**Communication Concerns of Academicians in Foreign Language in International Academic Events**

**Akademisyenlerin Uluslararası Akademik Etkinliklerde Yabancı Dilde Yaşadığı İletişim Kaygıları**

Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the source of the fear of communication and language anxiety experienced by Turkish academics (e.g. non-native speakers of English) in international scientific activities and and the evaluations from their perspectives. basis. Forty-four (20 females and 24 males)participants were selected from academicians from two universities on the voluntarily basis. Using the quantitative research design, the data were collected by the Teachers' Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, 1986) and Personal Communication Fear Scale (McCroskey, 1982). Quantitative data generated data from profile form and face-to-face interviews while quantitative data generated data from fear of anxiety and communication scales. The results showed that academicians had concerns at different levels according to gender.

Key Words: Scientific activities, foreign language anxiety, fear of communication

**Özet**

Bu çalışmanın amacı Türkiye'deki devlet üniversitelerinde çalışan anadili İngilizce olmayan Türk akademisyenlerin uluslararası bilimsel etkinliklerde yaşadıkları yabancı dil kaygısı ve iletişim korkusunu kaynaklarının araştırılması ve katılımcıların perspektiflerinden değerlendirilmesidir. Çalışmaya uygun örnekleme yöntemiyle Türkiye’de iki üniversitedeki akademisyenlerden gönüllülük esasına dayalı seçilen 44 (e.g. 20 females and 24 males) kişi katıldı. Karma desen araştırma yöntemini kullanan bu çalışmada veriler önce Öğretmenlerin Yabancı Dil Kaygısı Ölçeği (Horwitz, 1986) ve Kişisel İletişim Korkusu Bildirme Ölçeği (McCroskey, 1982) ile toplandı. Nicel verileri kaygı ve iletişim korkusu ölçeklerinden toplanan veriler oluştururken nitel verileri profil formu ve yüz yüze görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler oluşturdu. Elde edilen bulgular cinsiyet değişkenine göre akademisyenlerin farklı düzeylerde kaygılar yaşadığını göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Bilimsel etkinlikler, yabancı dil kaygısı, iletişim korkusu

1. **Introduction**

Anxiety, in simple terms, is a condition called fear and phobia, which prevents one's learning (Scovel, 2001). In addition, as Weiner and Craighead (2010) describe, Freud described anxiety as an emotional state of anxiety and anxiety that accompanies psychological stimulation (p. 1698). In this sense, foreign language anxiety (FLA) is the fear that an individual who does not have a sufficient level of language is required to use a second language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993), and there are also negative and negative emotional reactions when learning or using a second language (MacIntyre, 1999). The foreign language is related to anxiety, self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and FLA is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” dir (Horwitz, Horwitz, &Cope, 1986). Several research have shown that anxiety has a negative effect on foreign language learning and use of it (cf. Horwitz, et al. 1986; Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1986; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991; Young, 1991).

Foreign language anxiety is also a performance evaluation in academic and social environments (Horwitz, M. B., Horwitz, E. K., & Cope, J., 1991: 30-3). It is a fact that English, which has become a dominant language, is important not only for college / university students but also for academics who are non-native English speakers (Ferris & Tagg, 1996). Anxiety of speaking skills can be at the highest level (Lucas 1984; Phillips 1992; Price 1991) and communication apprehension is more likely to be seen when he is verbal, which prevents an individual from being open to communication and does not help him to develop his communication skills (Daly, Caughlin, & Stafford).

Further, academic presentations are an area where the individual has the ability to speak. However, because foreign language writing skills are an area of ​​least anxiety (Leki, 1999), academicians may prefer to write more in their presentations rather than in presentations. It is often seen as difficult to overcome participation in international conferences and academic presentations for non-native speakers of English (Ho, 2011) because talking and listening in front of others (Campbell, 1999) is one of the factors that cause anxiety for non-native speakers of English (Awan, Azher, Anwar, & Naz, 2010). Research has shown that fear of high communication leads to low academic achievement (e.g. Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Garder, 1991; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976). In addition, other factors that lead to concerns are phonetic and linguistic problems, inexperience, public speaking, spoken abduction and fear of using academic language (Bandura, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2002). The academician's anxiety about communication can prevent him / her from asking questions to the audience in the scientific environment they are in and preventing the audience from answering their questions. This can greatly reduce the level of utilization of the scientific environment. That's why one of the pressing problems is communication. As a result, the academician, who tends to run away from communication, can have a negative development for both future success and corporate achievements (McCroskey, 1997).

**1.1.Types of FLA**

FLA was investigated from different perspectives such as communication apprehension (CA) (e.g., Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1990), test anxiety (TA) (e.g., Daly, 1991; Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1991), and fear of negative evaluation (FNE) (e.g., Aida, 1994; Horwitz et al., 1986; Young, 1990).

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, p.13) and is a subset of performance anxiety.

According to McCroskey (1997), the high level of fear of communication can automatically affect the individual in economic, academic and social terms. For example, individuals who have a high level of communication apprehension cannot express themselves well, but are unable to convey their knowledge to the other side even though they have very good and qualified knowledge in their field of study. This situation affects the social relations of individuals in the workplace, decreases the incentives to work together and decreases the work efficiency. Besides, individuals who have difficulty in communicating with their job requirements and need to communicate with people due to their position may have to leave their jobs because they cannot show their job performances, and this affects people economically. One of the most strongest, most reliable effects of CA , is a reduced desire to communicate. They can have a tendency to avoid public speaking. The fear of communication that an individual experiences, manifests itself as an individual to escape communication and reluctance to communicate (Burgoon 1976; McCroskey & Richmond, 1987; Phillips 1997)

Test anxiety is a feeling of intense distress due to negative expectations of individuals about the exam and motivation and performance efficiency decreases when anxiety is high (Andrade & Williams, 2009). The fear of negative evaluation refers to the social anxiety felt by the individual in situations where the individual is likely to be evaluated (Watson & Friend, 1969). Furthermore, the fear of negative evaluation is that an awareness that the individual's level is low and that the outcome of the evaluation may affect the individual negatively (Monfries, & Kafer, 1994).

**1.2. Factors Causing FLA**

Young (1994: 427) defined the types of FLA as communication apprehension, self-esteem, self-confidence that are related to personal and interpersonal anxieties. The others are: teachers’ beliefs about language teaching, learner beliefs about language learning, classroom procedures, instructor-learner interactions, and testing. L2 learners can feel painful and anxious while learning and using a foreign language because of their peers’ competitive attitudes and negative evaluation (Bailey, 1983). In foreign language classes, the comparison of students with other classmates may cause a sense of anxiety (Bailey, 1986). In this sense, as stated by Oxford (1999), the level of progression as a level of language will decrease, but it is likely that a continuous concern will become a personal trait.

Individual factors such as age (Krashen, Long, & Scarcella, 1982: Penfield & Roberts, 1959), aptitude (Carroll, 1981; Pimsleur, 1966), motivation (Clément, 1986; Gardner & Lambert, 1972), beliefs (Horwitz, 1987; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999), and personality (Guiora et al., 1972) are also among the major factors that cause. Further, gender is another crucial factor affecting students’ FLSA.

Woodrow (2001, 2006), on the other hand, conceptualizes foreign language anxiety in two dimensions: class classroom (anxiety in the learning environment) out of class (anxiety in the target language environment). Woodrow (2006), in his study, revealed that students experience the stress of speaking English when they interact with native speakers of English. The other reason was that the student had to make an oral presentation and had an activity in the classroom. According to Tobias model, the effects of anxiety on learning take place in 3 stages. These are the input, processing and output stages:

1. Input anxiety refers to the anxiety that students experience when they encounter a new word or sentence in the target language.

2. The processing step (processing anxiety) refers to the concerns that the student has experienced in the cognitive process of processing the newly acquired information.

3. The output step (output anxiety) refers to the anxiety that arises during the use of the student's ability to demonstrate the information he has already learned.

All in all, previous research has indicated that FLA limits student performance (e.g., Horwitz, 1991; Worde, 1998; Kondo & Ling, 2004). The urgent solution of these foreign language concerns is a contribution to scientific activities. The reasons for fear of academics may be different. The reasons such as anxiety of being evaluated academically and socially, communication anxiety and wince may show a failure. The concern about the evaluation, especially the thought that this is negative, will remove the person from communication. The anxiety that they show or show when performing performance will also be triggered by fear of failure. The concern of the person for foreign language levels is another concern and should be taken into consideration. Other concerns will help to understand the causes of foreign language concerns. English communication skills and career success work in conjunction with each other. In recent years, many different projects have been developed and implemented in order to increase the level of English communication of academicians in Turkey.

Most of the academicians in our country have written and published their articles in English and they make presentations in international presentations in English. The purpose of this study are: a) find that the level of communication in universities in Turkey and concerned academics to offer solutions for reducing b) examine the causes of concern which they live abroad, communication scholars. The solutions to be presented in line with the identified problems are aimed at reducing the probable problems in the future.Akademisyenler gerek öğrencileri ile gerekse akademisyenlerle hem yurtiçinde hem yurtdışında iletişim halinde olan bireylerdir ve onların bu konudaki eksikliğini gidermek kuruma ve bireye olumlu olarak geri dönecektir. Bu çalışmada Türkiye’nin farklı üniversitelerinde çalışan akademisyenlerin yurtdışında konferanslarda yaşadıkları iletişim kaygıları tanımlanacaktır.

**2. Literature Review**

Meeraa, Sebastian and Bindu (2015) investigated the CA levels of prospective teachers studying in the Teacher Education Centers of Kerala state in south India. Data was collected from 215 trainee teachers in different education fields (e.g. language, science, and social science), using the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (PRCA-24). The results indicated that 95 per cent of trainee teacher experienced CA.

In his study, Ohata (2005) noted that the practices and beliefs of the foreign language teacher should be more closely examined, as he does have potential to create anxiety in students. Seven ESL/EFL teachers were interviewed and his findings indicated that the teachers' beliefs corroborated previous research in the area.

A qualitative investigation by Bragg (2017) provides a description of the experience of the high CA community college students. The research aimed to explore the phenomenon of CA among a purposeful sample of five community college students with high levels of CA. It was observed that all individuals experience some level of CA, and between 30% and 40% of individuals are estimated to experience high levels of CA.

A questionnaire based survey with 130 students studying Pharmacy at Bangalore, Karnataka, India was conducted by Nayeem, Khan and Mehta (2015). The survey aimed to analyze the CA among students studying in different levels of pharmacy and to find routes by which the student’s communication skills could be improved. The questionnaire was distributed to the students, collected and evaluated. After the evaluation of the results, it can easily be seen that the factors contributing to the CA among the students are age, gender and the year of study.

The studies below have considered the implications of CA largely on a student level. How CA affects the teacher, and how their awareness or competence can be addressed, are issues that have been more or less left out.

Byrne (1987) investigated if German high school students experience similar levels of foreign language CA while speaking English, and if so, to what extent. It was determined that, there is no difference in the levels of CA of German citizens. They have only moderate levels of CA and FLCA.

Finnish students have also been paid attention in the following studies which aims to assess the levels and different aspects of CA. Those studies also fill the gaps in the research on CA and open a new perspective by hearing the voice of teachers.

Manninen (1984) focused on 231 students in a Finnish university to chart the factors that lay behind anxiety experienced by Finns when they communicated in English. Selected parts of the PRCA-24 questionnaire were used and It was found that the students' self-evaluations were among the most potential correlates to CA.

Similarly, Paakkanen and Pirinen (1990) focused on a group of 28 Finnish upper secondary school students who had been identified as having higher CA. In this study, Paakkanen and Pirinen listed the majör factors behind CA after the students were interviewed: Inadequate skills, lack of exercise and experience, fear of errors and ridicule, as well as low self-confidence. Also, females were found in this study to show more CA than males.

Sallinen-Kuparinen et al. (1991) also carried out a comparative investigation into the level of CA amongst 249 Finns students at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. The total CA measured for Finns was 65.8. With this result, Finns showed slightly less apprehension than Swedes and virtually as much as Americans.

Also, The Korpela (2011) is considered as one of the more recent studies on Finns and CA. It involved a questionnaire administered to 122 Finnish upper secondary school students and supplemented the data with six theme interviews. The study aimed to find out the most potent causes of CA in the EFL classroom setting. It was noticed that the most significant internal causes of CA was low self-assessed English proficiency, unrealistic demands, concern over errors, evaluation and the impression made on others. On the other hand, CA was also caused by lack of authentic practice, discouraging teachers and past experiences, high demands, conversation partner's English proficiency and the large size and unfamiliary of the audience. This finding is supported by earlier studies and theory on foreign language CA and anxiety (e.g. Horwitz 1996; McCroskey 1997b; Gregersen & Horwitz 2002; Nuto 2003).

The following studies in different context investigated the levels and causes of CA and inspire teachers to wake up to the fact that in every classroom, there is likely an individual who struggles with CA.

Muhamed et al. (2011) investigated classroom oral communication apprehension among 2nd semester Libyan postgraduate students, sixty-eight (68) males and five (5) females, at University of Utara in Malaysia. Another goal of the study was to investigate what strategies they adopt to overcome their oral CA. Two questionnaires designed by Horwitz et al., (1986) and Kondo & Ling (2004). The estimated results showed that most of the Libyan postgraduate students in CAS UUM have the feeling of oral CA in the classroom and that they adopt different strategies to deal with the apprehension.

Laurilla (2007) attempted to determine levels of communication anxiety and perceived communication competence among maritime students in the Philippines. Speech performance scores were obtained through teacher and peer grading. A checklist for the individual’s report on Self-Perceived Communication Competence (SLFPER 1 and 2) adapted from McCroskey &McCroskey (1988) was distributed to the participants before and after instruction. The results indicate that students’ performances varied in relation to the type of speech task, and that their perceptions about their communicative abilities were almost independent of the teacher or peer grades given to them.

Special attention is paid to the fear of oral communication and how to alleviate it in Japan. McDowell and Yotsuyanagi (1996) compared Japanese and American students in the areas of CA. It was found that Japanese test lower on parts of the willingness to communicate scale. Kondo (1994) looked at strategies to reduce public speaking anxiety in Japan. Of the six categories into which these strategies are placed, relaxation and preparation are used most often by highly anxious people. Keaten, Kelly, and Pribyl (1994) examined CA in Japanese schools from 15 the elementary to the secondary levels. Ironically, there were no major differences in the levels of CA between Americans and Japanese at any level. The study also showed a steady increase in the amount of fear Japanese students experience from kindergarten to 12th grade. A study by Lucas (1984) investigated how CA affects learners of English as a second language, specifically Japanese students in ESL classes.

Research conducted in Puerto Rico strongly supports the speculation advanced by Lucas (Fayer, et aI., 1984; McCroskey, et aI., 1985). In this research it was found that while only approximately 11 percent of the Puerto Rican students surveyed reported experiencing high CA when speaking Spanish (their first language), approximately 43 percent reported high CA when speaking in English, their second language. This difference appears in spite ofthe fact that English is a universal requirement at every grade level in the schools of Puerto Rico.

Noor et al. (2015) examined students’ perception on CA as well as to determine their level of anxiety. A total of 113 students from several universities in Malaysia were involved in this survey. A set of questionnaire adapted from the measurement scale of language anxiety called the Foreign Language Class Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used. The findings from this study show that the majority of the undergraduates had high levels of CA which indicates that apprehension is one of the factors that dampens language learning. Some undergraduates tend to be more anxious when they realize that they are being monitored and evaluated by other undergraduates in class. Fear of being monitored by classmates also causes some students to have trouble in concentrating while speaking in second or foreign language (Pappamihiel, 2002; Zheng, 2008).

# Wick-Nelson and Israel (2006) describe that CA as the matter of fact manifests differently according to gender.

BintiRafek, et al. (2014) investigated the difference between 60 Malesian university students’ CA level by gender, using FLCAS designed by Horwitz (1983). Results showed that majority of the students have high CA level, fuerher, females experience higher anxiety than males.

# A study by Wahab, et al. (2004) investigated the influence of gender and culture on the oral CA level among Malaysian accounting undergraduate students. The data was obtained from 1551 accounting students, using Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) developed by McCroskey (2001). The results indicated that male and female students significantly differed in terms of oral CA, with higher in females. Moreover, a significant difference among the three major ethnic groups was found, in which it appears that the Chinese students are the most apprehensive group, followed by the Malaysians. While the Indians students are found to be the least apprehensive.

A study by Burroughs and Marie (1995) investigated CA by gender while using their native language English. The results showed that women experienced more CA about expressing themselves than men. This could be a result of their culture in which it is still predominantly controlled by men.

Although there are numerous experimental studies examining the impact of English test performance and anxiety on class activities (eg, Aydın, 1999; Aydın, 2008; Aydın, 2012; Merç, 2011; Subaşı, 2010), there are very few researches that examine the foreign language anxiety experienced by Turkish academics while communicating in a foreign language. (Han, 2016). This study investigates the FLA experienced by Turkish academics while they are in the international activities and in this sense this study fill in the gaps in research in this field. The findings can guide academicians who will make presentations abroad.

It is estimated that participants can experience foreign language anxiety and communication apprehension at different levels. The guiding research question of this study is what are the sources of CA problems that non-native Turksih speaker of English experince when presenting in English in the international academic meetings and how they cope with them. Further, the following sub-research questions were asked:

1. To what extend do the Turkish academicians experience communication apprehension whose native language is not English?

2. Is there a significant difference between foreign language anxiety and communication apprehension among male and female academics?

1. **Method**
   1. **Research Design**

This study followed an explanatory sequental mixed method. First, a quantitative research was conducted to analyze the data obtained from the Teacher Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, 1986), PRCA-24 (McCroskey, 1982).

**Participants**

A purposeful sampling strategy was followed to portray the different perspectives on the CA problems in the presentation experiences by Non-NEST academics.

The sample group of the research consisted of 44 Non-NEST academics working in the fields of social and science in Turkish universities. However, the academic staff who works in the field of language teaching and learning and related departments were not included in study because they have advanced level proficiency in their foreign languages and therefore they may not experience CA problems. The participants were chosen purposively from among all of the academic staffs who had attended international meetings such as conferences, symposiums, workshops, and others regarding their fields of study. Personal consent fors were given. The Table 1 shows the details about the profiles of the participants.

Table 1.

Profiles of the Participants

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | | Degree country | | Degree | | Lecture Language | | Proficiencey | | Event attendance | | |
| Female | Male | Turkey | Abroad | MA | PhD | Tr | Tr-Eng | Intermediate | Advanced | 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%) |

Table 1 shows that 24 (55.5%) participants were male and twenty (45.5%) were female. The ages of the participants ranged from 27 and 57. The participants’ L1 is Turkish and they were assumed to be at an advanced level of English. They were expected to have some level of CA. Next, only 3 participants hold MA or PhD degree from abroad and most of the participants hold PhD (e.g. 28 persons). Further, only 25 percent of the participants’ lecture in English. Their perceived level of proficiency mostly is intermediate. Finally, their event attendance numbers vary from 3 to over 10.

* 1. **Data Collection**

The reliability and completeness of the data were triangulated by consulting three sources of data (e.g. scales, open-ended questions, and face-to-face interviews) relating the participants’ experiences and the cronbach alpha was calculated for this study.

Data were collected from the multiple sources of information: a) background questionnaire regarding the profiles of participants (e.g. overseas experience, presentation experience at international conferences, gender and age), b) the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 (PRCA-24), and c) Teachers foreign language classroom anxiety scale (Horwitz, 1986).

PRCA-24: The 24-item the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-PRCA-24- developed by McCroskey (1982) was used in this study. The author has made it available for scale research and no permission has been taken because the citation is used in this study. The scale consists of 4 dimensions: group discussions, meetings, interpersonal and public speaking. A total of 12 items were used to measure communication concerns in this study. The PRCA-24 measuring tool is widely used to measure the fear of communication. The reliability coefficient is quite high (cronbach alpha> .90) and allows for public speaking, didactic interaction, sub-scores for small groups and large groups. However, such scores may be lower than the total reliability of the PRCA-24 (PRCA-24, 2016).

FLTCA: Data were collected using “Teachers' Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety scale” by Horwitz (1986). Further, in the interviews; 8 open-ended interview questions were asked to the participants selected for the sub-sample.  
Further, in the interviews, it was aimed to focus on the specific details about the problems they encountered and the strategies to cope with them presentation experiences. Eight open-ended interview questions were asked to the participants selected for the sub-sample. These questions were adapted from Price (1991)’s study entitled “The Subjective Experience of Foreign Language Anxiety: Interviews with Highly Anxious Students” .

Interviews were collected from 4 participants with the highest level of anxiety and communication apprehension after the quantitative data were collected and analyzed. Interviews were made easier in Turkish, because the language skills of the participants were measured. The researcher encouraged the participants to convey their thoughts as they wanted. Data were collected by recording audio (cf. Han, 2016).

* 1. **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data obtained from the scales (e.g. PRACA-24 and FLTCAS) were analyzed descriptively (e.g. mean scores and standart deviations) and inferentially (e.g. t-tests and ANOVA).

**Results**

Table 2 and Table 3 shows the descriptive and inferential statistical results obtained from FLCAS for the participants level of FLA and the significant differences by gender. Further, the scores obtained from PRCA-24 were presented in Table 4 and Table 5. Table 4 shows CA context scores by gender and Table 5 shows T-test results for academic staffs’ anxiety levels by gender.

1. **Results for Academic Staffs’ English Anxiety**

Table 2.

Academic Staffs’ English Anxiety Mean Scores by Gender

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 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, it is possible that, the participants are slightly anxious about their language proficiency. The mean score near or above 4 implies at least some amount of anxiety.

Table 2 indicates that nearly half of the participants are anxious their language proficiency levels. Further, the statndart deviation scores indicate that they have varying level of anxiety regarding thier language proficiency levels.

Table 3.

T-test Results for Academic Staffs’ English Anxiety Levels by Gender

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Gender | n | m | Std | t | df | p |
| Female | 20 | 2,35 | .96108 | -3,071 | 42 | .004 |
| Male | 24 | 3,125 | .71094 |  |  |  |

Table 3 shows that males have higher level of FLA than females and there is no significant FLA difference by gender, indicating that they experience moderate level of FLA.

1. **Results for Academic Staffs’ Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24)**

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

Scoring Formula:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | **Context Scores - Range 6 - 30 / Overall Scores - Range 24 - 120** | |
|  |
| **Low Moderate High** |
| **6 15-18 30** |
| **24 50 65 80 120** |

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. Furthermore, the Table 2 examined the differences between females and males. The results were calculated using a formula provided in McCroskey and Richmond (1995).

The means of the levels of CA and the means for the total level of CA experienced by the participants, and the total CA were presented in Table 2. The Turkish context-specific results are provided along with the total CA values in Table 2.

Table 4. CA Context Scores by Gender

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | gender | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Group Discussion | f | 20 | 35,5000 | 2,06474 |
| m | 24 | 35,1250 | 2,27104 |
| Meetings | f | 20 | 15,3000 | 3,75710 |
| m | 24 | 16,1667 | 4,55561 |
| Interpersonal Conversations | f | 20 | 16,2500 | 4,31491 |
| m | 24 | 15,8333 | 4,19800 |
| Public Speaking | f | 19 | 15,8421 | 4,96950 |
| m | 24 | 19,5000 | 5,66453 |
| Total Score | f |  | 82.90 |  |
|  | m |  | 86,63 |  |

\* Context score Low=6, moderate=15-18, high=30>

\*\* Scores below 51 represent people who have very low CA.

Scores between 51-80 represent people with average CA.

Scores above 80 represent people who have high levels of trait CA.

The Table 4 shows that both female and male participants experience high level of communication apprehension in group discussions in academic meetings. Regarding the meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking contexts, both female and male participants experince moderate level comminication anxiety academic meetings. Similarly, the total scores indicates that both female and male experience high level CA academic meetings.

Table 5: T-test results for academic staffs’ anxiety levels by gender

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Group Discussion** | | | | | | |
| Gender | n | m | Std | t | df | p |
| Female | 20 | 35,5 | 2.06474 | .568 | 42 | .573 |
| Male | 24 | 35,125 | 2.27104 |
| **Meetings** | | | | | | |
| Gender | n | m | Std | t | df | p |
| Female | 20 | 15.3 | 3.75710 | -.679 | 42 | .501 |
| Male | 24 | 16.1667 | 4.55561 |
| **Interpersonal Conversation** | | | | | | |
| Gender | n | m | Std | t | df | p |
| Female | 20 | 16.25 | 4.31491 | .324 | 42 | .748 |
| Male | 24 | 15.8333 | 4.19800 |
| **Public Speaking** | | | | | | |
| Gender | n | m | Std | t | df | p |
| Female | 20 | 15.8421 | 4.96950 | .568 | 42 | .032\* |
| Male | 24 | 19.5000 | 5.664453 |

\* mean difference significant at p .05 level

The Table 5 shows t-test results fort he comparison of CA context scores by gender. The results indicate there were only significant public speaking CA difference between females and males. Females had received lower means scores.

**Discussion and Conclusions**

This present study aimed at investigating the Turkish academic staffs’ FLA and CA levels while attending and presenting in English in international events (e.g. symposia, conferences, etc.). The results indicated that first, nearly half of the participants are anxious their language proficiency levels.

Second, although males have higher level of FLA than females and there is no significant FLA difference by gender. The results of this study is not in line with previous research as such several studies indicated that particularly while speaking (Aida, 1994; Ngidi & Siberya, 2003; Sarıgül, 2000) female learners are more anxious than male learners potentially due to cultural and societal characteristics (Wilson, 2006). The FLA difference by gender between our study and previous research may stem from the culture specific context of foreign language communication. (cf. Burroughs & Marie, 1995; Wahab, et al., 2004)

Third, both female and male participants experience high level of communication apprehension in group discussions in academic meetings. Regarding the meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking contexts, both female and male participants experince moderate level comminication anxiety academic meetings. Similarly, both female and male experience high level CA academic meetings. As Wick-Nelson and Israel (2006) describe that CA as the matter of fact manifests differently according to gender.

Finally, there were only significant public speaking CA difference between females and males though females had received lower means scores. As Nayeem, Khan and Mehta (2015)’s study indicates the factors contributing to the CA among the students are age, gender and the year of study. The results of this study can coincides with BintiRafek, et al. (2014)’s study who investigated the difference between 60 Malesian university students’ CA level by gender, as their results showed that majority of the students have high CA level, fuerher, females experience higher anxiety than males.

It was concluded that the Turkish academics experience anxiety while presenting and communicating in international acedemic events such as syposia and conferences. In academic presentations, the individual has the ability to speak in a English fluently in acedemic events and most of the academics perceive this as a difficult task (Ho, 2011) as talking and listening in front of others (c.f. Campbell, 1999) is one of the factors that cause anxiety (Awan, Azher, Anwar, & Naz, 2010). As a result, the academics prefer not to attend international academic events, instead; they may prefer to write as writing skills are an area of ​​least anxiety (Leki, 1999). To avoid fear of high communication leads to low academic achievement (e.g. Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 2001; MacIntyre & Garder, 1991; McCroskey & Anderson, 1976), the academics need to be provided English speaking courses on strategy training to alleviating FLA and CA by instiutions and they should be mointored about their progress.

This study is limited to only participants from two state universities. Further, this study used only quantitative design. Under the light of limitations, further research can investigate this issue as using a longtiduinal research design and mixed-methods approach because the initial quantitative data can be explained further with the qualitative data. “This type of deseign is popular in fields with a strong quantitative orientation….. but it presents challanges of identifying the quantitative results to further explore and the unequal sample sizes for each phase of the study” (Creswell, 2014, pp.15-16).

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