Examining Non-Native English Speaking Academics' Communication Apprehension in International Academic Meetings: A Turkish Context

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the sources of communication apprehension in foreign language experienced by Turkish academics working at state universities (e.g., non-native speakers of English) in international academic meetings and their perceptions towards this matter. As the sample of the study, 44 (20 females and 24 males) participants were selected from voluntary academics from two universities. Using the quantitative research design, the data were collected by the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and Personal Communication Fear Scale (McCroskey, 1982). The results indicated that although female participants have higher levels of FLA than male participants, there were no significant differences by genders.

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction

Although numerous studies are examining the impact of English test performance and anxiety on class activities (e.g. Aydın, 1999; Aydın, 2008, 2012; Merç, 2011; Subaşı, 2010), there is little research examining foreign language teachers' anxiety (FLTA) experienced by Turkish academics (Han, 2016). This study investigates communication anxiety (CA) along with foreign language teachers' anxiety experienced by Turkish academics in international academic meetings, filling the gaps in this research field. The result of this study indicated that there were no significant differences in CA in a foreign language concerning genders. The results of the study may guide academics on how to alleviate their CA and develop strategies to overcome while participating in international academic meetings.

Purpose

This study examines the sources of CA with foreign language anxiety that non-native Turkish speakers of English experience in international academic meetings and the strategies they use to overcome them. The following research questions guide the study:
1. To what extent do the Turkish academics experience CA?
2. Is there a significant difference between FLTA and CA among male and female academics?

Method

This study uses a survey method. Quantitative research was conducted to analyze the data obtained from the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, et al., 1986), the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (PRCA-24) (McCroskey, 1982). The sample group of the research consisted of 44 non-native English-speaking academics working in the fields of social sciences (e.g., history, sociology) and sciences (e.g., chemistry, medicine) in Turkish universities. Data were collected from the multiple sources; a) background questionnaire for the profiles of participants (e.g. experiences in a foreign country, presentation experiences at international conferences, gender, and age), b) PRCA-24, and c) the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, et al., 1986). The quantitative data obtained from the scales (e.g. PRCA-24 and FLCAS) were descriptively (e.g. mean scores and standard deviations) and inferentially (t-tests) analyzed.

Findings

The results indicated that nearly half of the participants were anxious about their language proficiency levels. Although female participants have higher levels of FLA than male participants, there is no significant difference in FLA concerning gender. The findings of this study are in accord with previous studies (Aida, 1994; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Sarıgül, 2000; Wilson, 2006) indicating that female participants are more anxious than male participants due to cultural and social characteristics. The FLA difference did not base on gender in this study and previous studies result from the culture-specific context of foreign language communication (cf. Burroughs & Marie, 1995; Wahab, et al., 2004). Another finding of this study is that both female and male participants experience a moderate level of CA in group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking contexts. In contrast to Wick-Nelson and Israel (2006) which stated that the level of CA may differ concerning gender, this study revealed that there are no significant differences in CA by gender. Finally, the study revealed that there is no significant difference in CA between female and male participants in group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking contexts though male participants receive lower mean scores.

Discussion & Conclusion

In this present study, the results indicated that Turkish academics experience anxiety while presenting and communicating in international academic meetings such as symposiums and conferences. In academic

presentations, a presenter is expected to have the ability to speak English fluently and most of the academics perceive this as a difficult task to perform (Ho, 2011). Talking/listening in front of others is one of the factors causing anxiety (Awan, et al., 2010). As a result of this type of anxiety, academics prefer not to attend international academic meetings. They thus tend to prefer the writing field which reduces their anxiety level (Leki, 1999). Avoidance of communication, therefore, leads to low academic achievement (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). As a solution to this problem, non-native academics may be encouraged to attend English-speaking courses to reduce their CA in a foreign language whereas they are monitored about their progress.

Anadili İngilizce olmayan Akademisyenlerin Uluslararası Akademik Toplantılarda Yabancı Dilde Yaşadığı İletişim Kaygıları: Türkiye Bağlamı

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Öz

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye'deki devlet üniversitelerinde çalışan anadili İngilizce olmayan Türk akademisyenlerin uluslararası bilimsel toplantılarda yaşadıkları yabancı dilde iletişim kaygısı kaynaklarının ve onların bu konudaki algılarının incelenmesidir. Çalışmanın örneklemi olarak Türkiye'deki iki üniversiteden 44 gönüllü akademisyen (20 kadın ve 24 erkek olmak üzere) seçilmiştir. Nicel araştırma yöntemi kullanılan bu çalışmada veriler Yabancı Dil Kaygısı Ölçeği (Horwitz, et al., 1986) ve Kişisel İletişim Korkusu Bildirme Ölçeği (McCroskey, 1982) ile toplanmıştır. Nicel veriler kaygı ve iletişim korkusu ölçeklerinden toplanırken nitel veriler profil formu ve yüz yüze görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. Araştırma bulguları kadınların daha yüksek kaygı yaşamalarına rağmen, akademisyenlerin cinsiyet değişkenine göre iletişim ve yabancı dil kaygılarında anlamlı ölçüde bir fark olmadığını göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *İletişim Kaygısı, Akademik Toplantılar, Yabancı Dil olarak İngilizce, İngilizce Konuşan Türkler.*

INTRODUCTION

Anxiety, in simple terms, is a psychological condition meaning fear and phobia, which also prevents one's learning (Scovel, 2001). Freud describes anxiety as an emotional state accompanied by psychological stimulation (qt. in Weiner & Craighead, 2010, p.1698). It is also generally accepted as an obstacle in the field of foreign language linked with anxiety in general. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986: 128) defines foreign language anxiety (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". Besides its natural occurrence in the learning and teaching environment, there are also negative emotional reactions possible to come out (MacIntyre, 1999). In this sense, FLA is also related to the fear resulting from the requirement of linguistic performance with an insufficient level of language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). Several studies have shown that anxiety has a negative effect on foreign language learning and its linguistic performance (cf. Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; Horwitz, et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Young, 1991). Additionally, FLA is a performance evaluation in academic and social environments (Horwitz & Horwitz, & Cope, 1991). Considering foreign languages, English as a universal and dominant language is considerably significant not only for college/university students but also for academics who are non-native English speakers (Ferris & Tagg, 1996). However, in the course of speaking English, the anxiety of speaking is possible to be at the highest level (Lucas 1984; Phillips 1992; Price 1991) for non-native academics and CA is more likely to increase, preventing the speaker from being open to communication and also from improving his/her communication skills (Daly, Caughlin, & Stafford, 1997).

Academics are responsible to do scientific research as well as to attend international academic meetings. The presentations they make to introduce their research and to contribute to the scientific field are means of enhancing the ability to speak. Several academics perceive them as a difficult task to perform (Ho, 2011). Talking/listening in front of others is one of the basic factors causing anxiety (Awan, et al., 2010). This type of anxiety can lead academics to prefer not to attend international academic meetings. Avoidance of communication, therefore, leads to a decrease in academic achievement (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

There are also other factors causing problems such as lack of competence in phonetic/linguistic, lack of experience, lack of public speaking, and fear of using academic language (Bandura, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2002). The anxiety of academics on communication discourages them from asking questions to the audience in a scientific environment, thus discouraging the audience from answering the questions as well. This atmosphere reduces the efficacy level of the scientific environment in such a manner as to damage communicative initiatives. As a result, academics make negative progress in terms of their academic achievements in the future (McCroskey, 1997).

Types of FLA

FLA is examined from different perspectives such as CA, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (e.g., Daly, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1990; Aida, 1994). Communication apprehension (CA) is defined as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons" (McCroskey, 1984:13) and is a subset of performance anxiety. According to McCroskey (1997), a high level of CA can automatically affect people in economic, academic, and social terms. Despite extensive knowledge in their field of study, people with a high level of CA cannot express themselves well, being unable to convey their knowledge to the other side. Affecting the social relations of individuals in the workplace, this situation decreases enthusiasm for collaboration along with work efficiency. Also, individuals having difficulties in meeting the requirements of their jobs which require them to communicate with people may have to quit their jobs because of failure to show effective performance. Regarding the negative effects of CA, one of the concrete reflections of it on individuals is the avoidance of public speaking. CA that some individuals intensely experience manifests itself in a lack of communication and willingness to communicate (Burgoon 1976; McCroskey & Richmond, 1987; Phillips 1997).

As another type of anxiety, test anxiety is a psychological reaction of intense distress due to negative feelings of individuals about the exam and in parallel with this, motivation and performance efficiency decrease in the presence of a high level of anxiety during an exam (Andrade & Williams, 2009). Likewise, fear of negative evaluation at the end of the exam refers to social anxiety felt by individuals in such situations where he/she is likely to be evaluated (Watson & Friend, 1969). As a consequence of social anxiety, the outcome of the evaluation may negatively affect the individual (Monfries, & Kafer, 1994).

Factors Causing FLA

Individual factors can be sorted as age, aptitude, motivation, beliefs, and personality (e.g., Carroll, 1981; Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Horwitz, 1987; Krashen & Long & Scarcella, 1982). Gender is also another factor affecting FLA. Woodrow (2006) categories FLA in two contexts: Classroom (anxiety in the learning

environment) and out of class (anxiety in the target language environment). In a study, Woodrow (2006) found that students experience the stress of speaking English when they interact with native speakers of this language out of the classroom. As for the classroom, making an oral presentation in front of their classmates creates a high level of anxiety for students.

In light of the previous research mentioned above, it can be inferred that FLA limits language performance both in the classroom and out of the classroom (e.g., Horwitz, 1991; Kondo & Ling, 2004; Worde, 1998). Compared to students' anxiety, academics' anxiety may be different. The factors such as the stress of being academically and socially evaluated, hesitation and lack of communication may fail. Anxiety about the evaluation significantly deters academics from communication. In addition to avoidance of communication, triggered by fear of failure during a presentation or an academic study, anxiety also prevents the linguistic performance in the target language.

In recent years, several different projects have been developed and carried out to increase the level of communication of Turkish academics in English. Most of the academics have written and published their articles in English and they presented their research in international academic meetings. Considered as the agents laying international bridge with other academics in foreign countries, academics in Turkey need to be promoted in terms of communication skills in English. In this regard, the purpose of this study is: a) to find out the communication level of academics at universities in Turkey as well as to offer solutions to them to reduce their CA, and b) to examine the causes of anxiety in communication context. The solutions to be presented in line with the identified problems aim at reducing probable problems in the future.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CA along with FLA is a scientific field in which various studies have been conducted. Although there are several studies on the effect of CA on students (Byrne, 1987; Lucas, 1984; Muhamed, et al., 2011), the effect of CA on teachers (Meera & Sebastian & Bindu, 2015; Ohata, 2005), investigation of CA concerning gender (Burroughs & Marie, 1995; Nayeem & Khan & Mehta, 2015), there are very few studies conducted in detail on main factors of CA and strategies to overcome it (Manninen, 1984; Young, 1994).

Research into the Effect of CA on Students

A study by Lucas (1984) investigated how CA affects learners of English, specifically Japanese students in ESL classes. In this research, it is found out that while approximately 11 percent of the Puerto Rican students show a high level of CA in speaking Spanish (their native language), approximately 43 percent of the students show a high level of CA in speaking English. The results showed a significant difference among students although English was taught at each grade at schools of Puerto Rico.

Three years later, Byrne (1987) investigated whether German high school students experience similar levels of foreign language CA in speaking English and if they do, to what extent they experience. The study concludes that there is no difference in the CA levels of German high school students having only moderate levels of CA and FLA.

Similarly, Sallinen-Kuparinen et al. (1991) carried out a comparative study on the level of CA amongst 249 Finns students at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. The total level of CA measured for Finns is nearly 70. Results showed that Finns had slightly less anxiety than Swedes and approximately the same as Americans had.

Keaten, Kelly, and Pribyl (1997) examined CA in 15 Japanese schools starting from the elementary to the secondary levels. Results showed that there were no significant differences in the levels of CA between Americans and Japanese. The study also showed a steady increase in the level of anxiety Japanese students experience from kindergarten to 12th grade.

In 2007, Laurilla investigated levels of CA and perceived communication competence among maritime students in the Philippines. A checklist for the individual's report on Self-Perceived Communication Competence (SLFPER 1 and 2) was replied by the participants before and after instruction. The results indicated that students' performances vary into the types of speech task and that their perceptions about their communicative abilities are nearly independent of a teacher or peer grades given to them.

In the following years, Muhamed et al. (2011) investigated oral CA and overcoming strategies in a classroom setting among Libyan postgraduate students consisting of 68 male and 5 female participants at the University of Utara in Malaysia. The results showed that most of the Libyan postgraduate students have the feeling of oral CA in the classroom as well as adopting different strategies to overcome anxiety.

Four years later, Noor et al. (2015) examined students' perceptions towards CA as well as to determine their level of anxiety. A total of 113 students from several universities in Malaysia are involved in the survey. The findings indicated that the majority of undergraduates have high levels of CA, indicating that anxiety is one of the factors preventing language learning. Further, some undergraduates showed a tendency to be more anxious when they realize that they are being monitored and evaluated by other undergraduates in class.

A qualitative study by Bragg (2017) described the experience of community college students with high CA. The research aimed to explore the phenomenon of CA employing a purposeful sampling of 5 community college students with high levels of CA. Findings showed that all individuals experienced CA to a certain extent, and between 30% and 40% of individuals were estimated to experience high levels of CA.

Research into the Effect of CA on Teachers

Ohata (2005) described that the practices and beliefs of foreign language teachers had the potential to create anxiety in students. The data obtained from the interviews 7 ESL/EFL teachers indicated that the teachers experienced CA.

Similarly, Meeraa, Sebastian, and Bindu (2015) examined the CA levels of prospective teachers studying in the Teacher Education Centers of Kerala state in South India. The study obtained data from 215 trainee teachers in different education fields (e.g. language, science, and social science), using (PRCA-24). The results indicated that nearly all of the trainee teachers experienced CA.

The Research into CA concerning Gender

The study of Burroughs and Marie (1995) investigated CA by gender. The results showed that women experience more CA about expressing themselves than men. Next, Wahab, et al. (2004) investigated the influence of gender and culture on oral CA level among Malaysian accounting undergraduate students. The study obtained the data from 1551 accounting students, using PRCA-24. The results indicated that male and female students significantly differ in terms of oral CA, with female students' higher level. Moreover, the study found a significant difference among the three major ethnic groups, stating the Chinese students are the most anxious group followed by the Malaysians whereas the Indian students seem the least anxious.

In the following years, Rafek, et al. (2014) investigated the difference of levels in CA concerning gender between 60 Malaysian university students, using FLCAS designed by Horwitz (1983). Results showed that the majority of the students have a high CA level, and particularly female students experience higher anxiety than male students.

Nayeem, Khan, and Mehta (2015) conducted a questionnaire-based survey with 130 students studying Pharmacy at Bangalore, Karnataka, India. The survey aimed to examine CA among students studying at different levels of pharmacy and to find ways by which students' communication skills could be improved. The questionnaire is distributed to the students, collected, and then evaluated. The results showed that the factors contributing to the CA among the students are age and gender.

Research into the Main Factors of CA and Strategies to Overcome CA

Manninen (1984) examined 231 Finnish university students' anxiety levels while communicating in English. The study used the PRCA-24 to collect the data. Results showed that the students' self-evaluations are among the most potential correlates to CA.

In the following years, Paakkanen and Pirinen (1990) examined major factors behind CA of a group of 28 Finnish upper secondary school students. Results showed that inadequate skills, lack of exercise and experience, fear of errors, and being mocked, and also low self-confidence caused CA. Further, it was found that female students experienced more CA than male students.

Kondo (1994) investigated strategies to reduce public speaking anxiety in Japan. Results showed that relaxation and preparation are most often used by people with a high level of CA.

Although several studies have examined CA in university students' context, there is little research examining FLA experienced by academics (Han, 2016). This study investigates CA along with FLTA experienced by Turkish academics in international academic meetings, examining the sources of CA with FLTA and the strategies they use to overcome them. The research gap in this field is hereby aimed to be filled. The findings of the study may guide academics to develop strategies to overcome their anxieties while presenting in international academic meetings.

As presented below, the following research questions guided this study:
1. To what extent do the Turkish academics experience CA?
2. Is there a significant difference between FLTA and CA among male and female academics?

METHOD

Research Design

This study followed a survey method. Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, et al., 1986) and PRCA-24 (McCroskey, 1982) were the instruments of quantitative data collection.

Participants

The purposeful sampling strategy was followed to portray the perspectives of Non-NEST academics on the CA problems during presentations. Participants were 44 Non-NEST academics working in the fields of social

and science in Turkish universities. However, academics who work in the field of language teaching and learning and related departments were not included in this study because of their advanced proficiency level in foreign languages. The participants were chosen purposively among academic staff who had attended international meetings such as conferences, symposiums, workshops, and others regarding their fields of study. Personal consent forms were given. Table 1 shows the details of the participants' profiles.

Table 1. Profiles of the Participants

Gender		Degree country		Degree		Lecture Language		Proficiency		Event attendance		
F	M	Tr	Ab.	MA	PhD	Tr	Tr-Eng	Int.	Adv.	1 to 3	4 to 9	10<
20 (45.5 %)	24 (55.5 %)	41 (93.2 %)	3 (6.8 %)	6 (13.6 %)	38 (86.4 %)	33 (75 %)	11 (25 %)	29 (65.9 %)	15 (34.1 %)	7 (15.9 %)	21 (47.7 %)	16 (36.4 %)

Note: Tr= Turkey, Ab.= Abroad, Int.=Intermediate, Adv.= Advanced

Table 1 shows that 24 (55.5%) participants were male and 20 (45.5%) participants were female. Their ages range from 27 to 57. The participants' L1 are Turkish and it was assumed that they have advanced English level and have some level of CA. Only three participants completed an MA or Ph.D. degree abroad and most of the participants (28) hold a Ph.D. degree. Only 11 (25%) participants lecture in English. Numbers of event attendance were examined in three categories (1 to 3. 4 to 9. 10 and higher).

Data Collection

Data were collected from three sources: a) background questionnaire regarding the profiles of participants (e.g. overseas experience. presentation experience at international conferences, gender, and age), b) Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (PRCA-24), and c) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, et al., 1986).

PRCA-24: Twenty-four items Personal Report of Communication Apprehension [PRCA-24] developed by McCroskey (1982) was used in this study. The researcher adapted the scale for research. The scale consists of 4 dimensions: Group discussions, meetings, interpersonal and public speaking. 12 items were used to measure CA in this study. The reliability coefficient is high (Cronbach alpha> .90) and allows for public speaking, didactic interaction, sub-scores for small and large groups. However, such scores may be lower than the total reliability of the PRCA-24 (PRCA-24, 2016).

FLCAS: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale designed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was used to collect data.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data obtained from the scales (e.g. PRCA-24 and FLCAS) were analyzed descriptively (e.g. mean scores and standard deviations) and inferentially (e.g. t-tests).

RESULTS

Table 2 shows tests of the normality of FLCAS and PRCA-24 results. Table 3 shows the mean scores of FLCAS. Table 4 shows independent samples t-test results by gender, and Table 5 shows independent samples t-test results of PRCA-24 by gender.

Also, normality tests of FLCAS and PRCA-24 were conducted to decide the type of inferential statistics. The test results indicated that the data were normally distributed and therefore parametric t-tests were conducted to examine significant differences.
Table 3 shows the descriptives statistics for Academic Staffs' FLA.

Table 3. Descriptive statistical results for FLA

mean	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
1.00	1.0000	3	.00000
1.50	1.2500	4	.50000
2.00	1.2000	5	.44721
2.50	1.7500	8	.46291
3.00	1.5000	10	.52705
3.50	1.7143	7	.48795
4.00	2.0000	6	.00000
4.50	1.0000	1	.00000
Total	1.5455	44	.50369

*If the mean score is around 3, the participants may be slightly anxious about their language proficiency. The mean score near or above 4 implies at least some amount of anxiety.

Table 3 shows that nearly half of the participants were anxious because of their language proficiency levels. Further, the standard deviation scores show that they had varying levels of anxiety based on their language proficiency levels.

Table 4.T-test results for academic staffs' FLA levels by gender

			Independent Samples Test			
FLCAS	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Male	20	56.9550	3.47131	.638	.023
	Female	24	54.1667	4.34057		

$p > 0.05$

Table 4 shows that females have a higher level of FLA than males but there is no significant difference in FLA by gender and Table 4 shows that they have a moderate level of FLA.

Results for Academic Staffs' PRCA-24.

The following scoring formula was used to calculate the CA scores.
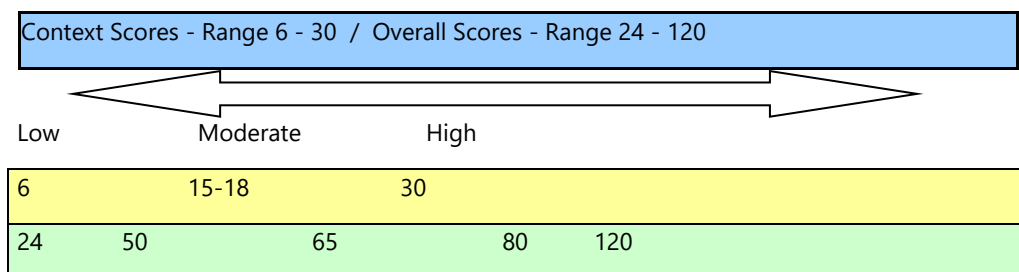
Scoring Formula:

Figure 1: Evaluation guide for PRCA-24

The first part addressed research question 1 - the extent of context-specific and total English language CA experienced by Turkish respondents. Table 3 shows the differences between females and males and the results were calculated using a formula provided in Richmond and McCroskey (1995).

The means of the CA levels, the total level of CA experienced by the participants, and also total CA were presented in Table 3. The Turkish context-specific results were provided along with the total CA values in Table 3.

Table 5: T-test results for PRCA-24 by gender

group discussion	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Female	20	17.5000	2.06474	.797	.570
	Male	24	17.1250	2.27104		
Meeting	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Female	20	19.7000	2.25015	.000	.614
	Male	24	19.3333	2.53097		
InterPersonalConversation	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Female	20	18.5500	2.01246	.175	.712
	Male	24	18.3333	1.80980		
public speaking	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Female	20	18.3500	1.98083	.210	.919
	Male	24	18.4167	2.35753		
PRCA-24	Gender	N	X	SS	F	P
	Female	20	74.1000	5.31037	.246	.577
	Male	24	73.2083	5.15819		

p>0.05
* Context score Low=6. moderate=15-18. high=30>
** Scores below 51 represent people who have very low CA.
Scores between 51 and 80 represent people with average CA.
Scores above 80 represent people who have high levels of trait CA.

Table 5 shows that both female and male participants have a moderate level of CA in group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking contexts in academic meetings. Similarly, the total scores indicate that both females and males have average level CA in academic meetings.

Table 5 shows the results of the t-test for comparing the CA context scores by gender revealed that there is no significant difference between females and males and except for public speaking.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

CA and FLA have widely been considered as two pivotal related factors in academic settings with their impact on the communicative skills of academics. The results of the study revealed that Turkish academics experience anxiety while making presentations and communicating in international academic meetings such as symposiums and conferences. Nearly half of the participants are anxious about their language proficiency levels. Although female participants have a higher level of FLA than male participants, there is no significant FLA difference concerning gender. However, this finding of the study is in line with such previous studies (Aida. 1994; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2003; Sarıgül, 2000; Wilson, 2006) indicating that female participants are more anxious than male participants due to cultural and social characteristics. The FLA difference based on gender

in this study and previous studies may result from the culture-specific context of foreign language communication (cf. Burroughs & Marie, 1995; Wahab, et al., 2004). Concerning the gender variable, although it was found that both female and male participants experienced a moderate level of CA during group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking contexts in academic meetings (see also Rafek, et al. 2014), there was no significant difference in terms of FLA and CA by gender. This results in contrast with the results found in a study by Wick-Nelson and Israel (2006).

The present research revealed that Turkish academics experience a moderate level of anxiety while communicating in international academic meetings such as symposiums and conferences. In academic meetings, an academician is expected to speak English in a fluent flow and most of the academics think that speaking fluently is a difficult ability to be acquired (Ho. 2011). Talking/listening in public is one of the pivotal factors leading to anxiety (cf. Awan. et al., 2010; Campbell, 1999). As a result of this anxiety, academics do not want to participate in international academic meetings, showing tendencies in the writing field which possibly reduces their anxiety level (Leki, 1999). Avoidance of communication, therefore, decreases academic achievement (e.g. Aida. 1994; Horwitz, 2001; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991). As a solution to this problem, academics may be encouraged to attend speaking courses to reduce their CA levels and they can be monitored about their progress.

In the study, there are two limitations. First, the sample of the study consisted of participants from only two state universities in Turkey. Second, this study followed the survey technique. In the light of limitations, further research may investigate this issue as using a longitudinal research design and exploratory mixed-methods approach. It may take a long time to carry out a study with longitudinal research design which is "popular in fields with a strong quantitative orientation.... but it presents challenges of identifying the quantitative results to further explore and the unequal sample sizes for each phase of the study" (Creswell, 2014: 15-16). However, it may be useful to obtain more detailed findings.

Çıkar Çatışması Bildirimi
Yazar(lar), bu makalenin araştırılması, yazarlığı ve / veya yayınlanmasına ilişkin herhangi bir potansiyel çıkar çatışması beyan etmemiştir.

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Etik Kurul Kararı

Bu araştırma için.....................................kurumdan (tarih-sayı no) etik izin alınmıştır.

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