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Abstract

This study aims to identify the language anxiety level of students studying at a Turkish state university, and investigate the role of creative drama in reducing language anxiety in speaking classes. To have a general picture of students, 565 students were administered an adapted version of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). Then, a one-group pre-test/post-test study was carried out with 22 randomly selected students who attended a 6-week creative drama programme run by a researcher who had received creative drama and leadership training for 123 hours. The FLSAS (the adapted version of the FLCAS) was administered both at the beginning and end of the study. The findings from the questionnaires were analysed through the SPSS 16.0 software. A statistically significant decrease was found in the language anxiety levels of students who participated in the creative drama programme. Possible sources of language anxiety as well as the relationship between anxiety level and students' proficiency level, and classroom performance grades are elaborated upon.

Keywords

Language anxiety, creative drama, speaking anxiety

Literature Review

Language Anxiety

In one way or another, it is possible to see learners who experience anxiety and distress when learning a new language (Price, 1991). Thus, learners whose minds go blank, who

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continuously pray not to be delivered a turn or who just freeze when they are called upon are a reality in our teaching situations. Von Wörde (1998) highlights this and suggests that anxiety is a problem experienced probably by one-third to half of the students. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) considered listening and speaking as the main sources of anxiety while some other studies point to the higher levels of anxiety as a result of learners' oral performance (Hewitt and Stephenson, 2012; Young, 1991). In regard to the need for elaboration on language anxiety in speaking situations, the present study aims to shed more light on language anxiety in speaking classes.

Considering language anxiety as a separate construct from other types of anxiety has enabled researchers to go far beyond speculative evidence or anecdotal findings and have a clearer opinion of what language anxiety is and what it does. Though anxiety as a general construct has been studied extensively by educators and psychologists, its recent recognition as a distinct variable has resulted in a precise definition of the construct (Scovel, 1978). Thus, language anxiety has gained pronounced importance over the last few decades and extension of its impact on learners' performance, proficiency, motivation, and achievement in different skills are some fruitful fields to be investigated. However, since anxiety is only one of the variables to be studied under the category of 'learner variables', a clear examination of the relationship to language learning is relatively difficult (Daly, 1991; Scovel, 1978). Therefore, it is not surprising that the probe into establishing a relationship between language anxiety and foreign language performance has not yielded a clear-cut result (Horwitz, 1991).

So far, many researchers have noted the gravity of the problem and suggest that too much anxiety may impede the learning process (e.g., Brown, 2008; Ellis, 1998; Hilleson, 1996; Horwitz et al., 1986; Liu, 2006; Price, 1991; Tsui, 1996; Woodrow, 2006). Oxford (1999) draws attention to several studies which are negatively correlated with language anxiety. Accordingly, language anxiety could be detrimental to learners' grades in language courses, proficiency test performance, self-confidence in language learning, and self-esteem. One example of this comes from Sparks and Ganschow (2007). They carried out a study to investigate the relationship between the early native language skills several years prior to beginning the study of a foreign language and anxiety about foreign language learning several years later. They found that the learners with low anxiety levels scored significantly higher than those with high anxiety levels on foreign language proficiency and foreign language course grades. Brown's (2008) study indicated that the majority of the learners studying foreign language suffered language anxiety despite their minimum level of IELTS 6 proficiency. Moreover, as McIntyre and Gardner (1991) argue, language anxiety could interfere with language development, retention and production of new language, which highlights the possible problems that may emerge as a result of language anxiety and its potential impact on learning and teaching situations.

Researchers seem to agree on the notion that a high anxiety context could produce a threatening atmosphere which might lead to inhibition even though a facilitative role of anxiety is also pronounced (Hewitt and Stephenson, 2012). Thus, there has been an emphasis on helping students overcome foreign language anxiety. However, some of the methods which are supposed to be of great help in alleviating language anxiety have not been tailored to foreign or second language teaching contexts (Foss and Reitze, 1988). The reason some of the methods are not applicable to foreign language contexts is that

these methods put an extra burden on teachers' shoulders, a burden which requires extra effort such as specializing in biofeedback, therapy and so on. So, the quest is to find a manageable and teacher-friendly solution and this study assumes that the solution in question could be creative drama activities. If one looks for an activity that could emancipate learners from the bonds of anxiety, creative drama techniques could serve the desired function.

Creative Drama

Traditional classes which are labelled 'dull' and 'pedestrian' by Wessels (1987: 9) inspire little communication, if any. In the age of communication, there is little room for artificial and structured drills. Establishing relevance to teaching materials and approaches has been the goal of many scholars (e.g. Bruner, 1960; Piaget, 1960; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky (1978) suggests that social interaction is necessary for learning and development. Vygotsky's ideas are represented through the theory of social constructivism, which proposes that learning takes place or meaning is constructed in a collaborative manner. According to Cormack (2003), creative drama could be studied in the framework of social constructivism. Constructivists advocate the idea that knowledge can be created, recreated, assimilated or changed through an individual's interactions with others. According to this theory, learners create or generate knowledge from their own experiences. Similarly, participants of creative drama are subject to such constructions.

Several studies confirm the usefulness of creative drama. McCaslin (2000: 5) suggests that the objectives of the modern curriculum are also included in the objectives of creative drama. Therefore, both modern curriculum and creative drama, for instance, aim at developing art-based skills, thinking creatively, and discovering the knowledge of the self. Thus, the development of the whole being or ensuring 'maximal growth' is the target in both objectives. Dodson (2000) discusses the pros and cons of using creative drama in language classrooms. The author suggests that drama activities could be useful for practising and acquiring vocabulary, lowering the affective filter and providing a genuine need for learners. Since the students are at the centre and active throughout drama, and meaning rather than form is promoted, drama is communicative in approach. Moreover, using creative drama activities in speaking classes would push learners to an imaginary realm which might cover their identities and reduce the threat to the self. It is probably because our daily life 'requires a series of civilized masks if we are to maintain our dignity and live in harmony with the others' (Wessels, 1987: 7). The soothing impact of creative drama is also mentioned in Stroud and Wee (2006), who argue that language anxiety which is identity-based could be overcome through crossing and double-crossing strategies. While crossing requires learners and teachers to use language styles which are not relevant to their identities, double-crossing, as the name suggests, requires them to 'cross over into the student's peer oriented ways of speaking, with the specific intention of inducing the student to cross back (hence, the double-crossing) into ways of speaking that are more typically associated with the target language' (Stroud and Wee, 304).

Phillips (1999) outlines some of the areas where creative drama could be useful: motivation, familiar activities, confidence, group dynamics, different learning styles, language personalization, language in context, cross curricular content, and pace of the

lesson. Shand's (2008) study reveals that creative drama use in language classes provides strong motivation to the learners and builds their confidence, and ultimately reduces the anxiety of third grade pupils whereas the same impact was not observed for sixth and seventh graders. Paksoy (2008) studied the impacts of process drama on self-esteem and oral language skills of learners in secondary schools. The study indicated significant differences in terms of the improvement of self-esteem and oral language skills between the control and experimental groups.

Creative Drama Sessions

These sessions consisted of four phases: warm-ups, pantomimes, improvisation/role plays and evaluation respectively. It is important to note that these phases could be adjusted to classroom use. Moreover, techniques other than improvisation and role play could also be used while teaching. What all these phases suggest is defined below.

Warm-Up. The aim of this phase is to familiarize students with each other, ensure trust, and instil confidence and help students get ready through some games, songs, pictures and so on for the main activity. Through verbal and non-verbal activities the learners/students are offered a chance to learn by stimulating their minds and bodies. These activities could vary depending on the main activities that are to be taught. Here simple games, such as 'Simon Says' or ball game activities, mirroring and so on, could be some examples in this sense. Thanks to warm-up activities or icebreakers, the participants establish rapport with each other and become mentally engaged in the activity they are to study. These warm-up activities serve as openers through which a non-threatening atmosphere could be established. The learners feel quite comfortable by doing so and it enables participants to learn about each other.

Pantomime. McCaslin defines pantomime as 'the art of conveying ideas without words' (2000: 71). There are times when students have an opinion of the subject studied, but not the words required to convey their ideas. Thus, in such a case learners might be sharpening their awareness and senses by using all parts of their body. Through pantomime activities, learners could establish confidence and boost their motivation. McCaslin enumerates some sample activities of pantomime. 'Enter a large room to look for your sweater', 'hear an explosion', 'coming home from school and smelling cookies baking in the kitchen', 'eating a piece of delicious chocolate candy and touching a piece of velvet' (2000: 74-75) are some examples including different senses. In this way, various senses of learners could be nurtured.

Role Playing. In EFL classes, where students are taught through creative drama, there is a bounty of roles to be assigned. Thus, learners express themselves in a way that might be different from their own identity. Due to the possible shift in identity, participants in creative drama classrooms could avoid threats to their own identity and feel a great sense of self-esteem (Öztürk, 2007). Role plays are commonly used in teaching English, and learners are offered journeys into make-believe worlds. Creating a non-threatening environment, role play activities might grant learners new identities. For instance, they might

become an angry driver who gets irritated when something wrong happens, a customer who complains about the faults of a product s/he has recently bought or a laissez-faire teacher – in other words, a teacher who does not care much about the educational objectives and exercises little leadership over his/her students.

Improvisation. This phase refers to ‘the creation of a situation in which characters speak spontaneously’ (McCaslin, 2000: 106). The leader or the practitioner should structure what learners are to act so tightly that the activities should not be intimidating for participants. To ensure confidence, students could also be provided some sample improvisation situations. Here it should be noted that spontaneity rather than memorization is what counts for creative drama classrooms. In the world of genuine communication, there is little room, if any, to respond to foreigners with dictionaries or grammar books at hand. Therefore, learners should be equipped with relevant communication skills that are important to sustain the dialogue.

The improvisations could originate from situations, objects, costumes, characters, stories, and the life span of a person or clues as well (Wessels, 1987). Here is an example used in the study:

The mother receives a phone call from the principal of the school her son is studying at. She gets very angry when she hears the news that her son is not getting on well with his classmates and sometimes fighting. As soon as her son arrives, she has a big argument with him and then her husband arrives. However, her husband is for his son in this matter, which is really irritating for the mother.

Three people, namely, the mother, father and son are assigned their roles and they were asked to act this spontaneously.

Evaluation. An evaluation phase refers to the judgments of the students about roles and characters. However, it should be highlighted that these evaluations do not refer to the identity of the participants. For instance, saying that ‘Mr. Donovan was angry when he arrived home, but suddenly he felt very happy when he saw his children. Here we can say that the role of children in daily life is important.’ has nothing to do with the real life role of the participant.

The evaluation could be done at any phase. It could be done at the beginning, in the middle or after the activity. In this phase, participants come together and brainstorm about the possible conclusions or discuss the reasons why a particular person behaved in a particular manner.

Purpose and Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the role of creative drama in reducing the language anxiety of the students in speaking classes. Considering the fact that language anxiety is a problem of remarkable proportions in teaching English as a foreign language, the study aims to define anxiety-inducing situations and create a less-anxiety producing condition, particularly in speaking classes. Accordingly, the study aims to define the anxiety levels of

students and depict the current situation at the School of Basic English, Karadeniz Technical University (KTU) in Turkey. Following that, creative drama techniques, which are assumed to be instrumental in reducing the language anxiety of learners, were carried out in a six-week study. The impact of the applications as well as the relationship of language anxiety to gender and language proficiency in speaking exams are investigated. Furthermore, the possible sources of language anxiety in speaking classes have been elaborated on. In many studies, qualitative analysis was used to measure the effectiveness of drama. However, using a quantitative method, this study seeks an answer to the following questions:

1. What is the distribution of language anxiety according to proficiency level and gender?
2. Is there a relationship between language anxiety in speaking classes and classroom performance grades in speaking courses?
3. What are the potential sources of language anxiety in speaking classes?
4. Can the language anxiety levels of the students be lowered in EFL speaking classes through creative drama techniques?

Methodology

This is a quasi-experimental study in which the perceptions of learners before and after a creative drama programme were compared.

Participants

All the students and the researcher who participated in the study were from the School of Basic English, KTU. The participants consist of two groups:

1. Students who took the adapted version of the FLSAS ($n=565$).
2. Students who participated in the 6-week creative drama programme ($n=22$).

Students Who Took the FLSAS. A random sampling procedure was employed for the students who took the FLSAS and 565 students from beginner, pre-intermediate and intermediate were chosen from undergraduate and postgraduate classes. Students in all pre-intermediate and intermediate classes were given the FLSAS and were asked to fill in the questionnaire. However, a systematic sampling procedure was employed for the students from beginner classes because there were more than 1000 students in the beginner level. Eleven pre-intermediate, 11 intermediate and 6 beginner classes (from Beginner 3, 13, 23, 33, postgraduate BEG A, postgraduate BEG E) participated in the study.

Students Who Participated in the 6-week Creative Drama Programme. The participants were chosen from the School of Basic English, KTU, Trabzon. Those who considered themselves anxious were invited to join a 6-week programme. An invitation card was posted on the notice board to generate publicity. Thirty students who enrolled earliest

were chosen for the study. However, due to participation problems, 8 people did not continue the programme. Seventeen of the participants were female and 5 of the participants were male. The age group of participants ranged from 18 to 28. These students were told that this programme had nothing to do with grades and it was free. The findings gathered would only be used for the study and participation was an important consideration.

The participants in the creative drama programme were asked to respond to the FLSAS both at the beginning and the end of the study. The students were informed about the purpose of the study before the questionnaire was administered and were asked to write their ID numbers because those ID numbers were needed to generate a comparison of the findings with the subsequent study. In addition, the participants were asked to participate in all sessions if they could. After the pre-test of the study, a 6-week drama programme was run on Wednesday afternoons. To facilitate participation, the day for the sessions was carefully chosen so that none of the students had an exam the following day.

Some information should be given about the researcher as he was the group leader throughout the creative drama programme. The researcher, one of the authors, had received drama and leadership training in Turkish for 123 hours. This training experience was based on practical applications for the most part, and he earned three certificates for his efforts.

Instrument

The original version of the questionnaire (the FLCAS) was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). The FLCAS is a 33-item language anxiety scale developed to measure the degree of language anxiety experienced by learners. It was scored on a 5-point Likert scale and answers range from 'completely agree' to 'completely disagree'. In this scale, Horwitz focuses on three potential sources of anxiety: test anxiety, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation.

A couple of modifications were made in the FLCAS instrument to ensure relevance and clarity. First, the wording was shifted from language class to speaking class because the scope of the study is speaking lessons rather than language courses in general. When piloting the study, about 30% of the students revealed that they had never taken an oral exam before, which could be attributed to lack of measurement in speaking skills in public secondary schools. Another change was in the medium of the questionnaire. In this study, the Turkish version of the questionnaire was used because the English version was beyond the beginner students' comprehension level. The Turkish version of those questionnaires was also used in several similar studies carried out in Turkey (Ayдын, 1999; Zhanibek, 2001; Avci, 2008).

After the piloting, the instrument was administered to 565 students and the reliability of the findings was tested using the SPSS 16.0. The Cronbach's Alpha for the FLCAS instrument was found to be highly reliable (31 items; $\alpha = 0.90$). Further data come from questionnaires administered at the beginning and at the end of the 6-week study. Appendix A provides an account of the activities carried out during the six week sessions.

Setting

The study was undertaken in the Department of Basic English, School of Foreign Languages, at Karadeniz Technical University, Trabzon, Turkey. This school offers a preparatory programme for those who do not have a passing grade in the proficiency exam administered at the beginning of each academic year. Each year, over 2000 students coming from different departments take the proficiency and placement test. The results obtained from the test determine whether the student will spend a year in the preparatory programme or continue their education in their own departments. Those who score 70 or above are considered to be successful and can continue with their departmental courses. The students who score less than 70 points are placed as beginners, pre-intermediates and intermediates depending upon their scores. Students who score between 0-34 out of 100 are considered to have a poor command of English. Thus, they are categorized as beginners. The scores ranging from 35 to 49 indicate pre-intermediate students while 50 and 69 refer to intermediate ones. A total of 565 students were given the questionnaire before the end of the first term. The participants' ages ranged from 17 to 35. Out of the total of 565, 318 students were males and 242 were females. The remaining 5 participants did not indicate their gender.

Some detailed explanation should be made for the setting for the creative drama. When mentioning the right conditions for drama, Wessels (1987) provided some essential elements of creative drama. According to him, relationships, physical environment, warm-ups, a background role for the teacher, goal orientation, student leadership and using the most co-operative students are the important factors for creating the right conditions. As for physical environment, places that stimulate participants' imagination and create enough room for activities are welcome. Wessels (1987: 22) summarizes this essential element as follows: 'A traditional classroom, with pictures, blackboard, reference books, and other audiovisual stimuli is still the best, as a bare room only creates inhibitions and stifles the imagination'. With all these in mind, a classroom and the conference hall of the school were used for the creative drama activity programme. The classroom contained movable chairs, which enabled enough room for physical activities. The conference hall, on the other hand, was equipped with an overhead projector and the stage was available for students' performances.

Results

The findings reveal that language anxiety scores of the 565 students ranged from 1.16 to 4.55 according to FLSAS (1= not anxious at all; 5= very anxious). The mean value of the language anxiety of the students in speaking classes was found to be 2.92. Standard deviation was found to be 0.62. According to von Wörde (1998), anxious language learners are identified by a score at least one standard deviation above the Horwitz mean. Accordingly, 20.2% of the participants were found to be highly anxious.

Language Anxiety Scores and Proficiency Levels

Going deeper into the findings gathered through the FLSAS enables us to have more insights into language anxiety felt by the learners in the speaking lessons. When the

relation between language anxiety and proficiency level was investigated, it was found that the more anxious group was beginners with a mean of 2.97. This can be attributed to the fact that the beginner students are exposed to a totally different realm where they feel as if they were strangers because everything is new for them. Brown (2008) also found that the level of anxiety among international students in the initial state of their academic sojourn was high. Moreover, intermediate students were found to be more anxious than pre-intermediate ones. The approaching proficiency exam that intermediate students take at the end of the semester could be the major reason for this. Those who get a passing grade in the proficiency exam could continue their departmental courses. Therefore, that exam is of critical importance for intermediate level students.

Language Anxiety Scores and Classroom Performance Grades

The results obtained through regression analysis were not found to be meaningful ($F = .070$; $p > 0.05$). However, an independent sample t-test was computed to see if there was any significant difference between the speaking classroom performance grades (CPG) of males and females. It was found that females who were significantly more anxious than males had higher CPG grades. The mean value of the CPG averages for both genders was calculated and it was found to be statistically significant: $p = 0.003$. This finding supports the studies that suggest the facilitative role of language anxiety (see Oxford and Ehrman, 1995).

Stepping into a foreign language classroom, learners are somehow prone to language anxiety and this is usually observable through the learners' physical and mental manifestations. The study suggests that there are a considerable number of students (20.2%) who felt anxious in speaking classes. Lack of confidence, fear of failure, physical and mental avoidance, reluctance to participate in speaking classes, competitiveness and perfectionism are some issues which were found to be contributing to language anxiety in speaking classes (see Table 1).

Sources of Language Anxiety

The reported sources of language anxiety are discussed through clustering the related questions.

Lack of Confidence. Items 1, 12, 15, 17, 22 and 29 can be grouped in this category. Most of the students who took the questionnaire indicated a high degree of lack of confidence in speaking classes. To illustrate, 41.9% of the students agreed (or strongly agreed) to the item 'I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my speaking class' while this number amounted to 52.9% in the 12th item: 'It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my speaking class'.

More than half (56.6%) of the participants indicated that they felt anxious in speaking classes even if they were well-prepared. Similarly, 53.6% of the students responded that they felt very self-conscious when they happened to talk in front of others. The most anxiety-provoking situation was reported in the 29th item which reads as follows: 'I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.' It is

Table 1. FLSAS Questionnaire.

Language Anxiety Scores	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my speaking class.	16.6	25.3	26.7	22.7	8.7
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in speaking class.	13.3	23.0	15.4	32.2	11.1
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in speaking class.	10.1	21.8	12.0	36.1	20.0
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	12.4	21.4	14.7	32.7	18.8
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more speaking classes.	29.2	23.9	20.4	13.3	13.3
6. During speaking class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	24.8	39.3	20.4	12.0	4.6
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am.	18.9	36.5	22.5	13.6	8.5
8. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in my speaking class.	9.7	24.8	18.9	29.9	16.6
9. I worry about the consequences of failing my speaking class.	12.0	10.8	7.3	28.7	41.2
10. I don't understand why some people get so upset over speaking class.	9.2	28.1	26.4	22.8	13.5
11. In speaking class I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	18.9	33.8	19.5	18.1	9.7
12. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my speaking class.	20.0	32.9	19.8	18.4	8.8
13. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	20.0	29.6	27.1	14.9	8.5
14. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	19.1	24.1	12.6	31.4	12.8
15. Even if I am well prepared for speaking class, I feel anxious about it.	20.5	36.1	13.3	23.4	6.7
16. I often feel like not going to my speaking class.	28.3	37.7	15.8	11.2	7.1
17. I feel confident when I speak in speaking class.	7.4	29.9	34.3	17.3	11.0

Table 1. (Continued)

Language Anxiety Scores	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
18. I am afraid that my speaking teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	26.7	42.3	16.3	11.5	3.2
19. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in speaking class.	11.5	29.9	15.6	31.2	11.9
20. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for speaking class.	9.2	31.0	18.9	28.0	12.9
21. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do,	17.9	39.3	20.7	15.2	6.9
22. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	15.9	37.7	16.3	21.8	8.8
23. Speaking class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	18.6	46.7	18.1	12.2	4.4
24. I feel more tense and nervous in my speaking class than in my other classes.	13.1	29.1	14.9	29.8	13.1
25. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my speaking class.	12.6	30.1	18.2	29.6	9.6
26. When I'm on my way to speaking class I feel very sure and relaxed.	5.8	19.5	28.8	31.3	14.5
27. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the speaking teacher says.	15.4	39.1	19.5	21.1	5.0
28. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	10.4	23.7	15.4	35.8	14.7
29. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	26.2	41.8	12.9	13.3	5.8
30. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	15.9	30.1	28.8	16.8	8.3
31. I get nervous when the speaking teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	10.8	25.3	19.6	34.7	9.6

important to note that 68% of the participants agreed that they are in fear of being laughed at. The findings suggest that most of the students in the study lacked self-confidence.

Fear of Failure. There are times when people avoid doing a task just because they believe they are prone to fail or make mistakes. This describes a negative outcome of language anxiety which impedes the learners' performance. The responses from situations in which the learners remain hesitant were brought into discussion considering the items (2, 4, 9, 14, 18, 23, 28) and it was found that the majority of the students felt reticent because their teacher might correct their answers (69%) and that speaking lessons move quickly (65.3%). In a similar study conducted on reticent learners in the same school, Avcı (2008) found that 70.3% of the participants were afraid that their teachers might correct their mistakes. Thus, it can be deduced from these two findings that the method used to address errors plays a crucial role in the level of language anxiety for the students. However, it is interesting to point out that 44.2% of the participants stated that they do not get upset when they do not understand what the teacher is correcting. Accordingly, what matters for students is whether they are corrected or not, rather than understanding the correction.

Physical and Mental Avoidance. It is possible to see the mental and physical representations of language anxiety in most EFL or ESL situations. These representations could be in a simple question form such as 'Are we supposed to cover all the chapters in the coming exam?' or in a physical form such as the student who trembles when s/he happens to speak in front of others. As for participants in this study, the situation is not much different. The items 3, 11, 19, 25, 26 are relevant indicators of the avoidance in question. Just over half (52.7%) of the participants endorsed item 11, 18.9% strongly agreeing and 33.8% agreeing. Moreover, a substantial number of students disagreed with the statement: 'When I'm on my way to speaking class, I feel very sure and relaxed.' However, 31.9% of the students responded that they got anxious when they realized that they were going to be called upon. It follows from this that pre-allocation of student speaker turns might not create an extremely anxiety-provoking situation. However, it is possible to speculate that things might change if the turns are delivered spontaneously.

Lack of Eagerness to Participate in Speaking Classes. Items 5, 6 and 16 are considered to indicate the lack of eagerness to participate in speaking classes. Here, an interesting controversial situation arises as 53.1% of the students stated that they would not get anxious if they took more speaking classes. One assumption that one can deduce from this finding is that having more speaking classes would be welcomed by the participants. The expectation to have further speaking courses (to have more hours of speaking course) suggests that students favour the speaking courses; therefore, they are expected to take part in the courses willingly. However, 64.1% of the students agreed or strongly agreed to the sixth item that reads 'During speaking class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course'. Furthermore, to see that 66% of the students indicated their reluctance to attend speaking courses confirms the inconsistency.

Competitiveness. Some learners feel that they are in a stiff competition with their classmates and do not want to fall behind. Sometimes a friend who usually fails may have a soothing

Table 2. Average FLSAS Scores of Pre-Intermediate Students Who Took the 6-Week Study.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z	P
<i>pre-int (pre)</i>	12	2.99	.38	-2.94	.003
<i>pre-int (post)</i>	12	2.64	.36		

effect for another person who experiences failure. The findings (see the items 7 and 21) show that the majority of the participants feel worse than their counterparts. To illustrate, 55.4% of the participants endorsed either agree or strongly agree with the item which reads: 'I keep thinking that the other students are better at language than I am'. In a similar vein, some responses were given to the item 'I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do'. This finding correlates with Allright and Bailey's (1983) emphasis that idealized images of counterparts could make learners feel under pressure.

Perfectionism. Perfectionism refers to how participants aim at reaching unrealistic goals. This situation comes to the fore especially at items 8, 20, 27 and 31. Learners' obsession with particular words to understand the whole meaning sometimes inhibits them from engaging in a particular task. Consider that 54.5% of the participants reported that they got nervous when they did not understand every single word articulated by the speaking teacher. Talking without preparation, not feeling the pressure to prepare well and receiving questions for which they are not prepared in advance were other factors reported to be anxiety-provoking.

Pre-test and Post-test Results of the 6-week Creative Drama Programme

At the beginning of the study the FLSAS was applied to participants and the same instrument was re-administered to see the impact of the study. The results from these instruments were then compared for pre-intermediate and intermediate students separately. A non-parametric test (Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test) was used as the number of participants was below 30. The results are provided in Table 2.

The average language anxiety level of pre-intermediate students before the study was 2.99. This score decreased to 2.62 after the implementation of the study. The difference between these two scores was found to be statistically significant according to Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test ($p < 0.005$).

Moreover, the average language anxiety level of intermediate students before and after the study was compared (see Table 3). The mean value for intermediate students lowered from 2.86 to 2.40. Similarly, the decrease was found to be significant according to Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test ($p < 0.005$).

Learners' Reactions To the Creative Drama Sessions

In the evaluation phase of the sessions, learners were asked to comment about particular events and the behaviours of the characters. However, in the final evaluation part, the

Table 3. Average FLSAS Scores of Intermediate Students Who Took the 6-week Study.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Z	P
int (pre)	10	2.8645	.61447	-2.93	.022
int (post)	10	2.4000	.21783		

participants were asked to comment on the drama sessions in general. Some learners' accounts in the final evaluation session seem to provide support for the quantitative findings. They were asked to talk about their impressions of the programme in their L1 and most of them came up with favourable attitudes towards the creative drama use especially on the way to feel more confident and overcome stage fright. In particular the games introduced in the warm-up sessions attracted the participants to be involved in the following phases. Here are some reactions from the learners:

"...Now I feel more confident when I go to stage."

"There were not many new things, but I feel more secure when I go to stage. Thus, I am happy to have participated in those activities."

"I used to fear to make mistakes a few months ago. But the sentence 'The important thing is to convey yourself; forget your hesitations and try to express yourself somehow' uttered by our teacher at a speaking course helped me overcome this fear."

"I really liked having participated in the activities. Since there were games, I was like a small kid and I did not care much about others' reactions."

Conclusion

There are several conclusions that could be drawn from the study. To begin with, students in the early levels of language development should receive more anxiety lowering activities so as to experience a smooth transition from L1 to L2 learning environments. The correlation between language anxiety CPG grades were compared. The mean value of CPG averages for both genders was calculated and it was found to be statistically significant: $p = 0.003$. This finding supports the studies that suggest the facilitative role of language anxiety. As the correlation might shift to the individuals' concern about their relationship rather than their language abilities, that is, to the identity-based anxiety rather than a competence-based one, constantly looking for a negative relationship between language anxiety and achievement in speaking could also be misleading.

The study provides some insights into the sources of language anxiety by clustering items. When related items were clustered, lack of confidence, fear of failure, physical and mental avoidance, reluctance to participate in speaking classes, competitiveness and perfectionism were categorized as some issues which were found to be contributing to language anxiety in speaking classes. Some further research on what to attribute anxiety provoking situations to and why certain situations cause anxiety may be enriching for future studies.

More creative drama activities should be integrated into the speaking curriculum because, as our study demonstrates, these activities bring variety and enthusiasm to lessons. Further research on the role of creative drama in ELT classes on motivation, learner autonomy, self-esteem or self-efficacy could be conducted. Since this study is limited with the pre-test and post-test scores of the same participants, studies to be conducted with control groups would provide more sound results. Moreover, data from different settings and larger sample sizes are needed to validate our findings. Future qualitative studies could add depth, richness and diversity to exploration of our findings. Methods or techniques other than creative drama could also be studied to alleviate language anxiety in language classes. Our study reports a limited number of techniques used in the creative drama. Numerous other methods could also be integrated. Further studies with larger samples and different districts are needed to further validate our findings.

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Appendix A. The Creative Drama Activities Carried out.

Category	Name of the Activity	Purpose	Time
WEEK 1			
WARM UP	Throw the Ball	Icebreaker, Introducing yourself	30 min.
IMPROVISATION	Pretend to be somebody in the picture	Establishing rapport	30 min.
PANTOMIME	Gibberish Sentences	Sharpening Senses	30 min.
ROLE PLAY	Shoplift Witness	Practising Vocabulary	40 min.
WEEK 2			
WARM UP	Avoid 'it'	Physical warm-up	15 min.
PANTOMIME	Who am I?	Practising questions and answers.	30 min.
ROLE PLAY	Create the Beginning & Ending	Practise Adjectives & Creating the beginning and ending of a story.	40+40 min.
WEEK 3			
WARM UP	Mirrors	Ensuring trust	15 min.
IMPROVISATION	Money	Practising showing emotions with voices, faces and bodies.	45 min.
ROLE PLAY	Structured Conversations	Problem solving, reacting spontaneously, conflict management.	45 min.
WEEK 4			
WARM UP	Simon Says	Practising imperatives, obeying instructions.	15 min.
PANTOMIME	Do what you are told	Demonstrating use of the body and voice as creative instruments. Students will use pantomime to suggest characters, thoughts, and feelings.	20 min.
ROLE PLAY	At a Restaurant	Activating the vocabulary of food; practising asking and ordering.	30+30 min.
WEEK 5			
WARM UP	Finding your way	Practising directions, giving directions.	15 min.
PANTOMIME	Sharpening senses	Practising showing emotions with voices, faces and bodies.	20 min.
ROLE PLAY	Problem solving	To revise and recycle language from previous lessons.	45 min.

(Continued)

Appendix A. (Continued)

Category	Name of the Activity	Purpose	Time
WEEK 6			
WARM UP	Tongue Twisters	Promoting students' enunciation ability. Letting students realize that making mistakes is fun.	10 min.
IMPROVISATION	Making a complaint	Familiarizing students with types of complaints. Teaching how to complain about something. Providing some useful expressions about making complaints.	50 min.
ROLE PLAY	Cinderella	Various structures, including: possessives, questions, and instructions; following a script. Group co-ordination, motivation.	40 min.

Note: Some activities are adapted from Phillips (1999).