Foreign language anxiety: A study at Ufuk University Preparatory School[*]

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Abstract

The number of studies carried out regards the effects of certain demographic variables on Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) is rather limited in the English as a foreign language (EFL) context. Besides, the findings of these studies yielded differential results. This study researched the levels of FLA exhibited by Turkish undergraduates and effects of gender, age, and previous preparatory class experience on FLA at Ufuk University Preparatory School, Ankara. 124 preparatory school students have participated in the study. Data were collected via the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and adapted to Turkish by Aydın (2001). Scale administration was done via the Ufuk University online questionnaire system. Analysis of the quantitative data unveiled that Ufuk University Preparatory School students had moderate levels of FLA. Besides, age was found to be casting a significant effect on FLA. On the other hand, previous preparatory class experience, and gender were found to have no significant effect on the FLA levels of Ufuk University Preparatory School students.

1. Introduction

Foreign Language Learning (FLL) is a complex and troublesome task as it embraces the mastering of a new language, culture and way of thinking. In this respect individual differences in attainment is comment and often many learners are intimidated during the process. A large number of studies have been carried out to determine the reasons behind why some foreign language learners are better learners than others. These studies have honed in on the cognitive and affective variables as well as demographic factors in search of a legitimate explanation. In this regard, the affective domain and the impact it has on foreign language learners has received ample attention and mainly in the past five decades, a great amount of research has focalized on anxiety and the role it plays in the FLL context.

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This is simply because anxiety is experienced by all second and foreign language learners (Campbell & Ortiz 1991).

Horwitz et al. (1986) remarked that FLA is associated with poor performance in the FLL context. Yet, study results regard its causes and effects have been conflicting (Aydın, 2017); moreover, it has been stressed that the exploration of the link between anxiety and learner demographics can aid in discovering the way learners perceive FLL and yield valuable insights (Aida, 1994).In this scope, research on FLA in the Turkish context has been woefully neglected (Aydın, 2017). The existent studies were primarily focused on the sources and effects of FLA (Aydin, Yavuz, & Yesilyurt, 2006), types of FLA (Aydın, 2008; Koralp, 2005), how FLA effects achievement (Çakıcı, 2016; Dalkılıç, 2001), the relationship between anxiety levels and gender (Aydin & Takkaç, 2007; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014), skills specific FLA (Atay & Kurt, 2006, Ay, 2010; Aydın, 2001; Balemir, 2009; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Kuru-Gönen, 2005; Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014, Saltan, 2003), the effect of technology on FLA (Aydın, 2011), and age, gender and grade effect on FLA (Aydin, 2017). This proves that literature is in desperate need of further studies in the Turkish FLL context. Thusly, this study focused on whether a relationship is existent between FLA and certain variables like age, gender and previous preparatory class experience. Henceforth, a brief summary of FLA and the synthesis of this study will be presented.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Foreign Language Anxiety

FLA lacked a clear cut definition until the mid-1980s and its possible effects were not well documented (Horwitz et al., 1986). It has been argued that FLA has no distinct effect than that of other specific types of anxieties in learning contexts (Horwitz et al., 1986). This comes by no surprise as FLL is an extremely agitating psychological situation that is threatening to learners' self-concept and world perspective (Guiora, 1983). The research findings by Horwitz et. al. (1986) revealed that foreign language learners experienced apprehension, worry, dread which in turn led them to have difficulty in concentrating, become forgetful, sweat, palpitate and freeze in the class, go blank prior to exams, and feel shy about entering the classroom. These negative feelings and effects accordingly were reflected in their behavior like avoidance or postponement of homework. In consideration of their observations and research they defined FLA as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 128).Later on it was also defined as tension and apprehension experienced in the FLL context (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1993).

1.1.2. Types of Foreign Language Anxiety

Conceptually, Horwitz et. al. (1986) framed FLA as a type of performance anxiety existent in an academic and social context and associated it with three types of performance anxieties that are communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety. Communication apprehension is the angst about oral communication and manifests in learning situations as difficulty in transmitting or comprehending an oral message (Horwitz, et al., 1986). Fear of negative evaluation, on the other hand, is apprehension about being evaluated by someone else, disconcert over their negative evaluations, eschewal from evaluative situations and anticipation of being negatively evaluated (Watson and Friend, 1969). Lastly, test anxiety is disquiet towards academically evaluative situations (Horwitz and Young, 1991). Apperception of these three performance anxieties is crucial in the understanding of FLA; yet, Horwitz et. al. (1986) further point out that FLL is not simply the combination of these anxieties to the FLL context but that it is a unique phenomenon that comprised of "self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to the language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 128).

1.1.3. Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety

After the theoretical development of FLA, some researchers have centered their research upon its potential sources. Bailey (1983) has determined performance wise comparison between oneself and peers, relationship with the instructor, the need to gain instructor's approval, tests and self-assessment as possible sources for FLA. Young (1991), on the other hand, proposed individual and interpersonal anxieties, learner and instructor beliefs, interplay between instructors and learners, classroom procedures, and language testing as potential sources. Moreover, in another study, Von Wörde (2003) has ascertained non-comprehension, speaking activities, error correction, native speakers, and pedagogical and instructional practices as probable sources of FLA.

1.1.4. Effects of Foreign Language Anxiety

Another important line of studies have focalized in determining the effects of FLA. Researchers have identified FLA as a significant predictor of success with a negative impact in FLL research (Onwuegbuzie, 1999). The impairing effects were found to result in inefficient responses to language errors (Gregersen, 2003), negative self-talk, and pondering over a bad performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994); avoidance behavior (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002); forgetfulness of learned material, consternation in role play activities and indifference in class participation (Horwitz et al., 1986). Besides, Young (1991) noticed that laughing nervously, avoiding eye contact, fooling around, and giving short answer responses were also typical behaviors of apprehensive students.

1.1.5. Foreign Language Anxiety and Gender

Several researches have been undertaken related to the relationship between FLA and gender at the tertiary level. In the study carried out by Aida (1994), who focused on Japanese learning and language anxiety concluded that males experienced higher levels of FLA; however the results regards the relationship between FLA and gender was not statistically significant. In another study carried out at the Defense Language Institute in the U.S., Campbell & Shaw (1994) revealed that male students to be more anxious than their female counterparts and the relationship between gender and FLA were significant. On the other hand, the results of the study carried out by Elkhafaifi (2005) with students enrolled in Arabic language programs at10 U.S. colleges revealed that females had higher levels of FLA but it did not prove a statistical relationship between FLA and gender. Studying gender related FLA with Malaysian and Chinese College students in Malaysia, Zulkifli (2007) also found females to be exhibiting higher anxiety levels compared to males. In a study with students from Access, BA and MA courses in the School of Languages, Linguistics and Culture University of London, Dewaele (2007) arrived at the conclusion that gender did not have a significant effect on FLA. In another study that involved Spanish ESP students, Stephenson (2007) ascertained a significant correlation between gender and FLA with males being less anxious compared to females. Kao and Craigie (2010) on the other hand did not determine any significant gender difference with regards to FLA in their study on Taiwanese tertiary level students.

Studies carried out in the Turkish context have also been mixed. Batumlu and Erden (2007) found gender not to be significant variable in relation to FLA in their study at Yıldız Technical University. In the study carried out by Aydın (2008), at Balıkesir University, ELT Department, it was determined that female students had higher FLA levels compared to their male counterparts. Moreover, the study also revealed a significant correlation between FLA and gender. On the other hand, in the study carried out at Hacettepe University, School of Foreign Languages, Department of Basic English, Balemir (2009) revealed that females scored higher on FLCAS compared to males.

1.1.6. Foreign Language Anxiety and Age

The interaction between FLA and age has also received considerable attention. In a research that focused on the link between FLA and age among other variables, Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Daley

(1999) determined a significant link between age and FLA with elder college students enrolled at diverse foreign language courses reporting higher FLA scores. In his study on PRC students attending compulsory English communication skills programs in Singapore, Zhang (2001) also found out that elder students exhibited higher FLA levels, but the correlation between FLA and age was not significant. Similarly, Deweale (2007) also found that older participants reported greater FLA scores but the result was insignificant. On the other hand, Bunrueng (2008) who investigated anxiety of freshmen students at a university in Thailand, revealed a significant relationship among FLA and age. In the study carried out by Aydın (2008) in the Turkish context, a significant relationship was found between age and FLA among tertiary level students.

1.1.7. FLA and Previous Learning Experience with Foreign Language

Previous learning experience has been identified as a possible source of FLA by Zheng (2008). Yet, the studies in this line are quite limited with regards to undergraduate students. In a study that involves 210 university students enrolled in French, Spanish, German and Japanese courses, Onwuegbuzie et. al. (1999) revealed a significant correlation between prior foreign language experience at high school and FLA. They concluded that the participants who had not taken any foreign language courses at high school experienced higher FLA.

1.2. Research questions

Within the discussion given up until now, there were several motives behind this study. First of all, studies regarding the relationship between some demographic variables and FLA levels in both international and national tertiary level FLL contexts are limited. More specifically, as previous studies did not yield collective conclusions regards the effects of age, gender, and previous preparatory school experience on FLA levels of tertiary level foreign language learners. All in all, it is obvious that the effects of age, gender and previous preparatory school experience on FLA are necessary. For this reason, the following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. What is the level of FLA among Ufuk University preparatory school students studying English?

2. Does gender have a significant effect on FLA?

3. Does age have a significant effect on FLA?

4. Does previous preparatory class experience has a significant effect on FLA?

2. Method

2.1. Design and Setting of the Study

The current study is a quantitative study that examines FLA in tertiary level English language learners in relation to certain demographic variables, the data of which was collected via online means. It was undertaken at Ufuk University Preparatory School, where students have 27 hours of weekly English classes that include a main course and skills courses that are listening, speaking, reading, and writing namely over two semesters. At the prep school, student progress is tracked via periodical assessments. These involve two monthly pop quizzes for the main course and two termly pop quizzes and a mid-term in skills courses. At the end of the two academic terms, students take a proficiency exam in order to pass the compulsory English language program. As most students enroll to this university from public schools (approximately 74% on average since 2001); a great majority of them have difficulty in adjusting to the language learning task in hand.

2.2. Participants

This research was carried out at Ufuk University, Preparatory School in the spring semester of the academic year2010 – 2011. During the data collection process convenient sampling methodology was adapted. The sample consisted of a representative size of the whole preparatory school population, which included 124 students out of 171. The sample size makes up almost 73% of the whole population. Moreover, the ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 22 and the male – female ratio was 36:88.

2.3. Instruments

2.3.1. Demographic Information Form

The demographic information form included three questions asking participants to which asked the participants to state their age, gender and whether they have previously attended English preparatory classes.

2.3.2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

FLCAS is a self-report instrument developed by Horwitz et al. (1986). It consists of 33 items; 24 positively worded and 9 negatively worded items designed to quantify FLA levels of students. It is scored on a five point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" (5) to "Strongly Disagree" (1). Based on a sample of 108 participants, the reliability score attained from the measure was .93. (Horwitz, 1986). Moreover, based on a sample of 78 participants, the test-retest reliability of the instrument was ascertained to be r= 0.83 (p<0.001) over an 8 weeks period (Horwitz, 1986). It is considered to be a reliable measure in assessing FLA levels of subjects revealed in many studies (Aida, 1994; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Ganschow & Sparks, 1996; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Matsuda & Gobel, 2004; Saito et al., 1999).

In the current study, the Turkish adaptation of the FLCAS by Aydın (2001) was used. The item numbered 26 from the original scale was omitted during data collection as it was irrelevant for the participants that only studied English. The Cronbach's Alpha value reported by Aydın (2001) for the Turkish version of the FLCAS was .91 and the reliability coefficient yielded by the instrument in this study was .80. Anxiety scores were calculated by adding the student rating of the thirty-two items.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis

Before collecting the data, permission was obtained from Ufuk University Preparatory School. During the data collection procedure a convenience sampling methodology was adapted. The data was collected via the Ufuk University online questionnaire system on a voluntary basis. An announcement regarding the study, the URL of the data collection instrument, and the submission deadline was made by the researcher and assurances regards the confidentiality of the information they would provide was given. The instrument was online for 26 days between April 4th and April 29th, 2011. The next day, data was received by the researcher via e-mail.

After receiving the data, it was submitted to SPSS 16.0 and was checked for entry errors and missing values. Next, descriptive statistics were calculated to see into the characteristics of the sample with regards to FLA levels as well as the demographic variables of age, gender and the existence of previous prep class experience. After that, assumption checks were carried out for each analysis that involved an investigation of normality via the Shapiro-Wilk Test, histograms, normal and detrended normal Q-Q plots, and an analysis of the homogeneity of variance via Levene's test for equality of variance. Afterwards, a series of initial analysis were conducted to explore whether there were any statistically significant differences in the FLA levels of the participants in terms of their age, gender

and previous preparatory class experience. The effects of age and gender on FLA were examined using the one-way ANOVA test whereas the effect of previous preparatory class experience was analyzed with the Mann-Whitney U test as the respective data did not satisfy the normality assumption (Field, 2013; Huck, 2011).

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

The number of undergraduate from Ufuk University Preparatory School participated in this research was N= 124. The sample included 88 females (72.10 %) and 36 male students (27.90%). The ages of the participants ranged between 18 and 20 ($M = 19.31$, $SD = 0.93$). Moreover, 16 (12.90 %) of participants did have prior experience in English preparatory classes before their undergraduate studies, 108 (87.10 %) of them did not.

Descriptive statistics for student FLA levels (N =124) and the mean and the standard deviation of the FLCAS scores were determined to be 80.50 and 14.05 respectively. The minimum and maximum scores among the participants were 57 and 117. The relevant statistics were presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of FLCAS scores

	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.
FLCAS Score	124	80.50	14.05	57	117

In order to have a sound understanding of the levels of FLA students possessed, the participant scores were divided into three categories as slightly anxious, moderately anxious and highly anxious according the means and Standard deviation of the FLCAS scores. The scores between 0 and 66 were regarded as slightly anxious, participants who scored between 67 and 95 were recognized as moderately anxious and those who scored between 96 and 160 were considered to be highly anxious. The distributions of the students with different levels of FLA are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for students with different levels of anxiety

	Anxiety Levels	Slightly Anxious	Moderately Anxious	Highly Anxious
n		22	77	25

(N=124)

As it can be observed in Table 2 there were 22 (18 %) participants that fell into the slightly anxious category. On the other hand, 77 (62 %) participants were found to be moderately anxious. Moreover, 25 (20 %) participants were ascertained to be highly anxious.

3.2. Descriptive and Inferential Analysis of FLA Scores with Respect to Gender

Descriptive statistics regards the gender of the students was analyzed and the findings indicated that, the mean FLCAS score for females (N = 88) was M = 80,95 and standard deviation was SD = 1,57. The mean FLCAS score for males (N = 36) was M = 79,39 and standard deviation was SD = 2,07. The minimum FLCAS score for females was 57.00, while the maximum one was 117.00,

whereas the minimum and maximum FLCAS scores for males were 59 and 104 respectively. The overall FLCAS score mean was found to be 80.50 and standard deviation was 14.05. The minimum and maximum FLCAS score among the all participants were 57 and 117, respectively. Descriptive statistics for the gender of the students are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for FLCAS scores with respect to gender

	n	M	SD	Min.	Max.
Female	88	80.95	1.57	59	104
Male	36	79.39	2.07	57	117

(N= 124)

In order to evaluate the effect of gender on FLCAS scores a one way analysis of variance (One way ANOVA) was conducted. Participants were divided into two groups according to their gender; females (M = 80.95, SD = 1.57) and males (M = 79.39, SD = 2.07). The analysis results confirmed that there was no statistically significant difference between FLCAS scores of the groups as determined by one-way ANOVA $F(1.123) = .32$, $p= .58$ at the .05 level of significance. The summary of ANOVA results presented in table 4.

Table 4. ANOVA results for gender

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	62.63	1	62.63	.316	.575
Within groups	24208.37	122	198.43		
Total	24271.00	123			

*Sig. p<.05

3.3. Descriptive and Inferential Analysis of FLA Scores with Respect to Age

An analysis of the descriptive statistics for the age of the students indicated that, the mean and standard deviation FLCAS scores for the 18 years old students (n = 22) were M = 77.05, SD = 2.69. For the 19 years old students (n = 55) the mean and standard deviation FLCAS scores were M = 76.91, SD = 1.61. The mean and standard deviation values for the FLCAS score of the 20 year olds (n = 37) were M = 86.78, SD = 2.61. Moreover, the means score for the 21 years old students (n = 6) was M = 86.00 whereas the standard deviation was SD = 6.15. The FLCAS scores for the 22 years old students (n = 4) had a mean M = 82.50 and standard deviation SD = 5.56. The minimum and maximum FLCAS score for the 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 years old students were 57 and 108.58, 108.59 and 117, 65 and 107, and 72 and 94 respectively. The overall FLCAS score mean and standard deviation were 80.50 and 14.05 respectively. Moreover, minimum and maximum FLCAS scores among the participants were 57.00 and 117.00, respectively. The relevant descriptive statistics were presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for FLCAS scores with respect to age

Age	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.
18	22	77.05	12.62	57	108
19	55	76.91	11.97	58	108
20	37	86.78	15.86	59	117
21	6	86.00	15.07	65	107
22	4	82.50	11.12	72	94

N= 124

A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of age on FLCAS scores. Subjects were categorized into five age groups as 18 year olds (M = 77.05; SD = 2.69), 19 year olds (M = 76.91; SD = 1.61), 20 year olds (M= 86.78; SD = 2.61), 21 year olds (M = 86.00; SD = 6.15), and 22 year olds (M = 82.50; SD = 5.56). There was a significant difference between the FLCAS scores of different age groups at the 0.05 level of significance, since the p value was 0.00. Therefore it is claimed that there was no difference between the FLCAS scores of different age groups F (4,123) = 3.62, p = .00, η^2= 0.11. The strength of relationship between the gender and FLCAS scores of students was assessed by η^2. The partial Eta squared showed that the effect size was medium to large η^2 = 0.11, which means that gender by itself accounted for 11% of the overall variance. The summary of ANOVA results presented in table 6.

Table 6. ANOVA results for age

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p	η^2
Correct Model	2630.23	4	657.55	3.62	.01	.11
Intercept Age	330112.53	1	330112.53	1815.25	.00	.94
		4	657.56	3.62	.01	.11
Error Total	21640.77	119	181.86			
	827822.00	124				
Corrected Total	24271.00	123				

*Sig. p<.05

3.4. Descriptive and Inferential Analysis for Previous Preparatory Class Experience

Descriptive statistics regards the existence of previous preparatory class experience of the students were analyzed and findings revealed that the mean FLCAS score for those participants who attended preparatory class (N = 16) was M = 77.56 and the standard deviation was SD = 3.24. The mean FLCAS score for the ones that without previous preparatory class experience (N = 108) was M = 80.94 with a standard deviation of SD = 1.37. The minimum and maximum FLCAS score for the students who did and did not attend preparatory classes before enrolling to their university were 61.00 and 101 and 57.00 and 117.00 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of the overall FLCAS scores were 80.50 and 14.05 respectively. Moreover, the minimum and maximum FLCAS score among the all participants were 57.00 and 117.00, respectively. Descriptive statistics for previous preparatory class attendance is presented in Table 7.

Table 7 . Descriptive statistics for FLCAS scores with respect to previous preparatory class experience

	n	M	SD	Min.	Max.
With	16	77.56	12.96	61	101
Without	108	80.94	14.21	57	117

N=124

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to evaluate the effect of preparatory class experience on FLCAS scores of Ufuk University Preparatory School students. Subjects were divided into two groups as those who have attended (M = 77.56, SD =3.24) and those who have not attended (M = 80.94, SD = 1.37). There was no significant difference between the FLCAS scores of the two groups at the 0.05

level of significance, since the p-value is 0.37. This leads to fail to reject the null hypothesis claiming that there is no difference between the FLCAS scores of students who have and have not attended preparatory classes prior to their undergraduate studies, z = -, 89,p < .05; Results were presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Mann-Whitney U test results for previous preparatory class experience

Prev. Prep. Sch. Exp.	n	Mean Rank	Sum of Rank	U	Z	P
With	16	55.00	880.00	744.00	-.89	.37
Without	108	63.61	5870.00			

*Sig. p<.05

4. Discussion

The first research question of the study investigated the FLA levels of undergraduate students studying at Ufuk University Preparatory School. The descriptive statistics revealed that the majority of the participants (77 out of 124) were moderately anxious with an average mean value of 80.50. This can be seen as an indicator that the overall level of FLA is moderate at Ufuk University Preparatory School. A comparison of the mean scores of the study to that of other studies carried out in preparatory schools of different universities in Turkey; which are Balemir (2009), (M = 85.93) at Hacettepe University, Çakar (2009), (M = 95.04, 87.45) at Pamukkale and Bilkent University, and Köse (2005; M = 89.1) at Zonguldak Karaelmas University; it can be observed that similar to the results of this study, the FLCAS means scores of Turkish prep school students were at a moderate level. This might well be an indicator that preparatory school students in Turkey may have modest levels of FLA. This conclusion in turn can be evaluated as a positive result as moderate levels of FLA was found to be facilitating oral production among adult learners (Gregersen, 2003).

With respect to the second research question, the effect of gender on Anxiety levels of the participants was tested. The analysis of the mean FLCAS scores for females (M = 80.95) and males (M = 79.39) indicated that females are slightly more anxious than males. Even though the comparison of the mean scores showed a slight difference in the anxiety levels of females and males; the ANOVA results showed no significant effect of gender in determining FLA (p> .05).This result is similar to that of Aydın (2008) carried out in the Turkish tertiary level context who found that female students were more anxious than their male counterparts, as well as highlighting a significant correlation between FLA and gender. In another study conducted with Turkish university students, Balemir (2009) also ascertained that females had higher FLA levels compared to their male counterparts. The slight insignificant difference between the mean scores with females scoring slightly higher found in this study can be attributed to females being more apprehensive about the fear of failure, teacher correction, negative evaluation and unpreparedness (Aydın, 2017).

Age was another demographic variable relevant to this research in terms of the effect it casts on the FLCAs scores of the study population. The analysis of the mean FLCAS scores for different age groups indicate that older students had higher foreign anxiety levels compared to younger ones and the ANOVA results showed significant effect of age on foreign language anxiety (p<.05). This result is in line with Aydın (2008), who also found a statistically significant connection between age and FLA levels in the Turkish higher education context. The result that elder students scoring higher on the FLCAS can be explained with the findings that they are more reluctant to pronouncing, translating, or writing words, which they feel uncertain in the target language (Onwuegbuzie et al., 1999), that they

find language structure and pronunciation more difficult to learn (Lieberman, 1984); and that they give more importance to accuracy compared to younger students (Slathouse & Somberg, 1982). Moreover, Onwuegbuzie et al. (1999) also claimed that a possible explanation for the higher FLA levels of elder students is their unease when performing task within a certain time limit like responding to a question in in the class.

As part of the last research question, FLCAS scores of the participants were also investigated in relation to previous preparatory class experience. The mean values for the FLA scores of the participants revealed that with previous prep class experience had slightly lower FLA levels compared to ones without a preparatory class education. However, the Mann-Whitney U test results showed an insignificant effect of past prep class experience on FLCAS scores. The literature in this line is limited and no relevant research was identified in the tertiary context. However, in the study carried out by Onwuegbuzie et. al. (1999), a significant correlation was found between prior high school experience with foreign languages and FLA for 210 college students enrolled in French, Spanish, German, and Japanese courses. They concluded that students who had not taken any high school foreign language courses experienced higher levels of anxiety. As put forth by Black (1993), students with previous foreign language learning experiences display more creativity, atypical ways of thinking and higher order thinking skills compared to those without.

5. Conclusions

Several conclusions were reached in light of the findings of this research. First of all, it was found that Ufuk University Prep School students exhibited moderate levels of FLA. Secondly, the FLCAS scores of tertiary level foreign language learners were found to differ significantly only in terms of age. Moreover, the study results regard the effects of gender and previous preparatory school experience on FLA was insignificant, yet female students and those students without previous preparatory class experience were found to have higher FLA levels.

In light of the results of this research a number of practical recommendations can be itemized. First of all, instructors at foreign language preparatory schools should bear in mind that some level of anxiety will always be existent in their classes and that this can be appalling for some students. For this reason, instructors of foreign languages should be empathetic towards their students and try to assist them in minimizing their uneasiness and discomfort. On that note, a fundamental learner need is the feeling of security in the classroom and the positive manner displayed by instructors is essential for this to be established. Teacher awareness with regards to the effects of age, gender and previous preparatory class experience is also crucial. Instructors should be careful to elder students while carrying out speaking activities and making corrections. They should provide them with enough time to respond, promote fluency and avoid implicit correction in front of their peers. Moreover, instructors should be cognizant of the apprehension of female students' over being unprepared, evaluated and corrected. They should urge and guide female students in preparation to classes and examinations, organize evaluative situations that foster learning, use positive and constructive feedback and corrective strategies, and be fair towards all students. In addition, instructor should be aware of the of the experiential trauma students without previous foreign language preparatory class experience may face as such classes are quite intensive in terms of mental and study-wise workload. They should provide sufficient time and assistance for such to settle down and get acquainted with the course speed and load as well as making sure via guidance that they do not fall behind their peers. All in all, it can be argued that foreign language instructors should be conscious about the pedagogical effects of FLA

as well as gender, age, and previous preparatory class experience effects on FLA levels of tertiary level students.

The current study included age, gender and previous preparatory class experience as variables. Future research can concentrate of other variables that might as well cast a significant effect on FLA like grades, proficiency, attitudes, motivation, assertiveness, teaching and learning styles, and teacher and student burnout. Last but not least, qualitative and experiential studies regards FLA in different contexts that delve into such aspect like its causes, effects and manifestations in the 21st century world of education can provide valuable insights and enhance our understanding of the concept.

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Yabancı dil kaygısı: Ufuk üniversitesi hazırlık okulu örneği

Öz

Bazı demografik değişkenlerin Yabancı Dil Kaygısı (YDK) üzerindeki etkilerini konu alan çalışmalar yabancı dil olarak İngilizce bağlamında azdır. Ayrıca bu çalışmalar farklılık gösteren sonuçlar ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu çalışma Ufuk Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulunda öğrenim gören Türk öğrencilerinin YDK'larını ve cinsiyet, yaş ve geçmiş yıllardaki hazırlık sınıfı deneyiminin YDK üzerindeki etkilerini araştırmıştır. Çalışma örneklemi 124 öğrenciden oluşmuştur. Veriler Horwitz vd. tarafından geliştirilen Yabancı Dil Sınıf Kaygısı Ölçeğinin Aydın (2001) tarafından Türkçe'ye uyarlanan adaptasyonu ile Ufuk Üniversitesi anket sistemi üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Nicel verilerin analizi Ufuk Üniversitesi Hazırlı Okulu öğrencilerinin orta derecede YDK'na sahip olduklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Bunun yanı sıra, yaşın YDK üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olduğu sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Buna karşın cinsiyet ve geçmiş yıllardaki hazırlık sınıfı deneyiminin Ufuk Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu öğrencilerinin YDK seviyeleri üzerinde anlamlı bir etkisi olmadığı tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Yabancı dil kaygısı; geçmiş yıllardaki hazırlık sınıfı deneyimi; yaş; cinsiyet.

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