THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF ROLE-PLAYING ON HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Harun Özhan CAN

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MASTER'S THESIS

Department of Foreign Languages Education
English Language Teaching Programme
Advisor: Assoc. Prof Dr. Abdullah Nejat TÖNGÜR

İstanbul
T.C. Maltepe University
Graduate School of Social Science
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JÜRİ VE ENSTİTÜ ONAYI

Bu belge, Yükseköğretim Kurulu tarafından 19.01.2021 tarihli "Lisansüstü Tezlerin Elektronik Ortamda Toplanması, Düzenlenmesi ve Erişime Açılmasına İlişkin Yönerge" ile bildirilen 6698 Sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu kapsamında gizlenmiştir.

ETİK İLKE VE KURALLARA UYUM BEYANI

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Harun Özhan Can

January, 2023

ÖZET

ROL YAPMANIN YÜKSEK ÖĞRETİM KURUMU ÖĞRENCİLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ OLUMLU ETKİSİ

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Bu çalışmada yabancı dil konuşma kaygısının nedenleri, rol yapmanın dil yeterliliği ve konuşma kaygısı üzerindeki etkisi incelenmiştir. Araştırma, İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Hazırlık Birimi B2 seviyesindeki 9 öğrencinin müfredat dışı rol yapma aktivitelerine katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Bu çalışmada gözlem, anket ve yeterlik sınavı sonuçları olmak üzere üç ölçek kullanılmıştır. Anket, Huang (2004) tarafından geliştirilen Yabancı Dilde Konuşma Kaygısı Ölçeği (FLSAS) uyarlanmış ve Microsoft Forms aracılığıyla uygulanmıştır. Yeterlik sınavı, İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Sınav Birimi tarafından The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) gerekliliklerine uygun olarak hazırlanmıştır. Son olarak rol yapma oturumları sırasında gözlemler araştırmacı tarafından yapılmıştır.

Anket sonuçları ışığında, katılımcıların yabancı dil konuşma kaygı düzeylerinin orta düzeyde olduğu, kişisel nedenler, öğretim materyalleri ve değerlendirme, kaygıyı tetikleyen başlıca faktörler olarak belirtildi.

Bu çalışma, müfredat dışı aktivite olarak rol yapmanın, öğrenciler üzerinde olumlu etki yarattığını, konuşma kaygılarını azalttığını ve konuşma becerilerini geliştirdiğini ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Rol yapma, dil kaygısı, konuşma becerileri

ABSTRACT

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF ROLE-PLAYING ON HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Harun Özhan Can
Master's Thesis
Department of Foreign Languages Education
English Language Teaching Programme with Thesis
Advisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. A. Nejat Töngür
Maltepe University Graduate School, 2023

This study examined the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety, the impact of role-playing on proficiency level, and speaking anxiety. The study was carried out at İstanbul Kent University, with the participation of 9 B2 level students from Preparatory school in role-playing as extracurricular activity.

In this study, three scales were utilised: observation, questionnaire and proficiency exam results. The questionnaire, the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA), developed by Huang (2004) was adapted and utilised via Microsoft Forms. The proficiency exam was prepared by İstanbul Kent University Testing Unit in accordance with The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) requirements. Finally, the observations during role-playing sessions were made by the researcher.

In light of the results of the survey, the level of foreign language speaking anxiety of the participants was temperate, personal reasons and teaching materials and assessment were noted as the major anxiety triggering factors.

In conclusion, this study revealed that the use of role-playing as an extracurricular activity has positive impacts on students, reduces students' speaking anxiety and improves their speaking skills.

Keywords: Role-playing, language anxiety, speaking skills

GENİŞLETİLMİŞ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

ROL YAPMANIN YÜKSEK ÖĞRETİM KURUMU ÖĞRENCİLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ OLUMLU ETKİSİ

Türkiye'de İngilizce öğrenenlerin çoğu, üniversite eğitimlerine başlamadan önce neredeyse 11 yıldır İngilizce öğreniyor. Ancak kendilerini istedikleri gibi ifade edememekteler. Bu istenmeyen durumun özgüven eksikliği, İngilizce konuşulan bir ülkede yaşamamak ve yabancı dil konuşma kaygısı gibi pek çok nedeni olabilir. Bir yabancı dil öğrenirken maruz kalma ve yaparak öğrenme çok önemlidir; ancak, İngilizce'nin birinci, ikinci veya resmi dil olmadığı ülkelerdeki Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce (EFL) öğrenenlerin çoğu İngilizce konuşanlarla etkileşimde bulunmak için yeterli fırsatlara sahip olmadıklarından, hedef dile yeterince maruz kalamıyorlar. Bu nedenle, İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğretmek, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin omuzlarındaki yükü artırmaktadır. Ayrıca, dil öğrenenlerin pratik yapmama, hata yapmaktan korkma ve mükemmeliyetçilik duygusundan dolayı endişeli hissedebilirler.

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, dil öğrenenlerin neden konuşma kaygısı yaşadıklarını, rol yapma ve konuşma becerileri arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmak ve rol yapmanın konuşma kaygısı üzerinde bir etkisinin olup olmadığını belirlemektir. Ayrıca, yabancı dilde konuşma kaygısının nedenlerini araştıran birçok çalışma olmasına rağmen, bu çalışma, rol yapmanın ders dışı bir etkinlik olarak kullanılmasıyla konuşma kaygısının nasıl ortadan kaldırılabileceğine veya en azından azaltılabileceğine ışık tutabilir.

Bir dili öğretmek, o dildeki yapıları, gramer kurallarını veya ilkeleri öğretmek değil, aynı zamanda hedef dilin gerçek hayattaki durumlarda nasıl kullanılacağını öğretmektir. Dil öğrenenlerin dersleri dinlemeleri, okumaları ve anlamaları gerekeceğinden ilk etapta iletişim kurmaları beklenirken konuşma ve yazma gibi üretken becerilerinin seviyeye uygun olması gerekir. Bu anlamda rol yapma, gerçek hayattaki durumları simüle etmenin bir yolu olarak kabul edilir ve dil öğrenenleri gerçek hayata hazırlamayı amaçlar. Bu nedenle, sadece gramer yeterliliği ve İngilizce yazılı sınavlarda iyi olmak yeterli değildir. Yani bir dili bilmek ve bir dili konuşmak tamamen farklıdır.

Araştırma öncesinde birtakım sınırlılıklar da var elbet. Öncelikle, hem deney grubu hem de kontrol grubu sadece B2 düzeyindeki öğrencilerden oluştuğundan, deney grubu ve kontrol grubundaki katılımcı sayısı araştırmaya ilişkin genel bir fikir sahibi olmak için yeterli olmayabilir. Bu nedenle araştırma daha fazla katılımcı ile yürütülürse sonuç ve bulgular çok daha güvenilir olabilir. Diğer bir varsayılan eksiklik ise, sürenin 10 hafta ile sınırlı olması. Her hafta sadece 1 saat rol yapma etkinliği kullanıldığı dikkate alındığında, rol oynama etkinliklerine daha fazla zaman ayrılması, rol yapmanın öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma kaygısı üzerindeki etkisi için daha dikkat çekici ve somut sonuçlara yol açabilir.

Uygulanan yönteme gelindiğinde, araştırmanın kapsamı İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Hazırlık Okulu'nda İngilizce öğrenimi gören 18-21 yaş arası 9 öğrenci ile sınırlıdır. 10 hafta süren bu rol yapma etkinliği süreci, İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Yeterlik Sınavı (KELT) sınavına sadece bir hafta kala sona erdi. İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi tarafından uygulanan Yeterlik Sınavı ile İngilizce konuşma becerileri değerlendirildi. Katılımcıların kaygı düzeylerinin verilerini toplamak için FLSAS'ın Huang (2004) tarafından uyarlanmış versiyonu kullanılmıştır. Anket iki bölümden oluşuyordu. Birinci bölümde katılımcılar hakkında demografik bilgileri elde etmeye yönelik dört soru yer almaktadır. Diğer bölümde yabancı dil konuşma kaygısı ile ilgili 28 soru yer almaktadır. Anketin formu, 1'den (kesinlikle katılmıyorum) 5'e (kesinlikle katılıyorum) kadar beşli Likert ölçeğiydi. Ayrıca deney ve kontrol grubu olmak üzere toplam 66 öğrenci 22 Haziran 2022 tarihinde KELT (İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Yeterlik Sınavı) sınavına girmiştir. Anket Microsoft Forms üzerinde tasarlandığından ve katılımcılarla e-posta yoluyla paylaşıldığından veri toplama işlemi çevrimiçi olarak gerçekleştirilmiştir. Online anket kullanmanın en önemli amacı araştırmacının daha fazla zaman ve para tasarrufu sağlamasına olanak tanıyarak, araştırmacının ayrılan sürede verileri analiz etmeye odaklanabilmesini sağlar. 18-21 yaş aralığındaki katılımcılar ise verilen sürede soruları rahatlıkla cevaplayabildiler. Araştırma, İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Hazırlık Programı'nda yapılmış ve 44 (33 kız, 11 erkek) öğrenci ankete katılmıştır.

Rol yapma prosedürü açısından, Microsoft Teams aracılığıyla bir genel kurul toplantısı yapılmış ve katılımcılara çalışmanın amacı, varsayımları, yöntemleri ve sürecin kendisi hakkında bilgi verilmiştir. İstanbul Kent Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Bölüm Başkanı ve

Hazırlık Okulu Müdürü'nün uygun görüşü ile öğrenciler resmi olarak çalışmaya davet edilmiş ve katılımın gönüllülük esasına dayandığı kabul edilmiştir. 27 öğrenciden 12'si gönüllü olarak araştırmaya katılmayı sözlü olarak onaylamış ve kabul etmiştir. Araştırmacı süreç hakkında ayrıntılı bilgi vermiş, rol oynama oturumları için her Salı ve Perşembe 15:00-16:00 saatleri arasında zaman ve gün ayırmıştır. Bir diğer veri toplama aracı ise İngilizce'nin 4 temel becerisi olan okuma, yazma, dinleme ve konuşmadan oluşan KELT sınavıdır.

Toplanan tüm bu verilerin analizi 3 ayrı aşamada yapılmıştır. İlk aşama, anket sonuçlarının analizidir. Anket Microsoft Forms aracılığıyla gerçekleştirildikten sonra sonuçlar tablolarda toplandı, yüzdeler ve oranlar hesaplandı ve yorumlandı. Ankette yer alan her bir madde (hem demografik hem de yabancı dil konuşma kaygısı maddeleri) tablolar aracılığıyla yorumlanarak öğrencilerin yabancı dil konuşma konusunda hangi durumlarda kaygılı oldukları analiz edilmiştir. Anketten elde edilen sonuçlar yardımıyla, öğrencilerin yabancı dil konuşma ve konuşma sınavlarında kaygı duymalarının başlıca nedenleri analiz edilmiştir.

Bir sonraki aşama, rol yapma oturumları sırasında katılımcılar gözlemlenmiştir. Rol yapma seansları 10 hafta sürmüştür ve katılımcılar seansların başından itibaren kişiliklerindeki değişiklikleri, İngilizceye karşı tutumlarını ve hedef dilde konuşma becerilerindeki gelişmeleri görmek için gözlemlenmiştir. Son aşama, rol yapmanın öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini nasıl etkilediğini görmek için KELT Sınavı sonuçlarını analiz etmektir. B2 seviyesini başarıyla tamamlayan tüm öğrenciler, bölümlerinde yükseköğrenimlerine devam edebilmek için KELT sınavına girmeye hak kazanırlar. Her öğrencinin sınav sonuçları okuma, yazma, dinleme ve konuşma gibi kırılımları olan tablolarda toplanmıştır. Ancak çalışmanın odak noktası rol yapmanın konuşma kaygısı ve yeterliliği üzerindeki etkisini ortaya çıkarmak olduğu için sadece konuşma bölümü sonuçları tablolar halinde toplanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Tüm sonuçlar tablo haline getirildikten hemen sonra rol yapma seanslarına katılan öğrenciler ile diğerleri KELT sınav sonuçları açısından karşılaştırıldı. Ayrıca sınavda konuşma bölümü kayıt altına alınmıştır. Videolar, adayların konuşma sınavı sırasındaki kaygı düzeylerinin yanı sıra telaffuz, dilbilgisi, sosyal ve stratejik yeterliliklerini görmek ve analiz etmek için

araştırmacı tarafından izlenmiştir. Sınava giren öğrenciler arasında adaletsizlik olmaması açısından, araştırmacı tüm sınav boyunca ne değerlendirici ne de gözetmen olarak görevlendirilmiştir.

Bu çalışmanın sonucunda, öğrencilerin konuşma kaygılarının nedenleri saptanmış. Öğrencilerin konuşma kaygısının başlıca nedenlerinin kendilerini diğer öğrencilerle kıyaslamaları, özgüven eksikliği nedeniyle kendini ifade edememe, konuşma sınavı kaygısı ve konuları ilgi çekici bulmama olduğu belirlenmiştir. Öte yandan öğrencilerin hata yapmaktan korkmadıkları, hatalarının sadece öğretmenler tarafından düzeltilmesi gerektiği vurgulanmıştır. Rol oynamanın öğrencilerin özgüvenini arttırarak ve iş birlikli öğrenmeye teşvik ederek konuşma kaygısını azalttığı belirlenmiş ve bu araştırma da rol oynama yoluyla öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerinin geliştiğini ortaya koymuştur.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

KELT : İstanbul Kent University English Language Proficiency Test

MIT : Multiple Intelligences Theory

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

CEFR : The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

OECD : The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

ELT : English Language Teaching

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Most EFL learners in Turkiye have been learning English for almost 11 years before they start to study at universities. However, they can not express themselves the way they want. There might be many reasons for this unwanted situation such as lack of self-confidence, not living an English-speaking country and foreign language speaking anxiety.

In the exposure definition of Magno et al., a person communicates in a language in any way he chooses. This includes actively speaking or writing in a language or passively hearing someone speak that language. A person's exposure time includes formal interaction with language as well as informal communication (p.490). Besides, Chiswick & Miller (1998) proposed that exposure is one of the features of formal learning and learning by doing affects the acquisition of fluency in the target language. Bachman (1990) and Chapelle (1998) identified language use as interaction, where both competence and the ability to implement and extract that competence in language use are in context. In other words, language learning is an interaction between the language user, the context, and the discourse. Briefly, exposure and learning by doing are vital while learning a foreign language; however, most English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in countries where English is not the first, second or official language cannot be adequately exposed to the target language as they do not have sufficient opportunity to interact with English speakers because of not living in an English-speaking country; therefore, it increases the burden upon the shoulders of the teachers/instructors of English to teach English as a foreign language.

Furthermore, language learners may feel anxious due to lack of practice, being afraid of making mistakes, and having a counsel of perfection. Dwyer and Heller-Murphy (1996) found that students are afraid of making mistakes, have poor English skills, lack self-confidence or are afraid of speaking because of performance anxiety. Tsui (1996) also mentioned that students' lack of self-confidence and fear of being ridiculed by their peers

prevent them from speaking in the target language. Therefore, role-playing as an extracurricular activity can help reduce foreign language speaking anxiety and students can use the language in authentic atmosphere. Drama and role playing can be used interchangeably to some extent. To illustrate, drama is often based on a story, for example, Shakespeare plays. There are usually props, stage directions and different characters and speakers. To be specific, role playing is where learners can take on the roles of other people, objects, animals and more.

This study aims to reveal why language learners experience speech anxiety and to reveal the relationship between role playing and language skills and whether role playing has an effect on speech anxiety.

1.2 The Aim of the Study

The major aim of this research is to investigate the reasons why language learners have speaking anxiety, the relationship between role-playing and speaking skills, and to determine whether role-playing has an effect on speaking anxiety. Researchers found that role-playing decreases the level of anxiety of EFL learners (Miccoli, 2003; Gorjian et al., 2010), and learners do not feel comfortable while speaking in a foreign language that causes a type of anxiety named communication apprehension (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991, p. 296). This sort of anxiety has an adverse impact on even the most talkative learners, and they become unwilling to talk in EFL classes (Horwitz et al., 1986; Aydın, 2008; Ay, 2010). Thus, it can be said that the lower the anxiety level, the higher the rate of participating in class activities, which in turn results in trying harder to speak in the target language as the learners feel more comfortable. As Albert Einstein emphasised regarding the significance of class atmosphere and providing comprehensible input, *"I never teach my pupils, I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn"* (as cited in Walter & Marks, 1981, p. 1).

As Whiteson (1996) indicated, role-playing is a remarkably effective tool for students since they can apply and explore numerous real-life situations of communication and language skills. It can be said that the more language learners communicate, the more self-confidence and problem-solving skills they gain. Similarly, Boudreault (2010) and Wessels (1987) both emphasised the positive effects of using role-playing to develop

communication ability as role-playing facilitates the ability to contextualise the target language while developing confidence in speaking skills. In a nutshell, language learners gain social skills and, activate their cognitive and productive skills while learning a foreign language with real life situations. In short, the major purpose of this research is to investigate reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety and the relation between role-playing and speaking skills and speaking anxiety of B2- level EFL learners at İstanbul Kent University. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety and the effectiveness of role-playing in terms of speaking skills and speaking anxiety of students.

1.3 The Significance of the Study

This study aims to provide the literature with more data not only the reasons why language learners foreign language speaking anxiety but also how role-playing affects language learners' speaking anxiety and their speaking skills.

Additionally, although many studies have investigated the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety, this study may shed light on how speaking anxiety can be removed or at least diminished by using role-playing as an exta-curricular activity.

Learning at least one foreign language has become inevitable and a must for various sociological and psychological reasons such as finding a better job, studying or living abroad, self-esteem, and self-actualisation. Working overseas, studying abroad, and being a world citizen have become popular and widespread ambitions. However, to learn and communicate in every single language in the world is impossible. Due to the impact of the British Empire all around the world, which has been replaced by American culture domination, English has become the most widely spoken language in trade, education, science, and sports. According to the website Ethnologue, there are 7,151 spoken languages today even though the number of languages around the world is constantly in fluctuation. However, communicating in English removes the barriers, as English is now considered as English as Lingua Franca (ELF) in many contexts. Therefore, people learn English, and the number of people who learn English is increasing day by day.

There have been many approaches, methods, and techniques to teach a foreign language; likewise, there have been many learning styles. Even though there is still an ongoing

debate on which method or technique works well according to the ages, levels and interest, role-playing is the most useful technique for all methods and approaches regardless of these factors. Also, role-playing, acting, and pretending as if the learners were somebody else or somewhere else are the things they always do even in their daily lives; therefore, role-playing technique can fit so well into language teaching.

It is necessary to clarify that role-playing does not merely mean performing a scripted play on a stage. Neelands and Goode (2000) considered role-playing *"the direct experience that is shared when people imagine and behave as if they were other than themselves in some other place at another time"* (p. 3). This implies that all people play some other roles other than who they are. Thus, role-playing can be seen as a natural process, as a part of everybody's life.

Role-playing or acting is a part of humankind lives. People play their roles in their lives and behave according to specific situations they are in. Thus, when language learners learn a foreign language, they do not need to understand merely the grammar rules, structures, and principals. Similarly, they need to internalise the target language in real life situations so that they can use the language. In this regard, role- playing as a part of drama has various effects on language teaching.

There are many advantages and benefits of using role-playing in language teaching. Firstly, role-playing requires oral communication as well as other forms of communication such as gestures, mimics, body language and intonation so that the role players can portray themselves in an imaginary situation. Role-playing technique might be seen as difficult for young adult learners since they are far beyond the critical period for learning. Nevertheless, through role-playing activities, learners can step out of their real-life status, educational and cultural backgrounds and identities that break the walls between learners and the target language. Creating an imaginary play or natural context has always been an extraordinarily strong educational tool for both young learners and adults (Lakhdar Barka, 2006). Briefly, role-playing activities can be considered as intrinsic to all human behaviours whether in games that children play or roles that adults play each day. In other words, it suits all personalities and teaching circumstances.

Teaching a language is not simply teaching structures, grammatical rules, or principles in that language but also how to use the target language in real-life situations. Language learners are expected to communicate in the first place as they will have to listen, read, and understand lectures, while their productive skills such as speaking and writing must be level appropriate. In that sense, role-playing is considered as a way of simulating real-life situations and aims to prepare language learners for real life. Thus, merely grammatical competence and being good at written tests in English are not enough. In other words, knowing about a language and speaking a language are totally different. Here, principles of Communicative Approach could be useful in terms of practicing language because Communicative Approach aims to create *a "shift in emphasis from language knowledge to language use"* (Tschirner, 1996, p. 1) *in the classroom while boosting "a broader ability to use language more appropriately in real situations"* (Whitley, 1993, p. 138). Also, the Communicative Approach emphasises that the goal of language learning is communicative competence (Richard, 1985). As language stands for communication mostly, language teachers should give priority to communicative activities such as games, projects, or practices. Communicative activities involve 'doing' things with language. Cooperative or collaborative learning is yet another recent method that emphasises group work and suggests that students' working collaboratively makes learning easier.

Moreover, there was a shift in education in the 1960s when teacher-centred and deductive teaching transformed to the learner-centred model of education. Thus, educators started to pay more attention to emotions during the learning process, such as anxiety, depression, motivation, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Emotions, individual differences, and personalities have a profound influence on learning, whether making it easier or harder, and shortening or extending the learning time. In this respect, it is proper to mention another individual difference that is different learning styles and distinct types of intelligences.

Every individual is different and unique; thus, the learning styles differ depending on their distinctive intelligences. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) (1983), which claims every individual has a distinctive way of information processing, advocates different types of teaching since every learner learns differently. For instance, some

students are body-kinaesthetic learners and can learn better through role-playing activities while they are doing. Some other learners are good at interpersonal skills and benefit from leading a group to improve their language skills and strategies. Role-playing activities are also good for students with intrapersonal skills who may be seen as 'shy' or 'uncooperative' students. Students who have strong musical intelligence and understand the rhythm and variations of music can benefit from role-playing activities in the context of pronunciation, intonation, and stressed syllables. Briefly, role-playing activities enhance the balance of these intelligences and give an opportunity to those learners to understand and empathise with one another. Before conducting this study, some assumptions were made. İstanbul Kent University B2 level students, whose major goal is to accomplish to pass the Kent University English Language Test (KELT) and start to study their department, are selected as the representative sample for this study. The play written by the researcher himself is assumed to boost students' motivation to participate in communicative and productive activities.

Speaking tests and students' personal insecurities are believed to be major causes of student anxiety. Thanks to role-playing sessions, these two fundamental reasons are expected to be removed or diminished.

It is assumed that role-playing reduces the level of students' speaking anxiety and their reluctance of speaking. In this regard, students who take part in this extra-curricular activity are assumed to be more comfortable and self-confident during the speaking exam. Therefore, their proficiency exam results are expected to be higher than the students who do not take role-playing activities as an extra-curricular activity. In short, it is assumed that the reduced anxiety level of learners helps in getting higher scores in the proficiency test of İstanbul Kent University.

1.4 Limitations of the Study

Role-playing has a great importance not only in language learning/teaching but also in lifelong learning in every aspect of life. However, it is a must to mention the limitations and drawbacks in this study in order to shed light on the future discussion and studies. These limitations are significant in terms of interpretation of the findings as they may affect the validity and reliability of the research.

First and foremost, as both the experimental group and the control group consist of only B2 level students, the number of participants in the experimental group and control group may not be adequate to have general insight into the research. Thus, the results and findings could be much more reliable if the study was carried out with a greater number of participants.

Another assumed shortcoming is the time limit which also can affect the outcomes of the research as the time is limited to 10 weeks. When using only 1-hour role-playing activity each week is taken into consideration, longer spare time for role- playing activities may lead to more remarkable and tangible results for the impact of role-playing on learners' speaking anxiety in English. Besides, since this study also aims to prove how role-playing affects learners' self-actualisation and their intrinsic motivation, this shortage of time might result in difficulty in mirroring more reliable results. Other role-playing activities with different age groups could have different or similar results.

1.5 Keywords and Identification

This part tends to help readers in following and comprehending the key terms and concepts with ease while reading and interpreting the study.

Language Anxiety: Language anxiety can be defined as *"feelings of tension and anxiety, particularly related to bilingual texts, including speaking, listening and learning"* (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, p. 284)

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): The study of English by speakers whose mother tongue is not English and living in a non-English-speaking environment.

Istanbul Kent University Proficiency Exam (KELT): KELT exam is the proficiency exam that parallels the CEFR requirements and assesses Prep school students' language proficiency when they successfully complete their B2 level to determine whether they can achieve their goals in their English medium departments.

Proficiency: Skill is the ability to use language in life situations in spontaneous communication and in an acceptable and appropriate way for the native speaker.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (**CEFR):** CEFR is an international standard for describing language ability.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter aims to provide general insight into the studies that indicate what foreign language is, the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiey and the relation between role-playing and foreign language teaching/learning.

2.1 Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Anxiety has various definitions in literature. To start with, Freud defined anxiety as *"something felt, an unpleasant emotional state or situation"* (Freud, 1924, as cited in Mokhlesi & Shinde, 2020 pp. 16-24). For Horwitz et al. (1986*), "Anxiety is the subjective experience of tension, anxiety, uneasiness, and worry linked with an activation of the autonomic nervous system"* (p.125). Rachman (1998) defined anxiety as a sensation of unsettling suspense, which is one of the most prominent and pervasive emotions. (As cited in Liu, M., & Huang, W., 2011). For Suleimenova (2013), anxiety is *"distress or uneasiness of mind caused by fear of danger or misfortune"* (p.1776). In regard to these definitions, anxiety reveals itself as a sensation closely connected to the psychological system of persons who undergo a change of feelings that are out of the ordinary.

Learning a language, particularly, speaking in the target language is considered as a long and difficult process. According to Wilson (2006), speaking remains as one of the most challenging tasks of the language learning process for many language learners. In other words, many language learners have FLSA, which is basically described as the fear of verbally communicating in a foreign language. Anxiety over learning a foreign language has long been recognized as a common issue in the field of language acquisition. Horwitz et al. (1986) were the first to study foreign language anxiety as a separate and distinct phenomenon. It was established that a great number of students have difficulties in language learning no matter how efficient they are with other learning types (Horwitz et al., 1991). Language anxiety can be analysed under three categories: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Cattell & Scheier 1963; Spielberger, 1966). Trait anxiety is believed to be *"a more permanent predisposition to be anxious"* (Scovel, 1978 pp.129-142) while state and situation-specific anxiety are observed during a specific event or condition (Brown, 2001). According to Luo (2014), situational anxiety is constant over time, comparable to trait

anxiety, however it may not be consistent across scenarios. Language anxiety falls under the heading of situational anxiety (Horwitz et al., 1986). To give an example, when a teacher addresses a pupil, the feeling of anxiety that results from that address comes within the category of context-specific anxiety response. In this regard, foreign language anxiety is often associated with the characteristics of situation-specific anxiety. Speaking is often considered as the most anxiety-inducing experience involved with the process of learning a new language and many students in a Foreign Language in EFL classes have public speaking. The emotional state of anxiety appears as a nervous-system arousal that many EFL learners are sensitive to. Given the importance of the issue, it should be noted that public speaking anxiety may reveal itself in forms of unconscious behaviours and responses such as blinking, flushing, sweating, and blanching.

Besides, language learning process can be adversely affected for many reasons and speaking anxiety is one of the emotional factors that negatively influence foreign language learning. It is known that many students struggle and their success in other types of learning does not affect this situation. It is well established that the anxiety of certain individuals is triggered when confronted with the idea of language learning (Horwitz et al.,1991). The ability to communicate effectively is one of the most important aspects of language learning. As an important factor affecting language learning process, speaking anxiety has a significant impact on the process of language acquisition. It also plays an important role in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Young (1991) defined anxiety as a detrimental emotional variable in the process of foreign language learning that may hinder interactional abilities and the ability to speak fluently in the target language (pp. 57-63). Placious (1998) identified speaking as the strongest element of learning that produces anxiety in students. It often has unfavourable effects on students' oral performance in English (Melouah, 2013). In other words, it hinders students' performance and their ability to adapt to the new learning environment (Mohammed & Wahid, 2009). Speaking in a language other than their mother tongue becomes the source of anxiety in most of the language learners.

Many studies have been conducted to find out the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety and its effects on learning, but the remedy to specific causes is still unknown. Horwitz et al. (1986) categorised foreign language anxiety into three primary categories:

communication apprehension, fear of unfavourable evaluation, and test anxiety. Apprehension refers to an individual's anxiety for an actual communication (Horwitz et al., 1991). This fear is connected to the native language as well as the target language. Personality traits such as shyness, silence, or reluctance are factors triggering this fear. Daly (1991) provided a more detailed explanation of the reasons for communication fear and individuals' inborn character may play a role in communication dread. Also, a positive communication environment is fundamental for the elimination of anxiety. Individuals are more eager to speak when their communication skills are positively rewarded (Aydın, 2001). Similarly, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) associated the most common causes of foreign language anxiety with three main reasons: negative peer response, highest standards, and fear of failure. FLA occurs in productive skills such as speaking and writing rather than receptive skills such as reading and listening. This state of anxiety is observed even in the most talkative individuals, and results in becoming quiet and disengaging from interactive activities in a FL class. Learners may avoid speaking activities and fail speaking exams. In another study by Öztürk (2012) on the sources and factors of foreign language speaking anxiety conducted in 2012 with a total of 383 pre-intermediate level Turkish students included in the EFL preparation program of a public institution, it was found that students have a low-level speaking anxiety as they consider speaking as a key anxiety-triggering factor evoking despair, stumbling, and rejection of any communication activity.

Similarly, Tobias (1986) evaluated the impact of anxiety on the three stages of learning: input, processing, and output, using the model established by Horwitz et al. (1986). The input occurs when new information is set forth for the learners to associate it with what they see or hear. The anxiety they develop in this stage due to the number of items needed to be processed impedes future phases, processing and output. They may overlook some details, but they make more of an effort to compensate (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), some difficulties in encoding information may be encountered in a variety of situations. When students are unable to identify new knowledge, they experience anxiety. Tanver (2007) defined this anxiety experienced upon being exposed to visual or auditory information as a part of input anxiety. The input is processed by the learner in the processing stage. The term ‘processing’ refers to the act of categorising and storing data. Due to the impairment of the cognitive process triggered

by the anxiety, time spent on digesting the information increases. A high level of anxiety felt at this stage hinders language learning and learners use the newly acquired knowledge in the output stage (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000). Successful initiation of the input and processing stages contribute to the outcome of the output stage (Aydın, 2001). At this point, as a result of the anxiety, it becomes difficult for learners to remember the information although it is fully processed. Intense anxiety disrupts the quality of verbal and written output and hinders productivity. These three processes directly affect one another, and learning is accomplished only after the successful implementation of each step (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). MacIntyre and Gardner (1995) provided a more concrete evidence on the importance of the successful completion of each phase in language acquisition with the definition below:

> Language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students. Anxious students are focused on both the task at hand and their reactions to it (…) (p. 96)

Public speaking fear also affects the students' oral performance. In that regard, the mixed method study of Yalçın and Inceçay (2015) carried out at the English language teaching department of a private institution over the course of 14 weeks offered the involvement of speaking activities like games, role-playing, and debates in the English language classroom as a remedy for students' fear of public speaking. A questionnaire, open-ended essay responses, and a focus group interview were administered to illustrate the efficiency of the spontaneous speech activities in creating a non-threatening learning environment and reducing the fear of speaking among participants. Thus, it can be inferred that the classroom atmosphere has utmost significance in order to reduce foreign language speaking anxiety. Learners' speaking anxiety increases with the classmates' and instructors' influence over their productivity (Horwitz et al. 1991). The survey administered by Huang (1998) to reveal the reasons for learning difficulties in speaking classes of students majoring in various fields in the United States of America reveals the fact that learners have a hard time when they can not speak the language fast enough in class.

As stated before, foreign language speaking anxiety and the language learning process are two inseparable terms in need of analysis in interdisciplinary aspects. In this regard, Tanveer (2007) analysed language learning from a behaviourist perspective and indicated that teachers' harsh responses to mistakes aggravate students' fear of failure. As a result, the attempts at communication fail, but individuals with a rich conversational input in their early life experience less anxiety (Daly, 1991). A psycholinguistic approach based on Levelt's (1989) information processing model evaluates speech in four stages: conceptualisation, formulation, articulation, and self-monitoring. Before speaking, the speaker devises what they will say during the conceptualisation process. This requires a context for the issue and the speech's circumstances. Throughout the formulation process, semantic forms and grammatical structures are recognised. In the articulation process, each word is articulated via articulatory organs, and the speaker monitors the speech and corrects inaccuracies during the self-monitoring stage. The pace of this method makes it impossible for the speaker to manage all the steps. As a result, the overall success depends on the automaticity of the phases. The absence of language automaticity causes L2 speakers to encounter various difficulties in different stages of foreign language learning (Carter & Nunan, 2002). The atmosphere of the classroom and relationship among students/instructors are also significant. The interview study by Tanveer (2007) to determine the underlying factors of language anxiety reveals the fact that learners feel anxious when the classroom is competitive or when the teacher stresses the competitive aspect of the classroom.

From a psychological standpoint, learners' capacity for information processing and output is restricted (Tanveer, 2007). In other words, linguistic incompetence contributes to speaking anxiety. He analysed speaking anxiety in detail, with various psychological and linguistic issues and he identifies language acquisition as a difficult process in which students necessarily need to understand all relevant linguistic forms (Tanveer, 2007). The challenges in mastering language structures may create speaking anxiety, as grammatical incompetence mirrors communicative incompetence (Tanveer, 2007). Due to the risk of misinterpretation and the fear of making mistakes because of inadequate linguistic expertise, learners may expect a negative evaluation and might be anxious (Tanveer, 2007). Students cannot process all information immediately (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). As previously stated, speech is generated in the brain via a series of phases. Difficulties

encountered in every attempt of communication during this process may create dissatisfaction and nervousness (Tanveer, 2007). For a complete study of FLSA, it is necessary to observe contributing factors that make people afraid to speak.

It is believed that this fear is deliberately cultivated as learners become enthusiastic to improve themselves. They can develop a fear of learning if they feel like they are not making enough progress in the language. The effect of inadequate language learning on L2 speaking anxiety is an ongoing debate. According to Horwitz (2001), for example, anxiety is a result of inadequate language development, and foreign language learning makes it necessary to take risks that can severely affect the social profile of an individual. Making mistakes starts to pose a threat against the social image of the individuals. In this regard, the lack of linguistic competence may cause learners to develop a tendency towards anxiety. To examine the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) and anxiety-producing factors experienced by EFL students in the English preparatory program of a state university, it was found that FLSA and anxiety-producing factors are associated with poor language development and communicative skills (Çağatay, 2005).

Likewise, in the study by Liu (2006) conducted to investigate the anxiety among Chinese undergraduate non-English majors at three distinct levels of English competence, using a survey, observations, reflective journals, and interviews revealed that the most proficient students had the least anxiety; talking to the teacher and performing on a stage in front of their peers are the strongest anxiety-producing factors. Balemir (2009) investigated the reasons for foreign language anxiety and its relationship with skill levels. Quantitative data was obtained using a proficiency exam. It was found that foreign language anxiety level among participants is temperate, and language proficiency does not affect the level of anxiety. Qualitative data was collected from 234 students from different departments via interviews. It was determined that the way that students are taught the target language and examination process, being negatively evaluated, and personal reasons are the most common sources of anxiety (Balemir, 2009). Besides, being misunderstood or having difficulty in conveying the intended message can cause students to develop anxiety.

Similarly, Shumin (1997) supported the idea that the successful learning of a foreign language depends on the development of conversational skills. Communicative competence means conveying and interpreting messages and associating meanings in

specific contexts (Brown 1994, p. 227). A study on the essentials of communication may also reveal the factors negatively affecting the foreign language competency of the students (Shumin, 1997). One possible obstacle in speaking a second language is the complexity of communication skills. These skills consist of four different communicative competencies: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic.

To begin with, grammatical competence is the ability to comprehend main grammatical concepts (Shumin, 1997). Mechanical concepts, in terms of speaking, are related to a language's sounds, pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992, as cited in Shumin, 1997). Regarding its essential role in the formation of other competencies, grammatical competence is vital. Another competence called discourse competence that refers to the ability to convey messages coherently (Brown, 1994). Speakers talk about past and present moments in daily communication. They explain the reasons and effects of the things, or compare them (Shumin, 1997). It is necessary to know how to connect words or develop ideas (Shumin, 1997). Besides grammatical competence and discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence is also important. Sociolinguistic competence is the ability to use the language appropriately according to the social environment (Brown, 1994). This can depend on the proximity of the participants like mother-child or teacher-student, their knowledge of one another, and the reasons for interaction (Brown, 1994). Knowing grammar rules, structures, choosing the appropriate words according to the social environment and the reasons for interaction are all vital for communication. Also, keeping the conversation going on is another issue for students. In that regard, strategic competency gains importance. Strategic competency refers to learners' ability to maintain communication despite any conversational inadequacies (Brown, 1994). That is, students should be capable of creating certain solutions when they struggle in conveying their thoughts during communication (Brown, 1994). These tactics play an important role in effective and successful communication. Due to the nature of the speech, different challenges may also occur, and communication is one of them (Bozatlı, 2003, p. 11). It is known that speaking process needs to be fulfilled within a certain amount of time, and that increases the possibility of failure. When the self-correction fails (in the self-monitoring stage), the message is not conveyed properly, and communication cannot be accomplished (Bozatlı, 2003).

The other challenging component of speaking is listening. The unclear message of the speaker means unclear meaning for the audience (Bozatlı, 2003). As a result, the listener may tend to end the conversation when it is his or her time to listen without fear of being misinterpreted. In brief, communicative incompetence may turn speaking into a challenging activity that increases anxiety in learners.

Furthermore, language learners may think as if they were in a competition, and this also makes them feel nervous while speaking. Assuming that they are unable to speak as fluently as others eventually causes them anxiety. In the study carried out by Aydın (2001) in a Turkish EFL environment to determine the sources of anxiety in speaking and writing sessions, the four primary sources of anxiety were found to be the teaching and testing procedures, personal reasons, rational or irrational beliefs, and classroom attitudes. Personal factors simply refer to the self-evaluation and self-comparison skills of the learners. In other words, self-reflection is related to the competitive behaviours in class (Aydın, 2001). Self-assessment of talents either occur in a positive manner or in a negative one. Negative ratings were found to increase anxiety (Price, 1991). However, a positive judgement helps them improve their language skills (MacIntyre, Gardner, & Clément, 1997). For speaking, learners' self-assessment means realising the capacity to communicate, and is a key source of anxiety (Kitano, 2001). The interviews in the qualitative research of Price (1991) conducted to understand foreign language anxiety of the learners show that the students who are concerned believe that they lack the language skills necessary in the class.

In the study by MacIntyre et al. (1997) investigating the relationship between linguistic anxiety and self-perceived competence, a language anxiety scale and a can-do exam composed of French speaking, writing, reading, and listening exercises were applied. Each participant was assigned with an assignment and evaluated by three multilingual judges. It was found that the performance of the participants with higher anxiety was worse, and nervous students were more likely to doubt their competence.

Students who have self-confidence and believe themselves regarding their language competence are less likely to have foreign language speaking anxiety. Kitano (2001) conducted a survey of 212 students enrolled in Japanese language classes at two institutions in the United States of America to determine the reasons for speaking anxiety

among college learners of Japanese. Anxiety was assessed using the FLAS. The students' self-perception in terms of speaking ability was evaluated using the Self Rating Can-do Scales developed by the researcher. As a part of the assessment, participants graded their oral performance on an assignment. The other instrument was a five-point Likert scale scored between excellent and poor. The participants rated their self-perceived Japanese speaking competency under four categories: grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and speaking. The level of anxiety was found to be higher in students who thought they could not talk compared to the students who believed that they could talk more (Kitano, 2001).

Similarly, the interview research of Yan and Horwitz (2008), performed to identify the role of language anxiety in language acquisition, revealed 12 shared characteristics with linguistic anxiety. One of them was self-reference. Most of the participants stated that they frequently compared their linguistic abilities to those of others.

Perfectionism and feeling incompetent is another anxiety triggering issue. Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) analysed the relationship between competitiveness and linguistic anxiety. They conducted interviews with eight students: four anxious and four not anxious. The research aimed to determine how linguistic anxiety and perfectionism were linked and included two stages. In the first stage, five English conversational questions were asked to participants and the interviews were recorded. One week later, in the second stage, students watched their recorded interviews and commented on their own performance using their native language. As a result, students with a high level of anxiety were found to set high expectations on themselves, and they had a fear of negative judgement, reflecting the importance of their peers' perceptions of them. Concerning mistakes, all four were aware of their blunders and were upset. The mildly concerned learners, on the other hand, were comfortable while speaking and judging their own performance.

To sum up, being competent in grammar is not enough all alone; therefore, students need to convey their messages coherently to the receiver and in an order. Besides, word choice is another key point as the environment and relationship between the speaker and the listener affect which words to be chosen. Also, knowing the conversational strategies enables students to maintain the conversation for longer. In short, having these four

competencies help foreign language speakers reduce speaking anxiety and improve their communicative skills.

Foreign language and speaking anxiety are the factors shaping learners' personal attitudes about language learning. It is a common belief that language acquisition requires the successful implementation of certain skills. For instance, Ohata (2005) explained that some learners place a higher premium on grammatical structures than on pronunciation, while others believe that reading skill is the most essential factor. Aydın (2001) stated that students may have unreasonable expectations regarding language acquisition, which may have a detrimental influence on their success. That means that if learners' beliefs do not match with reality, they might develop anxiety (Ohata, 2005).

According to research, students may have numerous of ideas regarding language learning. To illustrate, Wang (1998) evaluated Chinese learners' attitudes towards English learning. According to the survey, the majority of participants considered that English is not too hard to learn. Most of the participants agreed that language acquisition is related to aptitude but considered that they do not have it, and the greater number thought that language skills can not be fully improved unless they spend some time in an English-speaking country.

In addition to this, research indicated that learners place a higher premium on their beliefs than on their ability to master the language. Self-efficacy is described in the literature as people's self-assessments or judgements of their ability to effectively complete a specified activity (Çubukçu, 2008). Cheng (2001) studied the relationship of self-efficacy, competence belief, with foreign language anxiety. Extremely nervous students who see themselves as inefficient think that successful language learners have special abilities. It is possible that pupils who are really stressed believe they lack the potential to be successful in learning a new language.

Apart from self-evaluation and self-efficacy, teaching strategies or used materials in class activities and the oral exercises also make students feel nervous. That is to say that; speaking classes often include a variety of exercises, such as role-playing, pair work, and presentations in which students must engage orally. It was found that speaking and giving presentations in the class creates anxiety in students (Aydın, 2001; Woodrow, 2006;

Young, 1991). Aydın (2001) stated that the anxiety during presentations *is "a sense of prominence and a dread of negative evaluation"* (p. 111).

Being the subject of the teacher while speaking has been considered as another anxiety creating factor. The study by Wörde (2003) on learners' perception of foreign language anxiety showed that people avoid being nominated by the teacher. In the study of Koch and Terell (1991) on strategies and activities to reduce classroom stress, it was found that learners feel uncomfortable when being addressed individually and are much more comfortable when they are involved in pair and group activities.

Apparently, studies mentioned above indicate that students are afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates. When they are addressed to answer the questions, they feel nervous and stressed and become reluctant to speak as they think they have forgotten everything they know.

Last but not least, instructors' attitudes towards students and the way they correct students' mistakes or errors also trigger students' anxiety and reluctance to take part in the oral activities.

A study investigating instructors' role in FLSA reveals that error correction may increase anxiety in students (Aydın, 2001; Bekleyen, 2004). Research showed that the type and amount of feedback that students get affects their sense of self-efficacy and motivation to learn a new language (Williams & Burden, 1997, as cited in Aydın, 2001). This indicates the importance of teacher reactions to student errors.

The study by Young (1991) highlighted what really matters is *"not necessarily error correction but the manner of error correction; when, how often, and the most importantly, how errors are corrected"* (p. 428). That is to say, teachers' strict method of error correction contributes to anxiety. According to Aydın (2001), teachers' interrupting speaking to correct mistakes becomes the main source of anxiety for Turkish EFL learners.

Along with error correction strategies, some instructor attitudes towards pupils are found to trigger anxiety. When a teacher disregards the efforts of certain pupils or praises only successful students, anxiety might result (Aydın, 2001). In a study aimed to determine the

impact of instructors and classmates on foreign language anxiety, Bekleyen (2004) found that negative attitudes of the teacher increase the level of anxiety in the classroom.

To sum up, if students are negatively treated and corrected by the teachers, it increases the level of anxiety among students. When the atmosphere in the classroom is competitive and if the weaker students feel that they are left behind or not positively reinforced, students do not feel comfortable, in reverse they feel tense.

2.1.1 Role-playing and foreign language teaching/learning

One of the aspects that contribute to the success, or failure, of teaching and learning is the instructors' teaching method/strategy. It has been discovered that methods that foster involvement and first-hand experience through doing or activity by the learners themselves, under the proper leadership and supervision of the instructor, increase learning. One such technique is role-playing.

The International Encyclopaedia of Education (vol. 8) describes role-playing as a collection of approaches in which participants are urged to assume another identity in order to attempt to think their way into another person's predicament and, maybe, into their own brains. Crockall, Oxford, and Saunders (1987) described role-playing as a social or human activity in which players assume and act out specific roles, frequently within a pre-defined, structured environment.

Occasionally, the terms role-playing, simulation, theatre, and game are used interchangeably. An intricate role-playing activity is frequently referred to as a simulation. For example, Petty (2001) classified role-playing, theatre, and simulations as active approaches in microteaching, in which trainee instructors provide a brief lesson to their peers (p. 270).

In light of the studies that have been conducted so far, it can be said that foreign language speaking anxiety might be removed or the FLSA level can be diminished, at least. In order to accomplish that, role-playing can be embedded into the curriculum of teaching a foreign language. Role-playing itself consists of almost all types of intelligence such as interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence, spatial intelligence, linguistic-verbal intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence, musical intelligence, naturalistic intelligence, and existential intelligence. However, it is

crucial to mention the definitions of role-playing before discussing the role-playing as a language teaching technique.

According to Dorothy Heathcote (as cited in Wagner, 1976), role-playing is any action or scenario in which people become interested and actively participate (p. 85). As described by Verriour (1994), in order to live a role-playing circumstance, people must draw on all of their previous experiences and imagination in an attempt to create a moving image of reality that will surprise and delight the audience. Role-playing is a symbolic language that people use to describe the real world in which people live. Theorist McGregor (1976) asserted that role-playing allows youngsters to investigate themes, events, and relationships in a meaningful way. Role-playing, according to Somers (2013), is a medium of communication as well as a tool for helping people reach their targets.

The use of role-playing-based English language learning may aid in the reduction of anxiety which is associated with speaking English in public. Mak (2011) said that since learners' major focus is on articulating utterances, speaking necessitates output that typically causes anxiety in a variety of situations. For instance, after completing a role-playing-based learning program, Korean EFL students express pleasant emotions such as relaxation and self-confidence in their ability to communicate in English (Coleman, 2005). Using role-playing as a promising method in the teaching of English, Gomez (2010) investigated whether it can be used in contrast to long-established teaching practices as a means of contributing to overall oral proficiency by focussing on pronunciation at the segmental or suprasegmental level such as intonation, stress, and juncture as well as fluency in the target language. Over a three-week period, the participants, who are all native Spanish speakers, receive a pre- and post-intervention. Compared to standard teaching methods, the findings reveal the efficiency of role-playing in the classroom for English language instruction.

Besides, role-playing has not only been used in schools but also in various other fields. As a result of the army's discovery that officers lacked strategic military abilities, even if they looked to be competent on paper, the Prussian Army created role-playing as a simulation approach to attract officers. Behavioural tests were introduced by the Prussians through simulation activities (Jones, 2007), in which commanders were put through their paces in a simulated combat. People were selected as officers based on their ability to

successfully command troops under pressure. These simulation techniques were subsequently developed by the military in other nations, such as the United Kingdom and the United States, to be utilised as training tactics for spies and agents, as well as for the intelligence community's network. The simulation approach was created in the United States as a tool for company management after being used for war and espionage purposes. The use of role-playing in training and recruitment exercises by big organisations such as the American Telephone and Telegraph Company and NASA became increasingly widespread, and the concept was further expanded for use in sports training and in-house employee training programs. As a result of the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 1970s, the educational sector began employing and develop role-playing as an instructional method.

Education is a process of assisting individuals in discovering a meaningful and purposeful existence, and it includes both teaching and learning aspects of the process. According to McGregor (1976, as cited in Ustundag, 1997, p. 89), role-playing offers youngsters an opportunity to collaborate on a project, which helps them to express themselves more successfully in their everyday lives afterwards. Wagner (1989) pointed out that in order for the role-playing to be effective, students must work together to play out the role-playing, to keep the role-playing going, and to encourage one another's efforts. As a result, role-playing is a powerful instrument for teaching and learning throughout the educational spectrum. Role-playing in education refers to the application of role-playing techniques to enhance learning in the classroom setting. The entire class participates in improvised roles inside an imagined scenario as part of a role-playing education program. As a result, there is no clear separation between the actor and the audience; the learner is both participant and spectator throughout the process (Somers, 2013).

Larson and Miller (2011) emphasised that this is a challenge that should be tackled through fostering creativity, innovation, communication, teamwork, perseverance, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making. Additionally, they argued that these abilities are best taught through cross-curricular initiatives, collaborative teaching efforts, and opportunities that replicate authentic learning environments (Larson & Miller 2011, pp. 122- 123). Role-playing processes explore and reflect on the skills of improvisation, role playing, group collaboration, decision-making, and problem solving. They are effective mediums for introducing new concepts, scaffolding complex learning,

and reinforcing the previously taught conceptual and language learning. Role-playing is also an excellent technique to engage ESL students in authentic communication in a world where technology and the problems of the twenty-first century necessitate an increase in accurate and genuine communication.

Morrow (1981) highlighted the need for developing communication skills as a necessary component of the language education process. The principles of offering, accepting, and advancing improvised ideas and narratives are particularly useful (Johnstone, 1999), and they can be applied to a variety of situations with students, from basic language development to IELTS preparation to student work on computer simulations and game development. As Whiteson (1996) asserted, role-playing and improvisation are great methods for students to apply and explore a variety of real-world communication and language applications (Whiteson, 1996). Both Boudreault (2010) and Wessels (1987) emphasised the value of role-playing in strengthening communication skills by emphasising role-playing's capacity to contextualise language and language learning while also building students' linguistic confidence.

Role-playing is an option that educators may utilise and modify across the curriculum since it can serve as a platform for developing particular abilities that students can find valuable in their everyday lives. Any topic may benefit from using role-playing in the classroom, and it can be customised to fit any curriculum (Basom, 2001). Making a lesson more dynamic, engaging, and relevant for students and participants while also improving critical and creative thinking abilities helps students create and communicate ideas and opinions more effectively in the classroom. Students learn via the use of role-playing to comprehend rational patterns, cause and effect relationships, and to interpret topics and settings, as well as to study through the use of literature and terminology (Vila Abadal, 2002).

Role-playing has been shown to be beneficial in supporting all of the abilities listed above, according to research. One interesting study might be the DICE: Role-playing enhances Lisbon Key Competences in Education study, which was conducted in twelve nations and found that role-playing improves Lisbon Key Competences in Education (October 2010). According to the findings of the study, role-playing in school helps students develop 22 different skills. It is stated in the UNESCO Declaration that *"(...)culture and the arts are*

fundamental components of a comprehensive education that leads to the complete development of the individual (...)" (p. 12). As a result, arts education is recognized as a basic human right for all students. Many of the methodological strategies utilised in acting, according to the research conducted in this field, may be used to teach language, as well as other courses such as business issues (Vila-Abadal, 2002). According to Somers (2013), research indicated that creative role-playing may be used to improve students' interpersonal and leadership abilities through the use of role-playing exercises and scenarios. Through the use of role-playing, students may gain a better understanding of subjects such as economics and marketing from a variety of various views and aspects. In addition to providing students with the chance to work cooperatively on a shared project, role-playing gives students the opportunity to observe problems and topics from a variety of viewpoints. Besides, it enables them to enhance their own understanding of the issues.

The distinction between role-playing and simulation lies in the genuineness with which pupils assume their roles. According to Kodotchigova (2002), these acts convey distinct concepts and simulation is a setting in which students play a natural role, that is, a role that they occasionally perform in real life (e.g., purchasing groceries or reserving a hotel), whereas role-playing is a situation in which students play roles that they do not play in real life (e.g. being a Prime Minister, manager, director of a multinational company, or a famous singer). According to some experts, role-playing is a component or part of simulation (Greenblat, 1988; Crockall and Oxford 1987). Thus, in a role-playing, players are allocated roles and are required to act them out within a scenario. Kodotchigova (2002) observed that in a simulation, the emphasis is on the interaction of one role with the others rather than on the performance of individual roles.

Role-playing also promotes the sort of learning Blatner (2002) refers to as accommodation that he asserts, is hard to forget. Regrettably, most of education is geared towards the sort of learning that is more easily assessed, namely assimilative, memorization-based learning (Blatner, 2002). In Nigeria, science instructors continue to rely heavily on the teacher-centred approach, sometimes known as the conventional or lecture method (Osuafor, 1999; Njoku, 2004; Olorukooba, 2007). Thus, youngsters are frequently relegated to the role of passive listeners. They quickly become bored and disinterested in the material being taught by the teacher.

According to studies like (Osuafor, 2001), role-playing maintains a child's attention better than any other strategy, and interest improves learning. Although the notion of role-playing is not new, having been used in education since the late 1940s (Blatner, 2002), it is not commonly used in many regions of the world. However, such pupil-centred strategies must be more successfully used in classroom education if the children, and indeed the country, are to progress scientifically, since, as Blatner (2002) pointed out, the world truly requires individuals with skills that go beyond simple knowledge of facts.

Another reason why role-playing is an effective way of teaching the English language is Multiple Intelligence Theory (MIT) by Gardner. Teachers must use a variety of strategies and activities in order to satisfy the needs of all students, not just those who excel at reading and writing. The idea may be used in a variety of ways and it is effective throughout the whole educational system. It allows students to use and develop their entire intelligence, not just the areas in which they excel. Additionally, it provides a variety of learning styles and approaches as well as a variety of activities. Each intelligence is present in every learner, and it is the teacher's responsibility to monitor and assist pupils in developing their individual intelligences (Nolen, 2003 p. 119).

The effectiveness of role-playing is also acknowledged in a variety of language teaching approaches. For instance, the Silent Way places a premium on the development of students' inner reasoning (Intrapersonal Intelligence). Total Physical Response places a premium on language acquisition via physical activity (Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence), while Suggestopedia places a premium on the use of music (Musical Intelligence) to facilitate learning. Both the Communicative Approach and cooperative learning place a premium on interpersonal interactions (Interpersonal Intelligence) (Lin, 2005).

Role-playing as an extracurricular activity can be a tool to teach foreign language along with other teaching approaches. As mentioned before, role-playing appeals to numerous skills such as speaking skills, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, as well as reducing foreign language speaking anxiety. Besides, it allows students to learn how to learn in their own way since it requires multiple intelligence.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This part aims to indicate the design of the study including Research Questions, Data Collection Instruments, Data Collection Procedure Participants and Data Analysis Procedure.

3.1 Research Questions

The scope of the study is limited to 9 students between the ages of 18 and 21 who study English at the Foreign Language Department of İstanbul Kent University. This role-playing activity period lasted for 10 weeks and ended just one week before Istanbul Kent University Proficiency Exam (KELT) exam. With the help of the Proficiency Test that was applied by İstanbul Kent University, their English-speaking skills were assessed.

In this study the following research questions are addressed:

1- What are the reasons why language learners have speaking anxiety?

2- What are the impacts of role-playing on EFL learners' speaking skills?

3- How does role-playing affect speaking anxiety?

While the positive impacts of role-playing on learning a foreign language and reducing speaking anxiety have been well documented, there is not much data on the sociological and psychological effects of role-playing on young adults, age 18-21. The major concern of this study is to report the reasons for foreign language speaking anxiety, how role-playing affects language learning from an interdisciplinary perspective and the speaking skills of the students.

The play's major concern in the study is not only to improve skills in the target language but to foster students' motivation, self-confidence, and cultural awareness and to give a positive insight and attitude towards language learning. In this perspective, other levels such as A1, A2 and B1 level students are factored out, but B2 level students are chosen for this study as they are considered to have enough grammatical competence in the target language.

3.2 Data collection Instruments

This study was conducted with a survey, observations, and KELT exam results. Therefore, quantitative data collection method was utilised.

Sukamolson (2007) defined research as *"exploratory research that uses scientific sampling and research design to measure population characteristics with statistical accuracy"* (page 5). It provides information such as the number of people who feel a certain way, how often they do or react to certain actions. Survey research is the systematic collection of information from participants in order to understand and/or predict some aspects of the behaviour of the population in question. Survey research includes sampling, survey design, survey management, and data analysis (Sukamolson, 2007 p. 12). For this reason, a quantitative data collection method is used in the analysis of the collected data. Because the participants in this study included only a small portion of the population, he had to rely on the researcher's judgement that *"quantitative results can be generalized to the entire population or subpopulation." includes a larger, randomly selected sample"* (Carr, 1994, s.2).

Besides, the modified version of FLSAS by Huang (2004) was utilised so as to collect data of the participants' anxiety level. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. There were four questions in the first section aimed to get demographic information about the participants. The other section included 28 questions that were about foreign language speaking anxiety. The form of the questionnaire was a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

In addition, a total of 66 students including experimental and control group who would study in departments of dentistry, gastronomy and culinary arts, psychology, physiotherapy and rehabilitation, business administration, international trade and logistics, political science and public administration and nursing took the KELT (Istanbul Kent University Proficiency Test) exam on 22 June 2022.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

This section aims to indicate how the data was gathered. Since there were three types of data collection instruments, the procedure was done in order.

The researcher, as the reflective practitioner, implemented the play and conducted the survey via Microsoft Forms. A confidentiality order was granted so that accurate and sincere responses could be gathered from the participants who had a kind, voluntary interest in participating in the research. Moreover, informants found the questions quite clear to comprehend and answerable. For the data collection, the instruments administered for the presented study were considered to meet the required validity, reliability, and accuracy in terms of mirroring the positive impacts of role-playing as an extra-curricular activity on students' speaking anxiety, feeling of embarrassment, fear of making mistake.

To be able to carry out the objectives of this study, quantitative data collection instruments were utilised. Data gathering was carried out online since the questionnaire was designed on Microsoft Forms and shared with the informants via email. The most significant purpose of using an online survey was to obtain data practically and efficiently in terms of the uncertainty of having face-to-face education or online education. Besides, the online survey let the researcher save more time and money so that the researcher could concentrate on analysing the data in the allocated time. On the other hand, participants who were between the ages of 18-21 could easily answer the questions in the given time. The survey was conducted at İstanbul Kent University Preparatory Programme, and 44 (33 female, 11 male) students participated in the survey.

In terms of role-playing procedure, a general meeting was held via Microsoft Teams and participants were informed about the purpose of the study, its assumptions, methods, and the process itself. With the assent of the Director of İstanbul Kent University Foreign Languages Department and the Director of Preparatory School, students were officially invited to take part in the study, and it was acknowledged that participation was based on voluntariness. 12 out of 27 students verbally approved and accepted to be a part of the study voluntarily. The researcher gave detailed information about the process, allocated time and days for role-playing sessions, namely, every Tuesday and Thursday from 3pm

to 4 pm., when the researcher and the participants came together on the campus of İstanbul Kent University. There were only nine students to participate in the role-playing sessions though 12 out of 27 had confirmed to attend the sessions. Written and verbal consent was taken from each participant.

Role-playing sessions started on 17 March 2022 and ended on 14 June 2022. Role-playing sessions were held twice a week and lasted for 10 weeks. Each role-playing session lasted one hour, every Tuesday and Thursday. 9 students who studied at İstanbul Kent University Foreign Languages Preparatory School attended the role-playing sessions regularly. Participants were asked to attend at least 85% of the sessions and they signed the attendance sheet. Once the absenteeism was checked, it was seen that none of the participants exceeded the absenteeism percentage. First and foremost, they were asked to get to know each other as they had been taking online classes, and it was the first time they got together face to face. They gathered demographic data from each other and then asked some detailed questions about their personality, characteristics, likes/dislikes. In short, the first role-playing session was getting to know each other, and it was observed that they were too anxious and shy to speak English. Their communicative skills had retrogressed as they had gotten used to chat on social media or online classes; therefore, it was a must to foster their self-confidence and communicative skill.

The first role-playing activity was ‘trust falls’ where participants were divided into pairs who were approximately the same size and asked to close their eyes, open their arms and fall behind while the other participant was there to hold them. With the help of this activity, they started to rely on each other, and it was observed that their anxiety and shyness level was reduced. After a week or two it was observed that their confidence and teamwork skills dramatically increased. This also helped their self-confidence and collaboration to be boosted. This was very significant in leading them to work as a team since role-playing requires collaborative working and mutual assurance and understanding. There are four fundamental categories of social, psychological, academic benefits, and alternative assessment technique for both students and teachers with which Johnsons (1989) and Pantiz (1999) listed the benefits of collaborative learning. That is to say, collaborative learning helps students build different understanding, and establish a positive atmosphere for practising cooperation.

The following week, the participants were asked to write an analysis of the characters in the play written by the researcher so as to internalise the characters, use their imagination and creativity. After a small discussion about the characters such as their ages, socio-economic and educational background they became ready to act as those characters. It was their first time to act in a play therefore they were trained in some fundamental and basic role-playing practices of breathing exercises with diaphragm, improvisation, physical-fitness exercises and pretending to be someone else or something else. To illustrate, each role-playing session started with physical-fitness exercises in order to make them alert and active. Once they realised the significance of those exercises and physical activities, their mental process was fostered and memorising the script was much easier for them. This also encouraged them to participate in following activities and improved their readiness positively. In regard of improvisation, the participants were asked to define or explain something without naming it and the others went onto the stage right after they understood what it was in order to develop and add another aspect to that object. The most enjoyable activity for them was acting the case that had been pre-planned by the researcher.

Participants studied the script and acted for the last 7 weeks. The more they studied the better they became in various ways of linguistic competence, social skills, and gaining self-confidence. They studied various grammar subjects in the text and tried to make their own sentences by using those structures while memorising the script. They were expected to memorise the whole script as they did not know what role they were going to play; thus, they were able to prompt their friends once they forgot their parts.

Another data collection instrument was the KELT exam that consisted of reading, writing, listening and speaking, which were the 4 basic skills of English, and listening section was divided into two as note-taking and while listening. The score distribution was as follows; 30 points for reading, 20 points for listening (while listening 10 + note-taking 10), 30 points for writing and 20 points for speaking, a total of 100 points. However, since the aim of this study was to investigate whether role-playing reduces students' foreign language speaking anxiety, other data other than speaking was ignored.

The speaking exam was made up of three parts. Students were paired up with another examinee. In the first part, which was called ‘interview’, students had a conversation with

the examiner. They were asked one general or personal question on familiar topics. For this section, examiners had a list of questions and randomly chose one question to ask for each student. Students had maximum 30 seconds to answer the question. If they could not answer the question or give a yes/no answer, then they were asked one more question. Students' request for definitions of unfamiliar words were kindly turned down with a statement like *"Sorry, I cannot help you with that."* And the duration was 2 minutes maximum for this part. The second part was named 'monologue' and the duration was about 4 minutes. For Part 2, students were asked a question on which they were supposed to speak in a monologue. First, Student A was asked a question, and expected to prepare for his/her talk within 30 seconds and to speak for another 1 minute after the preparation. Then, Student B went through the same procedure. During the preparation time, each could take notes if they wished. The goal of Part 2 was to measure students' ability to talk about a topic, develop their ideas about that topic, and use relevant grammar and vocabulary. The last part was discussion with the other examinee and the allocated time was about 8 minutes for this part. In the third part of the speaking exam, students discussed an agree/disagree prompt with their partners. One student agreed while the other disagreed, and students attempted to persuade each other while refuting the opposing viewpoint.

The students were graded according to the criteria which was pre-prepared and shared with students beforehand. The aim of sharing the criteria with the students in advance was to be transparent and objective with evaluating process and standard among other examiners and assessors. The criteria consisted of four categories including grammar& vocabulary, delivery (pronunciation and fluency), content, and functional language (communication strategies). Finally, the participants were observed during the role-playing sessions in regard of the change in their attitudes towards the target language, how role-playing affected their academic, social and personal life throughout these role-playing sessions. B2 level class students taught by the researcher were taken into consideration in terms of their anxiety level while speaking and the researcher participated in the research as the applier and observer in students' performance and reported the findings during acting, memorisation and reflection on what sort of impacts role-playing activities had on speaking anxiety and their language success.

To ensure fairness, both experimental group and control group used the same lesson hours, books, and materials throughout the module. Unlock 5 Reading, Writing & Critical Thinking (Second Edition) by Cambridge Press, and speaking, reading and writing Booklets written by Prep School instructors were used throughout the academic year. The booklets' main focus was to help students pass the exams as they were all designed according to the exams written by Testing Units. Both control group and experimental group participants used the same course-books and followed the same pre-determined curriculum, but experimental group took role-playing activity, additionally. All those course-books were mainly focused on improving students' grammar, listening, speaking, and writing skills in the target language.

3.4 Data Analysis

This section aims to reveal how the data is analysed. As the focus of this study is to reveal the reasons of foreign language speaking anxiety, whether role-playing has an impact on speaking anxiety and the effects of role-playing on EFL learners' speaking skills, the gathered data is analysed in three stages.

The initial stage is the analysis of the survey results. After conducting the survey via Microsoft Forms, the results are gathered in tables, the percentages and ratio are calculated and interpreted. Each item in the survey (both demographic and foreign language speaking anxiety items) is interpreted through tables in order to analyse in what situations students feel anxious in terms of speaking a foreign language. With the help of the results gathered from the survey, the major reasons why students have anxiety during speaking a foreign language and speaking exams are analysed.

The following stage is to observe students during the role-playing sessions. The role-playing sessions lasted 10 weeks and the participants had been observed since the beginning of the sessions in order to see the changes in their personality, attitudes towards the English language, and their improvement in speaking skills in the target language. The observations throughout the sessions were analysed and discussed in the Results chapter.

The final stage is to analyse the KELT Exam results in order to see how role-playing affect students' speaking skills. All the students who successfully complete B2 level have

right to take the KELT exam so as to go on their higher education in their departments. The exam results of each student were gathered in tables with breakdowns such as reading, writing, listening and speaking. However, merely the speaking section results were gathered in tables and analysed since the focus of the study was to reveal the impact of role-playing on speaking anxiety and proficiency. Right after all the results were put into tables, students who took the role-playing sessions and the others were compared in terms of their the KELT exam results. Besides, speaking section in the exam was recorded. The videos were watched by the researcher in order to see and analyse the examinees' anxiety level during the speaking exam as well as their pronunciation, grammatical competence, social competence and strategic competence. For the sake of fairness, the researcher was assigned neither as an assessor nor an interlocutor during the whole exam. The impacts of role-playing on speaking skills were analysed in the Results chapter.

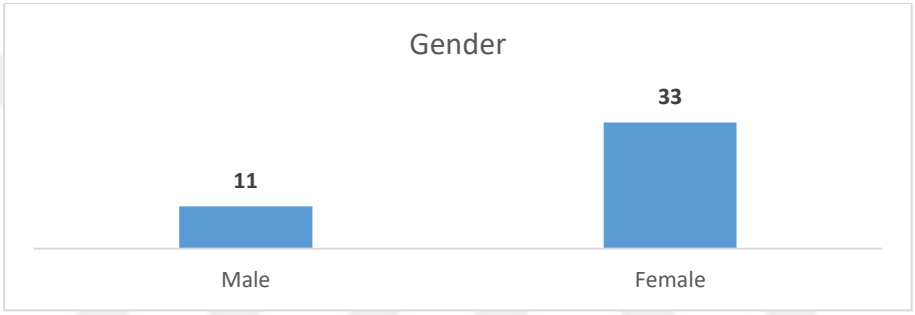
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

This chapter aims to analyse the results of survey, KELT exam, and how role-playing influenced the participants.

4.1 Findings

The demographic statistics give the data about participants' gender, their first encounter with the English language as a lesson, whether they like English lessons and studying English in their leisure time and, if yes, to what extent.

Table 1. The number of students according to their gender.



The majority of the participants in the research are female and the rate of female participants is three times higher than male participants.

Table 2. The first encounter with the English language

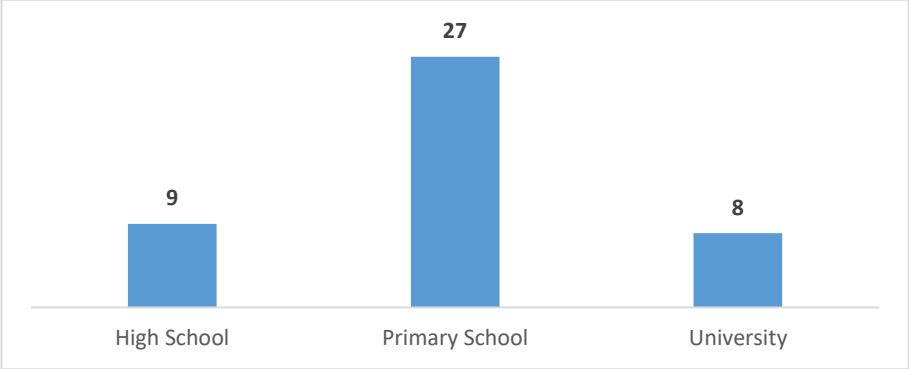
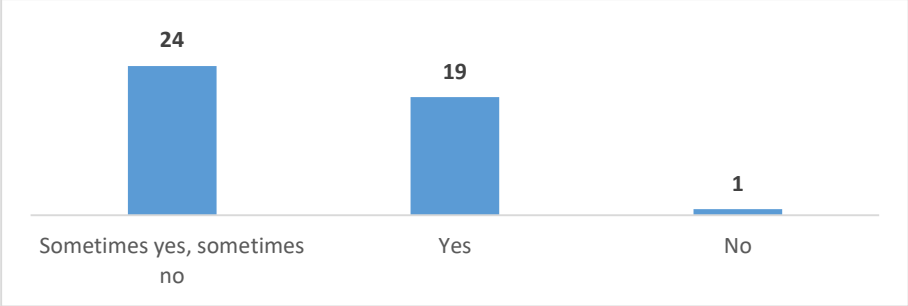


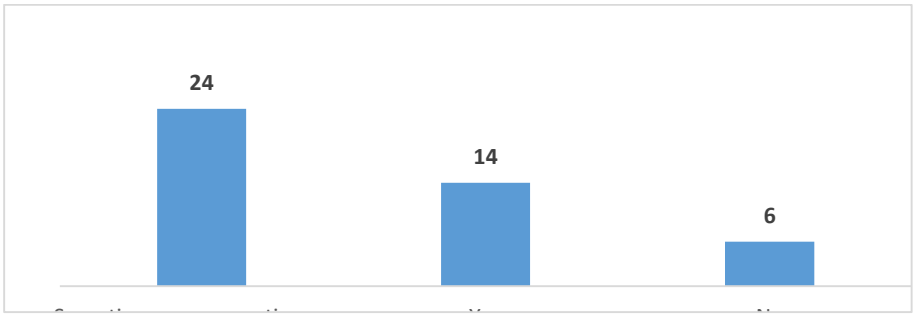
Table 2 indicates that more than 50 % of the participants started learning English when they were in primary school, that is to say, they had been learning English for about fifteen years. But then, one third of this participant number was introduced to English education during their high school years. Very close to this ratio with 18%, other students began having English lessons at İstanbul Kent University for the first time.

Table 3. Attitudes toward English lessons.



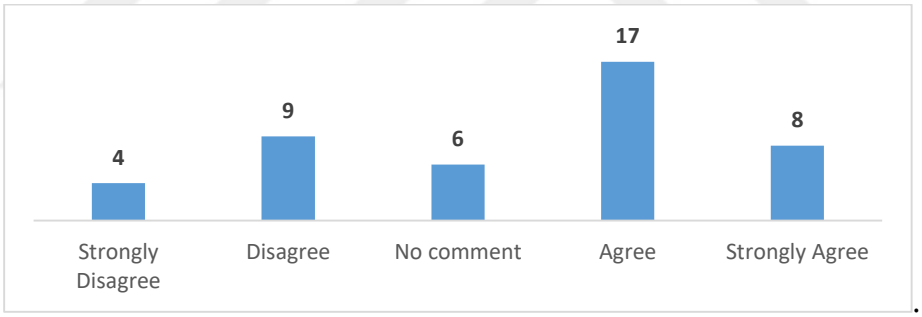
According to Table 3, only one student does not like English lessons and almost half of the participants have a positive attitude towards English lessons. Approximately 55% of the participants responded that they sometimes like English lessons and sometimes do not. They verbally mentioned that their attitudes highly depend on the activity or the skill to be learnt.

Table 4. Like/dislike studying English after class



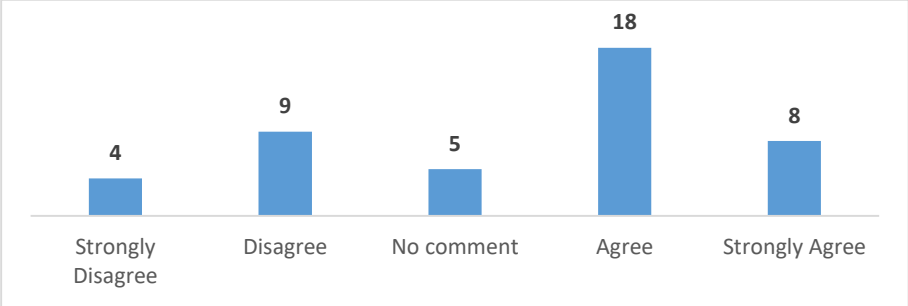
Contrary to general belief that most students do not like studying English as they feel incompetent in speaking or think that grammar structures are difficult to learn, it can be inferred in Table 4 that more than 30 % of the participants like studying English after class except for six out of 44 students. On the other hand, more than half of the participants sometimes like and sometimes do not like studying English after class for various reasons depending on the topic, context, and the homework.

Table 5. The participants' responses to item 6



As can be seen in Table 5, 8 students out of 44 have excessively high anxiety in English classes whereas only 4 participants do not feel anxious in English classes at all, though 9 participants disagree that speaking English causes anxiety. The ones who are highly anxious while speaking started having English classes at university or high school. Similarly, the ones who started having English classes in primary school responded that they feel comfortable when they are asked to speak spontaneously or with pre-planned contents. It can be inferred that the more students are exposed to the target language the less they become anxious while speaking. Besides, 17 participants also admit to being anxious while speaking English in class. On the other hand, approximately 14% of the participants did not want to comment on the item.

Table 6. The participants' responses to item 7.



The atmosphere in which students are supposed+------ to speak in the target language is another significant issue. Not being familiar with people whom they are talking to stresses students as they think they will be judged negatively when they mispronounce a word or make grammatical mistakes, so they feel nervous about speaking English and become less eager to talk. As can be seen in Table 6, almost 60 % of the participants think they are less anxious while speaking to people they know whereas only less than 30 % of the participants have an anxiety issue even if they know the people. Merely 5 participants abstained.

Table 7. The participants' responses to item 8.

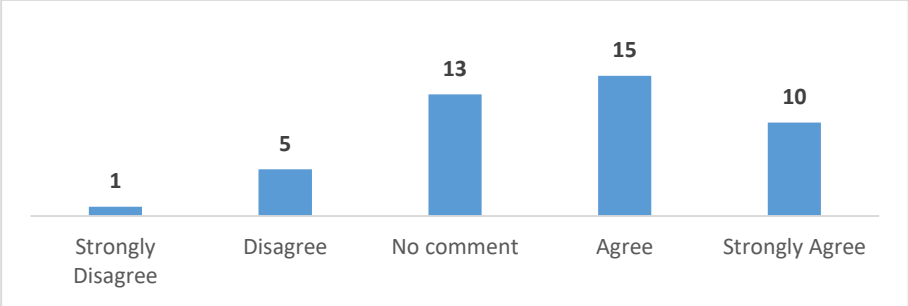


Table 7 shows that despite the fact that almost 30 % of the participants are indecisive, more than 50 % of the participants feel quite at ease speaking in English when they read the prepared materials before the class or acknowledged the subject beforehand. On the other hand, the number of students who do not agree with the directive remains at a low rate compared to the number of participants who agree with it. In other words, students think that being informed on what the content is in advance does not make them feel comfortable and they are still anxious about speaking.

Table 8. The participants' responses to item 9.

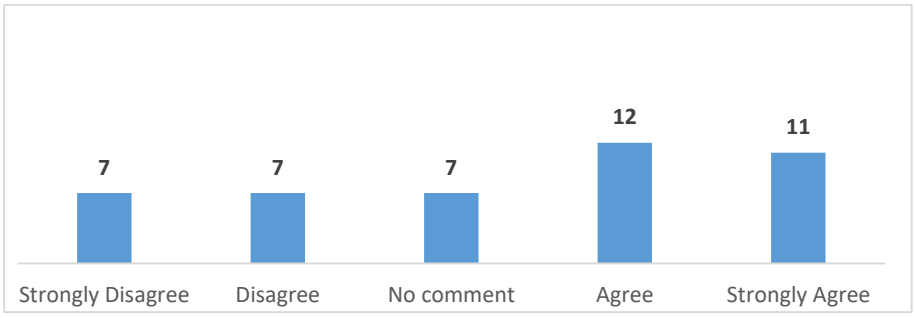
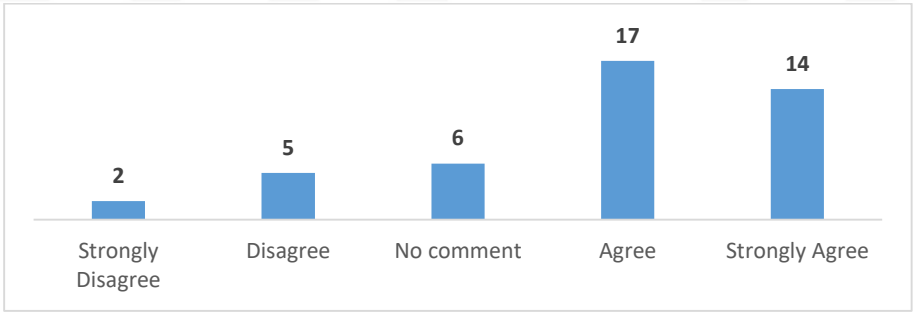


Table 8 indicates that the number of participants who feel highly anxious and moderately anxious when they are the only one answering the question outweigh the number of participants who answer that they are not really concerned while they are the only speaker. Besides, the numbers of the participants feeling highly anxious, moderately anxious, and not preferring to comment are the same.

The next table shows the statistics for the FLSAS of the participants' answers to item 10 regarding if students get nervous when they know they are going to be evaluated.

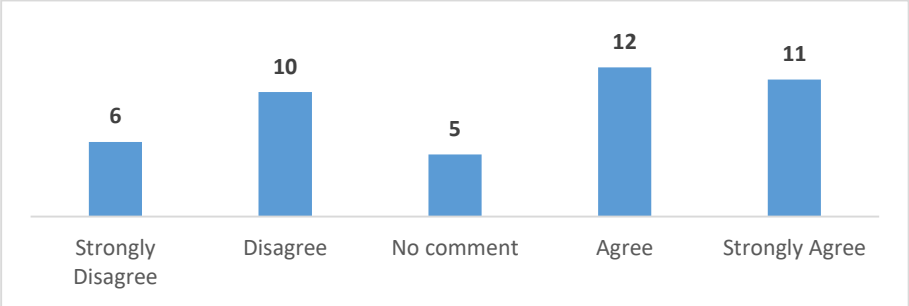
Table 9. The participants' responses to item 10.



Speaking exams or oral grading usually makes students feel uncomfortable and anxious and this table proves the presence of foreign language speaking anxiety among students. Only 2 students feel comfortable and 5 out of 44 students are slightly anxious during speaking exams. On the other hand, 17 students are anxious when they know they are being graded or evaluated, whereas 14 students feel highly anxious about being graded in oral activities, implying that the majority of the students do not feel uncomfortable on account of grades, scores or passing/failing the exam. 6 students abstained.

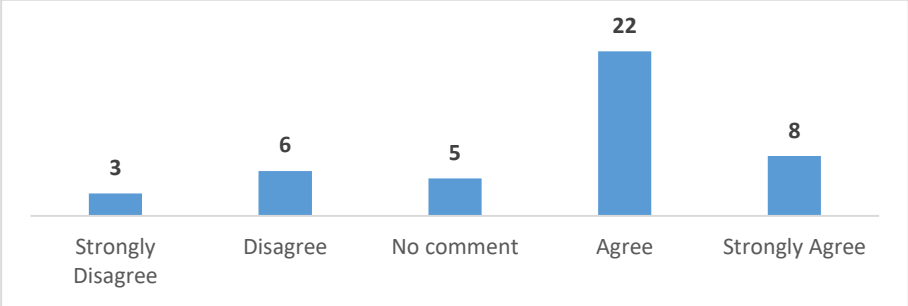
The next table indicates if the students are perfectionists while answering questions in English classes.

Table 10. The participants' responses to item 11.



There might be some students who know the answer but hesitate to raise their hands just because of making mistakes. In order to find out if this is the case, participants are asked to respond to this item and the results show that 12 students out of 44 are afraid of making mistakes and 11 students have high anxiety levels once they believe they make mistakes. In other words, more than half of the participants want to be perfect in English before they speak, sharing their ideas, feelings in the target language. On the contrary, only 6 students are not nervous at all while answering questions regardless of whether or not their answers are wrong, while 10 students feel moderately uneasy while answering questions in English classes. 5 students avoided responding to this item.

Table 11. The participants' responses to item 12.



As can be seen in Table 11, 50 % of the participants have fun in English classes if they are told that they are going to have English discussion sessions in class and the rest of the participants are divided into four categories. Only 3 participants do not enjoy English classes at all when there is discussion in English whereas 6 students slightly enjoy discussing a topic in English. Conversely, 8 students delight in debates in English though 5 students preferred not to comment.

Next table shows the percentages of participants' feelings of embarrassment while they speak in front of the class and their peers.

Table 12. The participants' responses to item 13.

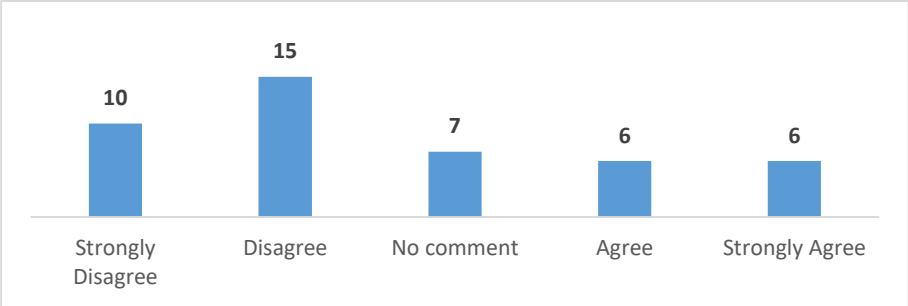
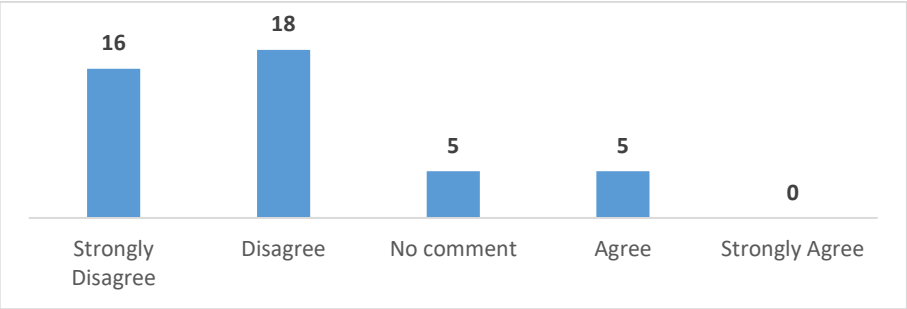


Table 12 indicates that 10 students do not feel ashamed of speaking English in front of class at all while 15 students feel slightly embarrassed; that is to say, more than half of the participants (56.8 %) have no issue with speaking at the front of the class. On the other hand, 6 students feel extremely embarrassed when they are supposed to speak English at the front of the class and the same number of students feel moderately ashamed in the same situation. 7 students did not prefer to answer this item.

Next table refers to students' fear when they are corrected by their teachers.

Table 13. The participants' responses to item 14.



As can be seen in Table 13, 16 students strongly disagree that they feel uncomfortable when they are corrected by the instructor and similarly 18 participants mentioned they feel fine when the teacher correct their grammar, pronunciation or spelling mistakes whereas 5 students are slightly anxious of being corrected and the same number of students abstained. On the other hand, not even one student is afraid of being corrected by the teacher.

Table 14. The participants' responses to item 15.

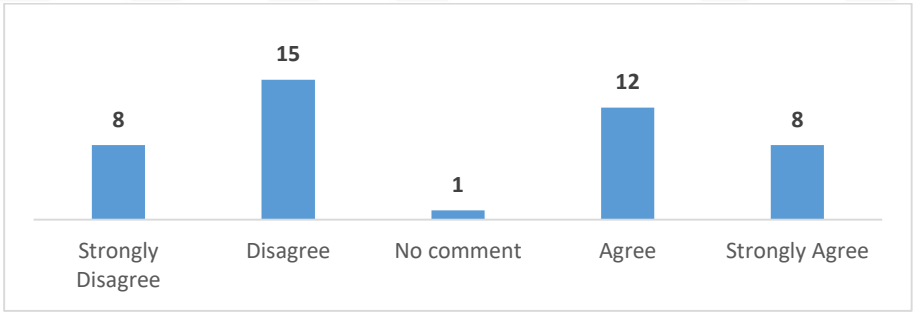
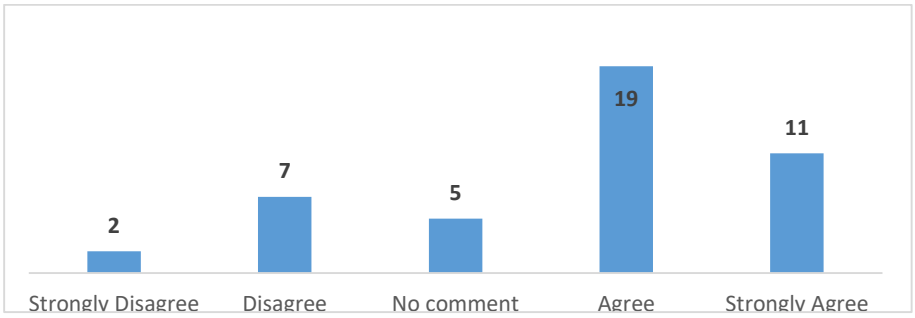


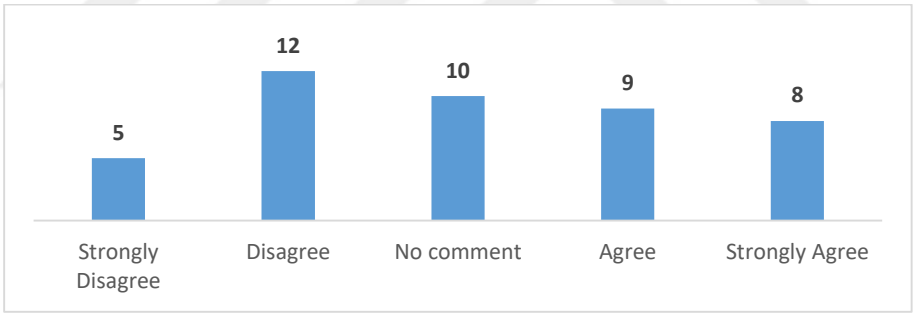
Table 14 shows that 8 out of 44 students get nervous in group discussions and the same number of students get extremely nervous when they participate in group discussion. 34 % of the participants do not think they are uncomfortable in group discussions while 27 % of the participants feel tense when they are asked to discuss in a group. Only one student did not answer this item.

Table 15. The participants' responses to item 17.



Oral exams have adverse effect on language learners and in Table 16. It can be seen that almost half of the participants, 43 %, are worried in oral exams. Besides, 11 participants strongly agree with the item; that is to say, they are extremely worried when they are supposed to speak English in speaking exams. Only 2 students out of 44 feel very comfortable while they are in an oral test. 7 of the participants have some worries, though 5 participants refrain from responding.

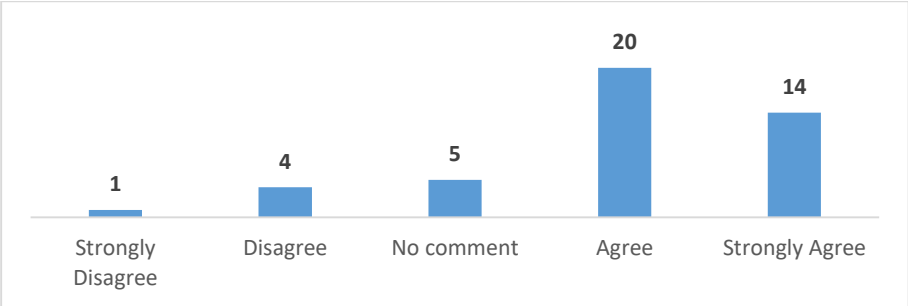
Table 16. The participants' responses to item 18.



As can be inferred from Table 17, the size of the class does not matter for 10 respondents as they prefer not to comment on this item. However, 9 students firmly believe they can speak English more comfortably if the class are smaller and similarly 8 participants prefer to have a smaller class while speaking English. On the other hand, 12 students think that the number of the students in a class would not make them feel better about speaking in the target language. Likewise, 5 students strongly disagree with the item and think there is no correlation between the number of the students and feeling better about speaking English in a class.

Next table indicates the anxiety caused by students not expressing' feelings, ideas or thoughts in a proper way.

Table 17. The participants' responses to item 19.



This table demonstrates the percentages of students' feelings when they can not express themselves effectively in the target language. While only 1 student does not get nervous when s/he cannot express his/her thoughts effectively while speaking English, conversely the majority of the participants, 77%, get stressed when they are unable to express themselves properly in the target language.

Table 18. The participants' responses to item 20.

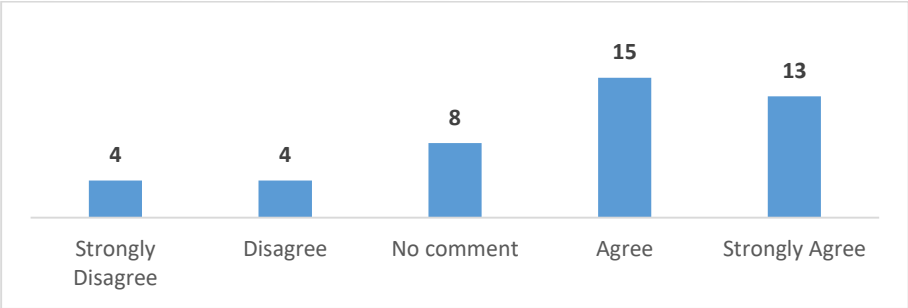
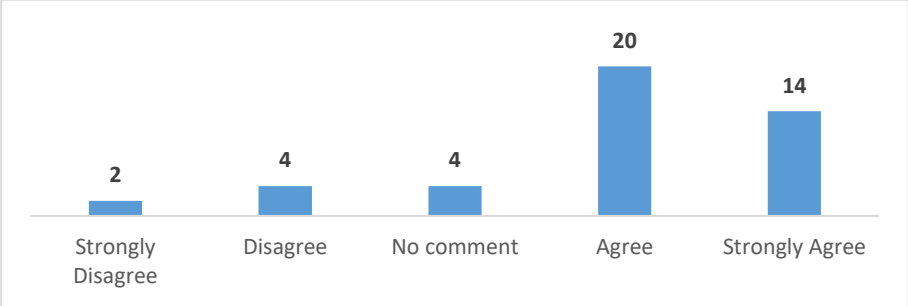


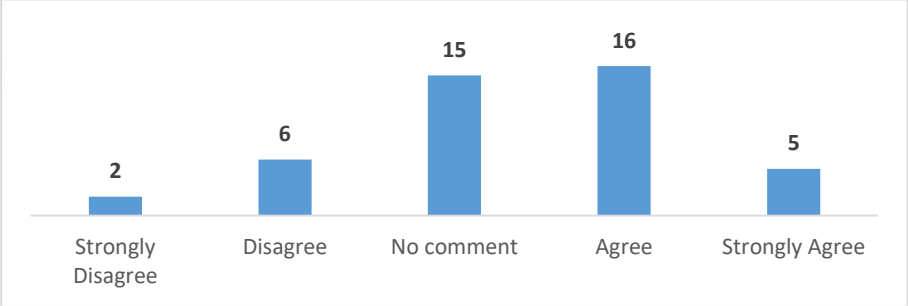
Table 19 gives information about pre-planned oral activities and students' eagerness to participate in oral activities. As can be seen in the table, 13 participants are highly motivated to speak English in class when they know the oral activity beforehand and 15 students feel more enthusiastic to be part of the oral activities in that case. However, 8 students feel disinterested in oral activities when they are informed about the oral activities. 8 students out of 44 did not want to comment on this item.

Table 19. The participants' responses to item 21.



According to Table 20, the majority of the participants feel much more relaxed when they are asked to work in pairs. 20 students feel less nervous when they share the activities together with their pairs and 14 students strongly believe they would not feel tense if they were given a chance to work with a partner. But only 2 participants are agitated once they are expected to work with a peer and similarly only 4 students feel laid-back when they can work alone in activities, while 4 students remained impartial.

Table 20. The participants' responses to item 22.



As can be seen in Table 21, only 2 students do not prefer attending the lesson at all if there is an oral task to be performed and 6 participants also dislike going to class in the same situation. In contrast, 16 students like being in class to participate in oral tasks and 5 students are highly motivated when they know there are going to be verbal tasks. The number of students who did not want to respond to this item is 15.

Table 21. The participants' responses to item 23.

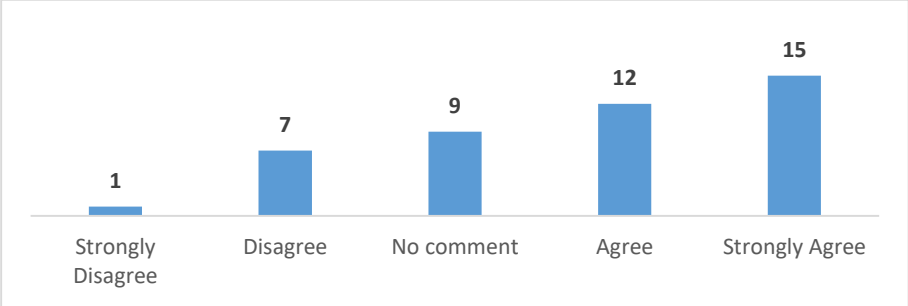
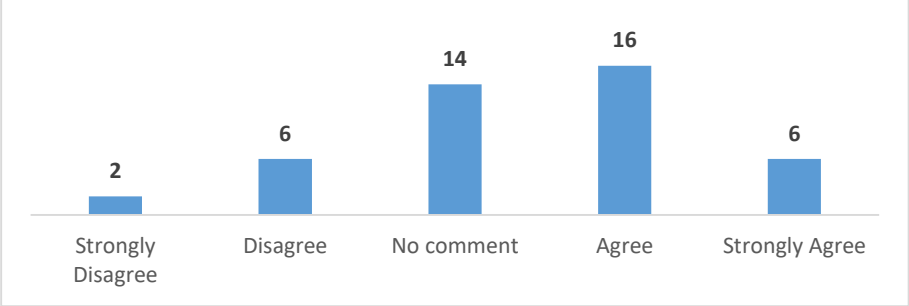


Table 22 gives information about students' fear of being laughed at by others if they make mistakes during their verbal performance. Only one student is highly scared of making mistakes on account of the fact that they think other people make fun of them. Besides, 7 students are slightly concerned about being laughed at by other people because of their pronunciation mistakes or inappropriate grammar usage. On the other hand, 15 students are aware that everybody can make mistakes while speaking in the target language which is why they do not feel nervous or anxious of making mistakes and being ridiculed for this. 12 students agree with this item as they know they are not perfect, and therefore making mistakes would not cause others to laugh at them, while 9 students avoided responding to this item.

Next table indicates students' eagerness to answer questions in English classes.

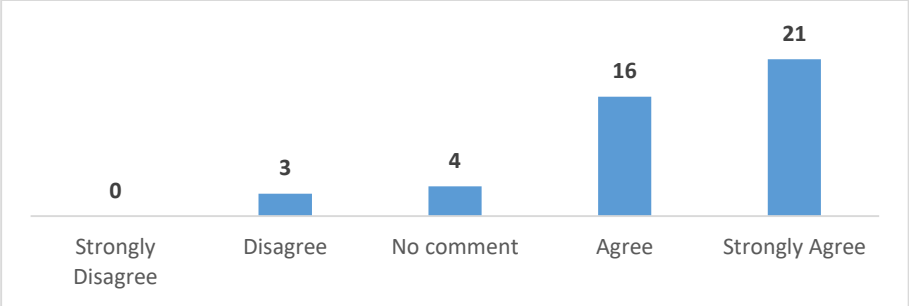
Table 22. The participants' responses to item 24.



According to Table 23, 2 students are definitely hesitant answering questions in English classes whereas 6 students rarely feel willing to raise their hands for some reasons. Nevertheless, 16 students are keen on answering questions asked by their teachers or instructors. Likewise, 6 students have high motivation in responding or sharing their ideas accordingly. Although 14 students do not comment on this item it might be inferred that they may think their responses are down to whether they know the answer or not. Furthermore, their mood or the situation they are in might change their attitude.

Next table demonstrates the relation between their willingness and interests to take part in activities if the topic is appealing.

Table 23. The participants' responses to item 25.



As can be seen in Table 24, the topics that students are expected to talk about or work on influence students' interest and motivation positively. 21 participants mention they are absolutely motivated when the topics are thrilling and want to engage in the activities related to the topic. Also, 16 participants believe the more their attention is attracted by the topic the more they become eager to join the lessons voluntarily. And one of the participants disagrees with the irrelevance of the topic and their willingness to participate in activities. Nonetheless, the minority of the participants with approximately 7% think that their motivation is not fostered by how much the topic is interesting to them. In short, the number of participants who think that they voluntarily attend the lessons when they are interested in the topic outweighs the ones who claim there is no relation between the topics' being interesting and their enthusiasm.

Table 24. The participants' responses to item 26.

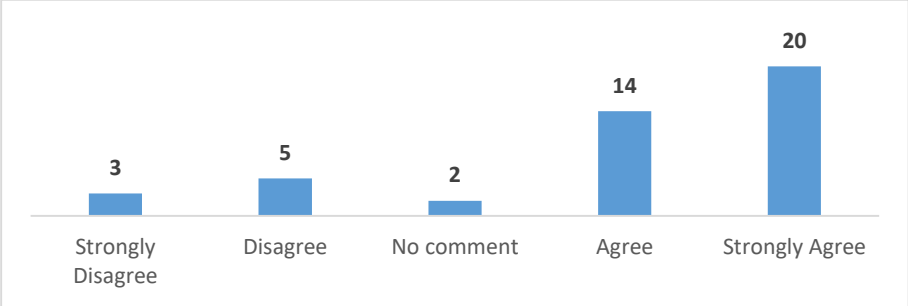
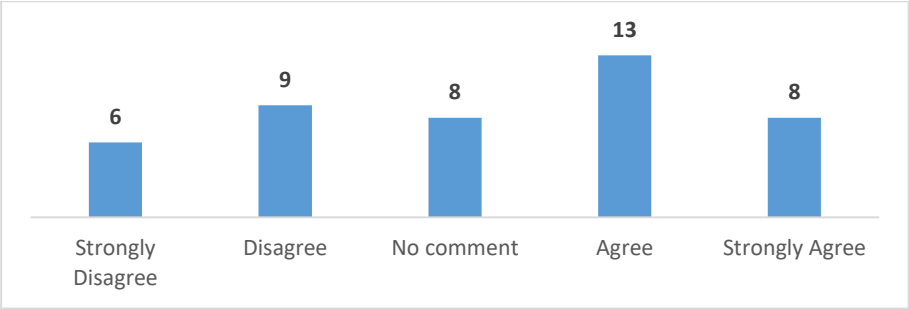


Table 25 demonstrates the significance of practice before speaking exams. More than half of the participants believe the more they practise speaking in class the less they feel nervous and anxious in oral exams. 20 out of 44 participants firmly believe that practice makes them better in speaking and also boosts their self-confidence in speaking exams, just like the other 14 students who agree that practice is the key to feeling comfortable in oral tests. Nevertheless, there are 2 students who have no comment on the prompt. 8 participants think they feel unease no matter how much they practice in class.

Next table indicates how students feel when their mistakes are corrected by their classmates, not by the instructor himself/herself.

Table 25. The participants' responses to item 27.



As can be seen in Table 26, most of the participants feel irritated when their classmates are asked to correct their mistakes. 13 participants prefer not to be corrected by their peers and 8 other participants really feel stressed when their classmates find their mistakes and correct them during /after their oral practice. On the other hand, 6 students do not mind being corrected by their classmates at all and that does not lead them to get demoralised or discouraged while 9 participants partly agree that being corrected by other students in class does not make a huge difference. Only 8 participants wished not to comment on the item for some unknown reasons.

Table 26. The participants' responses to item 28.

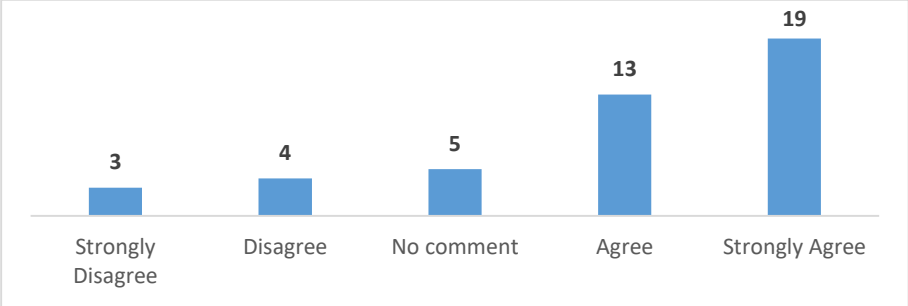


Table 27 indicates the pressure that students feel when they are corrected by teacher or instructor. 19 out of 44 participants feels no offence or stress when they are corrected by their instructors. Meanwhile 13 participants agree that teachers or instructors are there to correct their oral mistakes such as pronunciation, grammar mistakes, intonation. Therefore, they do not feel discomfort in that situation. Nevertheless, 7 participants in total do not wish their oral performance to be corrected by their instructors as they feel under pressure.

Table 27. The participants' responses to item 29.

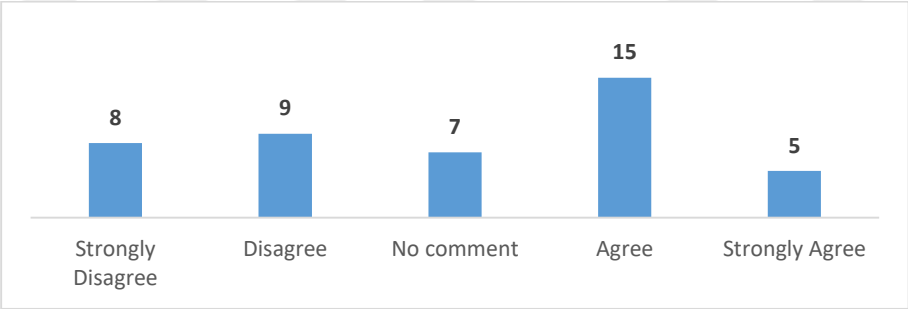


Table 28 demonstrates that 15 participants think that speaking classes create stress for them. That is to say, according to 34 % of the participants, attending English speaking classes causes them to feel more anxious than attending other classes. Moreover, 5 participants strongly agree that they absolutely feel more nervous when they attend speaking classes. On the other hand, 8 students do not find conversation classes tense at all. Likewise, 9 students consider speaking classes do not make them distressed or worried, though 7 participants preferred not to comment on the item.

Table 28. The participants' responses to item 30.

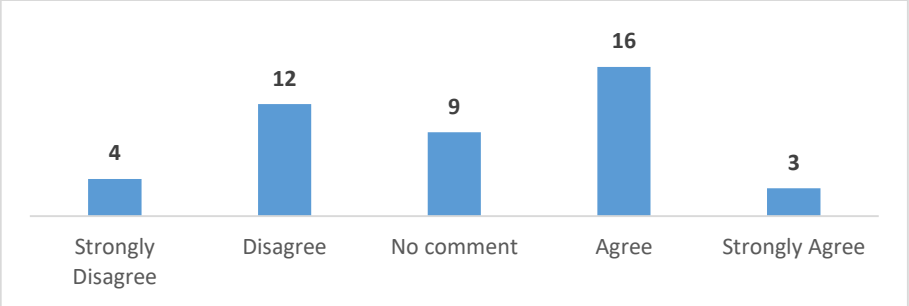
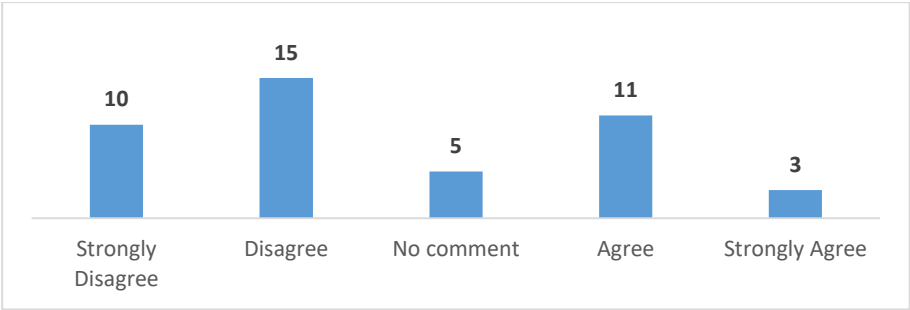


Table 29 shows that students have difficulty replying in English as 16 students confess that they stumble when they answer questions in the target language. 3 other participants definitely falter once they try to give an answer in English. 9 students do not comment on the item, 12 participants disagree meaning they answer questions in English with ease. Only 9 students remain indecisive.

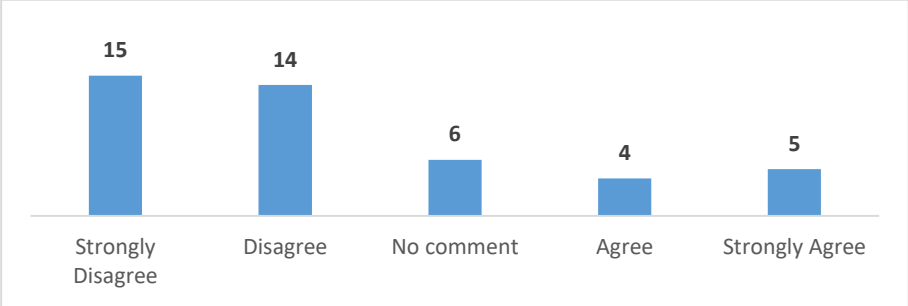
The next table aims to demonstrate the nervousness of the participants when they are asked to work collaboratively.

Table 29. The participants' responses to item 31.



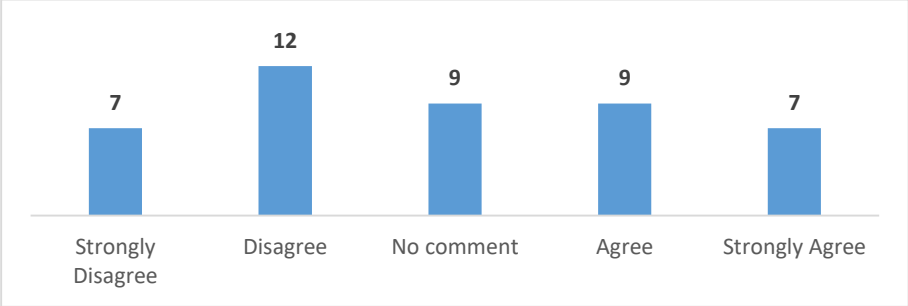
As can be seen in Table 30, more than 50% of the participants find group activities more comfortable. In order to see how students feel while working collaboratively, the participants are asked to what extent they agree or disagree with the item, and it shows that 15 students consider working in a group makes them less nervous. Similarly, 10 participants feel more self-confident in group work activities rather than working alone. On the other hand, 25% of the participants confirm that they feel nervous in group activities and only 3 students have a high level of anxiety whereas 5 students did not prefer to respond.

Table 30. The participants' responses to item 32.



According to Table 31, 15 participants have anxiety with relation to oral tests and 14 participants do not feel comfortable and self-confident during an oral exam. On the other hand, one third of the participants who are nervous during the speaking exams state that they do not worry at all during verbal exams. 4 out of 44 participants also feel worried during speaking tests that will result in failure or pass. 6 participants prefer not to comment on this item.

Table 31. The participants' responses to item 33.



According to Table 32, the number of the participants who feel anxious about speaking English and who do not due to being prepared for the pre-planned content are exactly the same, namely 7 participants. 12 students do not feel anxious as they believe they are ready to speak since they already know the content and did some study beforehand. However, 9 out of 44 participants mention they still feel nervous although they are well prepared for the scheduled contents or activities. The same number of participants avoided responding to the item.

Table 32. The experimental group's scores (KELT EXAM)

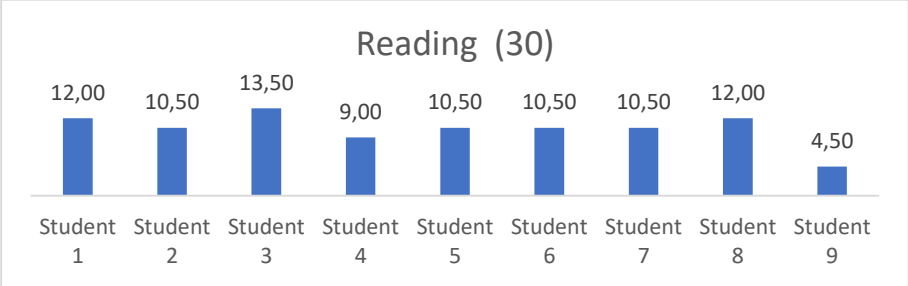


Table 33. The experimental group's scores (KELT EXAM)

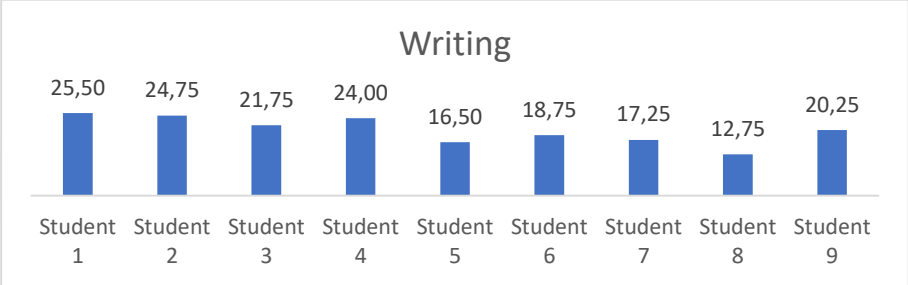


Table 34. The experimental group's scores (KELT EXAM)

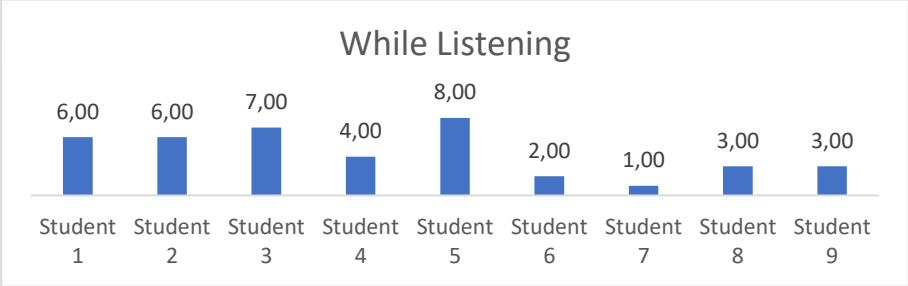
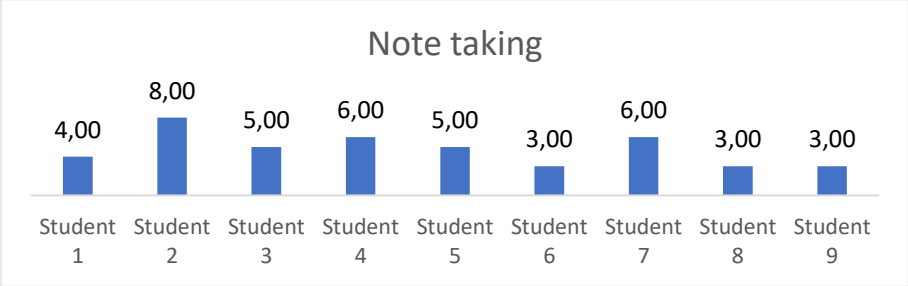


Table 35. The experimental group's scores (KELT EXAM)



As can be seen in Tables 33, 34, 35, and 36, when the experimental group's break down scores were examined in detail, it was seen that students lost points in reading, writing and listening parts to a large extent.

Table 36. The experimental group's scores (KELT EXAM)

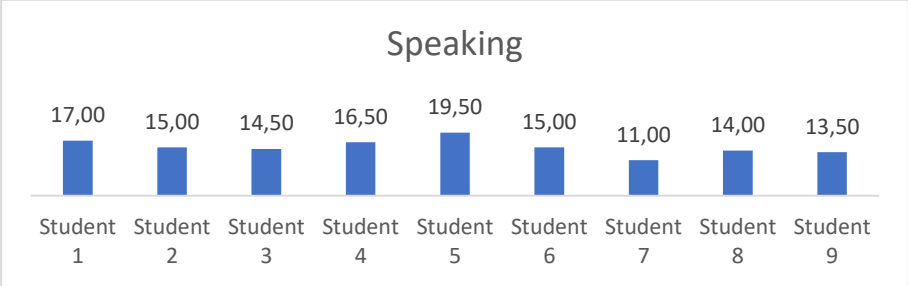


Table 37 indicates the speaking exam scores of the students who took the role-playing activities.

Table 37. All the students' speaking scores

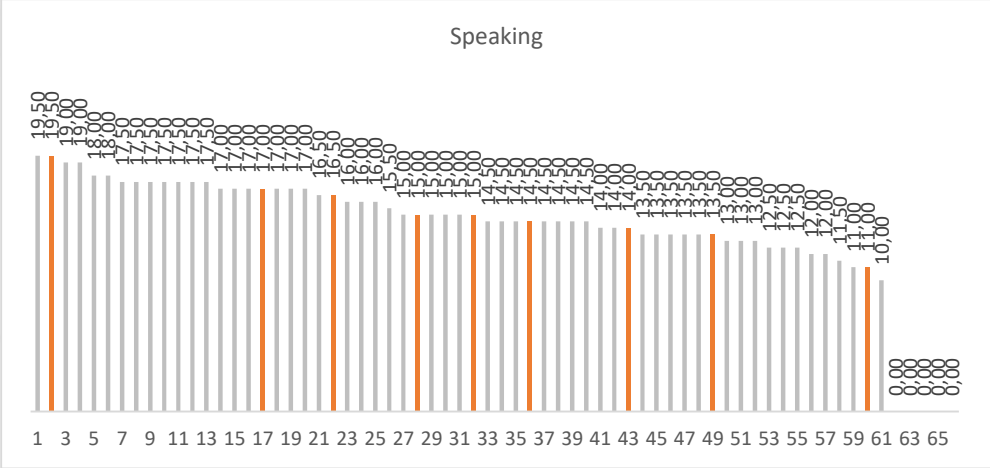


Table 38 indicates the results of the speaking test were ranked from highest to lowest among the students who passed and failed, 6 students who received role-playing sessions got a score above the average score, 1 student got equivalent score, whereas 2 students got a score below the average. Besides, when the audio and video recordings of the speaking exams were watched again, it was observed that the students who participated in the role-playing activities were less nervous and anxious compared to the other students.

4.2 Discussion

In this section, observations in role-playing sessions, the findings of the survey and KELT exam results are discussed in detail.

As can be seen in Table 2, not all the participants started to be exposed to English at the same age. Even though the majority of the participants started to learn English in primary school, they could not overcome their foreign language speaking anxiety for numerous reasons. Besides, Table 2 also indicates that there are still students who could not get English language education at primary or high schools since there were 8 out of 44 participants who stated that they had started to learn English at university.

When they were asked if they liked English lessons, more than half of the students mentioned that they sometimes liked English and sometimes did not. It can be inferred that students still consider English as a lesson but not as a language to communicate in. Their likes or dislikes of English were all down to the activities that they felt comfortable with as they were almost never taken out of their comfort zone. Nevertheless, 19 out of the 44 students directly clicked on the "yes" button, and the ones who also attended the role-playing sessions mentioned they were aware of the value of the language itself and the necessity of English. Thus, it can be inferred that students who internalise the notion and rationale behind learning a language have also got intrinsic motivation that makes them ready to learn with no dependency on what the activity is.

The second question was whether they enjoyed learning English after class, and the results were very similar to whether they liked English or not. In other words, there were many people who said they liked English sometimes, as well as those who wanted to learn English after class. It has been observed that the percentage of English students or students who do homework after class increases when homework is easy or fun, and also when the subject interests them. When asked to write articles or make posters, their motivation and enthusiasm turned out to be significantly reduced. In short, their motivation and willingness to learn English depended on the activity, homework or homework.

First and foremost, students get nervous while trying to express their feelings and ideas effectively in the target language. Lack of vocabulary, grammatical competence, and being misunderstood by others were the key concerns of the participants. Besides, it was observed that the participants who had been exposed more to the target language were less anxious. Therefore, it can be inferred that exposure is one of the fundamentals for learning and using a language without hesitation. As can be seen in Table 18, the

participants who think they cannot express themselves properly tend to feel anxious. That may cause unwillingness to talk or share their ideas, and that results in shyness, keeping silent in class. However, it is a well-known fact that practice is the key to speaking accurately, clearly, and fluently in language learning. That's another drawback for both students and instructors in terms of evaluating their performances, since students pull themselves back and instructors might think they do not know the answer or have nothing to share on that topic. On the other hand, Table 23 indicates that 16 out of 44 students volunteer to answer in English classes, while approximately the same number of participants are indecisive about commenting on the item.

Other anxiety-triggering issues for students are the context, content of the lesson, and the activity to be done. In other words, students feel more comfortable with and eager to participate in some activities and topics whereas classes like reading or writing do not attract students' attention enough or less than expected. As can be seen in Tables 11, 21, and 28, learners mentioned that they enjoyed English classes when they knew they were going to have oral tasks and discussion in class. It can be inferred that students do not want to be passive in class and just listen to the lecture, take notes, and do matching exercises. It also shows that learners tend to use the language itself, including grammar, structures, and parameters in English they have learnt so far. Besides, as Table 24 indicates, learners' attention and eagerness to take part in class activities are highly dependent on how interesting the topic is. It was observed that students were more active in discussion and oral tasks when the topic was riveting and attractive whereas students were reluctant, or half-hearted to do given tasks once the subject was unimportant or unstimulating for them. Thus, it can be inferred that students' analysis and gathering data of their interest to choose topics to be discussed play a crucial role in drawing students' attention, which also helps students' attention span last longer. Another assumption that supports this claim is that the more students enjoy the lessons, the more they enjoy learning the target language that results in a low level of anxiety as they feel themselves in their comfort zone.

Pre-planned discussion activity or content that informed beforehand is another factor that lowers the level of anxiety among students. As can be seen in Table 7, more than half of the participants mentioned they felt very relaxed about speaking in English class when

they studied planned content before the class. In other words, 25 out of 44 participants claimed they would be less anxious if they knew the content to be discussed beforehand. That also positively affected their participation in classes, considering Table 19, in which it was seen that they were more willing to speak in English class when they knew the scheduled oral activities. Thus, it can be inferred that choosing a topic out of nowhere or spontaneous speaking activities makes students more nervous and pushes them away from actively attending lessons. In addition, Table 32 supports this idea as 19 students did not feel anxious about speaking English when they were well prepared for the planned contents. It can be deduced that if students are given time to get prepared for the topic to be discussed, they feel more self-confident and motivated to take part in discussions in English classes. Nevertheless, it can also be discussed that learners are supposed to talk spontaneously in real-life conditions as there will not always be pre-planned or scheduled conversations in their lives.

As Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) mentioned one of the causes of FLSA is negative peer response, it was also found in this study as another worrisome issue for language learners. In this regard, the level of anxiety or nervousness is significant as, to some extent, the level of anxiety can be reasonable and taken under control. However, if that level is higher than average, learners might have difficulty speaking in a foreign language and they may show uncontrolled body movements. It was observed in role-playing sessions that the participants were anxious about speaking in front of others, though they knew them from their classes, and they hesitated to speak at first. This went on until they felt the friendly atmosphere and mistakes were tolerated but not graded. Conversely, Table 6 shows that the participants felt less nervous about speaking English in front of others when they knew them. They felt much more comfortable in a situation in which there was no judgement, no looking down on each other when a mistake was made, or a word mispronounced. In contrast to Dwyer and Heller-Murphy's findings (1996), according to Table 12, more than half of the participants claimed they did not feel embarrassed when they spoke English at the front of the class, whereas only 6 participants felt ashamed of speaking at the front of the class. According to Horwitz (1986) and Tsui (1996) students may feel nervous on account of making mistakes or being laughed at by others, hindering them from speaking in the target language. However, the survey that was conducted by the researcher showed that not every student has that anxiety or nervousness and as can be seen in Table 22, the

majority of the participants agreed that everybody can make mistakes while speaking English. That's why they were not afraid of being ridiculed by others despite the fact that there were eight participants who disagreed and felt moderately concerned. Moreover, the number of students in a class is another concern for language learners. It could be understood from Table 17 that the number of students in English classes influences learners in either a positive or negative way. The reason for the ones feeling nervous might be that they might feel that they do not have enough speaking time when the class is crowded. However, on the other hand, students might feel nervous if the class were smaller as they would have more time to speak, and the teacher/instructor would ask questions more frequently. Last but not least, students' self-efficacy is another perturbative issue due to the fact that they might disparage themselves when they compare themselves to their classmates in terms of grammar competence, vocabulary knowledge and speaking skills. Aydın (2001) and Yan & Horwitz (2008) found out, self-reflection and comparing students' language abilities to those in their classes cause anxiety. As can be seen in Table 15, believing or assuming their classmates are far better than themselves in English, participants mentioned that they would get nervous about speaking in oral activities. That might result in some students' high participation and some students' restraint.

The survey results showed that working in a group, in pairs, or working alone is another worrisome situation for language learners. To begin with, not all but most learners get anxious when they are the only ones answering the questions asked by instructors or teachers in English classes. Similarly, Koch and Terell (1991) found out that learners did feel comfortable when they were called with their names and expected to answer questions. As can be seen in Table 8, the majority of the participants felt nervous, and 11 out of 44 participants were highly anxious about being the only ones who were expected to answer. It can be deduced that students prefer to be asked in front of the entire class so that they do not feel rushed and can respond in their own time. It is not certain whether they know the answer or not. However, with the level of anxiety they have, they may not answer even if they know the correct answer. Likewise, Table 20 indicates that students felt relaxed in pair-work activities. Furthermore, 14 students strongly agreed that they preferred to work in pairs instead of working on a task alone. The study conducted by Liu (2006) also revealed that speaking anxiety reduced while learners were supposed to speak

among their classmates and pair work activities. It can be deduced that pair-work activities have a positive impact on anxiety. Thus, students do not feel alone, and they feel confident they can get help from their partners, which leads them to be active in activities. Besides, pair-work activities might make students feel secure so that communication and bonding among themselves could get stronger. That also fosters their self-confidence. Another issue that was shown from the survey is that of participating in group activities. On account of the fact that group work requires collaborative and communicative skills, some learners get nervous when they have to take part in group discussion. As can be seen in Table 14, the number of students who got nervous while participating in a group discussion, is slightly less than the number of participants who did not think they were uncomfortable in a group discussion. There might be various reasons, such as being shy, being laughed at by others, feeling worse than the other group members in terms of English language skills or lack of interpersonal skills. On the other hand, it was also proven in Table 30 as 25 out of 44 participants agreed that they felt fairly relaxed in group activities rather than working by themselves, whereas only 3 participants responded that they were absolutely nervous when asked to work as a team. One of the biggest advantages of working in a group as a team is that it also helps students work collaboratively and creates an atmosphere in which participants have fewer worries about learning or using what they have learnt so far. In short, group activities improve students' psychological, academic achievement, as well as their language competence.

Also, error correction is another important aspect to consider as it can negatively affect students. Thus, they may not be responsive to learning English, which also might cause learners to hesitate while answering questions, and the more they get nervous, the less they participate in activities or become unwilling to answer questions even though they know the correct answer. As can be seen in Table 10, more than half of the participants felt anxious about giving the wrong answer, and this fear of making mistakes or giving the wrong answer may lead learners to be passive in class and also affect their future personality negatively as they might feel inadequate. As mentioned above, one of the reasons for anxiety is a lack of confidence caused by making mistakes that can also result in learners' not taking risks. In contrast to this finding, participants had no trouble with being laughed at by others because of making mistakes, according to Table 22. In other words, it can be inferred that learners are afraid of making mistakes while speaking or

answering questions, not because they get ashamed, but because they want to be perfect in the target language in the sense of grammatical competence, communicative competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. In that regard, it can be said that perfectionism is another worrisome problem for language learners. In that regard, learners may tend to develop anxiety due to lack of linguistic competence (Horwitz, 2001). Besides, learners are negatively or positively influenced by the way they are corrected by instructors or peers. Although the study conducted by Aydın (2001) revealed that being interrupted and corrected by the teacher contributed to anxiety and became the one of the major sources of anxiety for Turkish EFL learners, this study found exactly the opposite. That is to say, as can be seen in Table 13, participants were perfectly fine with being corrected by their instructors/teachers and not even one student was afraid of attending speaking classes because of being corrected by his/her teacher whereas 5 students were partly nervous when they were corrected by an instructor. Another similar result was gathered by the item 27 when participants mentioned they did not feel any pressure when their teachers corrected their verbal mistakes. Briefly, it can be understood that teacher correction does not have a negative impact on learners. Even though learners are comfortable with being corrected by teachers, they find being corrected by their classmates annoying and bothersome. Participants felt irritated when their instructor asked learners' classmates to correct their pronunciation, vocabulary, or grammar mistakes (Table 26). It can be inferred that teacher correction attitude is another concern that triggers negative responses among language learners.

Finally, and this may be the most significant worrisome issue for students, is the speaking exam or being graded in oral activities. Most students consider English as a lesson to pass whereas there are some students who see a language as a communication tool, though the number of the first group of students overweighs the second type of students. It is a bleeding wound, especially in preparatory schools of higher education, where the main objective of students is to pass to a higher level or successfully complete prep school. That's why exams have got more importance than learning a language for students. As exams and scores are vital for them, students' situational anxiety level increases dramatically. Table 9 can be considered as evidential reasoning as the majority of participants at the rate of 70%, stated that they panicked once they learnt they would be

graded in oral activities. Similarly, 11 students were extremely worried about speaking exams, and 19 students stated they were moderately nervous about oral tests, according to Table 16. Another solid piece of evidence for that situation is Table 31, in which 29 out of 44 participants indicated they felt nervous in speaking exams as they were worried about failing the exam. On the other hand, participants also stated that the more they could practise speaking in class, the less they would feel nervous or anxious in speaking exams. To sum up, speaking exams have a negative impact on language learners in terms of getting nervous. However, practising speaking English more as in-class activities and teaching them discussion strategies could lower the level of anxiety among students.

38 students in total passed the proficiency exam and 60 was the minimum score to pass. 5 of the 9 students who participated in the role-playing sessions were successful in the proficiency test and 4 students unfortunately found their names on the list of unsuccessful students.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter aims to demonstrate what has been come to a conclusion in the light of the findings and give suggestions for further research.

The findings revealed that students at preparatory school of İstanbul Kent University had moderate level of foreign language speaking anxiety though the reasons differ. However, the reasons might be categorised into two main headings, such as personal reasons and teaching materials and assessment. To begin with, one of the main anxiety- triggering issues is learners' inequal progress and comparing themselves to other learners around them in terms of language competence. In other words, learners disfavour themselves and believe that their classmates are far better than them and this leads them to lose their intrinsic motivation. As a result, it fosters their speaking anxiety. In short, negative self-efficacy, self-reflection, and perception intensify their language speaking anxiety.

Another personal reason increasing the level of anxiety among learners is that lack of self-confidence in speaking the target language. Based on the findings, language learners suffer from their presumptive emotional barriers causing anxiety since they have difficulty conveying messages coherently. Thus, it can be said that language learners are hesitant, and they get nervous while expressing their ideas and emotions as they are afraid that they cannot express themselves effectively and accurately. Being misunderstood or misinterpreted makes them anxious while speaking in the target language.

The findings also revealed that learners hesitate to speak in the target language and they are unwilling to participate in speaking activities, particularly spontaneous ones, due to their past negative experiences that result in learnt helplessness. It also reduces their self-confidence and affects their attitude towards the target language adversely. With a reference to the findings mentioned above, the results suggest that being familiar with the topic to be discussed or the activity to be implanted has a positive influence on oral production of the target language. That is to say, a fairly given time before speaking activities helps students to proceed through the activities with the highest rate of motivation and supervision. Knowing the content of the oral activity reinforces consistent participation which leads to lower the level of anxiety. Internalising the aspects of the activity or the discussion topic, knowing the rationale behind the oral tasks, even

visualising the unity of the targeted performance provide students to develop a natural understanding of the context. It creates a coherent and fully acknowledged environment that supports language acquisition instead of learning. This natural flow of understanding and production tends to boost the positive reinforcement due to taking part in the activities without hesitation or anxiety leading immediate feeling of achievement and self-actualisation.

The findings indicated that learners are afraid of being asked and expected to answer questions addressed by their names. In other words, students feel more comfortable when the questions are asked to the whole class and they would like to have some time to think instead of facing the question on their own. Similar to spontaneous oral activities, learners would rather have pre-planned questions and they feel nervous when they are asked all in a sudden. Based on the observations and out of class talking, students confessed that they are afraid of giving wrong answers and feel left alone that causes anxiety and makes them pull themselves back.

Despite the fact that error correction is a must for instructors and learners, the way the learners are corrected had a huge impact on learners both emotionally and academically. As the findings above revealed that language learners do not feel humiliated or degraded when they make grammatical mistakes and are corrected by the teacher or instructor on account of the fact that they think everybody can make mistakes. However, they do not feel comfortable when their mistakes are corrected by their classmates or peers. As a result of this uncomfortable and irritating situation, students do not want to participate in the oral activities and share their ideas or answer the questions even if they know the correct answer. In conclusion, being corrected by their classmates demotivates the students and triggers their anxiety.

The level of anxiety is also riveted and directly proportional according to the context or the topics to be discussed and supposed to be interesting in order to draw students' attention and last their attention span longer so that they become more motivated to take part in the activities and feel relaxed as they are interested in the topics that they have fun. The more the context or the topic is familiar with the students, the less they develop nervousness or anxiety. According to the findings and the observations during the role-

playing sessions, students felt more confident when they mastered a subject or know the drill which resulted in low level of anxiety.

Last but not least, examination and being graded in terms of oral performance is one of the most initiators of anxiety that prevents students from learning the target language comfortably and consider the English language as a lesson. As a result of that, students focus on passing the upper level or completing Preparatory school successfully instead of learning the language to communicate. The survey results indicated that most students get nervous and panic once they learn they are going to be graded or evaluated.

When it comes to the effect of role-playing on students' proficiency level, it was observed that with the help of those role-playing sessions the participants got an above average grade. Once their speaking exam videos were watched again, it was clear that not only the way they spoke during the speaking exam but also their language competence and usage was far better when they were compared to other students.

When it comes to the findings how role-playing affected students' language anxiety, it was observed that role-playing helped language learners in both academically and psychologically. Role-playing sessions had a great impact on students in various ways. From the point of psychological benefits, it can be said that students' self-esteem increased, and cooperation decreased the level of anxiety which helped individual and group accountability. Students developed their critical and analytical thinking skills and academic benefits of collaborative learning through role-playing.

Besides, putting themselves into others' shoes let them sympathise with others, increased understanding of surroundings and environment, and allowed them to look at events, happening from a different angle/perspective. To give an example, one student pretended to be the president of the country and was asked what he or she would change in terms of health, education, tourism, and economy while the others pretended to be the members of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. In addition, they had to use unreal present conditional in terms of grammar competence, which was another advantage of role-playing, as they practised grammar in a communicative activity instead of just filling the gaps and doing homework.

Doing those exercises encouraged them and fostered their motivation even though their acting performance was not the main aim. Besides, their communicative skills and oral skills improved perceptibly on account of the fact that they were supposed to speak no other language but English.

When role-playing was used for students to demonstrate and utilize the oral production, it reduced the anxiety level significantly. With re-creating a new character on stage helped them to alienate and feel free from all the prejudice learnt and internalised in time. Instead, students could empathise with the role given and felt more secure during expressing their ideas without the fear of being judged for their speaking skills. Because they were pretending to be someone else, and pretence became the tool for dismissing the language barrier caused by past traumas and negative experiences.

Besides, participants established a mutual relationship and a bond. In other words, they strengthened their collaborative skills and teamwork. Even the shyest students actively participated in each activity voluntarily which proves that role-playing activities affected both students' speaking skills and their personality positively. They internalised the English language and realised that it is a tool for communication instead of merely a lesson to be passed. They mentioned that they had never enjoyed learning and studying English before and speaking was no more an anxiety triggering issue for them. Besides, as role-playing appeals to multiple intelligences, participants were able to find the most appropriate way to learn a language for themselves. Teamwork and mutual interaction fulfilled the need of using the target language as the main tool for communication where the students were released from the suppressive feeling of anxiety and acted as the part of a community shaped with the richness of vocabulary and correct intonation for them to have authentic conversations.

The findings and observations also brought out that role-playing has a positive impact on learners' proficiency in the sense of speaking anxiety as they felt more comfortable in the exam, though they had high level of exam anxiety especially for speaking section. When their speaking exam scores were compared and analysed, the students who took role-playing sessions did well enough as their scores were above the average.

All in all, the participants improved themselves in numerous ways, namely psychological, social, and academic perspectives. To illustrate, it was observed that they gained self-confidence and their foreign language speaking anxiety remarkably diminished as they were so willing to attend the sessions and take part in role-playing and improvisation. Speaking in English had previously been a cause for stress and they had been unwilling to speak in the target language; however, thanks to the role-playing activities they felt more comfortable while speaking English as they stopped getting nervous of making mistakes or feeling ashamed of speaking in front of others.

Despite a large body of research on foreign language speaking anxiety, the number of researchers who exclusively focused on the relationship between foreign language speaking anxiety and role-playing activities has been limited, and there has been relatively little FLSA research examining how role-playing activities can contribute to the reinforcement of oral communication skills in the context of lowering foreign language speaking anxiety. In order to achieve this goal, this study utilises role-playing exercises to explore how foreign language speaking anxiety affects EFL learners' ability to communicate in a foreign language. The findings of this study expand the use of role-playing activities by demonstrating the importance of action research, through which the researcher enriches his understanding of foreign language speaking anxiety and role-playing as an extracurricular activity for EFL learners, and by identifying the self-reflective accounts of obstacles and favourable circumstances encountered when role-playing is introduced to EFL learners in preparatory schools.

In light of the findings of this study, students' comparing themselves and their peers causes increase in speaking anxiety level. As it also leads them to lose their confidence and motivation, instructors should try to create a friendly atmosphere in class and encourage them to work collaboratively. This may hinder weaker students to overestimate the speaking skills of others. The motto of language teaching might be *"when there is competition, there is no collaboration and when there is no collaboration, there is no communication".*

Considering the potential unfavourable impacts of speaking anxiety on the students, instructors should support and promote students to participate in oral activities. Also, instructors' attitude should be positive, and they should give constructive feedback. The

findings shed light on the issue that students do not nervous about making mistakes, but they also do not want to be corrected by their classmates. Thus, error correction should be done just by the instructors.

The findings indicate that students would not like to take part in the oral activities if the discussion topic is not appealing to them; therefore, discussion topics and content should be interesting and up to date enough to draw students' attention and prolong their attention span. shared with the students before the speaking classes so that the students have the opportunity to get ready and prepared for the class. This may help students not feel tense when they are asked instant questions. Also, the questions should be asked to the whole class instead of addressing the question by students' names as the findings reveals that it causes to increase level of anxiety among students.

All in all, role-playing can be utilised as an extracurricular activity to foster students' collaborative skills since it requires collaboration and cooperation. With the help of collaboration, students can develop their communication skills that let them reduce their speaking anxiety and boost their motivation to participate in oral activities. As role-playing is used as an extracurricular activity, students are not graded so that the major concern of students, which is passing or failure in the speaking exams, will be removed.

Various suggestions can be made based on the results of the study. This study was mainly conducted to reveal the sources of foreign language anxiety in B2 level students. Therefore, another study may attempt to explore the causes of speech anxiety by involving students from all levels of language learning.

Second, the Covid-19 negatively affected the number of the participants of this study. Therefore, a larger number of learners can be added to the study for further research. Besides, as of the time being, the pandemic had another negative impact on the participants psychologically and mentally so another research can be done under more healthy conditions.

Third, this study was conducted in such a short period of time that a longitudinal study can reveal different findings and those findings can be compared and analysed to these findings.

Fourth, a nationwide study can be carried out instead of one foundation university students. In other words, all foundation university students or state university students can be included for further research.

Finally, as this study's proficiency findings were interpreted according to the proficiency exam prepared by İstanbul Kent University Testing Unit, another study can be conducted with an internationally recognised proficiency exam such as TOEFL/IELTS.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: The Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Scale

Personal Information:

1) Name:

2) Department:

3) Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male

4) When did you start learning English?

☐ Primary School ☐ High School ☐ University

5) Do you like English lessons?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes yes, sometimes no

6) Do you like studying English after class?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes yes, sometimes no

EFL Speaking Anxiety Scale– English Version

This questionnaire is prepared to collect information about your level of English language speaking anxiety that you experience in classroom atmosphere. After reading each statement, please circle the number which appeals to you most. There are no right or wrong answers for the items in this questionnaire. Thanks for your contribution.

'1': Strongly disagree **'2': Disagree.** **'3': Not sure.**

'4': Agree **'5': Strongly agree**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I feel anxious while speaking English in class.					
2. I feel less nervous about speaking in English in front of others when I know them.					
3. I feel very relaxed about speaking in English class when I study the planned contents before the class.					
4. I feel very relaxed about speaking in English class when I study the planned					

contents before the class.					
5. In English class, I start to panic when I know I will be graded in oral activities.					
6. I fear giving a wrong answer while answering questions in English class					
7. I enjoy English class when I know that we are going to discuss in English.					
8. I feel very embarrassed when I speak in English at the front of the class.					
9. Because of being corrected by my teacher, I am afraid of going to the speaking class.					
10.I feel nervous when I take part in a group discussion in class.					
11.If I think my classmates speak English better than me, I get nervous about					

speaking in oral activities.					
12.I worry about oral tests in English class.					
13.I would feel better about speaking English if the class were smaller.					
14.I am more willing to speak in English class when I know the scheduled oral activities.					
15.I am more willing to speak in English class when I know the scheduled oral activities.					
16.I feel relaxed in pair-work activities.					
17.I like going to class when I know that oral tasks are going to be performed.					
18.I know that everyone makes mistakes while speaking in English, so I am not afraid of					

being laughed at by others.					
19.I like to volunteer answers in English class.					
20.I am more willing to get involved in class when the topics are interesting.					
21.I do not feel tense in oral tests if I get more practice speaking in class.					
22.I feel uncomfortable when my teacher asks other students to correct my oral practice in class.					
23.I do not feel pressure when my teacher corrects my oral mistakes in class.					
24.Going to English conversation class makes me more nervous than going to other classes.					
25.I stumble when I answer questions in English.					

26.I feel nervous in group work activities.					
27.During an oral test, I do not feel nervous.					
28.Even if I am well prepared for the planned contents, I feel anxious about speaking English.					

Retrieved from Serkan Hasan BALEMİR (Adapted by Huang, 2004)

Appendix 2: KELT Exam Speaking Section (Sample)

EDUCATION

PART 1	**INTERVIEW**
TIME	**2 - 3 MINUTES (1 MINUTE EACH)**
MATERIALS	**NONE**

S1

To what age do you think education should be compulsory? Why?

S2

Do you think home-schooling should be widespread? Why? / Why not?

PART 2	**MONOLOGUE**
TIME	**4-5 MINUTES (1-2 MINUTES EACH)**
MATERIALS	**NONE**

S 1

Are students taught well enough at schools to prepare them for life? Why? /Why not?

S2

Are all the school subjects taught to students at schools necessary for their own life? Why? /Why not?

PART 3	**DISCUSSION**
TIME	**6 – 7 MINUTES (2 MINS THINKING TIME + 4 – 5 MIN DISCUSSION)**
MATERIALS	**1 STUDENT A TASK CARD, 1 STUDENT B TASK CARD**

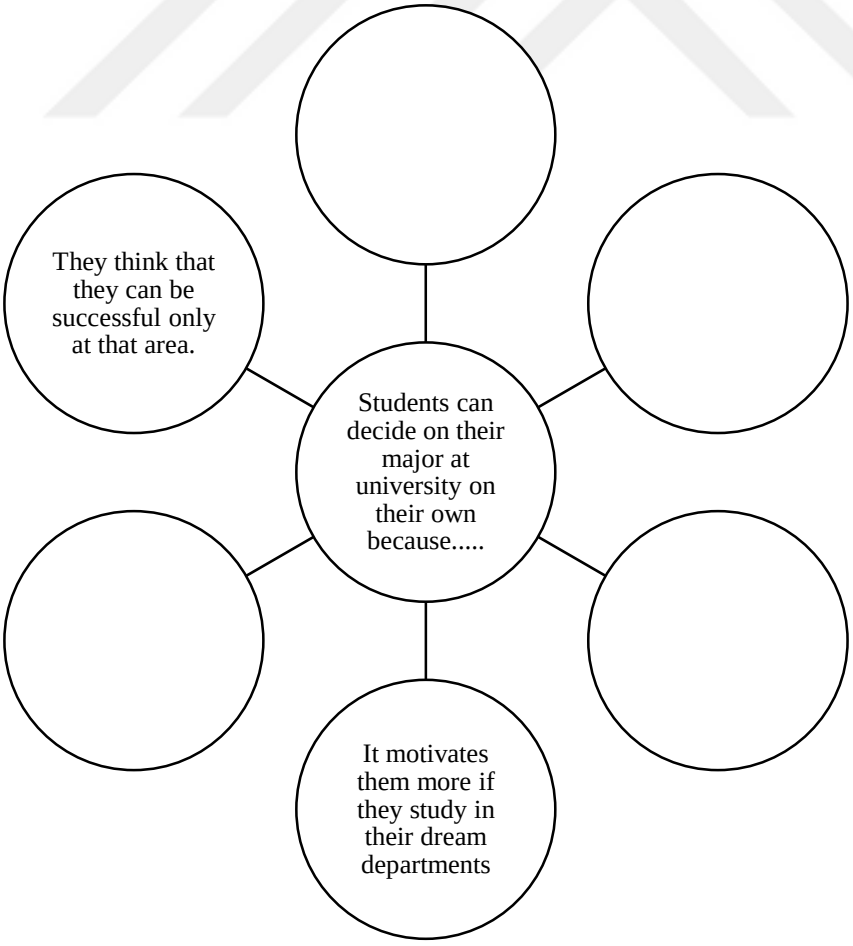
PART 3: STUDENT A TASK CARD

'Students can decide on their major at university on their own.'

You are going to discuss this topic with another student.

You will **AGREE** with the statement.

You can take notes below. You have 2 minutes.



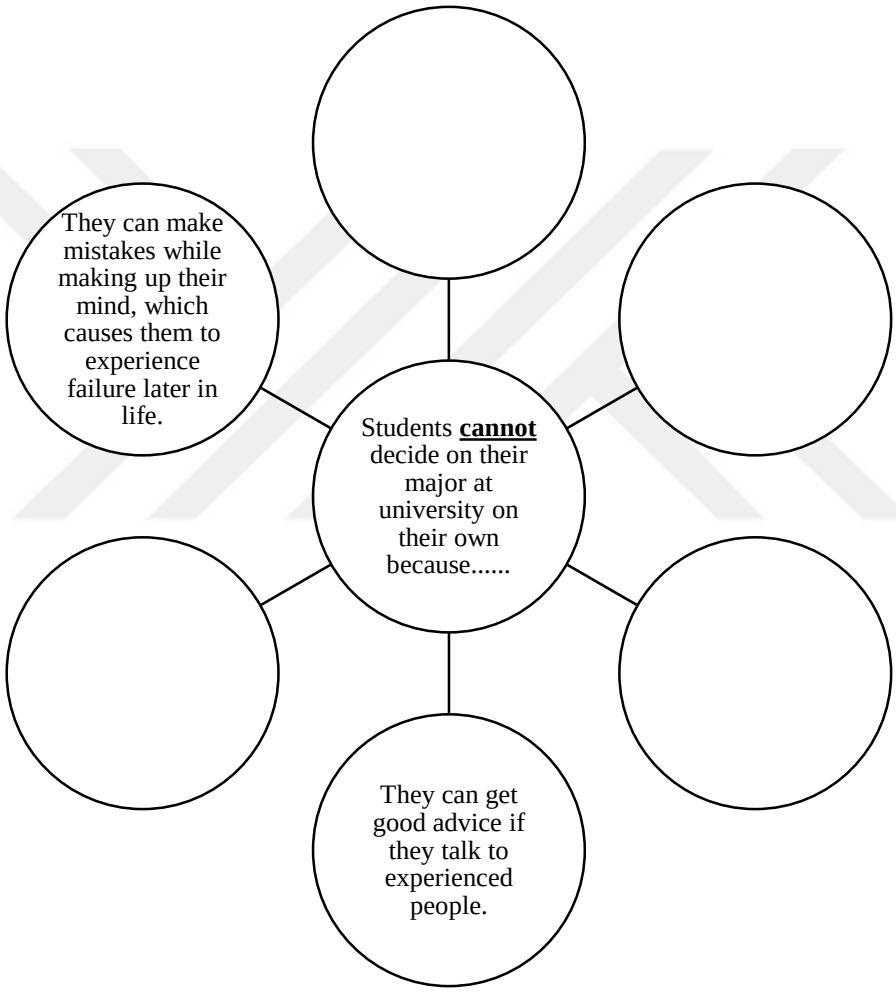
PART 3: STUDENT B TASK CARD

'Students can decide on their major at university on their own.'

You are going to discuss this topic with another student.

You will **DISAGREE** with the statement.

You can take notes below. You have 2 minutes.



Designed by İstanbul Kent University Testing Unit

Appendix 3: The play written by the researcher.

Scene: Home

Characters

Mother: Martha (54)

Father: Charles (57)

2 sons

Son 1: Henry (27)

Son 2: Archie (23)

2 daughters

Daughter 1: Lisa (32)

Daughter 2: Emma (19)

Student 1

Student 2

Student 3

Student 4

Student 5

Student 6

SETTING

A sofa

2 armchairs

A dinner table

Mother is talking to herself.

Father is watching TV.

Voice over: (mother) What did I do wrong? Is he really the man I loved once? I tried hard to love him again, but he has changed a lot. He used to bring some flowers, buy small gifts, we even used to go out for dinner from time to time. Now, look at him!

Mother wants to say something.

Mother: I… I think…

Father: Yes. What again?

Mother says nothing and father doesn't even look at her and keeps watching TV.

Voice over: (father) Inconsiderate, blind and stupid stupid Jack called me today, again! How many times do I have to tell him that I'll pay the rent in a week? What about Richard? Tomorrow, he wants me to work overtime. Any extra payment for it? No, of course! Ah, by the way I'm so sorry love. (Father looks at his wife and his lips move-I'm so sorry love, but mother doesn't look at him.)

Martha: Dinner? (Very soft and kind tone of voice)

Charles: Sure. We are not going to die of hunger, are we? (Retort)

Martha: (not to let the father hear this) 'yes please darling' would have also worked. (Murmuring)

Charles: Where the hell are the children? Aren't they coming for dinner?

Martha: Lisa is out with her friends and not coming tonight as you allowed her.

Emma is studying for her exam as I far as I know from Instagram. And God knows where your sons are.

Charles: What do you mean God knows where my sons are? They always know what they are doing. And call Lisa and tell her that I've changed my mind and she's coming home right away.

Door knocks. Archie comes home. His head bleeds. Wears shabby clothes.

Martha: Oh my God! Again? What happened to you? You've fought, haven't you? Yes, Charles you are right. Your son knows what he is doing. Let me get you a bandage. (Leaves the stage)

Father: I thought you were going to the match.

Archie: Well, technically yes. But we got into a bit of a drinking session. One thing led to another…

Charles: Let me guess. You encountered the rival fans.

Archie: Both yes and no. We found them in their cave.

Father: Also, you have lost your wallet.

(Horn beeps.)

Archie: And there's a taxi outside. Top broke my big man.

Father leaves the stage to pay for cab. Archie sits on the coach and moans. Henry enters the stage. He wears fancy clothes.

Henry: Oi oi mate. (Sees Archie's face, sneaky smile.) Are you alright?

Archie: Yeah yeah. How did it go? Did she like you?

Henry: Did she like me? Come on. She fell in love with me at first sight. And you know what? She was soooooo hot.

Mother and father enters the stage at the same time. Mother brings the bandage.

Martha: Oh, look who is here? Isn't he my big son, Henry? Long-time no see, ha?

Henry: You still remember my name, then no. What did you cook tonight? (Sits at the table)

Charles: We are waiting for your sisters. (Also sits at the table)

Henry: Since when? I'm starving.

Charles: Did you call Lisa? (Asking the mother)

Martha: Yes, but she told me that she's got a business dinner. As she has been looking for a job since she left school. (Meanwhile she sets the table)

Emma enters the stage with her nerdy glasses and by shooting a video.

Emma: (Very cheerful and energetic voice) Hello guys! Now it's time for me to have a great dinner with my precious family. I can't wait to eat what my mom cooked for us today. (Stops the video) (With a very vapid tone of voice) So, what are we eating?

Martha: (Puts her plate in front of her) This is what we are eating today. (Sits at the table)

Emma: #Pasta? #Again? You gotta be kidding me. Emma is sad ('Sad' smiley on her face)

Mother and father looks at each other for a while and lower their heads.

Archie: Take it or leave it, Emma. For God's sake! (Angrily)

Emma: Don't talk to me like that. I'm not your mate from the firm.

Henry: Then, you do what girls are supposed to do and cook something.

(Door knocks and Lisa enters the stage. She wears a skirt and a shirt that she looks professional. She is so happy, and she brings pizza.)

Lisa: Hello my (un)happy family! I got the job.

Martha: I'm soo happy dear. I thought you were not coming tonight. Let me get you a plate and share my dinner. I was not that much hungry indeed.

Lisa: No no mom. No need. The dinner is on me today. (Shows the plastic bags that she's holding)

Everybody looks at her and then the plastic bags that she's holding.

Lisa: Mom. I know what you cooked is also sooo delicious, but do you mind if we have these for dinner?

Martha: But I…. (Looks at her plate)

Emma: No no no no. She doesn't mind. Get them here Lisa. (She gets her phone ready to take some phtos of the 'dinner'.)

Lisa: Oh, come on Emma. What's wrong with you? Can't you put your phone away? I've just been employed and want to celebrate it as a 'family' like old good days.

Henry: As you said, Lisa, 'old days.' We are not children anymore.

Archie: He’s right.

Lisa: Let me tell you what is right. You Archie you always had mercy in your heart, but now you pretend like you’re a tough guy. That’s why you are in the firm. What about you Emma? (Looks at Emma) You were always cheerful. You used to play on the street, and nobody made you come home, but now your world is only you and your smartish stupid phone. (Looks at Henry) Don’t look at me like that, Henry. We all know why you hate girls and want to take revenge. But admit that she’s gone and will never come back. Just move on.

Charles: Martha, I love you sooooo much.

Everybody looks at him, gets shocked and speak with a single voice:

Archie, Henry and Emma: What?

Charles: I’ve been treating you so badly lately. You know I love you and I’ll always do. My business is going worse and worse day by day and…

Martha: Hush… I know and I do love you sweetheart.

Archie: I don’t know what all this tenderness is. But I frankly liked it.

Henry: Same ‘old days’ brother ‘same old days.’

Emma’s phone keeps beeping WhatsApp messages. Everybody looks at her and her phone. Emma throws away her phone onto the coach.

Emma: I don’t think it’s more important than my family and this moment.

Everybody smiles.

Henry: As you said mom ‘Long time no see’. Apparently, it’s the first time we ‘really’ see one another.

Video stops. Everyone freezes. The lights over the second scene are on.

Scene 2: Classroom.

Lecturer: So, you have just watched a typical 21st century family. What kind of values did you notice?

Student1: Lack of family ties. They had never talked or listened to each other.

Lecturer: Good. Thank you.

Student2: Emma looks so happy on social media, but she is not in real world.

Lecturer: Yes.

Student3: They all pretend as if they are somebody else.

Lecturer: What do you think Alice?

Student4: Sir I'm so sorry but I couldn't take my eyes off Henry. He was really handsome.

Students laugh.

Student5: Gender discrimination. Father favours his sons. Henry's attitude to women is unacceptable.

Student6: Sir? Who are those people?

Lecturer looks at his (frozen) family.

Lecturer: It's my (UN) HAPPY FAMILY.

Written by the researcher

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MA	2019-2022	Maltepe University**,** ELT
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2016 – 2019	Üsküdar University (English Instructor)
2012 – 2016	NLP Language School (English Teacher)
2009 – 2012	Spoken English (Educational Manager)
2007 - 2007	ECC Escola de Ingles, Sao Paulo, Brasil (English Teacher)
2005 – 2005	Universiade, İzmir (Translator)