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Sepide Farhadi

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## Review Article

# Research on foreign language teaching anxiety in the last decade: A review of studies in Turkish EFL context

Sepide Farhadi  ORCID

MA student in ELT, Anadolu University, Department of Foreign Language Education, Eskişehir, Turkey

### Abstract

Anxiety has usually been a fundamental factor affecting the language learning as well as the language teaching process. Although there are numerous articles regarding foreign language learning anxiety, there is a scant body of literature about foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA). The purpose of this research is to explore the main research areas concerning FLTA that are conducted in Turkey within the last decade, through the meta-synthesis method. Accordingly, the results of 13 FLTA-related studies were presented in this study after excluding irrelevant articles. Using content analysis, the data were analyzed. Based on similarities and differences, several codes were evaluated and separated between the themes. The results of the 13 selected studies revealed 5 themes, namely, the sources of FLTA, the impact of gender on FLTA, the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, the connection between years of experience and FLTA, and the level of FLTA. Consequently, for prospective research, possible research areas were recommended.

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## Introduction

Considering the classroom environment of many schools and universities, it has been identified that anxiety is a crucial issue pervading learning and teaching of all disciplines. Anxiety can be defined as the psychological stress in the implementation of a learning activity that the learner goes through (Zhang, 2001). The concept of anxiety varies from an eclectic mix of explicit behavioral features that can be rationally studied to empirically inaccessible introspective feelings (Casado & Dereshiwsky, 2001). It is the subjective feeling of apprehension, nervousness, tension, and worry correlated with automatic nervous system arousal (Spielberger, 1983). Kunt and Tm (2010) note that some research found negative relationships between anxiety and accomplishment, while some of them reported no association at all, others revealed a positive one. Accordingly, scholars stated that while mentioning anxiety, they should better consider the types of it. The researchers classified anxiety as trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety is regarded as a personality feature, whereas state anxiety is viewed as a reaction to a certain circumstance at a specific time (Spielberger, 1983). As for situation-specific anxiety, it is a type of anxiety associated with certain events and situations (Horwitz et al., 1986). In another classification made by Oxford (1999), there are two types of Anxiety known as debilitating and facilitating anxiety. Briefly, facilitative anxiety can be defined as an attempt to enhance a person's efficiency in many activities, while debilitating anxiety deteriorates the quality of his work (Oxford, 1999).

### Foreign language anxiety

The type of anxiety which is primarily linked to the learning of a foreign language is language anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991). When learning or using a second language, the concern and unpleasant psychological reaction awakened is conceived as language anxiety (McIntyre, 1998). In other words, it is the subjective sensation of fear and anxiety regarding learning and using languages (Richards & Schmidt, 2002). It is a type of situation-specific anxiety that can incorporate anxiety measures encountered in second/foreign language contexts in particular. Young (1991) classifies the causes of language anxiety into six groups: (1) personal motives; (2) language learning beliefs for learners; (3) language teaching beliefs for teachers; (4) interactions between teacher and learner; (5) procedures in the classroom; and (6) language testing. Moreover, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) language anxiety occurs at any of the three primary stages of the language learning process, consisting of receiving external stimuli, processing stage, and output production (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994).

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a phenomenon related to but distinct from other anxieties (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986). FLA was defined by Macintyre and Gardner as a state of uneasiness and tension. In terms of emotions, self-esteem, and self-confidence, Clement (1980) specified foreign language anxiety as a multidimensional concept that deals with the psychology of learners. FLA has been categorized into three notions: the apprehension of communication of foreign language, test anxiety, and fear of negative assessment (Horwitz et

al., 1986). Communication apprehension is apparent when learners have trouble conveying their sophisticated thoughts and opinions because of their poor communicative abilities; second, test anxiety refers to the anxiety of a person related to assessment incompetence, and third, fear of negative assessment can be explained as a kind of anxiety based on one's failing to produce a proper social impact, according to Aydın (2016).

### **Foreign language teaching anxiety**

Although the recognition of anxiety, its causes, and consequences on the learning process have been examined by researchers, foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA) has not gained enough attention from researchers. That means, although prospective instructors and teachers feel the pressure of anxiety in their classrooms, their anxiety cases have been scarcely studied by researchers. However, nowadays, language teaching anxiety has gained popularity especially in cases where researchers need to search for the emotional state of language teachers who teach a non-native language to others (Merç, 2015). Anxiety in language instruction is a challenge that should be recognized as a separate but linked term to anxiety in L2 learning and general anxiety in educating (Merç, 2011). Although this anxiety may not affect the efficiency of language teaching, it might remain a critical hindrance to the cognitive health and career enhancement of practitioners of various languages (Horwitz, 1996). Having a look at related studies might help us understand the nature of FLTA better. Moreover, such a holistic perspective might help us identify the research gap on FLTA. Therefore, this study aims to synthesize the qualitative and quantitative findings of 13 articles conducted on FLTA and to identify the limitations in the content of the literature on this subject for prospective studies.

### **Methodology**

Via the synthesis of independent studies carried out on a specific topic, meta-synthesis studies attempt to analyze and describe a specific phenomenon. A set of distinct but overlapping experiments are analyzed to establish an illustrative concept that could clarify the phenomenon's results and to provide a conceptual model for investigators (Walsh & Downe, 2005). Meta-synthesis has also been considered as a systematic technique aimed at reviewing a substantial amount of knowledge and comprehensively synthesizing the results in an attempt to build a more effective insight into a remarkable topic of focus (Tang, 2009). In his meta-synthesis, Bair (1999) included data from quantitative research, along with qualitative ones which is also the case in this study.

The meta-synthesis process encompasses several main stages including research question or problem formation, comprehensive search of literature, inclusion & exclusion criteria, analyses via meta-synthesis techniques, presentation of the synthesis with themes, and further suggestions for prospective studies (Uysal, Akalin, & Güven, 2018).

In the stage of data collection, although it was not the main concern of the data collection phase, the data were compiled using indexes such as Google Scholar, Eric, ResearchGate, and ULAKBIM TRDizin. The key terms used for searching the data were "Anxiety, Language anxiety, Foreign language teaching anxiety, Teacher anxiety, Language teacher anxiety, Student-teacher anxiety, and Pre-service teacher anxiety". Moreover, the studies conducted through the years 2010-2020 were utilized. Other criteria taken into account

were that the studies were written by Turkish scholars in Turkish contexts. So, briefly, the criteria considered for inclusion were:

1. Was the study undertaken by Turkish scholars?
2. Were the articles included or related to language teaching anxiety in Turkey?
3. Were the studies carried out between the years 2010-2020?

Overall, after the exclusion of the irrelevant articles, 13 articles remained to be included in the meta-synthesis. Table 1 presents the studies examined and provides information on the ID of the studies, topic, author & year of publication, the research sample, data collection tool, and research purpose involved.

**Table 1.** List of the articles eligible for meta-synthesis

ID	Topic of the study	Author & Year of publication	Research sample	Data collection tool	Research purpose
1	FLTA among pre-service teachers during teaching practicum	Dilek Tüfekçi Can- 2018	25 pre-service EFL teachers at Balikesir University	A background questionnaire, interviews, reflection, and essay papers.	The pre-service teachers' opinions on teaching practicum in general, their Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety during teaching practicum, and the anxiety-provoking factors during teaching practicum
2	A descriptive study on FLTA	Selami Aydın, Özgehan Uştuk- 2020	156 EFL teachers	A background questionnaire and the Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale (FLTAS)	The levels of FLTA among EFL teachers, the difference between the levels of FLTA regarding the variables of gender, age, school levels and types, teaching experience in years, whether they are native or non-native speakers of English, the degree of graduation, and their nationalities
3	A Qualitative Study on FLTA	Hülya İpek- 2016	32 non-native EFL teachers working at the School of Foreign Languages at the Anadolu University	Two self-report instruments, diaries and interviews, and a combination of the two self-reports.	The sources of anxiety experienced by non-native teachers of English as a foreign language while teaching the target language
4	Self-efficacy and anxiety perceptions of pre-service EFL teachers.	Güngör, F., & Yaylı, D.- 2012	77 pre-service teachers in English Language Teaching field of three state universities in Turkey	TSES (a 24-item paper-and-pencil questionnaire), FLTAS of 26 items with a five-point Likert scale	Whether variables such as gender, having some overseas experience and attending professional development activities affect pre-service teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy and foreign language (FL) teaching anxiety, and whether there is a correlation between pre-service teachers' levels of self-efficacy and FL teaching anxiety
5	A Qualitative Research on FLTA	Selami Aydın- 2016	60 pre-service teachers of English studying in the English Language Department of Education Faculty of Balikesir	Background questionnaire, interviews, reflections, and essay papers	The sources of Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety (FLTA)

			University.		
6	Student Teacher Anxiety Related to the Teaching Practicum	Turan Paker-2011	101 student teachers of an English Language Teaching Department at a Faculty of Education	The Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (STAS) with 26 items with a five-point Likert scale and Interviews with written responses	Student teachers' anxiety regarding the teaching practicum, the possible sources of anxiety for student teachers, and how different genders are affected
7	FLTA among Non-native Teachers of English: A Sample from Turkey	Gökhan Öztürk-2016	Randomly-selected 103 Turkish instructors of English at six universities.	Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale (FLTAS) and Interviews	Whether non-native instructors of English in Turkey experience foreign language teaching anxiety and if so, the level of it. Besides, whether the level of this anxiety changes according to several demographic features of the instructors. Plus, the factors that directly cause foreign language teaching anxiety in classroom atmosphere
8	FLTA and Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Turkish Pre-Service EFL Teachers	Ali Merç-2015	117 senior student teachers of Anadolu University Faculty of Education English.	Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety Scale (FLSTAS) with a 5-point Likert-type scale, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire (SEQ), and Interviews (semi-structured)	The level of foreign language teaching anxiety experienced by pre-service Turkish EFL teachers, their level of perceived teaching efficacy. Whether variables such as gender and practicum school type influence the level of anxiety and teaching efficacy and whether there is a correlation between the level of teaching anxiety experienced by pre-service Turkish EFL teachers and their teaching efficacy.
9	Perceived Social Self-Efficacy and Foreign Language Anxiety among Undergraduate English Teacher Candidates: The Case of Turkey.	İlknur EĞİNLİ & Mehdi SOLHİ-2020	69 Turkish undergraduate English teacher candidates from two different English-medium private universities in Turkey.	Two questionnaires: Perceived Social Self-efficacy (PSSE) Scale and Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) Scale.	The PSSE (the perceived social self-efficacy) levels of Turkish teacher candidates and the FLA (the foreign language anxiety) levels for Turkish teacher candidates Whether there is a relationship between teacher candidates' PSSE and their FLA The effect of teacher candidates' age and gender on their FLA and PSSE Whether there is a relationship between PSSE and FLA of teacher candidates moderated by age.
10	FLTA of language teachers Pre-service VS. In-service.	Hasan Şerif Baltacı-2017	30 non-native last year ELT pre-service teachers in a Turkish State university and 30 non-native in-service ELT teachers at a private university.	The TFLASF of 18 items with a 5-point Likert scale	Whether there is a significant difference between pre-service and in-service EFL teachers regarding their foreign language teaching anxiety (FLTA)

11	Sources of Foreign Language Student Teacher Anxiety: A Qualitative Inquiry	Ali Merç -2011	150 student teachers from Anadolu University in ELT Department	Diaries-Interviews (semi-structured interviews)	The sources of anxiety experienced by student EFL teachers
12	An Analysis of the Pre-service Teachers' Teaching Anxiety and Coping Strategies: A Turkish Elementary School Context	Turgay Han and Ayşegül Takkaç Tulgar-2019	32 pre-service English teachers studying at ELT Departments in two state universities in Turkey.	Background Questionnaire, Observations, the Diaries	The construct of English as a foreign language (EFL) pre-service teachers' feeling of anxiety before, while, and after experiencing teaching English within a Turkish elementary classroom setting, the anxiety sources for pre-service teachers in their practicum experiences, the ways they adapted to cope with these anxiety-provoking sources
13	Anxiety levels of novice and experienced EFL instructors: İstanbul Aydın University case	Aynur Kesen, Zühal Aydın-2014	35 EFL teachers instructors of English who work at the School of Foreign Languages at İstanbul Aydın University	The Foreign Language Teaching Anxiety Scale with 26 items with A 5-point Likert type scale.	The anxiety levels of EFL instructors in terms of their gender and experience years Whether there is any relationship between the anxiety perceptions of EFL instructors and their gender and whether there is any relationship between the years of experience and the anxiety perceptions of EFL instructors. If there is, the correlation between them

### Data analysis

After selecting the eligible studies, they were read more than once and all of them were presented in a detailed way (Table 1) with their IDs. Then, for analyzing the data, content analysis method was used. Content analysis was explained based on a structured, generalizable technique including clear coding rules to compress several lexes of the text into fewer categories of content (Stemler, S., 2000). Thus, the data, both quantitative and qualitative, were analyzed based on the most frequent themes that were investigated in accordance with the research purpose of this paper for all the selected studies. And these themes were, in turn, determined based on the frequency of the similar codes(findings) in the designated studies. Besides, the frequency of the themes and their subthemes were shown in the upcoming tables.

### Findings

The content analysis revealed five overarching themes that appeared in the prior research:(1) Sources of anxiety in FLTA, (2) The impact of gender on FLTA, (3) The general relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, (4) The connection between years of experience and FLTA in Turkey (5) Level of FLTA.

**Table 2.** Identified themes and their frequencies

Themes	Studies' IDs	Frequency
1. Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety	1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 ,11, 12	8
2. The impact of gender on FLTA	2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 13	6

3. The relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA	4, 5, 8, 9	4
4. The connection between years of experience and FLTA	2, 4, 7, 13	4
5. Level of FLTA	2, 7, 8, 10	4

As shown in Table2, the results of the available literature on foreign language teaching anxiety are significantly related to the sources and causes of FLTA. As it is apparent in Table 2, the sources of FLTA have been studied in studies 1,3,5,6,7,8,11 and 12. Secondly, the results of studies marked 2,3,4,6,7,8, and 13 have shown that the correlation between gender and FLTA has taken the attention of scholars in Turkey. Thirdly, in studies labeled 4,8,9, and 5 the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA has been identified. The connection between years of experience and FLTA has been searched in the studies 2, 4, 7, and 13. Lastly, studies marked as 2,7,8, and 10 have manifested the levels of FLTA in pre-service and in-service teachers.

### Sources of FLTA

**Table 3.** Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety

Sources of foreign language teaching anxiety	Studies' IDs	Frequency
• Evaluation	1, 3, 5, 6, 12	5
• Staff relationship	6, 11	2
• Pupils	1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12	7
• Management	1, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12	6
• Observation	1, 6, 8, 11, 12	5
• Language proficiency	3, 5, 6, 7	4
• Mentor	6, 8, 11, 12	4
• Inexperience	1,3,5,11	4

Concerning the sources of anxiety, this study has compiled the main sources of anxiety into 8 subthemes including evaluation, staff relationship, pupils, management, observation, language proficiency, mentor, and inexperience.

Focusing on evaluation as the first subtheme, fear of making mistakes, being graded & evaluated, and getting feedback were among the causes of anxiety in pre-service and in-service teachers. The studies 1, 3, 5, and 12 emphasized the fear of making mistakes in their findings. As seen in the following excerpt:

"I am not an experienced teacher. Thus, I am afraid of making mistakes when I speak in front of the students. Yes, I did some mistakes because of stress at the beginning of the activity. Indeed, I always feel fear of making pronunciation mistakes. That is why my performance was



so bad.” (Study 5) Moreover, as reported in studies 1, 6, and 12, being evaluated and graded was among the most anxiety-provoking factors. Besides, study 12 has mentioned another item regarding evaluation known as getting negative feedback. As one of the participants says: “Getting feedback on our teaching performances is beneficial for us to develop ourselves. However, no one wants to be criticized. So, receiving negative feedback, though it is true, may decrease my self-confidence and motivation leading me to think that I don’t have the capabilities to be an English teacher.” (From the interview in study 12)

Secondly, staff relationship was another subtheme of the sources of FLTA. According to the studies 6 and 11, other teachers and their negative ideas about student teachers in the school were the sources of anxiety experienced by student teachers in terms of staff relationships. For example, in a case from study 11, the student-teacher was stressful about teaching a class, about which she was informed by other teachers in the teachers’ room just before her class.

The third category, which is the most frequently found subtheme in the studies, is students. Since students are the undeniable part of each class, having anxiety while teaching them is something quite understandable. In study 12, having a desirable relationship with pupils and providing students with a good impression about the teacher was among the after teachings anxieties of pre-service teachers. In addition, in the interview conducted in the qualitative research of study 8, a teacher mentioned the following thought about the low proficiency level of her students:

“Actually, I always think about it. Why does it happen? I can’t say I’m not guilty. I tried hard to use my body language, sure I’m giving the verbal instruction, too; plus, the body language, I mean, I hold the paper, I show the activity, for instance, I try to answer one as an example, to make them understand, but when those pupils do not understand the simplest instruction, one really start to think ‘Am I really insufficient?’ You know, expressions like ‘circle’, ‘be quick’, ‘answer’. They have these even in their books. And they don’t seem to get these, and you can’t know what to do, then. Maybe I try shifting to Turkish, I don’t know. Nothing to do more... I feel hopeless...” (Study 8)

Similarly, in two other studies, 5 and 11, the low proficiency of the pupils was among the notable anxiety-provoking factors. Also, unfamiliarity with students and not knowing who they are, led to anxiety in studies 6 and 11. Besides, the reluctant, disinterested, and indifferent students in language classes put a further burden and concern on teachers.

“I felt bored because they felt bored. They were not willing to attend the course. They did not react to my explanations about the activity. At the end of class, students learned nothing about the verbs I tried to introduce. This caused me to lose my motivation and felt me worried.” (Study 5)

Noisy and disruptive students (study 11) and unexpected and undesired questions usually made by them can also lead to anxiety in language teachers (studies 1, 7,11)

The fourth category labeled as “management” includes class management, time management, and lack of preparedness and planning. Studies 1, 6, 11, and 12 have noted that

they are incapable of class management because students get out of their control. Below is a comment of a student-teacher who experiences the fear of classroom management to the bone. "My biggest fear was about classroom management. I was not their real teacher; I was just like an elder sister to them. So, I was anxious that I would not be able to set control over the students, which would negatively affect my teaching performance." (a student's diary in study 12)

The second crucial problem causing anxiety in Language teaching is time management. In studies 1, 5, 11, 12 teachers claim that although they prepare a good lesson plan by allocating enough time to each activity in class, they cannot manage the time in a real class atmosphere. For instance:

"Today I had a reading class for the eighth grades. I was to teach seven words before the reading session. Then we had pre-reading and during-reading activities. As not all of them would finish in this lesson, I was a bit worried. I made good lesson plans; also, I decently allocated time; however, in practice, I cannot manage the time as I noted in my lesson plan and this situation causes anxiety a little." (Study 11)

The fifth category is observation; being observed or being under the surveillance of mentors and other staff can be related mostly to pre-service and novice teachers' FLTA that has been highlighted in studies 1, 6, 8, 11, and 12.

Language proficiency is the next subtheme of FLTA. In this category, teachers often suffer from speaking skills and pronunciation knowledge (Studies 5, 7), and teaching a particular language skill (studies 3, 6).

"In the reading lesson, while discussing inferencing, expected problems came up. It is a troublesome subject anyway! I am anxious about how I will put up with it tomorrow." (Study 3)

Next, mentors and their expectations from teachers (Study 6), their attitude about pre-service teachers (11), their interference in the lesson (8, 11), and in turn teachers' tolerance to make a good impact on mentors (12) bring about language teaching anxiety.

Finally, inexperience is among the anxiety-provoking variables for the language instructor, typically confronted by novice and pre-service student teachers. The inappropriateness of content and resources at the level of learners (studies 5 and 1), teaching a challenging subject or teaching a subject for perhaps the first time (studies 1 and 11), teaching students at a specific level of language proficiency (study 3), teaching students at a special level of language proficiency (study 3), technical problems e.g., being unable to use interactive board, lead to teaching anxiety.

### **Gender and language teaching anxiety**

According to the findings of the studies regarding gender and FLTA, while some studies have established no statistically significant difference between the two concepts, some others have found contradictory ideas related to this theme.

Studies labeled as 7 and 13 have reached the conclusion that being male or female cannot affect the level of FLTA; however, while study 7 have found very similar statistical data regarding this issue (Means: Female 1.86 Male 1.82), in study 13, the male instructors have an average rank of 11.60 and the female instructors have an average rank of 19.07 that makes it impossible to conclude the above-mentioned notion that there is no relationship between

FLTA and gender. Similarly, the results in study 6 indicated that even though there is no huge difference between males and females in pre-and post-tests, women are more anxious prior to teaching, but both groups have nearly the same mean scores in the post-teaching phase.

On the contrary, some studies, have established a high statistical difference between the two variables, gender & anxiety. Although the studies 4 and 8 have reached the idea that male teachers feel less anxious in comparison to females, it is noteworthy to say that study 4 has only come to this conclusion based on 3 items including English, listening comprehension, and teaching technique mentioned in FLTAS questionnaire. And study 2 has reported the notion that male teachers are more anxious than female teachers in terms of the self-perceptions of language proficiency, fear of negative evaluation, inexperience, and time management.

Having said all this, there is an important issue that has been ignored in studies 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 13 and should be taken into consideration in further studies. In order to receive a more nuanced result, the critical issue that should be considered is the equality of the number of male and female teachers. In none of the above-mentioned studies, equality can be observed (e.g., in study 6, there were 28 males and 73 females participating in the study).

#### **Self-efficacy and language teaching anxiety**

Concerning the relationship between self-efficacy and FLTA, studies 4, 5, 8 and 9 have found inconsistent results. According to a group of studies, there seems to be no or low correlation between self-efficacy and FLTA (studies 4, 5). In another study, a moderate level relationship has been identified (study 8); finally, in study 9 a high-level correlation has been declared. All in all, the existing correlation among these two variables, FLTA and self-efficacy, was negative. So, an increase in self-efficacy level would turn into a decrease in FLTA. Here, conducted mostly with pre-service teachers (only study 5 included in-service EFL teachers), FLTA and self-efficacy can be further studied.

#### **Years of experience and language teaching anxiety**

Based on the data collected in studies 2, 7, and 13, there was a statistically considerable relationship between the years of experience and FLTA of the teachers. The findings indicated that there was a linear negative correlation between years of experience and FLTA. To put it another way, EFL teachers who had more teaching experience felt less anxious when compared to less experienced teachers and novice teachers concerning the fear of negative evaluation, target language proficiency, and fear of making mistakes. For instance, in study 7, instructors with 4 to 6 and 7 to 9 years of teaching experience when compared to teachers with 16 to more years of experience have more teaching anxiety.

“In fact, I was a little bit worried and apprehended in previous years, especially when I met a new group of students. However, as the time passed and I got more experienced, I began to feel more comfortable while teaching in front of my classes” (Study 7)

Interestingly, although it cannot be included as a finding of the relationship between years of experience and FLTA, it can be inferred that the whole concept of experience can

influence the level of anxiety. Study 4 is an instance of what I have mentioned. In other words, pre-service teachers with overseas experience and professional development program attendance seemed less anxious about their English level.

### **Level of foreign language teaching anxiety**

In studies 2 and 7, while the anxiety level of teachers has been taken into account, in study 8, student teachers' anxiety levels were examined and finally, in study 10 both pre-service and in-service teacher's anxiety levels were compared. EFL teachers experience a low level of anxiety in time management, and foreign language anxiety. But foreign language proficiency, uninterested students, and unpreparedness made in-service teachers feel anxious at a moderate level. According to study 7, in-service teachers suffer from a moderate level of anxiety and this notion is statistically supported (68 percent of teachers had moderate level anxiety). Furthermore, in study 8, it has been reported that pre-service student teachers endure a low level of FLTA and the most anxiety-provoking situation was their relationship with their mentors. Having found separate ideas about FLTA levels in 3 diverse studies, study 10 provides a more comprehensive and clear view of the level of FLTA among pre-service and in-service teachers; based on this study, in-service teachers demonstrated lower levels of teaching anxiety than pre-service teachers when compared according to self-confidence, fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension as the 3 factors of FLTA.

### **Discussion**

Of the collected studies, only 5 of them involved in-service teachers in their studies (Aydın & Uştuk, 2020; İpek, 2016; Öztürk, 2016; Paker, 2011; Baltacı, 2017; Kesen & Aydın, 2014). And of these 5 studies, only two studies (İpek, 2016; Öztürk, 2016) addressed the sources of the FLTA. In other words, studies that have examined the sources and causes of anxiety are more likely to involve pre-service and student teachers' concerns. Moreover, while in most in-service teachers, certain anxiety-provoking causes such as fear of making errors, classroom management, and time management can be found, other excessive reasons such as instructor observation and grading can be seen only in pre-service training programs. Accordingly, more studies on the concerns of in-service teachers should be conducted over this argument.

On the other hand, Öztürk (2016) considered the educational history of teachers with regard to FLTA in the articles compiled for in-service teachers and concluded that no significant difference was observed across teachers with MA or BA certificates. Similarly, Aydın and Uştuk (2020) reported educational background as one of the influencing factors on FLTA but did not provide evidence to back it up. That is why I believe, in future studies, the relationship between educational background and FLTA should be given more attention. Besides, studies on the correlation between GPA (Grade point average) of student teachers and their level of teacher anxiety can reveal interesting results regarding the factors of anxiety and the level of it. So, scholars can consider it seriously.

Although Aydın and Uştuk (2020), Güngör and Yaylı (2012), Paker (2011), Öztürk (2016), Merç (2015), and Kesen and Aydın (2014) have reported valuable information regarding the connection between gender and FLTA, none of them have considered balanced gender-based participation of males and females. As it is apparent, in all these studies, women outnumbered men. Consequently, it can be a potential problem.

Moreover, there is only one study (Baltacı, 2017) in which in-service and pre-service teacher's differences in terms of FLTA has been delved deep into. Accordingly, when compared, in-service teachers had less anxiety in comparison to pre-service teachers in Baltacı's study (2017). The dilemma, here, appears on the idea that aside from experience, although not statistically supported, the type of school (private or public) is also among the factors influencing teaching anxiety. Therefore, the type of school and school level can have a possible effect on FLTA and should be further analyzed.

### **Conclusion and Suggestions**

The results of the study have gathered the potential reasons behind foreign language teaching anxiety and its correlation with gender, years of experience and self-efficacy perceptions of pre-service and in-service teachers and its overall level. However, research on in-service language teacher teaching anxiety is found in few studies (2, 3, 7, 10, and 13). Therefore, there is a gap to be filled by prospective researchers. Additionally, qualitative research on FLTA requires a profound longitudinal perspective rather than observing and interviewing teachers in a limited period of one semester or two.

Considering these studies, several implications can be offered in order to reduce the amount of FLTA in pre-service and in-service teachers. Teacher education programs should attach a reflection aspect to the teaching practice to find out the causes of teaching anxiety and the relevant solutions. Moreover, mentor teachers in teacher education programs can constantly provide positive and motivating feedback. Also, comprehensive time management, schedule, and training recommendations before their teaching tasks can alleviate extreme anxiety.

According to the findings of this review article, there is a focus on the sources of FLTA, its level, and its correlation with the years of experience in face-to-face language settings(classrooms); however, further research can be done to compile the potential sources of FLTA, its level, and years of experience in online or digital teaching platforms within the context of Turkey in the recent years specifically since the outbreak of Coronavirus. Moreover, if investigated in that way, the results may be applicable to other non-native settings.

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