The relationship between foreign language anxiety and decision-making strategies among university students

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Abstract

A growing number of studies have stressed the significance of foreign language anxiety in foreign language learning. However, these studies have generally demonstrated foreign language anxiety to be associated with foreign language achievement not with 21st century skills particularly decision-making strategies. Based on this, this study aims to identify the relationship between foreign language anxiety (FLA) and decision-making strategies among university students Moreover, university students' demographic information such as gender, high-school background, and exposure to English was also investigated. The study adopted a survey-based research method. First, a demographic inventory was provided to participants to collect certain personal details for research questions. Then, two scales, Turkish adaptations of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Şakrak, 2009) and Decision-making Scale developed by Zaimoğlu (2018) were conducted to students respectively. The results indicated that FLA and Decision-making vary in terms of gender, language background, high school background and exposure to English levels separately. Furthermore, for students' FLA and Decision-making strategies, a considerable negative difference was found. This study provides possible suggestions for future research, and makes implications for foreign language learning.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety; decision-making strategies; 21ˢᵗ century skills; preparatory class students; university students

1. Introduction

There are many concerns regarding FLA with other variables like Emotional Intelligence (Horwitz, 1986 & Şakrak, 2009) in the literature for years but decision-making skills and strategies have begun to be discussed recently. Apart from most known language skills, 21st century's language learning and teaching framework have different skills than those of the past. These skills are a must for a student. These skills are; creativity, communication, critical thinking, and cooperation. This means students need to be taught how to become a member of a team, how to work in a team in cooperation and how to use

English in creative ways so that they can find the means to communicate all of these different types of people in the world. They can make analyses, evaluations, and decisions on their own. According to Dunham (2017), students need "strong critical thinking, problem-solving, analytical abilities and ability in collaboration, communicating, and rapid adaption to changing situations in order to succeed, survive and survive in today's world" (p. 2). This is also important why the instructors also need to develop critical thinking of the students while teaching English.

On the students' side, learning English is regarded as a challenging process. Second language learning is difficult, exhausting and stressful for students (Krashen, 1981). Moreover, one of the most crucial milestones in student life is transfer from high school to university. They experience new challenges such as moving away from their families into a different environment, having problems in organizing relationships, and more importantly, encountering unfamiliar academic study (Zaimoğlu, 2018). In addition, they attempt to discover a new language. While discovering the target language, students need to know how to become a member of a team, how to work in a team in cooperation. Our learners should know how to use English in creative ways so that they can find the means to communicate all of these different types of people in the world. All these difficulties are truly hard for them to handle. The problem becomes serious for the students as they are anticipated to convey a foreign language than their mother tongue. Nevertheless, so as to achieve this phase, they need to understand how to analyze the situation, examine their decisions and recognize for themselves and others the potential consequences of each decision. In other words, each student should take into consideration rigorously all the results of their decisions before making a judgment. Good decision-maker is someone who understands the risks of his/her choices, develops solutions to challenges, predict actions, assess and focus on the incidents, which all contribute to critical thinking abilities and creativity of the 21st-century skills as stated by Cosenza, Cicarelli, and Nigro (2019). However, an individual's inability to make decisions for a situation he or she is facing, experiencing a conflict situation or the expectation of being prevented also causes anxiety. This anxiety condition also affects the individual's life negatively and causes some failures or negativity. In this case, the individual needs to be free from anxiety and conflict in order to make healthy decisions. Considering that the decisions students make while learning a foreign language have a significant impress on their accomplishment and performance, it is seen that there is a demand to indicate the connection between foreign language anxiety and decision making. Decisions taken by students during their language learning processes, where foreign language concerns are high, can affect their success and performance. Thereupon, it is crucial to indicate the connection between foreign language anxiety and decision-making strategies for the students to pass this process successfully and efficiently.

1.1. Literature review

Foreign Language Anxiety is a significant problem, which can impact the goals of young people, many career decisions in life and their lifespan and potential as a whole. A growing and the economically competitive world require changes and seek also transformations in language learning. The need for understanding other languages is critical with the increasing use of digital technology. The world is becoming smaller thanks to the internet and the world's developing economy. More and more people are using English as a common way to communicate with each other. That is where English comes in. Hence, the focus is on preparing the students of all fields of education, particularly of language education with the skills of the 21st century. Schools in the 21st century represent diverse cultural students with different abilities and learning opportunities. Unfortunately, many students are lack of emotional and social skills and become less associated with the school, for this reason, their academic achievement and conduct are adversely affected. In this respect, developing decision-making skills, one of the

competences of emotional and social learning has been shown to influence positive academic performance even for students with negative behaviors (Vollandt, 2019).

In this respect anxiety, which is one of the fundamental concerns of this study, includes many forms to introduce itself into life and cause problems. The pattern of anxiety is a relatively consistent human trait, suggesting that it has stables neural substrates and can be a major driver of behavioral variability across a variety of dimensions, including decision-making. Another reason anxiety comes into conflict is by manipulating decision-making. In those circumstances, anxious individuals often chose the safest option.

Decision-making, on the other hand, is an cumulative and must be learned in the   content areas of the goals, inputs, and outputs of each student that relate to the methodology, the learning environment and the determination of the appropriate criteria for achieving them. Schumann (1997) argues that a highly variable system of neural preference is generated by each person's unique experience. An effective evaluation is therefore at the center of cognition and its impacts on decision-making. As Price indicates that students may offer the language teacher valuable information not only on anxiety but also on certain facets of language class so it is significant to keep our students in mind while developing classroom events and schedule to boost learners during the decision-making process (1991).

Decisions made by students in foreign language education significantly affect their progress and performance. As students develop decision-making skills they can acquire language skills and the educational environment can be increasingly diversified and controlled by students. It is known that one of the crucial components of flow is learner control. During second-language learning, anxiety is a significant element in order to control the amount of input that learners are being subjected to. In other terms, high-anxiety students have poor performance while low-anxiety students receive more information. The anxiety can affect decisions about their time management, study time or job selection. The more anxiety level increases, the more difficult the language learning process is. It is a sensitive process; therefore learners should meticulously take decisions about their language learning process. As Albadry (2018) indicates, environments and tasks that support autonomy are more useful to flow than those of controlled. Examples of student control may include participation in decision-making on the topics or on the learning materials. Nonetheless, learners are in need of being guided and cannot be fully autonomous. Another element of flow is the feeling of enjoyment and "playfulness" (Egbert, 2003, p. 505). They are more likely to experience flow when students enjoy their language learning. It has been confirmed by Albadry (2018) that students felt motivated when they were given more responsibility and control over their learning. Their ability to control the pace, location, and time of their learning had contributed to enjoy and interest in language learning.

As teachers, the efforts to create and implement decisions we need to know how the students decide to get to know them well. Teachers' efforts to develop and implement decision-making skills in the curricula are in exciting directions. The main steps in making the decisions are continuously taking place in the lives of students and once we recognize the important and learnable ability to make good decisions, a number of doors open. Students may participate in the classroom more effectively and learn to work efficiently in groups to solve complex issues. In addition, students can broaden learning beyond class by applying their decision-making skills to real-world issues. There is no question that decision-making abilities can be effectively implemented in a wide variety of settings, which is essential to our desire for students to be successful and productive decision-makers. Exposure to the decision-making skills curriculum enabled students to become more strategic and to choose subjects and teams for tasks quicker.

All in all, it is important to have decision-making skills because tomorrow's successful decision-maker will be the person who knows how to work well with others, how to look for information that is not

readily available, how to prioritize personal as well as organizational needs and how to control his / her anxiety levels. Moreover, working together often leads to improved decision-making. If a group shares a common objective, they may discuss the possible options in detail. Better decisions bring better outcomes and reduce anxiety. This is extremely important in a school environment. Maximizing student potential is the main priority for each school. By having this ability clear to students and encouraging them to exercise these skills in the classroom, they will be more successful both in school and overall in the future. Hence, in this context, the purpose of the study is to explore the relationship between FLA and DM strategies in an EFL context in terms of some variables.

1.2. Research questions

The goal of this study is to find a response to the following questions:

1. Does the level of foreign language anxiety (FLA) differ according to?
a) gender?
b) high-school backgrounds of the students?
c) exposure to English?

2. Do Decision-Making strategies differ according to?
a) gender?
b) high-school backgrounds of the students?
c) exposure to English?

3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between students' foreign language anxiety levels and decision-making strategies?

2. Method

The present study is based on quantitative research and is carried out using the correlation survey model, one of the general screening models investigating the presence and / or degree of covariance between two or more variables. Correlation research includes the collection of information to determine whether there are two or more quantitative variables in relation to what degree (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012, p.9). In this study, the relationship between English preparatory class students' foreign language anxiety (FLA) and decision-making strategies is examined. For this purpose, the data were collected via Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (Şakrak, 2009) and the Decision-Making Scale developed by Zaimoğlu (2018).

2.1. Sample / Participants

The study was conducted at the School of Foreign Languages of a state university. It is a state university in Turkey that includes many types of students coming from different parts of Turkey. This study was conducted with 155 English Preparatory Class students in the fall term of the 2019-2020 Academic Year. As it was shown in Table 1 the participants were split into two groups according to their gender, and their language knowledge. There are 43.2% (n=67) male and 56.8% (n=88) female participants in this study. One of the independent variables in the study was the type of schools the students graduated from. In a nutshell, specific consideration was given to collecting the whole data after the completion of this course. In Table 1 participants' demographic information is given:

Table 1. Demographic Background of the Participants

	n	*%*
Gender		
Male	67	43.2
Female	88	56.8
High-School Background		
Private High School	24	15.5
Anatolian High School	84	54.2
Science High School	11	7.1
State High School	36	23.3
Reading Book in English		
Never	54	34.8
1-2 times a year	64	41.3
5-6 times a year	14	9.0
Once a month	15	9.7
Once a week	5	3.2
More than once a week	3	1.9
Listening to Music in English		
1-2 times a year	6	3.9
Once a month	8	5.2
Once a week	22	14.2
More than once a week	119	76.8
Watching Film/Movies in English		
Never	6	3.9
1-2 times a year	7	4.5
5-6 times a year	7	4.5
Once a month	30	19.4
Once a week	44	28.4
More than once a week	61	39.4

2.2. Instrument(s)

Data were gathered by means of quantitative data collection instruments in this study. For the purpose of examining the research questions, a demographic inventory and two different questionnaires were implemented. The participants first filled the Demographic Inventory. Then, the Turkish adaptations of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Şakrak, 2009) and the Decision-Making Scale developed by Zaimoğlu (2018) were implemented.

2.3. Data collection procedures

Before collecting the data, the researcher requested permission from the Graduate School of Social Sciences at Çağ University. After the approval of the Ethics Committee, the data were gathered by means of the questionnaires mentioned above. The researcher conducted the questionnaires herself and for the rest; she demanded the assistance of scholars that work at that university. Participants were acquainted in advance with the purpose of the study. The data obtained from both FLCAS and Decision Making Scale was computer coded and a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was applied to check the data.

2.4. Data analysis

ANOVA and independent t-tests were implemented as inferential statistics not only to analyze the relationship between foreign language anxiety and decision-making strategies, but also to examine the relationship between anxiety level and decision-making strategies of the participants by means of their high school background, gender, and level of exposure to English. A statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) was applied to explore the data using quantitative methods. An independent sample t-test was carried out to see the differences between the gender-based differences and the participants' foreign language background. Moreover, the ANOVA test was also performed to analyze the differences among the high school backgrounds and levels of exposure to English. Scales were evaluated for their reliability. Descriptive statistics analyzed the data obtained via Likert scale items whose findings were represented by the figures and the frequency distribution table.

Furthermore, inferential statistics was employed to response the third research question aiming to find out if there is a relation between decision-making strategies and foreign language anxiety levels of participants. In order to see whether there exists a statistical relationship among these variables, correlation statistics was calculated. In correlation research design, researchers utilize the correlation statistics to identify and measure if there exists an association or relationship between two or more variables or sets of scores and two what extent this happens (Cresswell, 2012).

3. Results and Discussion

Three main research questions have been formulated in this research to analyze the relationship between foreign language anxiety and decision-making strategies of a state university's preparatory school students. The results were presented respectively.

3.1. Research Question 1

The first research question is "Does the levels of foreign language anxiety vary according to the students' demographic background such as gender, high school backgrounds, and level of exposure to English?"

Table 3. Independent samples t-test results for anxiety in terms of gender

	Group Statistics			t-test		
	n	M	SD	*t*	*df*	*p.*
Male	67	3.22	0,48	2.524	153	.013*
Female	88	2.99	0,60			

The findings affirmed in Table 3 that gender was a significant consideration for the anxiety of foreign languages in this setting. The difference showed that male participants displayed a significantly higher

level (M=3.22, SD=0.48) of FLA than their counterparts (M=2.99, SD= 0.60). This may arise from the males' self-efficacy beliefs. There is a widespread cultural misconception that girls learn foreign languages better than boys. For example, Ellis (1994, pp. 202-203) pointed out several studies to support the claim that girls surpass boys at different levels of language learning. Moreover, many researchers indicate that girls have greater motivation than boys to learn (Elaldı, 2016). These variations in motivation may arise from or develop the belief among male participants that foreign languages are female subjects whereas mathematics and physics are male subjects. (Carr & Pauwels, 2006, pp. 41-42). Considering the setting of this study, most of the male students study at engineering departments. Interest and motivation are the key elements when it comes to language learning (Al Zoubi, 2018). That is to say, self-efficacy beliefs of the male participants may also be influenced by their departments, success and grades in English, which can have an impact on their feelings towards foreign language learning.

Table 4. ANOVA results for foreign language anxiety in terms of high school background

High School Background	Group Statistics				
	n	M	SD	F	*p*
Private High School	24	2.36	0.46	8.774	.000*
Anatolian High School	84	3.12	0.49		
Science High School	11	2.75	0.49		
State High School	36	3.35	0.53		
Total	155	3.03	0.83		

Note: *p<.05

As it is seen in Table 4 that students with private high school background have experienced the lowest level (M=2.36, SD=0.46) of foreign language anxiety among the groups and students with state school background have the highest level (M=3.35, SD=0.53) of foreign language anxiety. This may be caused by several reasons. Most of the students did not have any private school experience in this setting. As it is known, private schools have several advantages in language learning. Firstly, private school students begin studying English at an early age and become more focused on English lessons than state schools do. Secondly, private school students are more likely to be trained by native instructors so that English can be around them more than others. Last but not least, the ability of private school students to join a language learning community and club membership appears to act on their FLA level. When students feel like successful language communicators, their self-esteem rises, and eventually, this high self-esteem contributes to a decrease in FLA. However, students in state schools have fewer hours of English classes and it is not possible to acquire a new language for two hours a week. As it is also stated by Öztürk and Çeçen (2007), this drift indicates that students can feel the burden to act appropriately that can trigger more anxiety. For instance, in her study Özsarı (2019) found out that state school graduates are more anxious than public school graduates. The background experience of public school students may affect their higher degree of anxiety. Due to adverse language learning experiences, students create impossible expectations for themselves as well as for the language courses. When students have little chance of overcoming this impossible perception, this anxiety is a recurring solution for an English class by a student in a public school. Last but not least, in a public school, individual differences during teaching may be dismissed because of the crowded language classrooms (Özsarı, 2019). Briefly, it is seen that high school background is a fateful parameter in FLA.

Table 5. ANOVA results for foreign language anxiety in terms exposure to English

| | Group Statistics | | | | |
Exposure Levels	N	M	SD	F	*p.*
Low	11	3.80	0.65	13.563	.000*
Medium	121	3.08	0.51		
High	23	2.39	0.39		
Total	155	3.03	0.83		

The findings indicate in Table 5 that there is a considerable difference among groups. Students with low level (3.80, SD=0.65) of exposure are more anxious than those with medium levels. Furthermore, students with a medium level (3.08, SD=0.51) of exposure are also more anxious than those with a high level (2.99, SD=0.39) of exposure to English. This huge difference may be caused by the students' culture and their tendency on English language. Most of the students particularly come from central or eastern part of Anatolia. These students may not have adequate opportunities like their counterparts coming from southern and western parts of Turkey. It can be said that there are cultural differences between eastern and western parts in Turkey in terms of literacy of parents, parental discipline practices, socialization goals, and value of children. In addition, they have inadequate opportunities to make practice with people who speak English. As Onwuegbuzie, Bailey and Dailey (1999, p.230) claimed that "exposure to various cultures, especially those where people speak the target language, tends to minimize their foreign-language anxiety". Most foreign language learners have little real opportunities to implement what they have learned because they lose the opportunity to talk a target language outside the classroom. Multimedia and school respectively, were the most recorded form of English exposure in these studies. In this respect, it should also be noted that some of the students in Turkey use internet resources excessively to exposure English settings like movies, programs, and online books when they begin their university life. Students' high affective filters and their mastery experiences impact on their FLA and exposure to English. No learning can take place without any exposure. Consequently, the length of exposure can be considered as a possible predictor of both level of proficiency and level of FLA.

3.2. Research Question 2

The second research question of the current study is "Do Decision-Making strategies differ according to the students' demographic background such as gender, high school backgrounds, and level of exposure to English?"

Table 6. Independent samples t-test results for decision-making in terms of gender

| | Group Statistics | | | t-test | | |
Gender	N	M	SD	t	df	*p.*
Male	67	2.78	0.89	-3.753	153	.000*
Female	88	3.32	0.88			

As it is shown in Table 6 that there is a significant difference between the decision-making strategies of males and females which indicates that females (M=3.32, SD=0.88) make more valuable decisions than males (M=2.78, SD=0.89) in this setting. This also supports the gender variable of the FLA of the first

research question in this study. The anxiety levels of the participants may adversely affect their decision-making strategies in this setting. While their anxiety level increases, their decision-making strategy levels decrease. These all result from sense of autonomy and motivation so that males may not scrutinize the options presented to them. For instance; Kunt (2020) found in his study that female students adopt a more sensible decision-making strategy than male students. Also, Çimen, (2017) claimed that female students use a sensible decision-making strategy more than their counterparts males.

Table 7. ANOVA results for decision-making skills in terms of high school background

	Group Statistics				
	N	**M**	**SD**	**F**	**p.**
Private High School	24	4.09	0.58	4.769	.003*
Anatolian High School	84	3.08	0.87		
Science High School	11	3.11	0.94		
State High School	36	2.90	0.86		
Total	155	3.14	0.92		

The findings in Table 7 showed that students with state school backgrounds have the lowest (M=2.90, SD=0.86) decision-making levels. This may be caused by students' sense of motivation and autonomy. As it is seen in the first research question with the same variable, students with state school background experience the highest anxiety level so this findings also support the statement that "individuals with high levels of anxiety appear to have difficulty in making decisions due to their anxiety levels in the decision-making process" (Subekti, 2018). It can be said that the students with low self-confidence have an ineffective decision-making style in this setting. According to the other results in this study, students with private high school backgrounds are the best decision-makers among groups as well as the ones, who have the lowest anxiety levels (see also Table 4). This may be caused by the fact that the hierarchical existence of the state structure of public schools restricts students from engaging in the decision-making process. Therefore, students in a state high school do not feel like a part of this community and confident and they do not have high self-confidence to make careful decisions. On the other hand, private school students have a range of sources to practice FL, including high technologies and software. This variety contributes to learners' individual affective needs and offers them controlling their learning (Horwitz, 2001). Also, in study conducted by Özsarı (2019), anxious students tended to be more cautious to make decisions, so that they could not reveal their true knowledge of their second language. Likewise, students with state high schools background do.

Table 8. ANOVA results for decision-making in terms exposure to English

	Group Statistics				
Exposure Levels	N	M	SD	F	p.
Low	11	2.91	1.09	1.346	.263
Medium	121	3.21	0.91		
High	23	2.91	0.88		
Total	155	3.14	0.92		

The findings demonstrated in Table 8 that there is no considerable difference between students' exposure to English and their decision-making strategies (F=1.346, p=.263>.05).A clear majority (78.1%) of the students, who participated in this study have medium (M=3.08, SD=0.51) level of exposure to English.

They stated that they listen to songs, watch movies/films or read books in English once a month or 5-6 times a year. If the social and learning context of the students is considered in this setting, it can be said that students may not find a chance to use their decision-making strategies while choosing the English materials. Generally, these learning materials such as books, videos or even songs are already there and most of them may not have interesting topics or melodies. For this reason, these materials may not meet their needs and appetites. Teachers or school authorities decide the content of their learning environment. Consequently, students are not able to make choices to develop their decision-making strategies or to cope with conflicting circumstances while learning English in this regard. If students do not have any ideas about what or why they will do in the classroom or they do not face any conflict to implement their decision-making strategies while choosing the source of activities, being exposed to activities in English will not have any importance or meaning for their well-being. Considering their social context, on the other hand, the reason of being exposed to English settings may be just for fun, spend their leisure times or by coincidence. Moreover, most of them may be exposed to English songs or movies because of its popularity among their peers. Although, there seems to be a decision situation here, this may be caused by extrinsic factors. It does not include any analytical, problem solving or critical thinking skills which are also related to decision-making components. Hence, it was inevitable to find any relationship between exposure to English levels and decision-making strategies of students in this setting.

3.3. Research Question 3

Concerning third research question "Is there a statistically difference between students' foreign language anxiety levels and decision-making strategies?" Pearson r correlation was carried out to see the relation between FLA and decision-making strategies. Table 9 demonstrates the total results of the Pearson Correlation analysis of the data, and Table 10 demonstrates the correlation results between the sub factors of FLA and decision-making.

Table 2. Correlation between the scales used in the study

Correlation between scales		1	2
Foreign Language Anxiety Scale	*r*	–	-.209**
	p		.009
Decision-Making Scale	*r*	-.209**	–
	p	.009	

Note: ** p < .01

As it seen in Table 9, a meaningful and negative correlation between university preparatory school students' Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety and decision-making strategies (r= -.209, p<.01,) was found. The findings demonstrated that the more students experienced anxiety, the harder they make responsible decisions or vice versa. When people feel anxious or out of control in stressful time, it is especially necessary to minimize anxiety. Also, the more relaxed individuals are prone to take bad decisions at periods of anxiety (www.psychologytoday.com).

Table 10. Correlation between sub factors of decision-making scale and FLCAS

Correlations between Sub-factors		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Scrutiny	r	1						
	p							
Future Responsibility	r	.587**						
	p	.000						
Value Based Decision-Making	r	.637**	.601**	1				
	p	.000	.000					
Negative Evaluation Fear	r	-.327**	-.292**	-.306**	1			
	p	.000	.000	.000				
Test Anxiety	r	-.211**	-.161*	-.169**	.416**	1		
	p	.008	.046	.036	.000			
Communication Apprehension	r	-.154	-.211**	-.165*	.564**		1	
	p	.056	.008	.041	.000	.000		
Anxiety of English Classes	r	-.098	-.042	-.094	.419**	.311**	.438**	1
	p	.227	.603	.247	.000	.000	.000	

Note: ** p < .01 *p < .05

Moreover, to identify the main sources of this significant negative correlation, Pearson r correlation was utilized to see the relationship between the sub-factors of these scales. The findings indicated in Table 10 that there was statistically negative significant correlation between "Negative Evaluation Fear" and all sub-factors of Decision-making scale; "Scrutiny" (r= -.327, p=.000<.01), "Future Responsibility" (r= -.292, p=.000<.01) and "Value-based Decision Making" (r= -.306, p=.000<.01). This may be caused by the fear of falling into a ridiculous situation, which leads students to make mistakes in the classroom, due to mispronunciation, incorrect sentence structure, and accent. Negative Fear Evaluation is described as "a fear of others' judgments, the avoidance of assessment conditions and the belief that others may assess themselves negatively and being mocked" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). In the language classrooms, it is a prevailing situation that students with higher level of English often make fun of those who make mistakes during their oral participations. So, students with this fear choose to be silent or not to attend activities in the classroom. Similarly, Baş (2014) revealed that students are frightened of making mistakes in foreign language lessons. Activities held in the classroom trigger anxiety as well. Many of the anxious students are frightened of making mistakes in pronunciation in front of their classmates (Price, 1991). Anxious students are afraid of losing credibility against peers, and so they behave carefully to make incorrect sentences in their utterances. The fear of making mistakes in foreign language courses creates reluctance towards the course and therefore, this negatively affects their success. The correction of every mistake of students by teachers is one of the factors causing them to worry about foreign languages (Pamungkas, 2018) and limits the decision-making skills of the students. Hereby, it may be stated that students with fear of negative evaluation do not make rational responsible decision making, and evaluate alternatives. Social interactions in this sense affect the cognitive mechanisms underlying the decision-making process (Fitzsimons & Finkel, 2010) and reduce fear of making mistakes in the classroom.

Additionally, it is also found that there was a statistically negative significant correlation between "Test Anxiety" sub-factors of decision-making scale; "Scrutiny" (r= -.211, p=.008<.01), "Future Responsibility" (r= -.161, p=.046<.05) and "Value-based Decision Making" (r= -.169, p=.036<.01). The findings also showed that test anxiety also negatively affects all variables of students' decision-making strategies. Another cause of anxiety arising from schools where students are constantly tested is the fear of testing Students answer incorrectly because they are anxious when testing (Conway, 2007). As reported by Young (1992), "in language testing, the greater degree of student evaluation, and the more

unfamiliar and ambiguous the test tasks and formats, the more the learner anxiety is produced" (p. 162). Considering the education context of our country, this may be caused by the available entrance exams for the transition to high school (OKS, SBS) and the transition to university (YGS, LYS, ÖSS). Students are always in a hurry during this life span. Thus, this makes students nervous and causes them to experience high level of test anxiety. They are exposed to exams that will force them to make choices and affect their entire lives. But in this stressful and ambiguous situation, they may not make reasonable or true decisions. For instance, most of the students study at undesired programs due to failing in the exams. They may not get enough scores to enter in desired programs. So, they may avoid entering exams not to live this stress again. In the research conducted by Ocak and Yurtseven (2016) using different "decision-making skills scale", it was found that pre-service students' negative decision strategies were highly effective on test anxiety. They claimed that secondary school students' test anxiety levels affect their decision-making abilities negatively. Students may not still overcome the test taking stress in their new environment and this stress may lead them to make wrong decisions. To this respect, students with high rates of foreign language anxiety are acting avoidant. Consequently, it is significant to recognize the source of test anxiety. Students may acquire a low degree of anxiety use their decision-making strategies wisely if the negative consequences of the tests or exams are minimized.

Finally, the findings also demonstrated that there was a statistically negative considerable correlation between "Communication Apprehension" sub-factor of decision-making scale: "Future Responsibility" (r= -.211, p=.008<.01), and "Value-based Decision Making" (r= -.165, p=.041<.05). This may be caused by the fear of speaking in front of the classroom, lack of effective listening, and absence of understanding o classroom activities in an FL classroom. According to Cubukcu (2007), an apprehension of communication reflects the cowardice induced by the apprehension of communicating with others. The apprehension of communicating may be experienced because of students' lack of strong communication skills. Learners cannot regulate communication because they are not adequately trained enough to express themselves, and foreign language classes may be trigger greater anxiety than certain classes, such as a math classroom (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). In the experiment conducted by Özsarı, (2019), it was found that students studied at public schools are more anxious and have more communication apprehension if they enter English class; however, private school students have a higher level of anxiety towards English class than communication in English. Most of the students have state school background (84.5%, see Figure 7) in this setting so the students may be confused with the options presented to them due to lack of communication apprehension skills.

All in all, "Negative Evaluation Fear", "Test Anxiety", and "Communication Apprehension" sub-factors of FLCAS have a statistically negative impact on students' decision-making strategies in language classes. Şakrak (2015) defines Turkey's learning environment as conventional, dominated by teachers, and controlled by authority. She claims that most of the students attending universities do not have critical thinking and comprehension skills since they have a teacher-dependent style of learning. The teacher-dependent style of learning increases all kinds of anxiety and does not provide opportunities for learners to implement decision-making strategies.

4. Conclusions

In view of the evidence that is presented, it is fair to say that both language anxiety and decision making skills are diminished in a variety of respects. FLA and DM exist in a language classroom together, and this helps language teachers to be knowledgeable of the burden of FLA on decision-making strategies of learners. This also facilitates learners to involve in the decision-making process in the classroom to be aware of their strengths and weaknesses, so they will reach ideal L2 learner self. This will lessen the anxiety and affective filters to make responsible decisions for their academic and private life. It is hoped this study will serve both students and teachers to conceive the prominence of decision-making practice

in language learning and teaching. Teachers will make required changes in their syllabus by means of their students' desires and needs by integrating them into decision-making process. At the same time, students participated in this decision-making process will feel as a part of that learning environment more than before. Therefore, this will help students to minimize the level of FLA so that they can make responsible decisions. By this way, teachers will develop a more comfortable classroom environment and students will enhance their learning and accomplish to reach their goals.

5. Ethics Committee Approval

6. Acknowledgements

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Üniversite öğrencilerinin yabancı dil kaygısı ve karar verme stratejileri arasındaki ilişki

Öz

Günümüzde İngilizce öğrenenlerin sayısı giderek artmaktadır ve öğrencilerin 21. yüzyıl becerilerine de ayak uydurmaları gerekmektedir. İyi bir karar verme becerisine sahip olmak İngilizce öğrenirken önemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Öğrenciler, dünyadaki tüm bu farklı insan türleriyle iletişim kurmanın yollarını bulabilmeleri için İngilizceyi yaratıcı yollarla nasıl kullanacaklarını bilmelidir. Ancak, Yabancı Dil Kaygısı dil öğrenmede hala dikkat dağıtıcı bir bileşendir. Bu nedenle, yabancı dil kaygısı ile karar verme arasındaki bağlantıyı belirtmeye ihtiyaç vardır. Araştırmanın temel amacı öğrencilerin cinsiyet, lise geçmişi ve İngilizceye maruz kalma konularında yabancı dil kaygısı ile karar verme stratejileri arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemektir. Çalışma, ankete dayalı bir araştırma yöntemi benimsemiştir. İlk olarak, katılımcılara araştırma soruları için belirli kişisel bilgileri toplamak üzere demografik bir envanter sağlanmıştır. Ardından öğrencilere sırasıyla Yabancı Dil Kaygısı ve Karar Verme Ölçeği olmak üzere iki ölçek uygulanmıştır. Nicel veriler SPSS ile analiz edildi. Sonuçlar Yabancı Dil Kaygısı ve Karar almanın cinsiyet, dil geçmişi, lise geçmişi ve İngilizce düzeylerine maruz kalma açısından ayrı ayrı farklılık gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin FLA ve Karar verme stratejileri için önemli bir negatif fark bulunmuştur.

Anahtar sözcükler: yabancı dil kaygısı; karar verme stratejileri; hazırlık sınıfı öğrencileri; üniversite öğrencileri

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