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LANGUAGE ANXIETY OF CROATIAN HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CROATIAN AND ENGLISH

Diplomski rad

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Graduation Thesis

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the notion of language anxiety by examining language anxiety rates of Croatian high-school students. Language anxiety is considered to be a complex phenomenon specific to the language learning context and has thus been extensively researched over the last few decades. The purpose of this study was to investigate levels of language anxiety experienced by high-school students in their Croatian Language and English as a Foreign Language Classrooms. More specifically, the purpose was to examine the differences between language anxiety factors in these two languages as well as to examine the relationship between language anxiety and the independent variables of the perceived self-image and gender.

Key words: language anxiety, self-image, gender, language anxiety factors, Croatian as L1, English as L2

1. Introduction

Over the last few decades, researchers have focused their attention to the role of affective variables in addition to cognitive factors in the process of second language learning. This paper will examine the phenomenon of language anxiety as one of the most important affective components in the area of SLA research and how it manifests itself in various aspects of language learning and acquisition in classroom situations. It will elaborate the problem of language anxiety experienced by students in their Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms. The focus of this paper lies on the examination of 36 Croatian high-school students and on the analysis of their answers in a specifically constructed interview adapted from a book called *Strah od stranoga jezika: Kako nastaje, kako se očituje i kako ga se osloboditi?* written by Jelena Mihaljević Djigunović (2002).

The fact that all learning has an emotional base was already recognized by Plato over 2 000 years ago. However, only recently has the biological interdependence of learning and emotion been recognized. That would imply that if schools are responsible for intellectual development, then they are also responsible for emotional development. Certainly, learning could be facilitated and more effective if teachers made an effort to find successful ways of minimizing anxiety at school, to teach students ways of coping with it and provide a positive learning and teaching environment that would motivate and uplift students (Hinton, Miyamoto & Della-Chiesa, 2008).

This research examines two factors that may contribute to the overall feeling of anxiety and these are student's self-image and gender differences. Taking these two factors into consideration is important because learning a foreign language is intrinsically related to the personality of the student, hence it is accompanied by a broad spectrum of emotions, both positive and negative.

In order to understand in what way emotions influence language learning and acquisition, it is important to understand how our brain functions when it comes to learning. The major brain networks involved in the process of learning are classified into the recognition network, strategic network and, for this paper the most important one, affective network. The first one receives sensory information from the environment and

transforms it into knowledge. The second one is responsible for planning and coordinating goal-oriented actions. Lastly, the third one is involved in emotional dimensions of learning such as interest, motivation and stress. What is important to stress here is the fact that emotion both shapes and is shaped by cognitive processing and this can be illustratively explained by the notion of fear conditioning. Fear conditioning involves the repeated pairing of an initially neutral stimulus, termed the conditioned stimulus (CS), with an unconditioned stimulus that poses a certain threat (US). As a result of this pairing, an individual learns to respond to the CS with fear. This process will be illustrated with an example later in this paper when dealing with reading anxiety (Hinton, Miyamoto & Della-Chiesa, 2008).

In a way, language anxiety represents our reaction to what we recognize as a possible threat to our feeling of security and self-respect. This could be a bad grade or a set of expectations we have considering our success in language learning and acquisition. If we don't meet our expectations regarding our learning outcomes, we could possibly start losing our self-confidence, learning motivation and feeling of self-worth. Hence a deep sense of unease might appear.

This idea is implied in the Expectancy-Value Theory of Anxiety and Theory of Self-Efficacy. These theories are based on the assumption that, e.g., concepts of worry and anxiety first relate to the appraisal of a situation as threatening or not and then to a learner's determination of his/her own efficacy in dealing with these situations (Pappamihiel, 2002). In a classroom situation this would mean that if students cannot see themselves as effective in dealing with various subject tasks and requirements, they will start feeling a deep sense of anxiety and worry which hampers their successful dealing with classroom challenges.

Additionally, Theory of State, Trait and Situational Anxiety may further throw light on the causes of language anxiety in classroom situations and it will be discussed later in this paper (Pappamihiel, 2002).

All in all, it is important to recognize the specific connection between language anxiety and learning motivation as well as with the overall success in language learning and acquistion. Furthermore, if we consider a proverb that says: "Those who know many

languages live as many lives as the languages they know", which metaphorically emphasizes the importance and advantages of using multiple languages, we can conclude that it is also important to examine the subject of language anxiety and, what is even more important, to find the best solutions and strategies to avoid it or, at least, to minimize its negative consequences.

In an attempt to understand language anxiety connected to both Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms experienced by Croatian high-school learners, this paper provides a concise theoretical background regarding the notion of language anxiety, an overview of other similar research and the elaboration of a survey conducted on 36 Croatian high-school students.

The first part of this paper outlines the already mentioned theoretical background regarding the notion of language anxiety, provides information regarding its numerous possible causes, cognitive, emotional and behavioural manifestations as well as regarding its impact upon learners. Furthermore, it briefly points out several studies that investigated this phenomenon in a similar context. The second section elaborates the qualitative study which examines language anxiety experienced by Croatian high-school learners regarding their Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms.

2. Language anxiety

Although fear has been recognized as a characteristic human condition since ancient times and was of great interest to philosophers, scholars and intelectuals, anxiety was not fully recognized as a distinct and pervasive human condition until shortly before the beginning of the 20th century. The first person to credit anxiety as having a critical role in personality theory was Sigmund Freud and he gave it a special place in the etiology of psychoneurotic and psychosomatic disorders.

As Spielberger asserted in his State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Adults, "anxiety states are characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry and by activation or arousal of the autonomic nervous system" (1983, p. 4).

Generally, psychologists differentiate between trait and state anxiety. Trait anxiety refers to a person’s inborn tendency to be anxious, that is, being anxious is simply part of a person's character. On the other hand, state anxiety is considered to be a temporary apprehension induced by a particular situation such as examinations or public speaking in language classrooms.

Furthermore, anxiety is seen as a possible debilitating factor for language learning, acquistion and performance since 1960's, however, scholarly work that could back up this idea came much later (Horwitz, 2001). We differentiate between the notions of facilitating and debilitating anxiety, indicating that anxiety can either have a positive or negative effect on language learning and acquistion. These notions can be connected to the reciprocal relationship between arousal and performance known as the Yerkes-Dodson law. We can draw a reference by saying that as anxiety increases, student's performance also increases until a maximum point is reached. After that point, the performance decreases. Facilitating anxiety improves learning and language acquisition as well as performance by motivating learners to do things more efficiently. As opposed to this, debilitating anxiety refers to the excessive feeling of anxiety which could lead to poor results. Consequently, debilitating anxiety causes learners to start avoiding certain anxiety provoking situations in the learning process in order to avoid the feeling of uneasiness and worry (Williams, 2008). Some researchers, most notably Alpert and Haber (1960, p. 213), suggest that both facilitating

and debilitating anxiety may be experienced by the same individual at the same time and they claim that “an individual may possess a large amount of both anxieties, or of one, but not the other, or of none of either”. We can conclude that facilitating and debilitating anxiety may appear simultaneously with the effect of both motivating an individual's learning experience as well as being a precaution against negative experiences in the learning process.

Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986, p. 128) stress that language anxiety connected to foreign languge learning has to be looked upon as situation-specific anxiety and say: *"Adults typically perceive themselves as reasonably intelligent, socially-adept individuals,[...]. These assumptions are rarely challenged when communicating in a native language as it is not usually difficult to understand others or to make oneself understood. However,[...] learning a foreign language [...] is likely to challenge an individual's self-concept as a competent communicator and lead to reticence, self-consciousness, fear, or even panic*".

Previous studies saw language anxiety as a manifestation of other types of anxiety, such as trait anxiety, test anxiety or public-speaking anxiety, however, more recently, researchers have generally agreed that language anxiety is a unique and distinct anxiety independent of other general types of anxiety (Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

It is important to stress that language anxiety can sometimes be facilitative if mild and it can contribute to being successful in dealing with certain tasks. However, it mostly has a negative effect on language learning and acquisition.

2.1. The definition of language anxiety

As this paper will elaborate, it is important to notice that language anxiety does not come hand in hand only with foreign language learning, but also when dealing with our own mother tongue. This research is focused primarily on instances and causes of language anxiety in classroom situations and it will portray major differences and similarities between English and Croatian, as well as different reasons for its manifestation in these two languages.

If one would want to define language anxiety, he or she would need to take into consideration a couple of approaches to this phenomenon.

According to one, language anxiety is a manifestation of more general types of fear, e.g. timidness, unwillingness to communicate, test anxiety, shyness, etc. (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002). Although some individuals may feel anxious in a wide variety of situations, it is important to stress that language anxiety is situation-specific, hence can even affect individuals who are not prone to anxiety in other situations.

On the other hand, language anxiety can be seen as a special type of fear which is characteristic for foreign language learning. It manifests itself as a feeling of unease, discomfort, anxiety and insecurity when we learn and use a language in which we are not skilled and proficient. It can be triggered in every or some aspects and contexts of language use whether they are associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing or the receptive skills of listening, reading and comprehending (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

Unfortunately, language anxiety can have a detrimental effect on students' self-esteem, confidence, level of participation or feeling of self-worth and is a strong indicator of academic performance. Generally, a negative correlation between language anxiety and learning outcomes and success has been determined by a vast majority of research campaigns which imply that the stronger the feeling of anxiety, the more unsatisfactory the outcomes (Bačić & Krstinić, 2018).

Additionally, languge anxiety has also become a factor that determines the level of comprehensible input received from the environment. As Krashen (1982) stated, providing

learners with this kind of input helps them acquire language naturally, as opposed to conscious learning. That would imply that linguistic competence is only advanced when language is acquired subconsciously and that conscious learning cannot be used as a source of spontaneous language production. Hence, successful language acquisition depends on whether students are able to receive input under certain conditions. Since anxiety restrains students from receiving the comprehensible input, students are not able to acquire and learn the language and this results in poor language performance and achievement. Therefore, it is very important to determine the level of anxiety and sources of anxiety that hamper language acquistion and learning (Rafek, Abd Karim & Awaludin, 2013).

For all of the enumerated reasons, it is important to understand and pay attention to this phenomenon because awareness of the problems and consequences it may cause can be really helpful in trying to ease and neutralize them. Also, students who experience great feeling of anxiety during their lessons tend not to actively participate in classroom activities and their active involvement is crucial for them to master the subject matter and improve their language skills.

2.2. Causes of language anxiety

Given the fact that language anxiety has a substantial impact on language learning and acquistion because of its hindering effect, it is important to examine what lies behind this phenomenon. Different scholars have different approaches to describing numerous possible causes and triggers of language anxiety and there are several theories that tend to explain them. Taking them into consideration is crucial if we want to find effective ways of teaching and learning in a high-anxiety classroom environment and eventually create a low-anxiety one. We will try to give a cohesive overview of the most important ones.

2.2.1. Gardner's and MacIntyre's theory

Generally, language anxiety is independent of other general types of anxiety manifestations. Gardner and MacIntyre (1989, as cited in Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002) set up a theory according to which language anxiety manifests itself as a result of repeated negative experiences during the period of learning a language. This can be connected to various aspects of language learning such as communication apprehension, test anxiety, the fear of negative evaluation, teaching approach, etc. However, as learner's competence improves, language anxiety decreases due to the fact that there are a lot more positive experiences in language learning and usage with improved language skills. That would imply that language anxiety is stronger at the initial stages of language learning and is alleviated with advancement in learning.

2.2.2. Eysenck's theory

Furthermore, Eysenck (1979, as cited in Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002) argues that language anxiety is connected to being overly self-conscious. This excessive self-consciousness results in being too self-critical, worried about the potential failure, nervous and embarrassed about what other people think, etc. Unfortunately, students who have greater language anxiety generally tend to study more, but their effort usually does not yield positive results.

2.2.3. Zhang's and Zhong's theory

Zhang & Zhong (2012) categorize language anxiety as learner-induced, classroom-related, skill-specific and society-imposed depending on different contexts.

1) Learner-induced anxiety

Learner-induced anxiety develops on the basis of learners' erroneous beliefs, unrealistic high standards, self-perceived incompetence, poor language abilities, inclined competitive nature and the dispositional fear of negative evaluation (Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

Erroneous beliefs could, for example, refer to the fact that sometimes students underestimate the language learning complexity and difficulties which may come along with it. Hence, this can produce anxiety when possible negative outcomes don't meet their initial positive expectations.

Furthermore, unrealistic high standards and self-perceived incompetence as other potential causes of learner-induced anxiety can be connected to previously mentioned Eysenck's claim that language anxiety is connected to being overly self-conscious. This is related to students who set their standards as high as the level of native speakers which eventually leads to anxiety because of their inability to attain the high standards. Also, students tend to show low self-evaluation of competence, hence in this case, language anxiety mainly stems from individual’s self-concept being challenged or threatened.

Moreover, it is quite understandable that poor language abilities play their role in producing language anxiety because low proficiency in a language can result in students' withdrawal from classroom activities and participation. However, as we have already mentioned above when discussing Gardner's and MacIntyre's view on language anxiety, sometimes an increase in language proficiency can result in decrease in language anxiety.

Lastly, the inclined competitive nature of students and their dispositional fear of negative evaluation are seen in language learners' tendency to form low self-perception of competence in comparison to others or in situations when they are negatively evaluated by their peers or teachers. Some of them tend to overly concern about the competence of

others and compare their own performance in a self-underrated manner with those of their peers.

2) Classroom-related anxiety

Although the cause of language anxiety can be in language learners themselves, some other contributing factors influence its advent and sustainability. Among classroom-related factors, the ones that stand out are language instructors/teachers, other students that also participate in the classroom as well as classroom and teaching practises (Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

Four instructor factors may be related to language anxiety: instructors' beliefs about language teaching, the manner of error correction, the level of perceived support and the teaching style. The instructor, that is, the teacher is looked upon as the most important factor in relieving the feeling of anxiety and tension and he/she represents the key to creating a positive language-learning environment. Specifically, instructors should instigate discussion about language learning and its possible anxiety-producing aspects, as well as create a positive climate concerning learners' mistakes and point to the fact that mistakes can actually benefit language learning and acquisition. Furthermore, instructors could forewarn students of some difficulties which could emerge during language learning or that students could come across when dealing with the subject matter. By doing this, instructors prepare their students for the possible obstacles which they may stumble upon and, this way, students have a more positive attitude towards their lessons and strong motivation for learning. The problem with language instructors emerges when they start considering themselves as "drill sergeants" rather than "facilitators" of language learning and when they tend to constantly correct errors in an authoritarian way, tell students what to do and in what way to do it and when they believe they should be responsible for most of the talking and teaching, instead of promoting group work, discussing problems, giving advice, etc., all of this for the fear of losing control of the class.

When we look upon the effect of classroom peers on an individual's level of language anxiety, we can see that other classmates can greatly influence one's attitude and feelings about a certain language. The most prevalent problem concerning other classmates

seems to be the constant worry about the possibility of being perceived as dumb, silly and senseless.

Another important classroom-related factor related to classroom and teaching practises is speaking in front of the class. If oral presentations are an inevitable part of classroom activities, students generally prefer to participate in them in small groups, rather than giving speech in front of the whole class. What lies behind this is the fact that most students do not want to be in the centre of attention because it makes them feel uneasy. Furthermore, language anxiety in the classroom environment can also be prompted by using the target language exclusively for giving instructions or explaining the subject matter (this refers to foreign language classes only).

We can conclude that in order to lower the level of language anxiety caused by classroom-related factors it is important, among other things, to create a positive learning and teaching climate that encourages students' participation, fulfils the requirements for students' cooperation, rather than competition and provides possibilities of presenting the subject matter in the best way possible. It is also important that teachers show their positive reinforcement, empathy and encouragement to their students and the thing that makes them being able to do this is constant reflecting on and upgrading of their teaching skills.

3) Skill-specific anxiety

Out of the four language skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing), speaking seems to be the most anxiety provoking one. Speaking activities can generate stress even among those students who never experience any form of anxiety whilst dealing with other aspects of language learning. Speaking is especially anxiety generating when students are asked to speak unprepared. Woodrow (2006) stresses that anxiety experienced when communicating in English can be debilitating and can influence students' adaptation to the target environment and ultimately the achievement of their educational goals.

Listening activities can also be a great contributing factor to language anxiety. Hang (2006) classifies sources of listening anxiety into five categories: 1) characteristics of listening comprehension (unfamiliar keywords that hamper the comprehension of the message; the fact that usually students have only one chance to understand the material and

they cannot give it another try), 2) characteristics of listening materials (what is included here is the speed of the delivery, speakers' pronunciation, acoustic conditions, the length, topic and vocabulary level of the listening material), 3) characteristics of the tasks (unstructured and difficult listening tasks), 4) social sources of listening anxiety (not being exposed to listening activities enough, excessively reprimanding teachers) and 5) foreign language proficiency and listening ability (poor language skills and negative self-image about language abilities).

Furthermore, writing activities can also be anxiety inducing. Contrary to speaking and listening, the activity of writing provides time to contemplate about the message and content that a student wants to deliver, to find the right vocabulary and syntactic structures to communicate the message and to change the content and language structures if necessary. Given all these mitigating factors considering writing activities, they still manage to pose a threat to student's self-image. It happens when, for example, student's linguistic capability is limited and not sufficient enough to enable the student to deal with the idea he or she wants to express. Writing can also trigger the feeling of anxiety in situations when language teachers who claim to value students' ideas over their language forms still grade them according to the flawlessness of their language forms. Therefore, students feel anxious about the outcome of the writing process (Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

Lastly, reading can also cause language anxiety especially when students are faced with the unfamiliar content related to topics concerning culture or when the content is too difficult to comprehend. In addition, students may get severely frustrated when they are incapable of comprehending each and every word and idea in a text. Reading and fear, that is anxiety, get connected in the same way that classical conditioning operates. An initially neutral stimulus (e.g., reading aloud) is repeatedly paired with an unconditioned stimulus that poses a certain kind of stress (e.g., teacher judgement, peer ridicule) and, as a result of this pairing, the learner forms an association between reading and negative emotions (M. R. Jalongo & R. A. Hirsh, 2010).

4) Society-imposed anxiety

The society in which an individual lives and is surrounded by can also affect his or her language anxiety in the classroom. Aspects of society-imposed anxiety can be categorized into three main components: identity formation, cultural connotation and parental intervention (Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

Identity formation mainly reffers to the notion of subtractive bilingualism, as opposed to additive bilingualism. According to Lambert (1975) additive bilingualism does not affect one's L1 in a negative way, but rather represents an addition to one's language repertoire and is beneficial to the language learner/user. Contrary to additive bilingualism, subtractive bilingualism manifests itself as giving up one aspect of one's dual identity. In this case, learning and acquisition of L2 is detrimental to an individual's L1.

Furthermore, cultural connotation mainly reffers to cultural differences between various social groups and individuals. Some learners may bring their own cultural values, habits, set of beliefs and manners with them into the language classroom. Therefore, some students may act quite differently than the majority of the class and their behavior may come across as odd or inappropriate for that social context. The example of this would be the tendency of Chinese students to be silent during their classes (being silent is a sign of modesty to Chinese people). In such cases, it is important to understand reasons behind students' atypical behavior and perceive it, as well as respect it, as a result of different socio-cultural values.

Lastly, parental intervention mainly refers to parents' exaggerated expectations considering their children's learning success. Students may feel anxious because their parents expect them to know a language as well as, e.g., native speakers or some students who really excel in language learning. Some parents, e.g., regard excellent knowledge of English to be crucial for their children to succeed in their future life and ventures. It is important to be sympathetic and understanding to children and not to pressure them into feeling anxious.

Having enumerated various possible causes of language anxiety that can be found in the literature, it is interesting to have a look at a survey on students' opinions about

language anxiety contributing factors conducted by Marwan (2007). His research showed that students believe that the most conspicuous causes of their language anxiety are lack of preparation, lack of confidence and the fear of failing the class. Furthermore, most participants agreed that lack of preparation was the main cause of their lack of confidence.

It is important to perceive and understand various causes of language anxiety in order to dimish their influence over learners who may show different anxiety-related behaviors and reactions unique to the language classroom setting. Some of them are: avoiding difficult linguistic structures, getting nervous during learning activities, showing unwillingness to volunteer answers and participate in oral activities, coming unprepared to class, avoiding speaking in class, being less willing to communicate and express themselves compared to more relaxed learners, etc (Tsai & Chang, 2013).

2.3. Language anxiety manifestations

There are four ways in which language anxiety manifests itself (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002). They are connected to various aspects of an individual: cognitive, emotional, behavioural and physical.

Cognitive aspect comprises different notions such as negative self-evaluation, worry about one's self-image (exaggerated self-consciousness), the feeling of being unable to fulfill social demands, etc. (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

Emotional aspect refers to states such as uneasiness, discomfort, tension, etc. Jalongo & Hirsh (2010) provide us with a lengthy remark on the influence of emotions on learning and acquisition. Brain research reveals that emotions are fundamental to learning and teaching that neglects emotional dimensions of learning is likely to be ineffective because emotions are integral part of the learning process. Emotions that children most often feel in the classroom environment are joy, pleasure, anticipation, curiosity, fear, sadness, disappointment, etc. Positive emotions, such as joy and excitement, encourage attention, interest and awareness and help the brain to obtain, process and store the new information in the long-term memory. Positive emotions also enhance productivity because they maximize the visual work form area (VWFA), that is, the mental workspace available for reasoning processes. Positive emotions also have an influence on the increase of dopamine levels in the brain which in return produces feelings of well-being and euphoria. Positive emotions, among other things, also play an imporatant role in motivating children to explore, learn, be open to new information and to participate in various classroom activities. On the other hand, negative emotions, such as fear, sadness and disappointment reduce the brain's ability to obtain, process and store the new information because the brain is preoccupied with the task of exercising control over powerful emotions. Prolonged intensive negative emotions increase levels of cortisol and other hormones in the brain and can eventually lead to the damage of the hippocampus, which directly affects the brain's ability to convert the information from short-term memory to long-term memory. Therefore, taking the affective domain into consideration is not a way of coddling children, but rather assuring that teaching methods recognize the important role of emotions in both learning and acquisition. This is further justified by research evidence which shows that

emotions influence thought in powerful ways that can initiate, stop, hamper or hasten information processing, emotions determine whether children will take part in or avoid a learning situation and how much effort they will put into the task, emotions serve as a tool for focusing attention and influencing recall and memory. Furthermore, children are likely to pay more attention to things with the attached emotional significance and tend to remember details of emotionally powerful experiences.

Behavioural aspect refers to certain physical components of one's behavior such as clumsiness, reticence, speech and gesture difficulties, tendency to retreat from and avoid classroom activities, etc. Also, behavioural aspect can manifest itself in the form of certain cognitive components of one's behavior such as fantasizing, mind-wandering and daydreaming.

Lastly, physical aspect of anxiety includes somatic reactions such as elevated heart rate, sweating, shaking, nausea, restlessness, dizziness, shortness of breath, etc.

2.4. Most prominent fears connected to language anxiety

In this section we will examine the three most prominent fears connected to language anxiety: communication apprehension, the fear of negative evaluation (bad grades) and the fear of negative social evaluation (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

2.4.1. Communication apprehension

As McCroskey (1977, p. 78) put it, "communication apprehension is an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons''. He further distinguishes between state and trait communication apprehension (CA). State CA is specific to a given oral communication situation, while trait CA is not specific to a given oral communication situation, but, quite contrary, is linked to almost all oral communication situations, both those which could rationally be described as threatening and those which could not.

While state CA is regarded as a normal experience of most people with stage fright being the most common example of it, trait CA is not characteristic of a normal and well-adjusted individual. Various research has suggested that trait CA develops during the early childhood and that the cause of it must lie primarily in a child's experiences during that period. Trait CA can possibly have huge implications on the course and quality of a person's life because people who develop strong feelings of CA in given situations will withdraw from and try to avoid communication when possible and as a result they will be perceived less positively by others and have a weaker social adjustment than people who experience lower levels of CA. Consequently, people who experience strong CA will be negatively impacted in terms of their economic, academic, political, social, etc. status (McCroskey, 1977).

There are certain actions that can be taken in order to minimize CA and its influence. Children should be reinforced to communicate extensively during their formative years of childhood and those children who have deficient speech skills or show slow language skills development should receive expert help as early as possible in order to avoid future negative reinforcement children experience due to their speech deficits. In schools, teachers should be trained to recognize the presence of CA in a child and provide

extra reinforcement for the child's communication, particularly in the early school years. However, classroom teaching procedures and activities should be modified so that children are not required to perform orally at a speech level beyond theirs (McCroskey, 1977). As Mihaljević Djigunović (2002) noted, CA highly depends on the context in which communication takes place and is boosted with the increase of the formality of the communication situation. Moreover, as has been stressed previously, speech is not admired equally in all cultures.

2.4.2. Fear of negative evaluation

The second most prominent fear connected to language anxiety is the fear of negative evaluation, i.e., fear of getting bad grades. It can be looked upon as one of many varieties of the fear of failure.

Although making mistakes is seen as a natural and inevitable part of the learning process, some students look at them as signs of their own incompetence. Students who suffer from high levels of negative evaluation anxiety tend to either study excessively or avoid situations in which their knowledge could be evaluated (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

One aspect of the fear of negative evaluation is test anxiety. *It refers to the set of phenomenological, physiological and behavioural responses that accompany concern about possible negative consequences or failure in an examination or similar evaluative situation. Test anxious students are characterized by a particularly low response threshold for anxiety in evaluative situations, tending to view test situations as personally threatening. They tend to react with extensive worry, mental disorganization, tension and physiological arousal when exposed to evaluative situations* (Zeidner & Matthews, 2003, p. 2). It is important to recognize the negative impact test anxiety can have on students' success and, consequently, their motivation and self-perception.

2.4.3. Fear of negative social evaluation

Lastly, the fear of negative social evaluation can refer to either real or imaginary evaluation. As Watson & Friend (1969, p. 449) pointed out, ‘’fear of negative evaluation is defined as apprehension about others' evaluations, distress over their negative evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively’’.

Student’s knowledge and skills can be evaluated both by his/her professor and classmates. Evaluation from classmates usually represents greater anxiety source than that from professors. Students are most afraid of mockery from their peers and it can make students avoid being actively involved in classroom activities or it can make them retreat from or give up studying (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2002).

Although mockery from classmates represents greater anxiety source, students in language classes are afraid to receive negative feedback not only from other classmates, but also from their teachers or instructors. This can lead to being afraid of making mistakes as well as losing face with their classmates and teachers.

As a result, the feeling of constantly being evaluated from other participants in the classroom environment makes students feel insecure and uncomfortable to participate in classroom activities and because of this reason they often do not achieve good results. Even in small groups, students might feel anxious which results in them being quiet and reticent because they try to avoid face threatening situations in a language class for the fear of making errors and being corrected.

Consequently, students become more and more frustrated, especially when their errors are being corrected before they even have time to completely formulate a response. Besides that, being interrupted for the sake of correcting errors makes students lose their focus in formulating answers. This makes them feel like constantly being tested by the teacher and they tend to perceive every correction as a sign of failure. Additionally, students are also worried about making pronunciation errors because of the fear of being laughed at by their peers. They also feel intimidated when others speak better than they do (M. B. Rafek, R. B. Abd Karim & F. A. B. Awaludin, 2013).

Von Wörde's (2003) research showed that students were very sensitive toward teacher's and peers' evaluation, especially regarding their speaking skill. Furthermore, students were very self-conscious when they were required to engage in speaking activities that could expose their inadequacies and these feelings often led to fear or even panic. Von Wörde even mentions an explanation given by one student of Spanish: "*I don't want to be the focus of attention so that my errors are put on display*" (2003, p. 5). According to many students, the most disturbing aspect of the language class was directly related to the idea that ''*the teacher was trying to make you feel stupid*'' (2003, p. 6). Some students even described instances where the teacher had either humiliated them or made them feel very uncomfortable.

3. The study

3.1. Aims of the study

The main aim of this study was to explore whether Croatian highschool students experience greater language anxiety in their EFL Classroom or in their Croatian Language Classroom. Furthermore, we wished to explore the main differences between causes of language anxiety in these two languages. Additionally, we wished to find out whether there were any differences regarding students' self-image and gender.

Although the phenomenon of language anxiety in the context of Croatian education has been researched, the comparison between the levels of anxiety during first and second language instruction has not yet been done.

3.2. Research questions

In order to fulfill the above mentioned aims and design a suitable questionnaire, three main research questions were formed.

(RQ1) Do students feel more anxious in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom?

(RQ2) How do anxious students differ from non-anxious students in terms of their self-image in the classroom?

(RQ3) Are there any gender differences in terms of the level of language anxiety?

(RQ3a) Do female students experience greater uneasiness regarding both languages as opposed to their male counterparts?

(RQ3b) Do female students have higher levels of language anxiety in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom?

The first research question rests on the assumption that Croatian Language Classroom represents a far less intimidating environment for the students than their EFL Classroom. The reason for that is obvious- it is conducted in their native language. All four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) are expected to be more developed in students' first language. Furthermore, students are more likely to experience instances of mockery from their peers in their EFL Classroom (e.g. when they wrongly pronounce a word, etc.) which can additionally lower their self-esteem and make them experience feelings of inadequacy and poor self-image.

The second research question rests on the assumption that language anxiety is connected to some of the student's personality traits such as shyness, low self-esteem and poor self-image. As Mihaljević Djigunović (2002) showed in her research on the correlation of self-image and language anxiety, levels of language anxiety are far more prominent in students who have a less positive self-image as opposed to those who have a more positive self-image. The importance of self-respect and a positive self-image cannot

be stressed enough and teachers can do a lot in helping students create a positive attitude towards themselves as language learners.

The third research question rests on the assumption that there are substantial gender differences concerning personality which may contribute to higher levels of language anxiety among female students. Prior research in social and personality psychology (mentioned in Gargalianou, Muehlfeld, Urbig & Van Witteloostuijn, 2015) has uncovered significant and fairly consistent cross-cultural gender differences in terms of average scores for personality traits such as emotionality, neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness. Linguistic studies have argued that language anxiety is a type of situation-specific anxiety, which is triggered by a language as a contextual factor, whereas psychological research has found that women are more susceptible to contextual triggers than men. Moreover, in comparison to men, women tend to show their character and build relationships more extensively through language, hence differences between native and foreign language might, therefore, have a stronger impact on women because the unfamiliarity of the foreign language context might more profoundly shake the foundations of their (social) identity (Gargalianou, Muehlfeld, Urbig & Van Witteloostuijn, 2015).

3.3. Methodology

3.3.1. Sample

Thirty-six students participated in this study which was conducted in May and June 2019. All of the participants went to the same highschool in a small town near Zagreb. The sample consisted of 18 male (50%) and 18 female (50%) participants aged between 15 and 18.

Table 1: Overview of participants (N=36)

male students (18)	female students (18)
9 second grade students / 8 third grade students	10 second grade students / 9 third grade students

3.3.2. Instrument

The instrument adapted for the purposes of this study was a questionnaire which consisted of two sections. The entire questionnaire was translated to Croatian in order to suit the requirements of this particular research.

In the first section, the participants were required to provide demographic data such as their age and gender as well as the information about their grades in both classes, knowledge of other languages, usage of dialects, shyness and self-esteem. They were also required to give information about how long they had been learning English as well as their personal assessment of their language anxiety in both Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms and the possible reasons for it.

In the second section, students were given fourteen statements concerning language anxiety in their Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms and they were asked to determine to what extent the statements describe them. In order to do that, students had to circle the appropriate number below the statements according to the accompanying legend. This represents a five-point Likert scale, ranging from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’.

The questionairre used in this study was an adapted version of Horwitz's 1983 FLCAS and it was taken from the book called *Strah od stranoga jezika: Kako nastaje, kako se očituje i kako ga se osloboditi* written by Jelena Mihaljević Djigunović (2001). Out of 33 Horwitz's original questions, 14 questions were taken and adapted to suit both Croatian and EFL Classrooms. The possible scores in Horwitz's FLCAS range from:

1) less than 76 points- indicating a low level of language anxiety

2) 76 to 119 points- indicating a medium level of language anxiety

3) more than 119 points- indicating a high level of language anxiety.

These scores were converted and the following scores were used:

1) less than 32 points- indicating a low level of language anxiety

2) 32 to 50 points- indicating a medium level of language anxiety

3) more than 50 points- indicating a high level of language anxiety.

3.3.3. Procedure

App. two weeks before the interview was conducted, the students had been informed by their teachers that they would be questioned and that the purpose of the interview was the study conducted for writing a graduation thesis.

As was already mentioned, the method of data collection was an interview backed up with the questionnaire constructed on the basis of Horwitz's 1983 FLCAS and it was personally distributed to students by the interviewer. The questionnaire represented a guideline for the interview.

Prior to completing the questionnaire, detailed written instructions comprising the requirements of the study as well as its purpose and aims had been presented to the participants. They had additionally been given instructions and short item descriptions. Furthermore, voluntary participation, anonymity and the possibility to cease participation at any moment had been emphasized to the participants. They had also been encouraged to give lengthy answers and to ask for clarification if they did not understand the questions.

After this instructional introduction, the students had to fill in a 14-item questionnaire with each item being followed by a five-point scale. After the students had finished with the questionnaire, they were interviewed. The interview was conducted in the absence of their teachers and it took place in the school's psychologist's office during their regular school hours with each interview lasting approximately 15-20 minutes. It was conducted in Croatian and almost all of the students were very eager to talk and give explanations to their answers. This type of interview aimed at relaxing the students so they could talk more freely about their experience in their Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms and possible anxiety connected to them.

This study is qualitative in nature. Our focus of attention was on the participants' beliefs, experiences and feelings. Our aim was to obtain insight into possible factors which could generate language anxiety in Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms as well as to shed some light on the major differences between them. The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to capture the participants' own voices and to examine their words and beliefs in an attempt to better understand the phenomenon in question.

3.4. Results and discussion

The results will be presented in two parts: first we will discuss the data obtained according to the research questions and then we will provide details about students' answers to the selected questionairre items.

3.4.1. Research questions

In this part of the paper, we will describe the results according to the three research questions.

(RQ1) Do students feel more anxious in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom?

This research question was based on the assumption that students would feel much more relaxed in their Croatian Language Classroom given the fact that lessons were conducted in their native language which was by itself far more relaxing environment than a foreign language classroom. Additionally, EFL Classroom could possibly be more anxiety-provoking due to students' possible limited vocabulary and grammatical knowledge as well as poor fluency. Furthermore, it was reasoned that students would lack the ability to fully express themselves in their EFL Classroom which could lead to possible frustration, uneasiness, insecurity and feeling of inadequacy.

It is important to stress the fact that the professor factor as a possible cause of language anxiety was ruled out because each and every interviewed student stated that both their English and Croatian professors were really relaxed, fair, supportive, willing to help and explain the subject matter.

The research showed that out of 36 students, 23 (64%) got a higher first language anxiety score in the adapted Horwitz's 1983 FLCAS questionairre, 11 (31%) got a higher second language anxiety score and 2 (5%) got equal scores for both.

Out of 23 students who got a higher first language anxiety score, 12 (52%) showed a low level of language anxiety, 10 (44%) showed a medium level of language anxiety and 1 (4%) showed a high level of language anxiety.

Out of 11 students who got a higher second language anxiety score, 3 (27%) showed a low level of language anxiety, 5 (46%) showed a medium level of language anxiety and 3 (27%) showed a high level of language anxiety.

Out of 2 students who got equal scores for both languages, 1 (50%) showed a low level of anxiety in both languages and 1 (50%) showed a medium level of anxiety in both languages.

Table 2: Language anxiety scores

	higher first LA score (N=23)	higher second LA score (N=11)	equal LA scores (N=2)
a low level of LA	12 (52%)	3 (27%)	1 (50%)
a medium level of LA	10 (44%)	5 (46%)	1 (50%)
a high level of LA	1 (4%)	3 (27%)	/

The main differences in reasons for experiencing language anxiety in Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms were illustrated in great detail by the students.

When asked to explain why they felt anxious and uneasy in their EFL Classroom, they gave the following explanations: the fear of mispronouncing words, insufficient grammatical knowledge, limited vocabulary (they were aware of the fact that there was a difference between active and passive knowledge and they were frustrated by the fact that they couldn't actively use more words and phrases), poor fluency and low quality English lessons in their elementary school which left them with poor knowledge of English.

On the other hand, students' reasons for experiencing the feeling of fear and anxiety in their Croatian Language Classroom were of a quite different nature. They stated that the subject matter was too difficult and that there was too much information which needed to be learned and acquired in a very short time period. Furthermore, they said that their

Croatian lessons were too demanding and that they needed to put far more effort in them as opposed to their English lessons where they could make logical conclusions and didn't have to learn things by heart. Also, they were expected to show greater knowledge in their Croatian Language Classroom and the grading criteria were far more stringent. They said that they could accomplish better results in English even without studying and that they could never be sure whether or not they had prepared enough for their Croatian lessons because there was just too much learning material to be covered. They also stressed the fact that their grades in the Croatian Language Classroom were far more important to them as opposed to those in the EFL Classroom. Moreover, they felt that they should have the greater knowledge of the things taught in their Croatian Language Classroom as opposed to those taught in their EFL Classroom because Croatian was their native language and it was expected from them to know it and not to make mistakes which also tended to be far more noticable in their Croatian Language Classroom.

(RQ2) How do anxious students differ from non-anxious students in terms of their self-image in the classroom?

This research question was based on the assumption that a negative self-image that students have about themselves can influence levels of language anxiety in a negative way. To put it differently, it was assumed that low levels of self-esteem regarding their lessons would generate higher levels of language anxiety.

Out of 36 students, 16 students showed a low level of anxiety in both languages. Only 3 (19%) students perceived themselves as having a negative self-image regarding their English and Croatian language lessons. One learner was worried about his Croatian lessons and the fact that he wasn't able to keep pace with the excessive subject matter and the other was worried about his English lessons and his accent and pronunciation. Additionally, he was constantly stressed about the way others perceived him because of his problem with speaking in the class. The third one perceived himself as having insufficient vocabulary regarding his Croatian lessons and he thought that he wasn't able to express himself properly. He also thought that he wasn't good enough in Croatian.

Out of 36 students, 20 students showed a medium or high level of anxiety. Out of these 20 students, 16 (80%) of them perceived themselves as having a negative self-image regarding their lessons. Concerning their English lessons, students thought that they had a low proficiency which made them feel nervous, they weren't sure in their knowledge and they thought that there was a lot of room for improvement. Concerning their Croatian lessons, students thought that they were embarassing themselves as well as the whole nation because of the insufficient knowledge of their native language and the corresponding subject matter. Apart from the insufficient knowledge, some of them didn't see the point in having so many things to study and for that reason they didn't like it. Because of the excessive amount of studying material, students felt like they hadn't studied enough even if they had and that their level of knowledge was still insufficient.

The results suggest that the students' negative perception about themselves as learners of English and Croatian could be connected to their medium or high levels of anxiety. It is important to work with the students on developing their positive self-image because a negative self-image can create mental obstacles which prevent students from being successful language learners.

Table 3: Connection between students' self-image and their anxiety levels

	a low anxiety level (N=16)	a medium or high anxiety level (N= 20)
positive self-image	13 (81%)	4 (20%)
negative self-image	3 (19%)	16 (80%)

(RQ3) Are there any gender differences in terms of the level of language anxiety?

(RQ3a) Do female students experience greater uneasiness regarding both languages as opposed to their male counterparts?

(RQ3b) Do female students have higher levels of language anxiety in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom?

The theory underlying this research questions has already been discussed earlier in this paper and now we will examine the obtained results.

(RQ3a) Do female students experience greater uneasiness regarding both languages as opposed to their male counterparts?

As was mentioned before, the number of interviewed male and female students was equal (18 male and 18 female students). Regarding their English lessons, 9 (50%) female students showed a medium or high level of language anxiety as opposed to only 3 (17%) male students. On the contrary, regarding their Croatian lessons, 7 (39%) male and 7 (39%) female students showed a medium or high level of language anxiety. As can be seen from the results, substantially larger number of female students experienced greater anxiety in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their male counterparts, whereas the number of male and female students who experienced anxiety in their Croatian Language Classroom was equal.

Table 4: A medium or high level of LA experienced by the students

	male students	female students
EFL Classroom	3 (17%)	9 (50%)
Croatian Language Classroom	7 (39%)	7 (39%)

(RQ3b) Do female students have higher levels of language anxiety in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom?

18 female students participated in this reasearch and when looking at their overall scores for language anxiety, the results are equal for both their lessons (9 (50%) students per each). However, when we look at the specific anxiety rates (low, medium and high) some differences emerge. In the low anxiety group (N= 6), 2 (33%) students had a higher score for their English lessons and 4 (67%) students had a higher score for their Croatian lessons. In the medium anxiety group (N= 8), the results were once again equal- 4 (50%)

students had a higher score per each class. In the high anxiety group (N= 4), 3 (75%) students had a higher score for their English lessons and 1 (25%) student had a higher score for her Croatian lessons.

Table 5: Levels of language anxiety of female students

	a low level of LA (N= 6)	a medium level of LA (N=8)	a high level of LA (N=4)
EFL Classroom	2 (33%)	4 (50%)	3 (75%)
Croatian Language Classroom	4 (67%)	4 (50%)	1 (25%)

As we can see, it was only regarding the high anxiety group that the female students had higher levels of language anxiety in their EFL Classroom as opposed to their Croatian Language Classroom.

3.4.2. Students' reported causes of language anxiety

These questions, among others, formed the oral part of the questionairre on which the interview with the students was based.

1) Why do students feel insecure when they are required to speak during their English/Croatian lessons?

Many of the anxiety-provoking factors reported by the participants appeared to be generated by various speaking activities normally encountered in a language classroom. Oral communication and giving a public speech have long been accepted as psychological phenomena which could generate high levels of anxiety. One of the reasons for students' insecurity was the fear of being judged by their teacher (who could form a negative opinion about their knowledge based on their oral production and label them as not having enough knowledge) as well as their peers because they didn't want to embarrass themselves in front of the whole class. Consequently, the participants were very sensitive to both peer and teacher evaluation of their speaking because they didn't want to be the focus of attention

and have their errors put on display. The reason for this, as the students reported, was the fact that they were very self-conscious when they were required to engage in speaking activities because they could possibly expose their inadequacies, and these feelings often led to fear or even panic. Another frequently cited anxiety-provoking factor in the interviews was simply being called on in class, no matter if they had prepared or not.

Furthermore, students were concerned about their accent, pronunciation, limited vocabulary and the inability to orally produce valid syntactical structures in English. Regarding Croatian, students were afraid that all the information they had to know would got mixed up and that they would end up saying some nonsense. 2 students reported having dyslexia which made them feel uneasy when they were required to read out loud during their Croatian lessons. Furthermore, some students reported not being able to express themselves well in Croatian and even said that it was easier for them to talk in English.

2) Do students feel embarrassed when they are required to speak in front of others during their English/Croatian lessons, are they afraid of their mockery and why?

Students were asked to determine whether they felt embarrassed when required to speak in front of others in their classes and whether they were afraid of their mockery or not by circling the appropriate number on the questionairre's Likert scale. They were required to specify their level of agreement or disagreement with the given statement. The range comprised five levels, from 1- ''I can't relate at all'' to 5- ''I can relate completely'' and the statements were ''I am embarrassed to speak in front of others during my English/Croatian lessons'' and ''I am afraid that I would be laughed at by others when I am required to speak during my English/Croatian lessons''. The median score for the first statement regarding English lessons was 2.08 and regarding Croatian lessons 2.50. The median score for the second statement regarding English lessons was 1.72 and regarding Croatian lessons 1.53.

The students reported that they would have been embarrassed if they had said something incorrectly, especially if that was something that everyone else knew and was familiar with. They were also afraid of getting confused and not being able to answer the questions. They also dreaded their mind getting blank. Some reported not being socialized

enough and this disabled them in speaking openly in front of others in formal situations. One interesting thing the students mentioned was the fact that they felt like their mistakes wouldn't be easily noticed in English and that they felt the pressure to know everything for their Croatian lessons.

3) Do students feel nervous and confused when they are required to speak during their English/Croatian lessons and why?

Students were asked to determine whether they felt nervous and confused when required to speak in front of others during their lessons by circling the appropriate number on the questionairre's Likert scale. They were required to specify their level of agreement or disagreement with the given statement. The range comprised five levels, from 1- ''I can't relate at all'' to 5- ''I can relate completely'' and the statement was ''I feel nervous and confused when I am required to speak during my English/Croatian lessons''. The median score regarding English lessons was 1.72 and regarding Croatian lessons 1.75.

Students reported feeling nervous and confused when they didn't come prepared for a lesson, when they worried about other people's opinions, when they weren't sure that what they were saying was correct, when they were suddenly called on in class, when their mind went blank and when they were required to communicate with the teacher. Regarding English lessons, one student reported that she was afraid that she could easily make a mistake in speaking English since it wasn't her mother tongue.

In general, although students reported various reasons for feeling uneasy when speaking during their lessons, the overall scores for various aspects of speaking weren't that high. However, scores of all the interviewed students were taken into account, not just of those who showed medium or high anxiety levels.

4) Why are students concerned about making mistakes during their English/Croatian lessons and which mistakes are they most worried about?

Students' concern about making mistakes was mostly connected with the pedagogical practice of error correction. Students reported that they were afraid that both their teacher and their peers would regard them as stupid if they made a mistake, especially

if they made a mistake that they thought nobody else would have made. This indicates that the fear of making errors is connected to the attitude that making errors is a sign of one's incompetence and to the fear of negative social evaluation. For some students, it didn't matter what type of mistake they made, they would automatically get worried because it was simply a mistake and, as they reported, a sign of their failure. Some students reported becoming frustrated when the teacher would correct the error before they had time to completely formulate a response and the fact that they were being interrupted for it which would frequently cause some of the students to lose their focus.

The mistakes which concerned students the most regarding their English lessons were connected to grammar, spelling and pronunciation whereas the ones which concerned them the most regarding their Croatian lessons were mostly connected to grammar. Students also reported that they thought making mistakes during their Croatian lessons was far worse than making mistakes during their English lessons because Croatian was their native language which they were supposed to know well and that the mistakes were just too obvious to not be noticed.

5) Are students more relaxed during their English or Croatian exam and why?

The problem of test anxiety has already been mentioned earlier in this paper. Students were asked to determine whether they were relaxed during an examination in their classes by circling the appropriate number on the questionairre's Likert scale. They were required to specify their level of agreement or disagreement with the given statement. The range comprised five levels, from 1- ''I can't relate at all'' to 5- ''I can relate completely'' and the statement was ''I am usually relaxed during an examination in English/Croatian''. The median score for English was 4.11 and for Croatian 2.86. As can be seen from the results, students were significantly more stressed out during examinations in Croatian. Students gave a number of reasons for this, the most frequent one being the quantity of studying material. Another major reason for greater test anxiety in Croatian was the fact that students hadn't prepared well for their examination and they mentioned that if you didn't prepare well for your English examination you could somehow always get away with it and get a good grade. They even said that if they did prepare well for their Croatian examination, there was just too much things to be learned and remembered so everything

could easily get mixed up and forgotten. Some said that it was very important for them to get a good grade in Croatian and that this made them feel pressured and anxious.

3.5. Limitations and implications for further research

Certain limitations of this study should be considered. First of all, this was a small-scale study, conducted on a small number of participants. In order to better understand the concept of language anxiety in learners of English as a foreign language and Croatian as a native language, there is a need for a study with a larger sample. Furthermore, anxiety in language learning is mostly investigated in terms of its debilitating aspects. Given that there is also a facilitating side of anxiety in language learning, in addition to finding solutions to reduce anxiety, future research should also find ways to take advantage of the positive effects of anxiety on foreign language teaching and learning.

4. Conclusion

Language researchers and theorists have long been aware that anxiety is often associated with language learning. Moreover, teachers and students generally firmly believe that anxiety is a major obstacle which needs to be overcome in order to be successful in learning.

This study attempted to differentiate between the factors which cause language anxiety in Croatian Language and EFL Classrooms. Furthermore, it included such variables as self-image and gender in order to see whether they have anything to do with the intensity of language anxiety.

This study suggests that, generally, students experience higher levels of language anxiety in their Croatian Language Classroom most prominently due to the excessive amount of learning material and the inability to cope with it. Moreover, it suggests that students who have a more negative self-image experience higher levels of language anxiety in both languages as opposed to students who have a positive self-image. Also, a substantially larger number of female students that participated in this study experienced greater anxiety during their English lessons as opposed to their male counterparts, whereas this couldn't be said for their Croatian lessons since the results were equal. Furthermore, female students did not have higher levels of language anxiety during English lessons as opposed to their Croatian lessons, however in the female high anxiety group students had a substantially higher score for their English lessons.

Furthermore, students gave substantially different reasons for experiencing language anxiety during their English and Croatian lessons. The main reasons for feeling uneasy during their English lessons were the fear of mispronouncing words, insufficient grammatical knowledge, limited vocabulary, poor fluency and low quality English lessons in their elementary school which left them with poor knowledge of English. On the contrary, students stated that the main reason for feeling uneasy during their Croatian lessons was the difficulty of the subject matter and the excessiveness of the learning material and they felt the pressure to know everything since Croatian was their mother tongue.

When anxiety connected to the activity of speaking during their lessons is considered, the students stated that the most anxiety-provoking factors were the fear of being judged by their teacher and peers. The reason for this, as the students reported, was the fact that they were very self-conscious when they were required to engage in speaking activities.

Also, students were concerned about making mistakes during their lessons mostly because they were afraid that both their teacher and peers would regard them as stupid if they made a mistake and this indicates that the fear of making errors is connected to the attitude that making errors is a sign of one's incompetence and to the fear of negative social evaluation.

Finally, the results showed that the interviewed students were significantly more stressed out during examinations in Croatian than in English. The most frequently given reason for this was the quantity of studying material.

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6. Appendices

6.1. Appendix A- General information about a student

U ovom dijelu upitnika potrebno je odgovoriti na postavljena pitanja.

1. Spol: M / Ž

2. Dob: _____

3. Ocjena iz engleskog jezika _____ / ocjena iz hrvatskog jezika _____

4. Vrijeme učenja engleskog jezika _____

5. Jeste li Vi ili netko iz Vaše obitelji dvojezični?
_____

6. Govorite li nekim dijalektom i, ako da, kojim?
_____

7. Smatrate li Vi ili osobe iz Vaše okoline da ste sramežljivi te imate li samopouzdanja?
_____

8. Po Vašem mišljenju, osjećate li strah i s čime je taj strah povezan (ocjenom, prozivanjem, govorom pred ostalima u razredu i sl.) na nastavi:

a) engleskog jezika
_____

b) hrvatskog jezika
_____

9. Ako su odgovori na prethodno pitanje bili da, zašto, po Vašem mišljenju, osjećate taj strah na satu:

a) engleskog jezika
_____
_____
_____

b) hrvatskog jezika
_____
_____
_____

6.2. Appendix B- Language anxiety questionairre (the adapted version of Horwitz's 1983 FLCAS- taken from Mihaljević Djigunović, 2001)

Odredite koliko vas dobro opisuju sljedeće tvrdnje. Zaokružite odgovarajući broj prema ovoj legendi te objasnite odabir:

1= uopće se ne odnosi na mene

2= većinom se ne odnosi na mene

3= ponekad se odnosi na mene, a ponekad ne

4= djelomično se odnosi na mene

5= potpuno se odnosi na mene

---

1. Nikada se ne osjećam potpuno sigurnim/om u sebe kad govorim na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

2. Zabrinjavaju me pogreške koje radim na satu :

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

3. Često mislim da drugi u razredu znaju bolje od mene:

a) engleski jezik 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatski jezik 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

4. Obično sam opušten/a kad imamo test (kontrolnu ili sl.) iz

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

5. Uhvati me panika kad moram govoriti bez pripreme na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

6. Mogu postati toliko nervozan/na da zaboravim i ono što znam na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

7. Neugodno mi je javljati se na satu:

a) engleskog jezika: 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

8. Ne bih bio/la nervozan/na da moram razgovarati s izvornim govornikom (odnosno u vannastavnoj situaciji) na:

a) engleskom jeziku: 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskom jeziku 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

9. Čak i kad se dobro pripremim, strah me na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

10. Osjećam kako mi srce lupa kad me profesor/ica treba prozvati na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

11. Pred drugima u razredu, neugodno mi je govoriti:

a) engleski jezik 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatski jezik 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

12. Nervozniji/a sam nego na drugim satima na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

13. Osjećam se nervozno i zbunjeno kad govorim na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____

14. Bojim se da će mi se drugi u razredu smijati kad govorim na satu:

a) engleskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5 b) hrvatskog jezika 1 2 3 4 5

_____
_____
_____