrooms. In the study by Chametzky (2013a), this issue is described as the fact that teachers and students would experience extreme stress if they were unaware of inequalities in online engagement. Because of this ignorance, learners may become frustrated and leave the class, which is a highly undesired behavior (Lee & Choi, 2011). Eygu and Karaman's study is another that backs up the findings in terms of interaction (2013). They discovered that in order to foster a sense of community and minimize social isolation, it is crucial to give online learners access to interactive features like chat, discussion boards, private messaging, and face-to-face connection. The participants in the current study may have been apprehensive about developing healthy communication with their professors and peers because they did not have the opportunity to connect online as Eygu and Karaman recommend. As a result of the aforementioned factors, learners in online sessions reported moderate levels of anxiety.

The findings of the present study are different from those of studies by Pichette (2009) and Baez-Holley (2013), which revealed no differences in two scenarios with French speakers who were learning either English or Spanish. In two different learning environments, Côte and Gaffney's study from 2021 discovered a substantial difference in the degrees of anxiety. However, the difference they discovered goes against the direction of the present study. In other words, they discovered that students in the online environment experienced less anxiety and contributed more to the lesson, whereas in the present study, students showed less anxiety in the classroom than in the online environment. As in the current study, further examination through interviews revealed that learners experience anguish when there is a technological problem during the online classes, it is probable that the contradictory findings are related to learners' technological ability or technological breakdowns. The current study's findings, while different from several other research (Côte & Gaffney 2021; Pichette, 2009), are in line with those of Kaisar and Chowdhury (2020). The researchers discovered that students felt less apprehensive in traditional classroom settings than they did in online courses. It is important to highlight that Kaisar and Chowdhury (2020) and Côte and Gaffney (2021) did their studies during the Coronavirus pandemic, which may have had an impact on the students' affective states.

The majority of students reported that in the classroom setting, they could raise questions directly to the teacher and get a prompt response. Additionally, students supported a school environment because they saw see nonverbal communication in action. The lack of voice interruptions or connectivity troubles during online classes was noted by students as a communication impediment. White (2003) noted that the particular setting of distance learning offers an additional scope that can have a significant impact on affect because learners are unattended while attempting to regulate their anxiety. This is because the teacher is absent there and there is hardly any direct peer assistance. Similar to this, Zhang and Cui (2010) asserted that studying a language online might be more compelling than other topics, particularly in reference to speaking abilities given the lack of an instructor to see student production, offer feedback, and assess student performance. These may be the causes of the participants' increased anxiety in online classes in the current study.

When they could not understand the learning material, the students' affective states became tense. A fear of being judged by others was also mentioned by over half of the students. This result backs with an earlier study by Korkmaz and Mirici (2021), which discovered that students avoided speaking in front of their peers out of fear that they could be mocked or even laughed at. Similar to this, the participants in the current study said they were afraid of being judged when speaking in front of their peers.

Some of the participants in the study claimed that they prepared more thoroughly for the in-person classes because they felt anxious about speaking in front of so many people. This result is consistent with a study conducted by Kim (2017), which discovered that students in online classes were less concerned about potential mistakes because they couldn't watch their peers make them. In online classes, students said that having technical issues made them concerned about the subject matter. The majority of students reported feeling anxious when taking an online course since voice breaks or internet disconnections could occur.

The current study has some restrictions. First off, a rather small sample size was used in the study, which involved 234 English preparatory school students from 6 state colleges. The findings cannot be applied to all students at English preparatory schools because there were other state and private universities. In the present study, anxiety levels and the causes of those anxieties were investigated using an explanatory mixed-method approach. Additional recommendations are provided in light of the present study's limitations. The current study used just interviews to gather qualitative data; other qualitative methods, such as reflection papers, diaries, or think-aloud exercises, can be used to gain a deeper understanding of learners' affective status. As the current study only included students in preparatory schools, other study groups, such as college students from other faculties, high school students, and elementary school students, can be looked into in order to broaden the study's focus. Since the results of the current study showed that learners' FLA levels were much greater in online lessons than in classroom settings, it is important to analyze the online language learning environment from a variety of perspectives with regard to the anxiety phenomena.

Some ramifications for those involved in foreign language instruction are suggested by the current study. The findings of the current study suggest that anxiety is a problem for foreign language students both in traditional classroom settings and online. As a result, it's critical to take preventative measures and use methods or activities, such reminiscing exercises, to lower learners' anxiety levels. Positive psychology was used to conduct an experimental study by Jin et al. in 2021. In the study, the experimental group that participated

in the reminiscing activity experienced much lower levels of anxiety than the control group. Therefore, it is crucial that lecturers include assignments that reduce students' anxiety levels. The source of anxiety status was another significant discovery. In online sessions, students acknowledged a number of circumstances that make them more anxious. One of the circumstances was a technology issue. Therefore, resolving technical issues and enhancing mechanical systems might ease the distress felt by students. Additionally, students said that their inability to observe nonverbal cues during online lectures prevented them from participating in the assignments. Therefore, selecting appropriate activities for the environment is essential.

The current study looked at learners' anxiety levels in two different settings and discovered that English prep students had a moderate degree of FLA. However, the mean FLA level score in the online context was much higher than in the classroom. The study also looked at how students perceived the two environments, and it found that certain factors, such technology issues, and issues with interaction, made online classes stressful for students. The study concludes that it is necessary for language learners to take effective measures and engage in activities that lower their FLA levels.

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