

**T.C.**  
**ISTANBUL SABAHATTIN ZAIM UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE EDUCATION INSTITUTE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN YOUNG ADOLESCENTS**  
**IN A VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

**MASTER THESIS**

**Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT ÖZER**

**Istanbul**

**June - 2022**

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**Supervisor**

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**Istanbul**

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## THESIS APPROVAL

This study has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for MA Degree in English Language Teaching

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## **DECLARATION OF SCIENTIFIC ETHICS AND ORIGINALITY**

This is to certify that this MA thesis titled “Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in A Virtual Learning Environment” is my own work and I have acted according to scientific ethics and academic rules while producing it. I have collected and used all information and data according to scientific ethics and guidelines on thesis writing of Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University. I have fully referenced, in both the text and bibliography, all direct and indirect quotations and all sources I have used in this work.

**Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT ÖZER**

Istanbul, June 2022

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## ABSTRACT

### FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN YOUNG ADOLESCENTS IN A VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Learning a foreign language is a challenging path consisting of multiple steps such as acquisition of the knowledge, comprehension, putting information into practice. Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is an utterly important element of this process. Although it has been a popular subject in academia for many years, most of the research in literature limited to formal education and on adult learners (aged 18-25). This thesis emerged as a way to enhance FLA literature by including different age groups and means of learning. This study is unique in that it focuses on middle school students (aged 10-14) and their foreign language anxiety in virtual classrooms. Regarding the close relationship young adolescence have with technology, students' level of FLA started to vary and change in virtual classrooms. The main objective of this study is to identify the effects of virtual classrooms and online materials on young adolescents' FLA and to investigate the reasons of these potential changes in these students' anxiety levels by using a sample group of English as foreign language learners in middle school. To collect data; a questionnaire is used, and semi-structured interviews are conducted. In this study which mixed method has been used, it was found out that virtual education has a positive effect on the decrease of young learners' FLA levels. On the other hand, disadvantages and challenges of foreign language education in virtual classrooms have come in sight. This research serves as an important means to provide an insight on FLA's effects on young adolescents in a virtual class environment.

**Keywords:** Foreign Language Anxiety, Young Adolescents, Middle School, Virtual Learning, Anxiety Level of Young Learners

## ÖZET

### SANAL ÖĞRENME ORTAMINDA GENÇ ERGENLERDE YABANCI DİL KAYGISI

Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT ÖZER  
Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi  
Tez Danışmanı: Doç. Dr. Üyesi Emrah GÖRGÜLÜ  
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Yabancı dil öğrenimi; bilgiyi edinme, kavrama, edinilen bu bilgiyi uygulamaya koyma gibi birden çok adımdan oluşan zorlu bir yoldur. Yabancı dil kaygısı da bu sürecin çok önemli bir unsurudur. Akademik çevrede uzun süredir popüler bir konu olmasına rağmen, bu konuda yapılan araştırmaların büyük çoğunluğu örgün eğitim ve yetişkin öğrencilerle (18-25 yaş) sınırlı kalmıştır. Bu tez, farklı yaş gruplarını ve öğrenme araçlarını dahil ederek yabancı dil kaygısı literatürünü geliştirmek amacıyla ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu çalışma, ortaokul öğrencilerine (10-14 yaş) ve çevrimiçi sınıflardaki yabancı dil kaygısına odaklanması bakımından özgündür. Genç ergenlerin teknolojiyle olan yakın ilişkisi göz önüne alındığında, çevrimiçi sınıflarda öğrencilerin yabancı dil kaygı seviyeleri değişiklik ve çeşitlilik göstermeye başladı. Bu çalışmanın temel amacı ortaokulda okuyan ve yabancı dil eğitimi alan bir öğrenci grubunu kullanarak çevrimiçi sınıfların ve internet kaynaklı materyallerin genç ergenlerin yabancı dil kaygısındaki etkisini saptamak ve bu öğrencilerin kaygı seviyelerindeki olası değişimlerin sebeplerini araştırmaktır. Veri toplamak için bir anket çalışması ve yarı-yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirildi. Karma yöntem kullanılarak yürütülen bu çalışmada çevrimiçi sınıfların genç ergenlerin yabancı dil kaygılarının azalmasında olumlu yönde etkisi olduğu görüldü. Öte yandan, çevrimiçi sınıflarda verilen yabancı dil eğitimindeki olumsuz yanlar ve zorluklar ortaya çıktı. Bu araştırma, çevrimiçi bir sınıf ortamında yabancı dil kaygısının genç ergenler üzerindeki etkilerine dair bir fikir sağlamak için önemli bir araç görevi görmüştür.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yabancı Dil Kaygısı, Genç Ergenler, Orta Öğretim, Sanal Eğitim, Genç Öğrencilerin Kaygı Seviyeleri

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**FLA:** Foreign Language Anxiety

**FLRA:** Foreign Language Reading Anxiety

**LCDH:** Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis

**WTC:** Willingness to Communicate



# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This thesis aims to find out the effects of virtual education in relation to foreign language anxiety in young adolescents (aged 10-14). This chapter includes the statement of the problem, the purpose and the importance of the study, the research questions, and the limitations of the study.

### **1.1. Background of the Study**

Learning a foreign language is a complex process with its ego-threatening nature (Horwitz et. al. 1986) and it has been a popular subject to research in academia. This process involves the instructor, the learner, learning materials, learning/teaching methods, assessment, and evaluation. It is a process which stimulates not only cognitive abilities but also emotional capabilities. (Kayhan 2021). Foreign language learning is about both “knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis but also emotions and feelings.” (Krashen 1982) Therefore, foreign language anxiety is an utterly important element of this process.

According to Scovel (1978) anxiety is “a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object.” However, this definition is too vague to truly define foreign language anxiety (FLA). FLA is a specific anxiety reaction. Horwitz et. al. (1986) defines it as “a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process.” By acknowledging this problem in 1986, Horwitz et al. became one of the most influential researchers in FLA research. They also introduced Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which measures students’ anxiety levels. Horwitz et. al. (1986) also reported that “one of every three foreign language learners had a feeling of anxiety.” Besides, according to Campbell and Ortiz (1996) “half of the language learners suffer from FLA.”

Although FLA research has been popular for many years, with the changing educational environment it has shifted and started to focus on different variables. There has been a lot of research on FLA regarding different age groups and with 2019 pandemic spreading all around the world, virtual education revealed itself as the future of education. FLA research throughout online education process showed surprising results regarding students' levels of anxiety. According to Kaiser and Chowdhury (2020), the majority of students express that they feel safer, more relaxed and more comfortable and they reported that they do not miss anything from the lecture. Besides, virtual class brings "flexibility and it is time and energy saving."

As opposed to the research proposing that online education decreases students' levels of FLA, there exists certain research proposing that online education is even more triggering for FLA. Doğan (2020)'s research puts forward that: "taking a course online may turn out to be an anxious endeavor for EFL learners."

FLA research has covered a number of perspectives so far and regardless of the age of the learner or the medium of instruction, there is no doubt that so many students experience FLA on various levels. Since most research focus on formal education and adult learners (18-25 ages), this study is unique in the sense that it focuses on FLA in young adolescents in virtual classes.

## **1.2. The Statement of the Problem**

A majority of foreign language learners suffer from foreign language anxiety. (Horwitz et. al. (1986); MacIntryre (1995); Aydın (2018) FLA might sound like just a concept, yet it is a grim reality to many students. Anxiety is defined as "uncertainty, fear, and a state of emotion with the fear that something bad will happen. (Reber 1990; Sapir & Aranson 1991). Since anxiety is a state which affects cognitive abilities of an individual, FLA affects students' foreign language production, achievement and eventually performance and success. Although anxiety is a regular part of individuals' lives, it may be explained as a

personality trait or a pathological disorder to many. Yet, FLA is different since it is a unique type of situation-specific anxiety.

According to Gardner (1985) “not all forms of anxiety would influence second language learning but a construct of anxiety which is not general but instead is specific to the language acquisition context and is related to second language achievement.” Since FLA is a crucial component in second language learning, and a big number of students fail because of it, a need has risen to focus on this issue and to come up with solutions to solve it.

Students suffering from FLA tend to become forgetful, use avoidance tactics, miss class, postpone, procrastinate, freeze in production scenarios. It even happens to the best and the brightest students. These students even make careless mistakes in tests many of which are preventable. The more they study, the more anxious they get and inevitably, they make more mistakes. All these reactions are essentially the same with anyone with specific anxiety reactions; apprehension, worry, dread and panic. No matter how hard they try, they tend to fail due to FLA and end up changing their attitude towards the lesson, or even the language.

According to Krashen (1982) extraction of meaning from the second language is the vital point. Therefore, anxious learners fail to take in the language output/messages and do not progress due to anxiety. They become unable to use and produce the language, it leads to teachers to wrongly assess them and once again bad grades and poor test performance become inevitable. Students get worried whenever they need to speak in front of people without preparation. Such students are already having trouble speaking in public, and in foreign language classes, they are even more anxious because they are forced to speak in front of their peers in a language they are not comfortable using.

MacIntyre (1999) proposes that “foreign language learning has more potential for students to embarrass themselves, to frustrate their self-expression and to challenge their self-esteem and sense of identity than almost any other learning activities.” (p.33) Therefore,

learning a foreign language is even harder when students have FLA. In addition, by experiencing all these negative emotions, students suffering from FLA even change their attitude and even teachers' perceptions towards them may change since they may be perceived as less trustworthy, less competent, less social and less dominant. Besides, speaking is mostly used in measuring one's linguistic abilities and foreign language learners are forced towards active participation which serves as a trigger for FLA sufferers.

Most of the research mentioned above are conducted on formal education. However, with the global pandemic, the entire world had to switch to virtual learning. This shifted the focus of FLA research into online classes. Although FLA in online education research is few in number, some of the results (Pakpahan & Binjai 2020; Kaisar & Chowdhury 2020) show that the level of FLA decreases in online education. Considering the few numbers of research regarding FLA levels of young learners in virtual classes, this research aims to focus on FLA levels of young learners in online learning/teaching environment, explanations of the sources of this type of anxiety and the possible solutions on the matter.

### **1.3.The Purpose and the Importance of the Study**

Foreign Language Anxiety is “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second or foreign language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning.” (MacIntyre, 1999) It is a condition which affects numerous students and interfere with their learning process. In addition, FLA research is mainly focused on formal education. Since the pandemic outbreak, virtual classrooms have become the new norm. Therefore, the need for a study which combines virtual classroom FLA and its effects on young learners has arisen. This study combines FLA's effects on young adolescents on virtual class environment, making this research a significant contribution to the literature.

With the online education and virtual foreign language classes students' level of FLA started to differ. Considering that young learners have a close relationship with and a strong knowledge about the latest technology, their anxiety level started to vary; sometimes negatively and sometimes positively.

The main objective of this study is to identify the effects of virtual classrooms and the online materials on young adolescents' foreign language anxiety and to investigate the reasons of the potential changes in these students' anxiety levels by using a sample group of language learners in middle school. This study also aims to pave a way for further research involving students with FLA. This study will research to what extent students experience FLA and whether online education increases or decreases the level of foreign language anxiety. The findings of this study will help middle school teachers, as well as students, to diminish FLA and to find out the engagement problems in online classes. It is put forward that one of the reasons why students have an issue with engaging in virtual foreign language classes (even though technology is an entity which catches young learners' attention) because they might be suffering from FLA. Since virtual classes are considered to be the future of education, creating a more engaging environment and enabling students to interact better is the key to success. Reaching out to the weaker students and trying to ease their anxiety is crucial. This is especially important for young learners with short attention span.

Based on the premises above, FLA is a key feature for understanding less engaged students or the ones who is having performance issues. By answering these questions, this thesis aims to provide useful remedies to alleviate FLA in young learners in the virtual classroom.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

This thesis focuses on foreign language anxiety in virtual classrooms and its effects on young adolescents. It aims to find out the answers to the following questions:

1. How does virtual learning affect young learners' anxiety levels? Do virtual classrooms increase or decrease young adolescents' foreign language anxiety?
  - 1.1. Is there a significant difference of FLA levels in terms of gender?
  - 1.2. Is there a significant difference of FLA levels in terms of grade/age?
2. Which features of online education increase or decrease FLA in young adolescents?

3. What needs be done to eliminate Foreign Language Anxiety in young adolescents in virtual classroom environment?

### **1.5. Definitions**

**Anxiety:** “A state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object.” (Scovel 1978)

**Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) :** “Transitory unpleasant feelings of apprehension, tension, nervousness or worry, often accompanied by activation of autonomic nervous system.” (Horwitz et al. 1986)

**Academic Anxiety:** “Unifying formulation for the collection of anxieties learners experience while in schools.” (Cassody 2010)

**Online Education:** “A form of distance education that uses computers and the Internet as the delivery mechanism, with at least 80% of the course context delivered online.” (Kentnor 2015)

**LCDH:** “Linguistic Coding Deficit Hypothesis suggests that students who do poorly in foreign language courses may have language problems in their native language that interfere with their ability to learn a foreign language.” (Sparks and Ganshow, 1993)

**WTC:** “A learner’s readiness to enter into discourse at a particular time with a specific person or persons using a L2.” (MacIntyre, 1998)

### **1.6. Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited to the secondary schools in Bakırköy, İstanbul, Turkey. Hence, the findings may not be generalized for all learners of English. In addition, due to permission issues and the ongoing pandemic conditions, results may include limited evaluation and conditions.

### **1.7. Organization of the Chapters**

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 focuses on problem statement, purpose, and the significance of the study. Chapter 2 is an overview of the previously written literature in detail regarding FLA, FLA in young learners and FLA in virtual education

since this study aims to find the solutions to the problem which combines all three subject matters. Chapter 3 introduces the methodology, data collection processes and findings. In Chapter 4, discussions on the findings and possible solutions to the problem takes place. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the findings and provides possible further research topics.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Anxiety

The term anxiety has been researched by numerous academics and is defined as “a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object.” (Scovel 1978). Another definition by Brown (1994) puts forward that “anxiety is related to the feelings that consist of frustration, apprehension, uneasiness and self-doubt.” That is, anxiety is unwanted, negative feelings which come up in certain situations. According to Scovel (1978), “anxiety is not a simple, unitary construct that can be comfortably qualified into high or low amounts.” Although Scovel is one of earlier names who focuses on anxiety within the concept of education and learning, he suggests that it cannot be measured accurately and properly.

According to Cakici (2016) anxiety affects “language aptitude, motivation, learning styles and learning strategies.” Therefore, it can be understood that anxiety has an impact on learning and in this context, language learning and experience. Cassady (2010) defines the term “academic anxiety” as a “unifying formulation for the collection of anxieties learners experience while in schools.” Hence, anxiety interferes with language learning and performance. Besides, MacIntyre and Gregersen (2012) argue that language anxiety “involves fear related emotions” and includes both second and foreign language learning together with productive language skills of writing and speaking.

Although early research on the relationship between anxiety and language learning showed either no relation or positive correlation (Kleinmann 1977; Chastain 1975), Scovel (1978)’s research presented contradictory results. The reason is that each of these studies used different results and introduced facilitating-debilitating anxiety framework suggesting that learners with more facilitating anxiety had lower tendency towards avoidance; that is, students need to be made a little anxious so that they would study harder. Therefore,

students are expected to learn how to deal with their worries. However, Scovel (1978) suggested that researchers need to be specific regarding the type of anxiety which is being measured for more accurate results. According to Williams and Andrade (2008), truly measuring facilitating anxiety is difficult and the results may be misleading. Scovel (1978)'s proposition led to a deeper attention for a clearer distinction among types of anxiety.

## **2.2. Types of Anxiety**

Prior to explaining FLA, it is crucial to clarify different types of anxiety. Researchers (MacIntyre & Gardner (1989); Zheng (2001)) classified anxiety in three types. *Trait anxiety* is defined as “a general series of anxiety not specific to a particular stimulus” (Greenberg, 2006) or “a general tendency to perceive situations as threatening.” (Spielberg 1968) People with trait anxiety are anxious in any condition. It resembles a personality trait leading the person to feel constantly anxious. Trait anxiety includes fear of social evaluation, fear of physical danger or fear in even the most harmless situations. It deteriorates an individual's cognitive features and memory; thus, results in avoidance behavior. (Eysench, 1979)

Spielberg (1983) defines *state anxiety* as “apprehension of an experience at a specific moment for a definite situation.” It is momentarily experienced feeling of anxiety; hence, not static nor permanent. If the trigger is still intact, anxious states continues. For instance, it can occur during a job interview and once the interview is over, the state of anxiety vanishes. This type of anxiety occurs as a consequence of a non-permanent phenomenon, and it influences individuals in different ways. According to Keramida and Tsiplakides (2009), state anxiety “is a social type of anxiety that emerges within reasonable limits under certain conditions.” Besides, people experiencing higher level of state anxiety are more sensitive towards what people think of them and it affects their cognitive capacities negatively. This circumstance reveals itself also in physical outcomes such as sweaty palms, difficulty in breathing, increased heartbeats as well as mental symptoms such as worry, trouble focusing and concentrating.

*Situation-specific anxiety* is explained as “an anxiety that occur during specific occasions” such as completing examinations or in-class participation. (Al-Saraj 2011) It is an apprehension of specific situations and events. (Ellis 1994) FLA goes under this category since it is “distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors during language learning process. (Horwitz et. al. 1986) During the language learning process, inadequate knowledge of that language causes the learner to experience situation-specific anxiety. (MacIntyre & Gardner 1991) According to Gardner (1999), FLA is explained as a part of situation-specific anxiety since it is not a general reaction, rather specific to the language acquisition context is related to second/foreign language achievement.

### **2.3. Foreign Language Anxiety**

Foreign language anxiety has been a very popular subject matter for the academia and has been researched for decades. The earlier research addresses the nature of FLA and later research focus on the sources of FLA and its stability or variations under different instructional or socio-cultural conditions. Later studies also concentrate on the relationship of FLA with other factors affecting learning and focus on instructional strategies to reduce FLA. As one of the early researchers of FLA, Kleinmann (1977) uses facilitating-debilitating anxiety framework and suggests that learners with high level of facilitating anxiety has less tendency towards avoidance. He also indicates that in addition to relative linguistic contrasts, affective factors play a role in second / foreign language acquisition. This study is sometimes interpreted as such: students must be made a little anxious for them to study harder. However, Scovel (1978) puts forward those various studies used different anxiety measures and each one showed different results such as test anxiety or facilitating-debilitating anxiety. They found different correlations and different types of relationships between anxiety and achievement. Therefore, Scovel (1978) recommends researchers to specify the type of anxiety they are measuring and to take into consideration all kinds of anxieties. By proposing this, Scovel (1978) has become a turning point in anxiety studies.

In 1986, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope became the leading names in language learning anxiety research and introduced the construct of FLA as situation-specific anxiety in addition to being one of the reasons for failure in foreign language classes. Their study

mainly indicates that FLA should not be seen as a general classroom anxiety. No other field of study implicate self-concept and self-expression as much as foreign language learning. This makes FLA distinctive. Horwitz et. al. (1986) put forward that this type of anxiety comes from “the inherent inauthenticity associated with immature second language abilities” and define FLA as “a phenomenon related to but distinguishable from other specific anxieties.” Speakers are aware of the socio-cultural standards of their native tongue, therefore, speaking in the first language is easy. However, speaking in the second/foreign language includes risk taking, nonspontaneous mental operations and bravery. Any performance in second/foreign challenges an individual’s self-concept. Even the competent communicator may feel panic, fear, and self-consciousness. In order to measure FLA, Horwitz et. al. (1986) introduced Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). It serves as a distinct situation-specific measure of FLA; thus, the issue of appropriate anxiety measurement is solved. To understand the relationship between anxiety and achievement, it is important to distinguish the role of anxiety in language learning from its role in linguistic performance. Following this study, Horwitz (1986) published another paper on the validation of FLCAS and found that the relationship between test anxiety and FLA was moderate. This is strong evidence that language anxiety is an independent, situation-specific anxiety.

Sparks and Ganschow (1991) proposes that the difficulties in the second/foreign language learning are based on the first language learning disabilities, particularly in phonetic encoding. They see the existence of FLA in favor of viewing anxiety as a natural result of difficulty and poor achievement in language learning. FLA should be explored examining students’ native language strengths and weaknesses as demonstrated by performance on language aptitude tests. As a response to Sparks and Ganschow (1991), MacIntyre (1995) focuses on how anxiety affects the second language learning. According to Sparks and Ganschow (1991), anxious learners have cognitive disadvantages in language learning and their responses to FLCAS reflect realistic assessments of their learning skills rather than their levels of anxiety. However, MacIntyre (1995) rejects it and suggests that Sparks and Ganschow (1991) ignore the nonlinguistic aspects of the second/foreign language learning and that language learning anxiety causes individual differences during the process of language learning as well as production. Another important hypothesis MacIntyre (1995)

rejects is Sparks and Ganschow (1991)'s linguistic coding deficit hypothesis (LCDH). Sparks and Ganschow (1991) put forward that "language aptitude is the primary source of individual differences in language achievement." People who struggle with the efficient coding of linguistic stimuli in their mother tongue (especially phonemes) will experience similar difficulties in the second/foreign language. LCDH is proposed to explain the individual differences in second/foreign language learning. However, according to this hypothesis, affective variables (especially learning anxiety) are not likely to be the cause of these differences. Rather, they are considered to be mere side effects of having troubles in coding in mother tongue. According to Sparks and Ganschow (1991), low motivation, poor attitude, high anxiety levels are manifestations of deficiencies in the first language which obviously correlate to the second/foreign language. LCDH also indicates that affective variables and language learning strategies are explanations for individual differences in language achievements and learning strategies extend into cognitive functioning. That is why, this hypothesis implies that the lack of achievement in second/foreign language learning are due to intellectual failings rather than learning difficulties. Therefore, LCDH degrades language anxiety to the status of an unfortunate side effect. However, LCDH theory remains inadequate in explaining individual differences in the second/foreign language learning. MacIntyre (1995) suggests that FLA needs to be placed into the broader context of the psychology of social anxieties because it is shown that language anxiety has significant negative correlation with standardized proficiency tests. He also indicates that "anxiety stems primarily from the social and communicative aspects of language learning and can be considered as a social anxiety." (MacIntyre 1995) Besides, according to MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on "encoding, storage and retrieval processes" but learning anxiety can interfere with them and divide attention. Therefore, anxious students try to focus on both the activity and their possible reaction to it. By doing so, self-related cognition increases, and task-related cognition gets restricted. Therefore, the relationship between task performance and anxiety is as follows: if anxiety levels rise during learning, anxious students will perform poorly and fail to reflect whether they gained the required learning outcomes. Even though the student learns the content and studies the material,

s/he freezes and experiences performance loss. Consequently, since LCDH does not recognize the language learning anxiety, it is considered to be incomplete.

Following Horwitz et. al. (1986)'s research, Saito & Garza (1999) put forward the idea that foreign language anxiety does not just include productive skills such as speaking and writing. They introduce the concept of foreign language reading anxiety (FLRA) and they offer a scale called foreign language reading anxiety scale (FLRAS).

As a response to Saito & Garza (1999), Sparks and Ganschow (2000) suggest that students with poor first language skills are naturally anxious when reading in second/foreign language and put forward that FLRAS only measures students' reading skills. However, Horwitz (2000) proposes that poor first language skills lead to anxiety, but successful students also experience FLA. Therefore, second/foreign language learning entails more than just decoding skills.

MacIntyre (2007) introduces the concept of Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in second language. The main question in his research is that some people choose to speak up and others do not. Why do the second language learners not turn into second language speakers? WTC is a concept which can be seen as an individual factor or non-linguistic outcome of the language learning process. That is the probability of speaking when free to do so. MacIntyre (2007) suggests that FLA and WTC should be perceived as a state. FLA captures the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using the second language and second language anxiety researchers have settled on the idea that language anxiety is an emotional experience uniquely proved by the second language learning situations.

Another crucial study for FLA is Sparks and Young's (2009) research. Although Sparks is a disabilities specialist and Young is an FLA specialist, they seem to find a common ground in the disability and FLA debate. They indeed achieve a very important goal in that they offer real guidance to language teachers who want and need to make language learning more accessible to all learners.

Consequently, although there are multiple debates regarding whether FLA can be considered as a learning disability or to what extent it causes and/or affects students'

achievement in second/foreign language, FLA is a crucial part of language learning. To understand the relationship between anxiety and achievement, it is important to distinguish the role of anxiety in language learning from its role in linguistic performance.

#### **2.4. Components of Foreign Language Anxiety**

Having explained FLA, it is important to elaborate on its components. According to Horwitz et.al. (1986), there are three main components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

*Communication apprehension (CA)* is “a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people.” (Horwitz et. al. 1986) That is, CA is fear of engaging with someone else in a foreign language. People having trouble speaking in front of people experience this even greater. According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1989) “communication apprehension is that learners may have the feeling not being able to express themselves or to comprehend other learners in foreign language, which causes apprehension and worry.” It turns even the most talkative people silent and shy individuals. Since foreign language classes require constant speaking in a medium which the learner has a little knowledge of or uncomfortable with, it is triggering for students suffering from CA. It also includes fear of not being able to understand what is told (i.e. receiver anxiety). On the other hand, it is also possible that some people feel as if they are a different persona while speaking in a foreign language which may cause them to feel less anxious and the impact of FLA diminishes.

*Text anxiety* is defined as “a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure.” (Horwitz et. al. 1986) It is originated from the fear of failure. Students create unrealistic expectations and unreasonable demands on themselves and consider anything less than perfect as failure. It happens even to the best students. Since in foreign language classes quizzes, tests and oral presentations are so frequent, they provoke test anxiety and oral communication anxiety simultaneously and on a great level.

*Fear of negative evaluation* is “apprehension about others’ evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectations that others would evaluate oneself negatively.” (Horwitz et. al. 1986) Fear of negative evaluation is not limited to test taking situations. It

may occur in any kind of social evaluative situation including job interviews or dates. People suffering from fear of negative evaluation try to avoid any situation which they may be evaluated because they think they will be negatively evaluated by peers or instructors. In foreign language classes, there is a constant evaluator present (i.e., the instructor) and even the mildest feedback might be triggering for such people.

## **2.5. Potential Causes of Foreign Language Anxiety**

According to Young (1991) there are six potential causes of FLA. The first cause he introduces is personal and interpersonal anxieties. These include low self-esteem and competitiveness. They are usually experienced by perfectionists who consider anything less than perfect as failure; thus, cannot perform properly due to extreme pressure they put themselves under. Competitive nature of such people creates higher levels of stress causing even worse results. (Kralova & Saradova 2015) According to Krashen (1982) “individual’s degree of self-esteem is highly related to language anxiety.” People with low self-esteem worry more about what other people think about themselves; thus, they are more likely to be triggered by in-class participation or public speaking. Learner beliefs about language learning is proposed as the second reason. This includes wrong, unreasonable, unbelievable expectations of learners. Learners’ perception regarding their knowledge may be wrong and this may cause them to create disrupted expectations, way higher achievement levels than their abilities could ever attain. The majority of the learners of second/foreign language learners believe that pronunciation is the most important practice in language learning and such students express great concern over their pronunciation. That is why, speaking in the perfect accent is crucial to them and it increases their stress levels. In addition, such learners create a hypothetical time frame for themselves to achieve fluency (e.g. 3 months) and it is usually a way out of their learning pace range. Once they fail to achieve fluency within this unreasonable time frame, they consider themselves as failure. As a result, they end up with frustration and high anxiety level.

Instructor beliefs about language learning is another potential cause of FLA. It covers determining the correct method of teaching, choosing the correct, appropriate material for the students’ interests and level of language and how the instructor relates to a certain teaching style. According to Young (1991) when the instructor constantly makes error

correction and not nurture a group-work environment, s/he is not in the position of a facilitator, rather it is considered authoritarian. This situation does not improve students and actually increases the level of anxiety. The fourth potential reason according to Young (1991) is instructor-learner interactions. This may affect students' entire perception towards that foreign language class or learning foreign languages altogether. Negative perception towards the instructor causes negative perceptions towards the foreign language class. Besides, providing too much corrective feedback may increase students' anxiety level as well as their shyness. Massively strict instructors conduce towards more anxious students. Classroom procedures are also one of the potential causes of FLA and since it entails speaking in front of the classroom, it serves as a trigger for many who suffers from FLA. Presentations and in-class participation is crucial in foreign language classes; thus, it is anxiety provoking. Many students report that once they are not obliged to speak in front of their peers or their instructors, they feel way more comfortable and less anxious. (Kaiser and Chowdhury 2020) Finally, the last potential reason is language testing. Since test anxiety is a massive part of FLA, it affects students on a great level. Besides, students react differently to different test items. For instance, if the lesson is carried out in communicative approach but learners are primarily given grammar tests, this leads to frustration and high levels of anxiety. In addition, if students are asked questions which they have no experience in, they tend to get frustrated again.

Considering these six potential reasons, one can come to the conclusion that FLA includes self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to the language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process.

## **2.6. Effects of Anxiety on students**

MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) categorize the effects of FLA into four primary types: academic effects, cognitive effects, social effects, and personal effects. When it comes to academic effects, the existing literature presents various conflicting results. That is, some research considers FLA as a debilitating anxiety and proposes that FLA has a negative correlation with language performance and achievement. Over studying is also one of the effects. (Eysench 1979) Many students suffering from FLA thinks they need to study harder to achieve better results and they do so; however, due to FLA they fail again.

According to Tobias (1979), there are three cognitive steps of language learning: input, process, and output. For this MacIntyre & Gardner (1994) establish three anxiety scales and explain that the most powerful effects are on process and output stages. Input stage is when the information is filtered through a mechanism and once anxiety strikes, the following stages tend to be slower and harder. Thirdly, social effects mainly include the classroom environment. Negative, competitive classroom environment triggers FLA immensely, making anxious students less eager to participate and speak less frequently. Once they feel they are in a competition, anxious learners compare themselves to whom they think are superior; thus, they lose enthusiasm, apply to avoidance tactics, or give up. This even affects their perception of themselves. The last one is the personal effect. Learners who have personal effect of anxiety “experience apprehension, worry and even dread and have difficulty in concentrating, become forgetful, sweat and have palpitations.” (Kayaoğlu & Sağlamel 1994) One research reported this sentence from a student “I would rather be in a prison camp than speak a foreign language.” (Han 2013) Another one reported that “When I’m in my Spanish class, I just freeze, I can’t think anything when my teacher calls on me.” (Horwitz et. al. 1986)

## **2.7. Foreign Language Anxiety over the course of Online Education**

Although many believe that online education and virtual classes became a part of our lives with the global pandemic of 2019, it was actually a medium of instruction which has been applied in some parts of the world and being talked about in all around the globe. There is a big debate regarding its fruitfulness, yet there is no doubt that virtual classrooms are a great tool to reach places where means of education is out of reach. With the global Covid-19 outbreak, e-learning has become a subject of discussion and in no time, reality itself. Every single day, more and more academics and learners got used to this new means of education and even the most technophobic people became a part of the system. With the rapidly increasing need to move the act of learning beyond the classroom, more learners and instructors master the specifics of educational technologies. All these brought this question into discussion: Could e-learning be the future of education? According to Reynard (2003) online education “will be the preferred instructional technology of post-secondary institutions for the future.” It seems the answer is a big yes.

Having comprehended the importance and urgent need of integration of educational technologies into teaching and learning, the focus of FLA research also shifted into virtual classrooms. Kaisar & Chowdhury (2020) investigates whether e-learning makes a difference in the FLA levels of learners and whether it is possible to create FLA-free classrooms. Before them, there has been a number of studies proposing that implementations of technology could be used as a coping strategy. Al-Qahtani (2019) suggests that virtual classes enhance communication skills significantly. In his research, he found out that majority of the teachers and the learners maintain a positive attitude towards virtual learning. Huang & Hwang (2013) found out that students find computer-based learning less threatening, more relaxed and positive atmosphere. Therefore, virtual learning reduces learning anxiety and stimulate learning. When it comes to Kaisar & Chowdhury (2020)'s research, although their research expresses the downsides of virtual learning, majority of the results show a positive scenario. Their students report the challenges of virtual education as following: virtual classes are sometimes boring, unfruitful, monotonous, create a sense of isolation since there is no peer or teacher physically present, not serious enough due to the lack of dress code. Students also express fear of disconnection, missing words, being recorded. They also feel uncared by the teacher and worry about their mental and physical health due to spending too much time in front of the screen. On the other hand, the majority of students showed a positive attitude and expressed that virtual classes are more comfortable, more relaxed, more autonomous and less intimidating. This study also showed that most of the students do not have technophobia. Besides, virtual classes create a less stressful classroom; thus, lower the FLA levels of students.

Aydın (2018) proposes that technology in teaching has great potential to develop communication and interaction. Via technology, educators can present immediate feedback and individualized education. It also helps learners and instructors deliver authentic context and instructional materials. Aydın (2018) inserts that even though the use of technology in education is a great opportunity, how and to what extent it affects anxiety in learners is yet unknown. Students may fully comprehend this new means of education and progress greatly or they may suffer from communication apprehension while using the target language and lose motivation and their FLA level may increase. Aydın (2018)'s survey

results show that e-learning do not provoke FLA and anxiety, rather it reduces reading and computer anxiety. Students perceive virtual education as less threatening; thus, they experience less FLA.

As opposed to Kaisar & Chowdhury (2020), Huang & Hwang (2013), Aydın (2018) and Al-Qahtani (2019); Doğan (2020) indicates that the level of FLA is higher due to less student-teacher interaction, lack of body language, eye contact and instant feedback. On the contrary, he also puts forward that online education offers flexibility, accessibility, and affordability. Although several meta-analyses (Sun & Chen 2016; Nguyen 2015) put forward that online education is more effective than face to face education, Doğan (2020) puts forwards that foreign language learning is harder to acquire virtually due to subtle nature of language skills and the required knowledge for language proficiency. Besides, in a virtual environment assessing personal progress and creating opportunities for speaking exercises is difficult. According to Matsumura & Hann (2004) technological teaching sources cause apprehension, stress, tension; hence, high level of FLA. Sepu-Esobar and Morison (2020)'s study explores the challenges and opportunities in virtual learning and found out the most negative factor is lack of interaction between the teacher and the instructor. Besides, limited internet access and fear of missing the lesson provoke anxiety and lead to a slower learning. Bohlin & Hunt (1993)'s study proposes that computer-based foreign language learning is "context dependent". That is, the level of anxiety depends on the student and his/her technological skills which may increase or decrease anxiety levels. Overall, there are mixed and controversial results on FLA studies in a virtual classroom and this field requires more research to fully come to a decision.

## **2.8. Young Learners & Foreign Language Anxiety**

There is a limited amount of data on children in FLA research since most of the FLA research focus on young adults (undergraduate students) or adults. There exists an increasing diversity in all of the classrooms in the world and the amount of young learners of English is rising day by day. Besides, it is important to secure this language learning experience as a positive process for young learners to pave an affirmative way for the future of language learning. Another reason why FLA research is centered around adults is that children are considered to be a rather "homogenous" group of learners and children have a

more positive self-perception, high level of confidence and they are more attentive as opposed to adults who tend to apply to avoidance tactics when asked to speak in a foreign language. (Nilsson 2019)

Teaching young learners is way too different than teaching adults in terms of the content, methodology or the material. Children are a captive audience. That is, since instruction is compulsory for them, they cannot drop out, change major or skip classes. Their cognitive, emotional, and linguistic development are way faster than adults. Although this speed comes with its disadvantages such as shorter attention span or less patience, the learning speed they have is incredible. Besides, they do not have any previous learning experience which presents the instructor with the chance of working on an empty canvas.

Although the amount of data in children's FLA is few, one of the most important research projects conducted within Turkish EFL context is Aydın et. al. (2018)'s study. In their study, Aydın et al. (2018) investigate Turkish primary & secondary students' FLA, the reasons and the types of activities which cause this problem. They introduce and use Children's Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (CFLAS). Their results present that examinations and grammar-based language activities are the reasons of moderate level of anxiety. Other sources of high FLA include unpreparedness before speech, fear of making mistakes, unfamiliar topics, negative evaluation by others and fear of failure. Aydın et. al. (2018) also propose that focusing on children's FLA is crucial because "learning a foreign language at early ages facilitates proficiency in the target language." (Cameron and Leventhal (2003); Lightbown et. al. (2006))

Most of young learners' FLA research is conducted in east Asia or Southern Europe. According to Chan and Wu (2000, 2004), a major amount of young learner experience FLA, especially the fear of negative evaluation. They also found out that personal and parental factors affect the level of FLA in young learners. Finally, another important result obtained from this study is that the majority of the teachers have very little awareness of the concept of FLA as well as their students' FLA levels, making them unable to help their students who are suffering from FLA to cope with it.

Studies conducted in Turkey regarding young learners' FLA mainly focus on test anxiety. (Aydın (2012); Aydın (2013)) It is a big limitation because communication apprehension

and the fear of negative evaluation is not explored in these studies. Aydın (2012;2013) found out that the test anxiety levels of students are affected by time limitations, test length, test techniques, instructions and learners' attitudes towards teacher. In a follow up study, Aydın et. al. (2018) added communication apprehension and the fear of negative evaluation to the focus of study. He found out that children do not usually experience FLA when they are well-prepared, and they do not feel nervous while volunteering. However, in exams and grammar-based activities, they experience a *moderate* level of anxiety. The times they experience *high* level of anxiety is when they receive feedback from the teacher and when they do not understand what the teacher says. Negative comments, unpreparedness, unfamiliarity to the subject, non-clear feedback and the thought of failure are also other reasons of *high* levels of FLA. In order to cope with FLA, Aydın et. al. (2018) suggests that EFL teachers need to gain cognitive and pedagogical perspective on the matter and spread awareness.

According to Çermik (2015)'s study which he conducted on 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, high levels of FLA are analyzed under two categories: student-oriented factors and teacher-oriented factors. Student oriented factors include homework, exam pressure, fear of making mistakes, peer pressure and lack of parental support. Teacher oriented factors consist of wrongly presented error correction and overused target language.

An example from Europe is Nilson (2019)'s study on Swedish primary students' levels of FLA. His participants are primary school students aged 8-12 and 18.2% of them show high levels of FLA which is closely related to oral performance. Nilson (2019) also suggests that language learning is a challenging situation for self-expression and many young learners may get nervous along the way or express frustration.

## **2.9. Measuring Foreign Language Anxiety**

Anxious students believe that in order to have a chance of comprehending the target language, they must understand every single word uttered. This idea makes them anxious, leading them to use avoidance tactics such as skipping class or sitting in the last row. Since

FLA is “not merely a composite of other anxieties”, rather “a distinct set of beliefs, perceptions and feelings” it requires a different type of measurement. (Horwitz et. al. 1986) Therefore, Horwitz et. al. (1986) introduced Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) which consists of 33 statements related to FLA, its components and triggering situations. Students are asked to give answers on a five-point Likert scale. The results aim to help learners to cope with their anxiety and instructors to create less stressful, less triggering classroom environments.

Later on, by considering the lack of measurement tool of FLA for children, Aydın et. al. (2018) introduced Children Foreign Anxiety Scale (CFLAS) which consists of 25 items and each item includes five facial expressions standing for 1=very unhappy to 5=very happy.

With the global pandemic and emergence of virtual classes, a need for a scale to measure FLA in virtual classroom has been born. Thus, Kaisar & Chowdhury (2020) introduced Foreign Language Virtual Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLVCAS). FLVCAS consist of 19 questions, each is designed as i-Card Scale with five options 1=strongly agree to 5=strongly disagree.

## **2.10. Ways to Decrease Foreign Language Anxiety**

The damage FLA causes on learners is undeniable. Having mentioned the scales to measure FLA, next step is to find ways to decrease the stress the learners feel within the classroom. Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) suggest certain solutions to diminish FLA. First one is project work: by doing projects students feel more personal involvement; hence, more motivation. They also do not feel constantly assessed and it is easier to focus on communication. However, if the project is assigned to a group, that group should be formed with mixed ability of students, and they should be given tasks which will equally challenge all students to make sure there is no difference in treatment. Besides, once the project is finished, it presents the learner with a sense of completeness and accomplishment. Second is establishing a learning community. This way, an “optimal motivation” (Alderman 2004) and “collaborative atmosphere” (Gregorsen 2003) can be created. Another possible solution is to negotiate the classroom rules with the learners. These rules should include the following: making fun of the wrong answers will not be accepted; mistakes will be

tolerated, etc. These will help assuring students with FLA that the classroom is a safe space. Error-correction is also considered one of the reasons for high levels of FLA when done incorrectly. According to Onwuegbuzie et. al. (1999), error correction might destroy a students' confident if it is performed in the wrong attitude in front of the whole class. Therefore, teachers should avoid on the spot correction since it causes loss of confidence in learners. Scaffolding method can be implemented. Some teachers may believe that praising weaker students in front of the class might help them boost their confidence. However, according to Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009), non-verbal praising is more effective because praising students for minor accomplishments may cause a negative effect since students might think "how little faith my teacher have in me."

According to Çermik (2015), learners with FLA need to be aware of the fact that everyone can make mistakes or give wrong answers and they should be guided for a more positive attitude. Besides, the learner needs to get to know his/her classmates and teacher well so that s/he can express himself/herself better and focus on the message s/he wants to convey rather than focusing on the way s/he says it. Ergün (2011) suggests that teacher should be more of a facilitator than an evaluator in the class and s/he should motivate students by being a part of the activities such as interviews or role-plays. The teacher should "recognize, cope with and eventually overcome debilitating FLA as a factor that helps shaping students' experiences in foreign language learning." (Horwitz et. al. 1986)

## **2.11. Conclusion**

FLA is concept which has been defined and researched by a number of researchers. Chapter 2 of this thesis focuses on the previous studies and the existing literature on that matter. Although there are various causes, a number of co-existing definitions and different types of FLA, the research on FLA in young learners and FLA during virtual education remains inadequate. To measure FLA, there has been a number of scales such as FLCAS (Horwitz et al. 1986), FLCVAS (Kaisar and Chowsbury 2020); however, the scale this research will make use of will be different and this scale will be further explained in Chapter 3. The following chapter of this thesis will explain the methodology and how the researcher will

measure and evaluate the participants' FLA levels during face-to-face learning and in virtual classrooms.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter includes research design, context, the participants of the study, data collection tools, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques. The main aim of this study is to understand how virtual education affects middle school students' (aged 10-14) FLA. Having discussed the previous literature on how and to what extent virtual education affects FLA of young learners, this study further aims to identify different ways to help students suffering from FLA to cope with it during online education.

#### **3.2. Research Design**

The subject matter of this thesis requires both qualitative and quantitative data because in order to find out to what extent virtual education affects FLA in young adolescents both students' insights, feelings and perspectives as well as statistical data on FLA are required. Therefore, this study made use of mixed method research. It is an approach which employs both qualitative and quantitative data and integrates different types of findings to provide multiple perspectives for the researcher. It also allows the researcher to work with findings only one type of research cannot present; therefore, enriches the research. (Creswell 2014) To provide more detail, qualitative data stands for information which cannot be measured with numbers, rather based on descriptions and language-based expressions. However, quantitative research is based on numerical data or statistical analyses.

According to Yıldırım & Şimşek (2008) qualitative research includes “data collection techniques as observation, interviews and document analyses” and they are used “for determination of the perceptions and events with a realistic and holistic manner in the natural environment”. In addition, it provides natural and interpretive results and since our subject matter is humans and his/her perceptions; it enables the researcher to obtain better, richer information on subjects' inner self – which tells more than just the numerical information can put forward. On the other hand, this study also requires quantitative method because it focuses on FLA and require statistical results. Such statistical results

provide the researcher with more than human emotion and help to measure different levels of FLA in both face to face and virtual education.

### 3.3. Context and the Participants of the Study

This study was carried out during 2021-2022 education year in a private school in Bakırköy, Istanbul, Turkey. During this education year, both virtual education, hybrid education and face to face education was being sustained due to the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. This research consists of two 5<sup>th</sup> grade, two 6<sup>th</sup> grade and two 7<sup>th</sup> grade classes with students aged between 10- 14. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are excluded from the research considering that they are already experiencing a very high level of anxiety due to their high school entrance exam (LGS). All classes which have taken the questionnaire were chosen randomly. Overall, 129 students completed the questionnaire. The descriptive statistics of the participants regarding gender and grade are presented in Table 1.

*Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Participants*

		Grade			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grade 5	46	35,7	35,7	35,7
	Grade 6	41	31,8	31,8	67,4
	Grade 7	42	32,6	32,6	100,0
	Total	129	100,0	100,0	

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	70	54,3	54,3	54,3
	Female	59	45,7	45,7	100,0
	Total	129	100,0	100,0	

After the application of the questionnaire, 12 students were chosen for a semi-structured interview. Students with the highest level of FLA were chosen for these interviews.

### **3.4. Data Collection Tools**

In this study, the data was collected from two main sources: Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Environment Questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The researcher took certain parts from Horwitz et. al (1986)'s Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and Kaiser and Chowdhury (2020)'s Foreign Language Virtual Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLVCAS); modified them into more convenient statements for teen students and created Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Environment Questionnaire. It consists of 31 items and is divided into two parts: (1) Foreign Language Anxiety (first 10 questions) and (2) Virtual Classroom Experiences (last 21 questions). This questionnaire uses 5- point Likert Scale to score the items ranging from 1 to 5; strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5). In the first part of the questionnaire where students' foreign anxiety levels are measured question 6 was negatively worded. Therefore, the scale was changed as such: strongly disagree (5), disagree (4), neutral (3), agree (2), strongly agree (1). The questionnaire was translated into Turkish and Turkish version was applied to the students since their English level is not advanced, and the researcher wanted to avoid any possible confusion, misunderstanding or receive correct data. In addition, Turkish translation benefited participants' honest answers; thus, served as a positive component on the validity of the questionnaire. Furthermore, before the application, the questionnaire was piloted with a small number of students to avoid any confusing statements or misunderstandings on the side of the participants and to determine whether the questionnaire truly serves the purpose of this study. Both Turkish and English versions of the questionnaire can be found as Appendix B and Appendix C.

### **3.5. Semi-Structured Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were used as a source of qualitative data for the researcher to have a more insightful view of students' viewpoints. Interviews were held with 12 students. These students' answers and points of view were compared for the purposes of this

research. Questions were translated into Turkish to create a more comfortable environment for the students and for them to understand the questions better the interviews were held in Turkish, later translated to English by the researcher. Responses were recorded with the permission of participants' parents/guardians. Both English and Turkish versions of these questions can be found in Appendix D and Appendix E. Each participant is asked 10 questions and when they needed further information/explanation, the researcher explained the questions clearly. Each one of the interviews were last around 10 minutes.

### **3.6. Data Collection Procedures**

The students were given questionnaires during their regular class time and asked to complete them within the lesson time. The purpose and the importance of the study were explained to the participants before they filled out the survey. Students are asked to reflect their true feelings on the matter. Once the results are analyzed, students with highest level of FLA are called for semi-structured interviews. All recordings were kept in confidence and were not shared with any third party. These semi-structured interviews aimed to shed light on students' thoughts on causes and effects of FLA and its possible reflections in virtual classrooms.

### **3.7. Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the questionnaires are analyzed through SPSS 28. The anxiety levels of the participants were determined by using descriptive statistics. The correlation between Content analysis was used to analyze semi-structured interviews to focus on students' perspectives. Content analysis procedures of Creswell were followed. First, all recordings were transcribed and translated into English. The answers were read for the enhanced understanding and interpretation. Furthermore, the answers were categorized to find common and recurring themes. They were explained in detail to determine FLA and its sources.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative and the qualitative data and findings of the study. In the first part, quantitative data, which is gathered through SPSS 28, will be presented. Firstly, the normality of the distribution of the data is analyzed and presented. Afterwards, gender and age/grade statistics are analyzed descriptively. After the analysis, possible correlations are found through one-way ANOVA test and independent T-test. Each data will be presented in the order of the research question it corresponds to. In the second part, qualitative data resulting from semi-structured interviews conducted with 12 students are analyzed to find out students' perceptions towards online education, their awareness of FLA and possible solutions to the issues at hand as an answer to research question 3.

#### 4.2. Findings of Quantitative Data

##### 4.2.1. Test of Normality

To decide whether the set of data was distributed in a consistent way with a normal distribution and to determine whether to apply parametric or non-parametric tests, the normality test has been applied to the questionnaire given to the students and the results are presented in Table 2.

*Table 2. Results of the Normality Test*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Questionnaire	,072	129	,181	,985	129	,173

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Since the number of participants exceeds 50, Kolmogorov-Smirnov results were taken into consideration. It was found that the data was normally distributed ( $p(\text{Sig.}) > 0,05$ ). It means parametric tests can be applied to this research.

#### 4.2.2. General Descriptive Statistics

In this study, 129 participants from Grades 5, 6 and 7 were selected randomly using the convenient sampling method from a foundation school in Istanbul, Turkey. This questionnaire is designed to analyze the FLA levels of the participants in face to face and in virtual classrooms as well as researching their technophobia, their attitude towards participation and communication in virtual and face to face classrooms, physical and mental health issues in virtual classrooms, and online test taking. The number of participants is N=129. Students' ages ranged from 10-14.

Table 3. Results of General Anxiety Sum

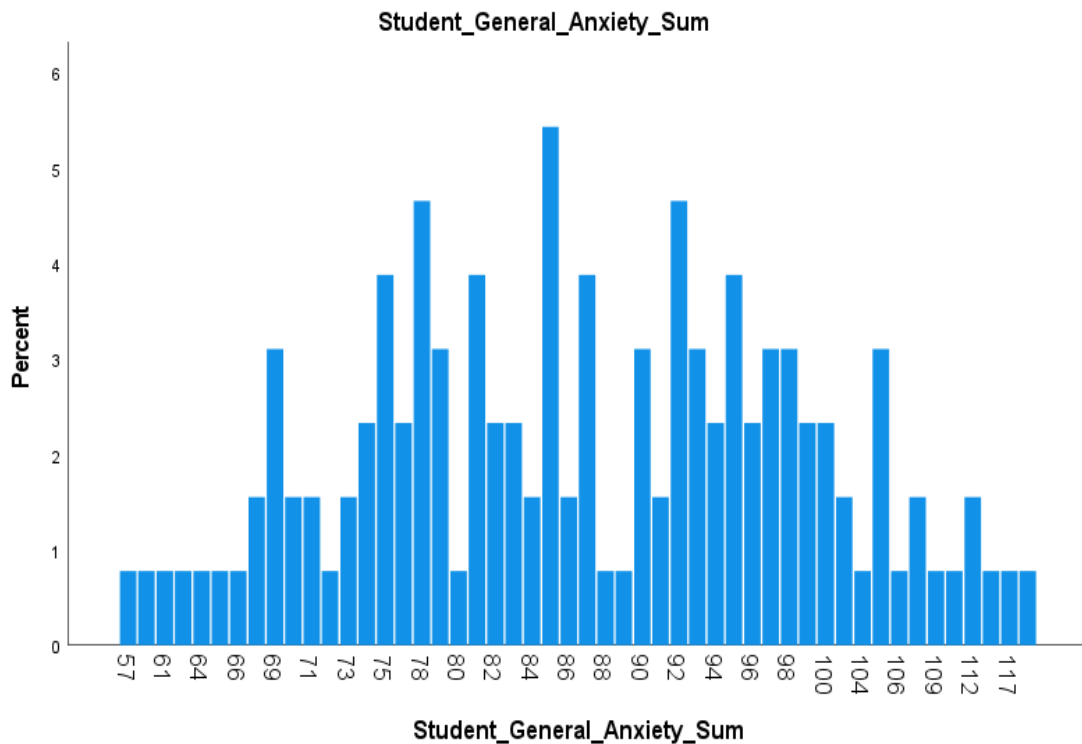


Table 3 presents the cumulative result of the general anxiety among participants. Each statement in the questionnaire is measured from 1 to 5; 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. However, it was also taken into account that in negative/opposite worded statements (q.6, q.12, q.22, q.26, q.30) points were calculated accordingly. In light of these, the highest point which can be received from this test is 155, and the lowest point is 31. It

can be seen from the bar chart above that the student with the highest anxiety scored 117 and the lowest point received is 57. The point average of the participants' anxiety is 87.

*Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of the Test on Likert Scale (1-5)*

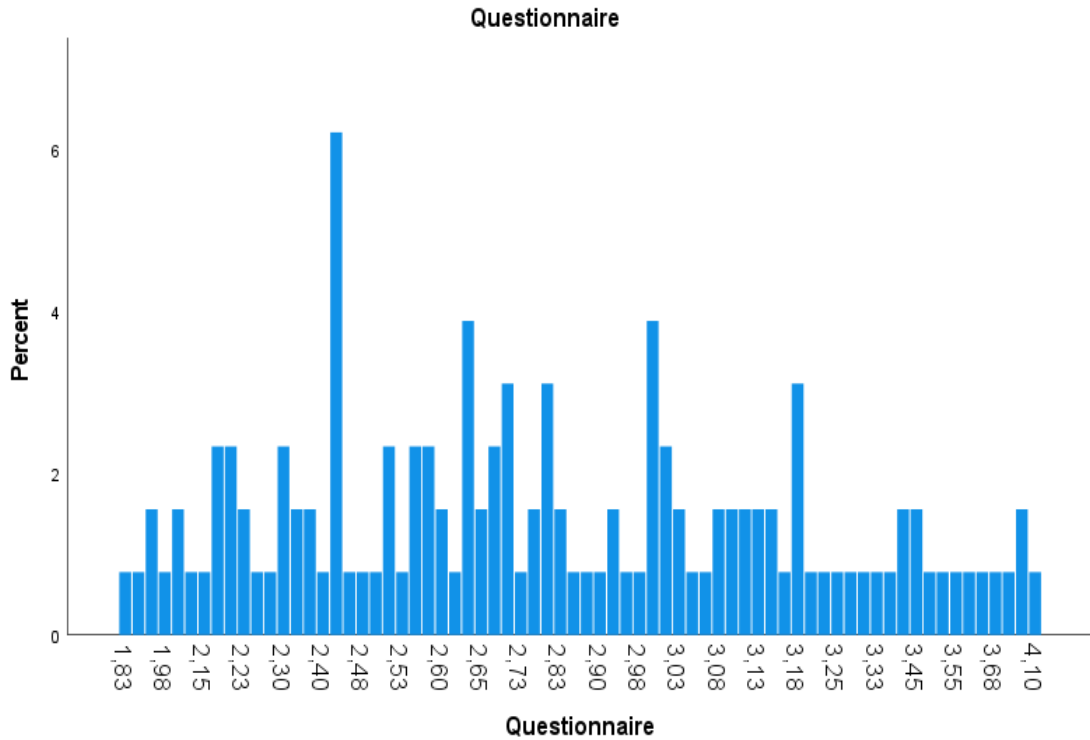


Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire given to the students on a Likert Scale (1-5). According to Horwitz et al. (2010), students with mean score of 1-2 are considered to be less anxious, students who scored around 3 are slightly anxious, and if a student scores around 4-5, s/he considered to be highly anxious. Based on the chart above, the mean score of the participants is 2,77 reflecting that the majority of the participants have a low level of FLA. However, the student with the highest anxiety level scored 4,10 which means some highly anxious students are a part of the group as well.

**4.2.3. Research Question #1: How does virtual learning affect young learners' anxiety levels? Do virtual classrooms increase or decrease young adolescents' foreign language anxiety?**

This question aims to investigate the FLA levels of participants in virtual classrooms and to find out whether there is a correlation between FLA levels in virtual and face to face classrooms. To find an answer to this question, the questionnaire was separated into two categories. Part A entitled “Foreign Language Anxiety” consists of 10 questions and aims to evaluate participants’ FLA levels in face-to-face classrooms. Part B entitled “Virtual Classroom Experiences” consist of 20 questions (questions from 11 to 31) and mainly focuses on virtual learning, technophobia, participation, and communication issues online, online test taking, and physical and mental health issues in virtual classrooms. It was evaluated on a five points Likert scale. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics of FLA levels of face-to-face classrooms (FLA) and of FLA levels of virtual classrooms (VFLA).

*Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of FLA and VFLA Levels of the Participants*

		<b>Statistics</b>	
		FLA	VFLA
<b>N</b>	Valid	129	129
	Missing	0	0
<b>Mean</b>		2,8558	2,7023
<b>Mode</b>		2,85	2,80
<b>Std. Deviation</b>		,46185	,64244
<b>Minimum</b>		1,85	1,60
<b>Maximum</b>		3,90	4,70

According to table 5, the lowest score in FLA is 1,85 and the highest score is 3,90. The mean is 2,85 suggesting that the participants suffer from low level of FLA in face to face classrooms. However, in VFLA, the lowest score is 1,60 and the highest score is 2,70. The mean is 2,70. In light of these data, it can be inferred that even though higher scores can be encountered in VFLA, the mean is lower suggesting lower levels of FLA in virtual classrooms. To find out the correlation between FLA in face to face and virtual classrooms, Pearson Correlation coefficient has been used. Table 6 presents the correlation.

Table 6. Bivariate Correlation of FLA and VFLA

		FLA	VFLA
FLA	Pearson Correlation	1	,398**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<,001
	N	129	129
VFLA	Pearson Correlation	,398**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<,001	
	N	129	129

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To find out the correlation between FLA and Virtual FLA, Pearson correlation coefficient was used which measures whether there is a correlation between two variables. If the value is between -1 to -0,9 it presents a strong negative, -0,9 to -0,5 medium negative, -0,5 to 0 weak negative relationship. If it is between 1 to 0,9 strong positive, 0,9 to 0,5 medium positive, 0,5 to 0 weak positive relationship is reflected. Therefore, Table 6 presents the following results: (r=0,398), suggests that there is a weak positive correlation. Resulting that there is a correlation between FLA in virtual and face to face classrooms. It can further be interpreted that virtual education lowers FLA levels of students.

#### 4.2.3.1 Research Question #1.1: Is there a significant difference of FLA levels in terms of gender?

To elaborate this study even further, sub research questions have been formed. It was aimed to find out whether there is a significant difference between male and female participants. There has been 70 male and 59 female participants to the study. Group statistics have been presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Group Statistics

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Questionnaire	Male	70	2,8243	,48756	,05827
	Female	59	2,7254	,43285	,05635

According to Table 7, the mean score of males is 2,82 and females is 2,73 which shows slightly higher level of FLA in male participants. Independent T-Test has been used to evaluate this question and the statistics has been analyzed through SPSS program. Table 8 presents the results of the analysis.

*Table 8. Independent T-Test Results for Gender*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		F	Sig.	t	df	One-Sided p	Two-Sided p	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Questionnaire	Equal variances assumed	1,334	,250	1,207	127	,115	,230	,09886	,08189	-,06319	,26092
	Equal variances not assumed			1,220	126,640	,112	,225	,09886	,08107	-,06156	,25928

According to Table 8, p value (sig=0,250) is bigger than 0,05 reflecting that the variances are equal and therefore, this research uses “equal variances assumed” line. In terms of significance, two sided p value is ,230. T (127) =1,2;p=,25 providing that there is no meaningful difference in terms of gender in this study.

#### **4.2.3.2 Research Question #1.2: Is there a significant difference of FLA levels in terms of grade/age?**

The second sub research question focuses on the possible difference among different grades. To find the answer to this question, one-way ANOVA analysis has been applied. Table 9 presents the descriptive statistics of different grades.

*Table 9. Descriptive Statistics for Grade*

Questionnaire	Descriptives							
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Grade 5	46	2,7467	,46555	,06864	2,6085	2,8850	1,83	4,10
Grade 6	41	2,7189	,44532	,06955	2,5783	2,8595	1,98	3,65
Grade 7	42	2,8732	,47698	,07360	2,7246	3,0219	1,98	3,88
Total	129	2,7791	,46420	,04087	2,6982	2,8599	1,83	4,10

According to Table 9, the number of 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are 46, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students are 41 and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are 42. When evaluated, the group with the highest amount of FLA is 7<sup>th</sup> grade students with the score of 2,87. The highest point received by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students is 4,10 and the lowest is 1,83. Among 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, the highest point is 3,65 and the lowest is 3,65. The highest 7<sup>th</sup> grade point is 3,88 and the lowest is 1,98. Both slightly anxious and highly anxious students can be found among participants. Table 10 shows the results of one-way ANOVA test conducted by SPSS Program.

*Table 10. One Way ANOVA Test Results for Grade*

<b>ANOVA</b>					
Questionnaire	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	,569	2	,284	1,326	,269
Within Groups	27,013	126	,214		
Total	27,582	128			

According to Table 10, since p value (,269) is higher than 0.05, reflecting that there is no significant difference among grades in this study.

#### **4.2.4. Research Question #2: Which features of online education increase or decrease FLA in young adolescents?**

To find out the answer for the second research question, this part of the research was separated into seven main headlines: technophobia, participation and communication in a virtual environment, partnership, connection issues, online test taking, physical and mental health, fear of making mistakes in a virtual environment.

##### **4.2.4.1. Technophobia**

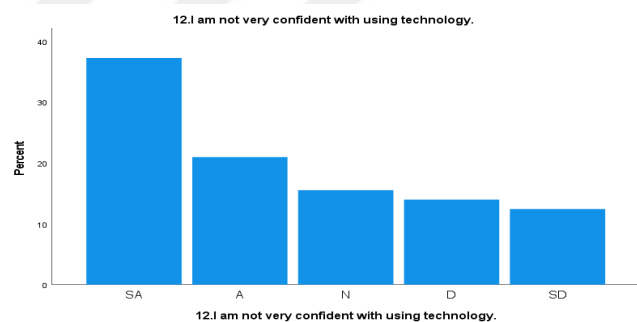
In the questionnaire given to the students, item 12 “I am not very confident with using technology” serves as a point to measure whether there are any participants suffering from technophobia in this study. Considering the fact that technology is a huge part of every life and the millennials who contributed to this study (students participating to this study were

born in around 2012-14) are named as “digital natives” (Prensky 2001). These digital natives are the generation who grew up into the technological age meaning that they are quite comfortable and successful with technology and take it as an inseparable part of their everyday lives. According to Prensky (2001), our students are incredibly interbedded into technology that “today’s students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach.” That is, the shift from our education system from face to face, to virtual could be successful with digital natives. Table 11 presents the student answers to item 12.

*Table 11. Item 12 Results - Technophobia*

**12.I am not very confident with using technology.**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SA	48	37,2
	A	27	20,9
	N	20	15,5
	D	18	14,0
	SD	16	12,4
	Total	129	100,0



As it can be inferred from the table and the bar chart, 37% of the participants do not think that they are struggling with the use of technology. The amount of students who think they are having trouble with virtual world is 12%. Overall, almost half of the participants do not have technophobia (57,2%) and it does not affect their FLA levels negatively in virtual classrooms.

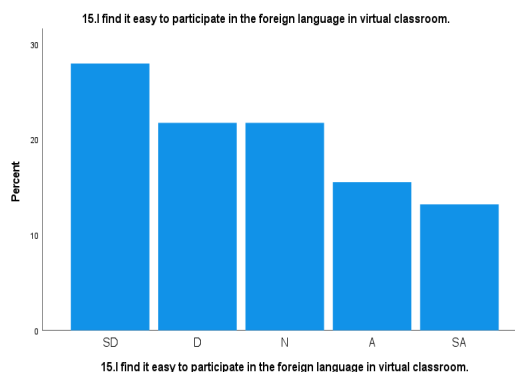
#### **4.2.4.2. Participation and Communication**

Items 15 and 20 are designed to measure participation and communication in virtual classrooms and items 3,6,7 reflects participation and communication in face-to-face classrooms. For a better comparison between face to face and virtual classrooms; data collected from items 15 and 6; items 7 and 28 will be presented together and items 20 and 24 will be presented separately.

*Table 12. Items 6&15 Results - Participation and Communication*

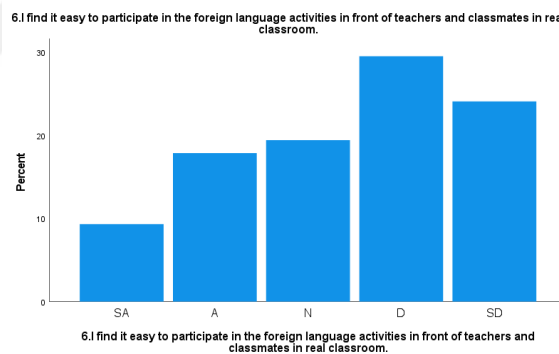
**15.I find it easy to participate in the foreign language in virtual classroom.**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	36	27,9
	D	28	21,7
	N	28	21,7
	A	20	15,5
	SA	17	13,2
	Total	129	100,0



**6.I find it easy to participate in the foreign language activities in front of teachers and classmates in real classroom.**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SA	12	9,3
	A	23	17,8
	N	25	19,4
	D	38	29,5
	SD	31	24,0
	Total	129	100,0



According to table 12, participant answers of item 6 shows that 27,1 % of the students think it is easy to participate the lesson in front of their teacher and peers. However, more than half of the participants (53,5%) believe the otherwise scenario is true. Based on the answers given to item 15, the amount of students who have trouble participating in virtual classrooms is 28,7%. However, the majority (49,6%) of the participants find it easy to participate in virtual classrooms. That is, participants of this study prefer participation in virtual classrooms.

Table 13. Items 7&28 Results

**7. During face to face lessons, I feel really involved with the lesson.**

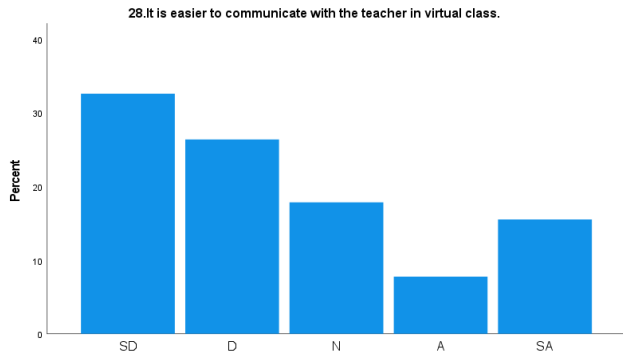
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	5	3,9
	D	15	11,6
	N	26	20,2
	A	51	39,5
	SA	32	24,8
	Total	129	100,0



7. During face to face lessons, I feel really involved with the lesson.

**28.It is easier to communicate with the teacher in virtual class.**

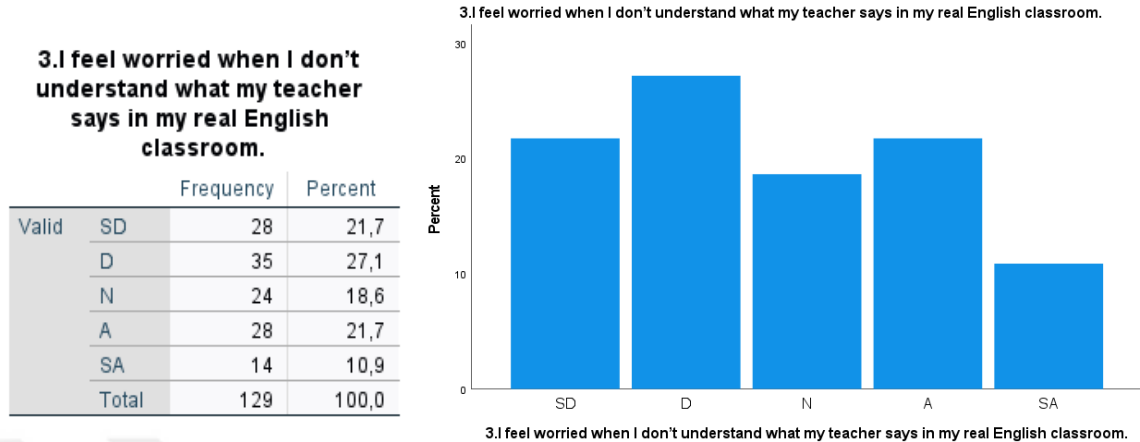
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	42	32,6
	D	34	26,4
	N	23	17,8
	A	10	7,8
	SA	20	15,5
	Total	129	100,0



28.It is easier to communicate with the teacher in virtual class.

According to Table 13, the participants who feel more involved in face-to-face lessons are 64,3%. That is, participants believe that face to face lessons are more gripping. Participants also believe that communication with the teacher is easier on face-to-face lessons (SA/A=23,3%; SD/D=59%)

Table 14. Item 3 Results

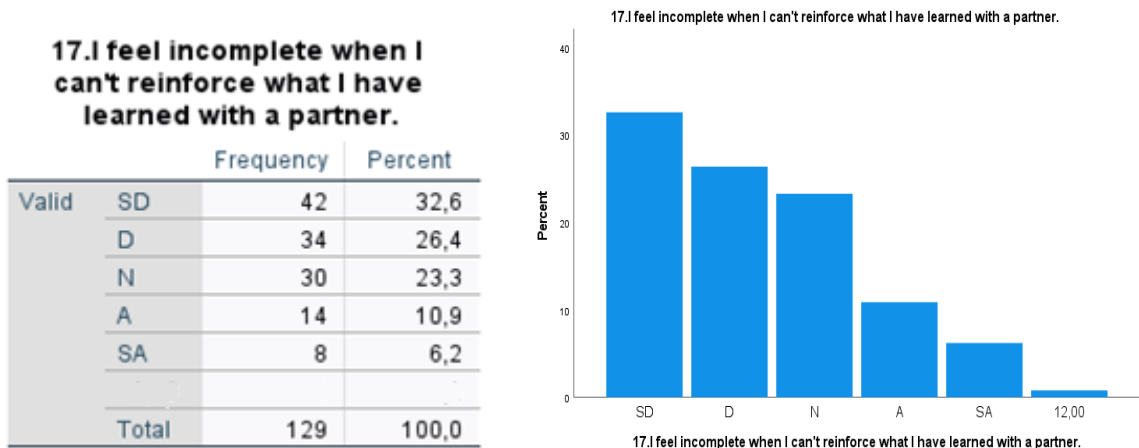


Item 3 was designed to measure the communication apprehension of the students in face-to-face classrooms. According to the results of Table 14, the majority of the students (48,8%) do not suffer from face-to-face communication apprehension. That is, they do not feel fear when they do not catch what their instructor says.

#### 4.2.4.3. Partnership

Practicing with a partner is crucial in language learning. Group work or pair work is one of the methods that has been used quite often in foreign language learning. However, creating a group/pair work environment in virtual classrooms can be hard. Item 17 of the questionnaire focuses on the pair/group work. Table 15 presents the answers given to the question “I feel incomplete when I can't reinforce what I have learned with a partner.”

Table 15. Item 17 Results - Partnership

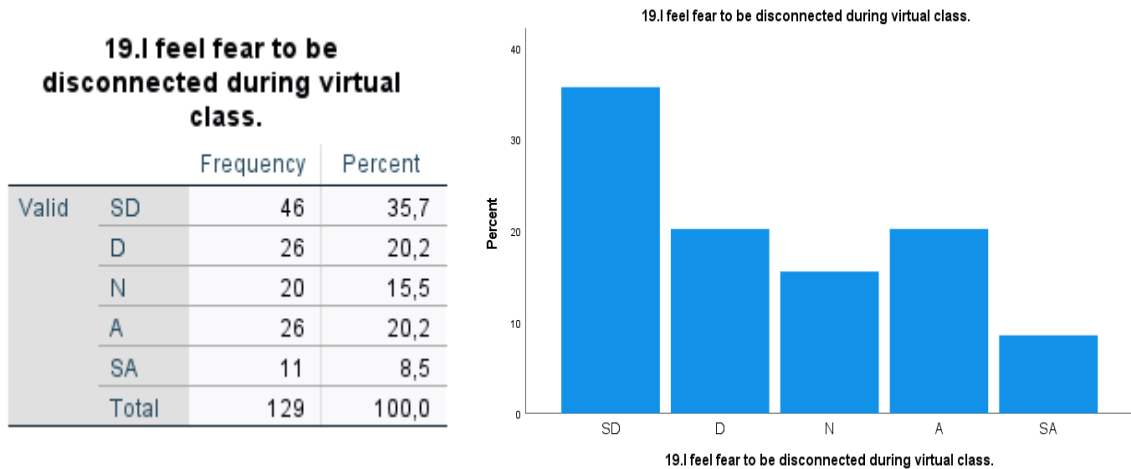


According to Table 15; 32,6% of the participants strongly disagree to the fact that they cannot reinforce the subjects they have learned when they are not a part of a group or pair work. Moreover, it could be hard to create a group work in online education, but it is not impossible and there are endless opportunities that technology presents to the education community for reinforcement.

#### 4.2.4.4. Connection

One of the most important parts of virtual classrooms is a strong internet connection. It creates a big difference on the quality and the effectiveness of the lesson. One of the issues that people came across with during the classes conducted in Covid-19 pandemic was the loss of internet connection. To further investigate, the effects of connections, participants of the study are asked whether they fear to be disconnected during virtual classes. Table 16 presents the answers of Item 19.

Table 16. Item 19 Results- Connection

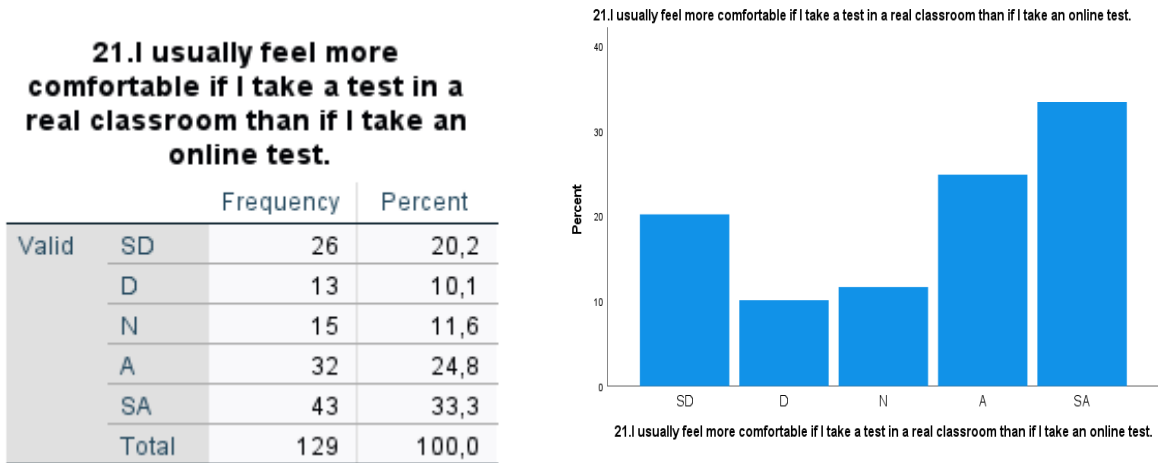


The results of item 19 presents that the majority of the participants (55,9%) do not feel fear to be disconnected. Of course, this situation affects their anxiety and they do not feel any additional anxiety for being online and not sharing the same physical space as the instructor. Therefore, it creates a better, more positive attitude towards virtual education.

#### 4.2.4.5. Online Test Taking

Online test taking has been a great topic of debate in education community. Taking a test online provides the test taker with faster results, less human error on marking, a much more economic and environment-friendly process, high security and reliability for the results. However, online test taking is very popular among young adolescents and teenagers. In addition, it is more relaxing for the digital natives since they associate paper-pen tests with more stress and online test taking with more fun and ease. Although some educators prefer paper-pen based testing, online tests have been quite useful, especially during Covid-19 pandemic or international tests which require travelling to different places in order to take the test. Item 21 asks students whether they feel more comfortable when they take an online test rather than a paper-pen test.

Table 17. Item 21 Results - Online Test Taking

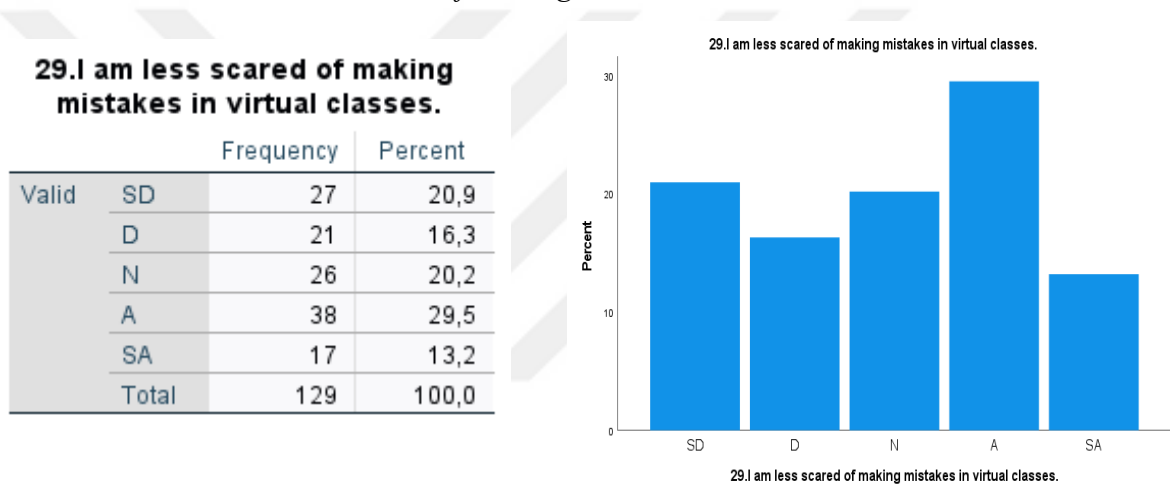


Results presented above reflects that more than half of the students (58,1%) feel more comfortable taking an online test. 30,3% of the students feel more comfortable when they take a traditional paper-pen test in a physical classroom. That is, online test taking is another positive feature of virtual classrooms which help decreasing test anxiety; therefore, FLA.

#### 4.2.4.6. Fear of Making Mistakes

Fear of making mistakes and being judged by the instructor or peers are two of the problems which students with FLA sufferers. Learners feel nervous about making grammatical, lexical or pronunciation mistakes which might cause them to stay silent or force them to apply to avoidance tactics. To figure out whether the participants feel less scared to make mistakes in virtual classrooms, item 29 was generated. Table 18 presents the results of Item 29.

Table 18. Item 29 Results – Fear of Making Mistakes



According to Table 18, 42,7% of the participants feel less scared of making mistakes in online lessons. Therefore, it can be inferred that virtual education provides a better, safer, less scary foreign language education environment.

#### 4.2.4.7. Physical & Mental Health

Item 23 was created to find an answer to whether students feel anxious regarding their physical and mental health during their virtual lessons in front of computers. Considering the long hours spent in front of the computer due to virtual education, some of the students feel anxious regarding their physical health. In addition, not physically sharing a space with his/her peers, some students may experience loneliness, or even depression. Table 19 presents the answers given to this question.

Table 19. Item 23 Results - Physical & Mental Health

**23.I feel anxious about my mental and physical health due to spending long hours in front of the computer in virtual classes.**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	SD	33	25,6
	D	22	17,1
	N	22	17,1
	A	34	26,4
	SA	18	14,0
	Total	129	100,0

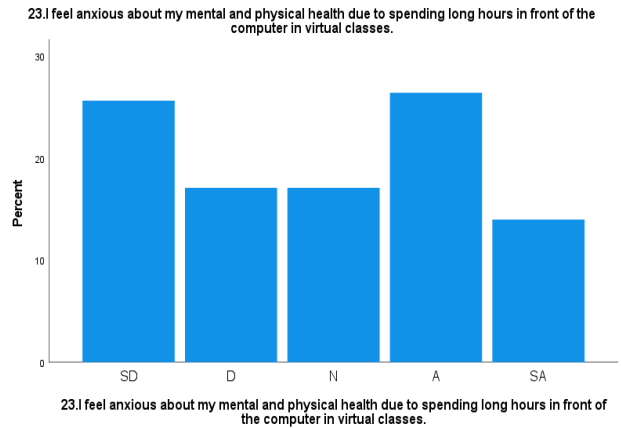


Table 19 presents the following results: 40,4% of the participants agree and 42,7% of the participants do not agree with this premise. Although the percentages are quite close to one another, the amount of participants who do not worry about their physical and mental health are more in number. Although such issues could be considered as one of the downsides of virtual classrooms, it does not necessarily cause higher anxiety among the participants.

#### 4.3. Findings of Qualitative Data

Semi structured interviews were held with 12 students with the highest level of FLA according to the questionnaire given previously. The main aim of these interviews was to fully comprehend the ideas and attitudes of the participants towards virtual classes, the sources of FLA and virtual FLA as well as their understanding of upsides and downsides of online education. The interview questions were semi-structured and there were 10 questions prepared by the researcher by examining different research on FLA and FLA in virtual classrooms (Kaisar and Chowdhury 2020; Aydın 2018; Doğan 2020; Aydın et. al. 2017) The interviews were conducted in English due to the young age of the participants. In addition, conducting the interview in their native language enabled the participants to express their feelings and thoughts easily and more sincerely. During the interviews, answers of the interviewees were recorded by taking permission from the students and their legal guardians. Later, these recordings were transcribed and translated to English by the researcher. The transcriptions were analysed according to Creswell (2014)'s qualitative

research procedure. All the transcribed data has been coded and recurring themes were noted to clarify the participants' understanding and attitude towards online learning.

#### **4.3.1 Research Question #3: What needs be done to eliminate Foreign Language Anxiety in young adolescents in virtual classroom environment?**

The main aim of these semi-structured interviews was to have a deeper insight on students' awareness of FLA, their FLA levels in virtual classrooms and to figure out what could be done to improve FLA levels in face-to-face and virtual classrooms. Interview questions 1,2,4,6,7, and 9 mainly focus on students' own feelings and experiences. Question 1 and 4 are concerned with face-to-face classroom situations and questions 2,6 and 7 focus on virtual classrooms. Question 3 asks whether the students find online education beneficial; question 5 is a comparison of virtual and face to face classroom regarding communication and reach to the instructor, question 8 focuses on the advantages, disadvantages, and points to be improved on virtual classrooms and finally question 10 asks the students whether they would like to receive their entire foreign language education in virtual learning.

For the first interview question, the participants were asked which situations they feel uncomfortable while speaking English to find out the main situations triggers of FLA.

- I feel the most comfortable when I talk in English in public. (Participant 1)
- When teacher asks me to speak, I feel like everybody is looking at me. (Participant 3)
- I am afraid that when I make a mistake and all class look at me. I feel so sad and scared. (Participant 4)
- Learning and pronouncing new words. I struggle when there's a long, hard word I tend to avoid saying it. (Participant 7)
- When I am asked as question, everybody looks at me and they laugh at me. That makes me feel really embarrassed. (Participant 12)

Based on the answers above, the participants stated that expressing themselves in public in a foreign language triggers their anxiety and makes them feel more nervous. It is also stated that fear of mispronunciation and fear of communication apprehension are other triggering situations for them.

In the fourth question, they are asked “do you feel ensured when you have eye-contact with your teacher in a real classroom? Are face to face classes make you feel more serious?” The main aim of this question to find out whether such anxious students require non-verbal validation from their teacher or rather this non-verbal action make them feel even more nervous.

- I usually feel safer when I see my teacher. (Participant 1)
- Yes, I feel better to actually see my teacher during the lesson. (Participant 11)
- Yes, I definitely feel better. (Participant 3)

According to the answers given above, 3 out of 12 participants feel much better when they have non-verbal interaction with their teacher during the lesson and they express that it makes them feel more assured and safer.

- I feel better in virtual classes because I feel pressured when I have eye-contact with my teacher or the other people in the classroom. (Participant 12)
- No, I feel worse. I feel like the teacher is about to ask me something so I feel anxious. (Participant 2)
- I hate having eye-contact with the teacher especially when I do not know the answer to the question. I feel so guilty for not knowing and I get so sweaty immediately. (Participant 6)

4 out of 12 participants reported that they feel quite bad when they have eye contact with the teacher. The other 5 participants reported that having eye-contact with their teacher do not make much difference in terms of their state of mind. According to these results, highly anxious students mostly prefer not having eye-contact with their teachers or their peers due to the fear of making mistakes or fear of being judged. Therefore, it is considered to be one of the triggering situations for their FLA. Considering rather secluded environment of virtual classrooms, they serve as a beneficial tool for such students to decrease or even overcome their FLA.

In line with the answers given above, in interview question 6, students were asked “do you feel safer and less anxious in virtual classroom? How?” and their answers presented that they felt safer and more comfortable.

- So much safer, I felt so much better. Because I am not judged by other people. It is way more comfortable. Also, I can listen to the teacher the way I want because not everyone learns the same way. Teachers expect us to have an eye contact with them and but I feel nervous when I do that. So it is better when I just listen to the lesson through the screen. That is why, online education is so much more comfortable and safe. (Participant 1)
- Yes, because the environment isn't the same as the classroom and you don't see other people looking at you so I feel safer in online lessons. (Participant 3)
- Yes, because I can turn off my camera or microphone whenever I want. I am in control. (Participant 6)
- I feel more comfortable because I am alone, and nobody is there to judge. (Participant 12)

Question 2 focuses on the possible negative outcomes of virtual education. Students were asked “do you feel isolated during virtual classes?” The majority of the students’ answers were positive. They expressed that they do not feel isolated during virtual classes because;

- Everybody is already there on the screen. (Participant 1)
- I usually feel good about it because if I want to be alone, I can and if I want to socialize, I can simply turn on my microphone on and speak. (Participant 4)
- We are not face to face physically, but we can still see each other through the computer. (Participant 10)

In light of the findings from the previous questions suggest that students with high level of anxiety finds virtual learning environment more comforting.

Although some students find virtual classes less scary, question 7 explores whether they experience the fear of missing out in virtual classrooms. 8 out of 12 students reported that they feel fear of missing out due to internet connection issues and complained that sometimes either the teacher’s connection or their own connection caused the freezing of the screen and they missed some parts of the lesson. However, when they are asked whether it is easier to reach and communicate with the teacher in virtual classrooms in question 5; 5 out of 12 students said face to face communication is better since they can find their teacher anywhere at school and talking face to face with people is easier and typing/sending

an email takes a lot of time. However, 7 out of 12 participants finds virtual classrooms easy to communicate and to reach the teacher.

- Communication is easier in virtual classroom because in face to face classroom sometimes when there is too much noise, the teacher might not hear you or miss what you say. (Participant 11)
- Virtual classroom is better because there is a chat box and “raise your hand” button. You can write your ideas or questions there or wait for the teacher to give you the word. It is way easier. (Participant 3)

In interview question 9, the participants are asked whether they feel bored or have fun in online English lessons. The fact that there are multiple websites, applications, or materials for foreign language classes makes foreign language learning through online platforms so much beneficial. In addition, participants were also asked in question 3 whether they think virtual learning is fruitful and beneficial for students in their age. The outcomes of these questions presented that students find online learning quite suitable and fun for foreign language learning.

- I enjoyed learning English so much more in online classes because they are fun and they included more technology and fun videos. (Participant 1)
- Generally, I was having a lot of fun because the games and videos make learning so much easier and better. (Participant 3)
- It was fun and beneficial because you are learning but you are also having fun. We were able to play games we weren't able to play in class. Also, there is no chaos or people are not talking to each other during lessons so the lesson is easier to follow and way more productive. (Participant 10)
- It is good, yes, there is nobody to distract you in the room so you can focus more easily and you can still socialize with your friends if you turn on your camera and microphone. (Participant 12)

To evaluate it even further, students were asked to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of virtual education and whether virtual education makes them feel more comfortable and eager to participate.

- There are so many advantages for me because I wake up later. It takes me less than 10 minutes to get ready. I had to have less eye contact with people and I am judged less by them. Some disadvantages are that we have less interaction, we cannot socialize with our teachers and friends. (Participant 1)
- For example, I come to school with a service bus and school is far from home. So, when I'm home I do not have to commute, and everything is faster and easier. Also, during the break times we can do some activities at home or enjoy ourselves. We don't have to wear a school uniform; we can just wear our jumpsuits and be comfortable. We can use phone or internet. We are not allowed to do that at school. But at school we are face to face and we can socialize, play games together. (Participant 2)
- I do not feel sleepy, I can get ready so much faster and easier and I feel more comfortable. I guess the main disadvantage is headache due to the computer and it affects even my sleep.
- We have better interaction with teacher, you can ask questions easily because you can just write it on the chat box. I guess, I do not see many disadvantages.
- Some of the advantages are that you can focus easily and there is nobody else to distract you, but also there is no peer pressure or bullying. People cannot bully you nobody can make fun of you. You can do as you wish. Even though it looks like you're not that free, you are actually quite free and independent. I guess there is not much of a disadvantage. (Participant 12)

As a parallel to the previous questions, students were asked whether they would like to receive the rest of their foreign language education in a virtual class in interview question 10.

- I would not. Because I have headaches if I look at the computer too much or I feel really tired if I sit in front of the computer all day. Also, there are no school trips or activities we do around the school this way. That is why, a combination of online and face-to-face classes would be so much better where we combine the fun of virtual classes and the school trips or social activities of face to face education. (Participant 1)

- A combination would be better because a student's improvement should be followed by the teacher face to face but virtual classes has so many good parts. You can easily focus and plan yourself. (Participant 12)
- Yes, because it is so much fun and it is so comfortable. I feel like nobody is there to judge me so I can speak freely, make as much mistakes as I want and nobody can make fun of me. (Participant 3)

Overall, students prefer a combination of virtual and face-to-face education. Although there are multiple positive effects of virtual education on students' FLA, due to the points of socialization and physical activities, the participants prefer to receive a foreign language education which provides them with what they mentally and physically need.

#### **4.4. Discussion**

To explain further, this part of the study will discuss the details and the data acquired from questionnaires and interviews.

##### **4.4.1. Discussion of Quantitative Data**

In this study, quantitative data was collected through a questionnaire, and it mainly aimed to answer RQ1: "How does virtual learning affect young learners' anxiety levels? Do virtual classrooms increase or decrease young adolescents' foreign language anxiety?" and RQ2: "Which features of online education increase or decrease FLA in young adolescents?"

##### **4.4.1.1. Discussion of FLA levels in face-to-face and Virtual Classrooms**

Based on the analysis of descriptive statistics and bivariate correlation between the answers given to Part A ("Foreign Language Anxiety") and Part B ("Virtual Classroom Experiences") of the questionnaire, a correlation has been found which suggest that there exists an effect of virtual classrooms over FLA levels of students. Positive correlation and descriptive statistics also reflect that FLA levels are lower in virtual classrooms; therefore, online education can be utilized as a great tool as the future of education and a remedy for students with anxiety, especially FLA. Although some educators believe that foreign language education requires face-to-face interactions and teacher's intervention to the student in times when students get distracted, majority of the foreseeable negative

outcomes can be fixed and/or overcome by simple adjustments. The interesting point of this research is that majority of the students believe face-to-face classrooms to be more overwhelming when they are asked to choose. As a matter of fact, certain aspects of face-to-face classrooms such as eye-contact, active use of body language, and corrective feedback are quite intimidating to the students. That is why, this study also aimed to raise awareness over the fact that some actions which teachers consider very effective and calming for the students may have the exact opposite effect over the students, especially students with high level of FLA. Accordingly, instructors (especially the teachers of younger learners) need to bear in mind that one size does not fit all and methods/materials which turn out well with a group of learners can actually lead a student to get intimidated, anxious and eventually lose the will to learn.

#### **4.4.1.2. Discussion of Features of Virtual Education in relation to FLA**

The features of virtual education which affect students' FLA levels were separated into seven subheadings: technophobia, participation and communication in a virtual environment, partnership, connection issues, online test taking, physical and mental health, fear of making mistakes in a virtual environment. One of the first questions asked in this study was whether the participants of this study had technophobia. However, the subjects of this study are digital natives and since they were born into this technological world, the results presented that they do not suffer from technophobia, and it has no negative effect on the FLA levels. In fact, the case is the opposite. Being a part of the virtual world and an online community affected their will to learn, emotional state and eagerness positively. When the students are asked whether they believe participation is easier in virtual or face-to-face classrooms, they suggested that communication with the teacher and participating in the classes are easier in virtual classrooms. They also suggested that they are in control in virtual classrooms, and it makes them feel so much better and less stressful. Considering that students with high levels of FLA feel that they need as little intervention and interaction as possible, creating a world which they can be the captain of their own ship is an exceptional way of motivating and leading them towards success. Presenting such students with more opportunities to be more autonomous learners will surely lead them to

more success and a more positive attitude towards foreign language learning. Moreover, one of the most common problems faced during Covid-19 pandemic education period was the constant disconnection issue. Participants of the study are asked whether they fear to be disconnected during virtual classes. Some of them expressed that they feel fear to be disconnected. However, most of the students presented that they sometimes get disconnected, yet it is not a big deal and they do not get nervous over this issue. Considering that testing and assessment are a crucial part of learning and a huge factor on FLA, it was investigated under this study. Based on the collected data, it is reflected that the participants feel less stress while taking an online test as opposed to taking stressful and intimidating paper-pen tests. Since online test taking comes in with several perks such as faster results, less carbon footprint, affordability and much more, the institutions providing online tests are rising daily. Alongside these perks, online testing also creates a less intimidating exam environment which helps reducing FLA levels of students. Moreover, fear of making mistakes is a crucial trigger for FLA sufferers, students feel much more confident when there is nobody else physically exist in the same room with them to judge. Seeing that performing public speeches or simply expressing oneself within the classroom are some of the expected activities in foreign language classrooms. However, if one is a student with high level of FLA, performing such activities seem impossible and feel like torture in front of everyone in the classroom due to fear of judgement. This problem disappears in a virtual classroom. Therefore, this situation counts as a positive feature of virtual classrooms. Finally, physical and mental health issues are one of the issues which worry students due to spending too much time sitting on a chair alone. Based on the provided data in Chapter 4, half of the students worry about their mental and physical health in virtual classrooms. In that case, to solve this issue instructors should lead students to be more active during break times and should include some activities to their lessons which requires students to stand up and/or move in front of their screens. However, certain physical problems such as the deterioration of eyesight or mental issues such as depression or anxiety disorders can be considered as negative outcomes which can occur during virtual education process. Afterall, the majority of the participants finds virtual education more relaxing, comfortable and less intimidating.

#### 4.4.2. Discussion of Qualitative Data

Semi-structured interviews were held with 12 students with the highest level of FLA according to the questionnaire given previously and aimed to discover a more thorough insight of the participants towards FLA, its sources and finally RQ3: “What needs be done to eliminate Foreign Language Anxiety in young adolescents in virtual classroom environment?”

Based on the answers of the participants, the main triggers of FLA as public speaking, fear of judgement, mispronunciation. They expressed that they feel the most anxious when they are speaking in front of peers, teachers, or other speakers of that language. In addition, they carry the constant fear of being judged by others which causes them to avoid communicating in a foreign language or pronouncing new words.

Besides, students were asked if they feel ensured in case of eye-contact with their teacher in face-to-face classrooms. Many teachers believe and use eye-contact and body language as a powerful tool to ensure the learner. However, if the student is suffering from FLA, this tool can backfire. Consequently, 4 out of 12 participants reported that they feel awful and in state of panic when they have eye contact with the teacher. In that sense, receiving online education calms the student and enhance their focus, or even their enthusiasm and participation. Once the level of anxiety falls away, success will follow.

Students were further asked if participating the classes behind a screen gets lonely, depressing or isolating. Most of the participants expressed that they do not because they are already a part of that community through virtual devices. Considering that these digital natives make friends from all over the world, become parts of online communities and take great pleasure out of this. They neither feel lonely nor have hardships making friends with their classmates. Furthermore, the participants’ attitude towards communication in virtual classrooms draws a parallel with the previous ideas. 7 out of 12 participants finds it easy to communicate and to reach the teacher in virtual classrooms. Since they can type emails, write on chat boxes, or simply push a button to raise their hands, according to the participants’ opinion, virtual classrooms are way easier to communicate, more relaxed and less time consuming. The participants also suggested that virtual education saves a lot of time and energy, and they have plenty of time left to study as well as play. For further

discovery, students were asked to compare the advantages and disadvantages of virtual education and their answers expressed a lot of positive insights.

As the final question, it was inquired if the students would like to receive the rest of their foreign language education in a virtual class. Having discussed all the positive sides of virtual education, one would expect that the students say yes. However, the participants preferred a hybrid education. On that note, it was suggested by the participants that even though virtual education is healing for them and it makes them feel so much more relaxed and lead them to become more successful, when they are asked the reason, they suggested that certain shortcomings of virtual classrooms such as the lack of interaction and physical activities during break times lead them to choose a hybrid type of education. Considering the fondness of sports and physical activities and high energy of younger students, their desire for physically active break time activities is understandable.

The findings from the previous questions suggest that students with high level of anxiety finds virtual learning environment more comforting. However, creating more inclusive virtual classrooms, keeping lesson time shorter, enabling students to move in front of the screens occasionally, coming up with creative ways to form group/pair activities, and finally making sure that the classroom is a safe space are some ways of eliminating FLA and boosting engagement in virtual classrooms.

#### **4.4. Conclusion**

In consideration of the findings from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the mean score of the students who have taken the questionnaire is 2,77 which present a group with mediocre level of anxiety. However, students with high level of anxiety (e.g. 4,10; 3,68; 3,65) also exist within the group. Based on the research questions and the data presented, virtual education helps reducing FLA in young adolescents. Although there is no significant difference between genders and among grades, the students with the highest FLA level are grade 7 students and male participants appear to be more anxious than females. When it comes to the features online education which affect FLA levels of students the most are analyzed in seven subheadings: technophobia, participation and

communication in a virtual environment, partnership, connection issues, online test taking, physical and mental health, fear of making mistakes in a virtual environment. Findings attained from semi-structured interviews also suggested that students with high FLA levels feel less anxious and more comfortable in virtual classrooms. Chapter 5 will focus on the discussion of these findings and conclusion of this research.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter consist of a summary, the conclusion of the study, the limitations, suggestions for further studies and suggestions for practitioners. In light of the findings based on the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, a conclusion is drawn.

#### 5.2. Summary

This research aimed to find out the effects of virtual education in relation to foreign language anxiety in young adolescents (age 10-14) and to explore the relation between FLA in face-to-face classrooms and virtual classrooms. To discover the answers to the questions asked before, 129 students who study at a foundation middle school in Istanbul, Turkey were given a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 31 items; items 1-10 focused on FLA in face-to-face classrooms and items 11-31 mainly concerned with FLA in virtual classrooms. Taking the results provided by the questionnaire into account, 12 of the students who received the highest score from the scale and proved high level of FLA were chosen for semi-structured interviews. The qualitative data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Bivariate analysis and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient have been used to explore the relation between students' FLA levels in face-to-face and in virtual classrooms. One-way ANOVA test has been used to see whether there is a relation among students' FLA levels from different grades. Independent T-Test has been used to discover a possible connection between genders. The quantitative data was analyzed based on Creswell's content analysis procedures. Students were asked 10 different questions. These questions were asked in Turkish and later, transcribed and translated to English by the researcher. The answers were separated into groups, common themes and recurring keywords were found and categorized. Each category has been analyzed as a source which affects students' FLA levels in virtual classrooms.

### **5.3.Conclusion**

In this study titled “Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Learning Environment”, the effect of virtual education in relation to FLA over young adolescents in middle school was investigated by using mixed method research. With a combination of statistics acquired from a questionnaire specifically designed to compare the FLA levels in face-to-face and in virtual classrooms and discourse and content analysis of semi-structured interviews, it was found out that there is indeed a positive correlation between the levels of FLA in virtual and in face-to-face classrooms. In the light of the findings, it was discovered that students with high level of anxiety prefer virtual classrooms since it enables them to feel in control, relaxed, happier, and more comfortable. Eliminating the constant fear of judgment enables them to be more successful and develop a more positive attitude towards foreign language learning. Although, there has been certain drawbacks of online education such as physical and mental issues, connection issues or lack of socializing, to eliminate or at least decrease the level of FLA virtual education can be considered as a great tool. With the Covid-19 pandemic, virtual classrooms have become the new reality to education community, and it turns out that this new system is here to stay and to serve as a big remedy for the students suffering from FLA.

### **5.4.Limitations of the Study**

This study is carried out at a foundation middle school in Istanbul, Turkey. That is why, the results were specific to this group of students and cannot be generalized to all young adolescent learners of foreign language learners. The number of participants can be enhanced for more thorough results. Another limitation is that since the subject group of this study are children among the ages of 10-14, certain abstract concepts are hard to fully comprehend by the participants and they needed further explanations in questionnaires and during interviews. Further studies can simplify the items in the questionnaire. Finally, all variables which affect students’ FLA cannot be controlled since there might be other factors which affect students on a personal level and cannot be associated directly with FLA, yet still affect their state of anxiousness.

### **5.5.Suggestions for Further Studies**

In light of the results attained from this research, further studies may focus on the following topics and enrich FLA research:

- Assessment and testing in virtual classrooms in relation with their effects on students with FLA,
- Preparation of an effective and interactive curriculum for virtual classrooms with a special focus on students suffering from FLA,
- Error correction and corrective feedback in virtual classroom environment and its effects on students with FLA,
- Conditions of the household, its effects on virtual classrooms and students' FLA levels (which can focus on socioeconomic conditions, educational backgrounds of parents etc. with in-depth interviews with students, teachers, and parents).
- Possible outcomes of virtual classrooms can also be explored with a study which can be conducted over a long period of time.

Further studies which focus on the issues above can be quite useful for the students suffering from FLA, their teachers as well as parents and can contribute to the literature.

### **5.6.Suggestions for Practitioners**

This study aims to contribute to the literature by proposing virtual education as a useful tool for the decrease of FLA levels of young adolescent learners or foreign languages. Therefore, instructors of foreign languages whose students suffer from FLA may benefit from the following suggestions:

- In order to eliminate the drawbacks of the virtual world, creating more interactive, student-centered lessons are crucial. Having considered the energy and short attention span of young adolescents, lessons should be designed as more inclusive with the help of multiple Web 4.0 tools or online games.
- To diminish FLA level of students, personal projects should be assigned so that the student acquire a sense of completeness and satisfaction. In addition, enabling more room for creativity and sparing some time for enjoyment would be a great way to change the negative attitudes of even the most anxious students. Besides, using

more visually stimulating materials are interesting and alluring to the young learners and helps the teacher to get more engagement on the screen. It should be remembered that once the student leaves the lesson with a smile on his/her face, the next time s/he comes back with a smile.

- Refraining from on-the-spot error correction is another crucial aspect for the elimination of FLA in classrooms. Especially interrupting students to give feedback or for error correction is one of the most important acts teachers need to refrain from. In that sense, virtual classrooms are more useful since it is possible to have a one-to-one chat with a student through personal chat box or emails. It is also crucial to nurture a learning environment in which making mistakes and language errors are considered to be a natural part of learning and everybody should feel comfortable to do so.
- To avoid confusion and motivate students, giving a preview of the following lesson and the main topics/vocabulary which will be discussed the next day would be useful so that the student with FLA is given a chance to get prepared in advance and feel less anxious and have a more thorough grip on the subject.
- Spreading awareness on FLA and creating a friendly environment where students can express when they feel anxious is in utmost importance in foreign language learning.
- The instructor should also help his/her students to set realistic, reachable goals and guide them to reach these goals. Since one of the reasons of FLA is unrealistic expectations on language learning process and success, setting down to earth goals will help students to feel calmer and get a tight grip of their learning. Making plans and creating milestones along the way is another way of diminishing FLA because once the student hit the goal, s/he will be embraced by a sense of completion and success; therefore, s/he will develop a more positive attitude towards language learning.
- The teacher should assume the role of a researcher while teaching. This is a method which brings theory and practice together. Letting the students lead the class and leading them towards the activities they have chosen is a great method to improve

motivation as well as success. Allowing students who is most anxious to choose the next activity helps them to feel more included.

- Finally, the teacher should get to know his/her students well. Having a clear idea of the student's language proficiency as well as personal life, parents' expectations, socioeconomic background etc. would help the teacher to understand the reasons laying behind high level of FLA if there is any. Communicating with the parents, helping both the student and the parents to set realistic goals, helping them towards achieving it and encouraging the parents to be more supportive and inclusive to the process are some of the ways to diminish FLA level.

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# APPENDIX

## APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form for Participants

### BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ GÖNÜLLÜ OLUR FORMU

Sizi Sena Damla Yeşilyurt tarafından yürütülen Sanal Öğrenme Ortamında Genç Ergenlerde Yabancı Dil Kaygısı / Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in Virtual Learning Environment” başlıklı araştırmaya davet ediyoruz. Bu araştırmanın amacı ortaokul öğrencileri arasında çevrimiçi eğitim sürecinin yabancı dil kaygısına olan etkilerini gözlemlemektir. Araştırmada sizden tahminen 5 dakika ayırmanız istenmektedir. Bu çalışmaya katılmak tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Çalışmanın amacına ulaşması için sizden beklenen, bütün soruları eksiksiz, kimsenin baskısı veya telkini altında olmadan, size en uygun gelen cevapları içtenlikle verecek şekilde cevaplamanızdır. Bu formu okuyup onaylamanız, araştırmaya katılmayı kabul ettiğiniz anlamına gelecektir. Ancak, çalışmaya katılmama veya katıldıktan sonra herhangi bir anda çalışmayı bırakma hakkına da sahipsiniz. Bu çalışmadan elde edilecek bilgiler tamamen araştırma amacı ile kullanılacak olup kişisel bilgileriniz gizli tutulacaktır. Araştırmada Kişisel veri toplanacağından 6698 sayılı Kişisel Verilerin Korunması Kanunu ve ilgili mevzuat uyarınca kişisel verileri korumak amacıyla gerekli tüm tedbirler alınacaktır. Eğer araştırmanın amacı ile ilgili verilen bu bilgiler dışında şimdi veya sonra daha fazla bilgiye ihtiyaç duyarsanız araştırmacıya şimdi sorabilir veya [yesilyurt.damla@std.izu.edu.tr](mailto:yesilyurt.damla@std.izu.edu.tr) e-posta adresi ve 0539 777 13 23 numaralı telefondan ulaşabilirsiniz.

Yukarıda yer alan ve araştırmadan önce katılımcıya verilmesi gereken bilgileri okudum ve katılmam istenen çalışmanın kapsamını ve amacını, gönüllü olarak üzerime düşen sorumlulukları anladım. Çalışma hakkında yazılı ve sözlü açıklama aşağıda adı belirtilen araştırmacı/araştırmacılar tarafından yapıldı. Bana, çalışmanın muhtemel riskleri ve faydaları sözlü olarak da anlatıldı. Kişisel bilgilerimin özenle korunacağı konusunda yeterli güvence verildi.

Bu koşullarda söz konusu araştırmaya kendi isteğimle, hiçbir baskı ve telkin olmaksızın katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcının:

Adı-Soyadı:.....

İmzası:

İletişim Bilgileri: e-posta:

Telefon:

Velayet veya Vesayet Altında Bulunanlar İçin:

Veli veya Vasisinin

Adı-Soyadı:.....

İmzası:

Araştırmacının

Adı-Soyadı: Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT

İmzası:

## APPENDIX B: Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Environment Questionnaire (English)

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire aims to obtain data for a study titled “Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Learning Environment.” The purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate your perceptions towards foreign language anxiety and online education. There are 31 statements. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire is 5 to 10 minutes.

Thank you for your participation.

Please fill in the parts below with your personal details.

1. Gender                      Female                      Male  
 2. Grade                      5th Grade                      6th Grade                      7th Grade

### A. Foreign Language Anxiety

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my real English classroom.					
2. I get nervous when my teacher calls on me in my real English classroom.					
3. I feel worried when I don't understand what my teacher says in my real English classroom.					
4. I start getting nervous if I have an English lesson today.					
5. I start to panic when I am asked to talk without preparation in English lessons					
6. I find it easy to participate in the foreign language activities in front of					

teachers and classmates in real classroom.					
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
7. In English lessons, I feel so anxious that sometimes I forget what I was going to say.					
8. In English classes, I feel so nervous that sometimes I forget what I was going to say.					
9. I always feel that other students are better at English than I am.					
10. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak in English.					

**B. Virtual Classroom Experiences**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
11. I have experienced virtual classes.					
12. I am not very confident with using technology.					
13. I feel more comfortable in a real classroom than in a virtual classroom.					
14. I get less scared when I don't understand what my teacher says in my virtual English classroom.					

15. I find it easy to participate in the foreign language in virtual classroom.					
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
16. I feel lonely and isolated during virtual classes.					
17. I feel incomplete when I can't reinforce what I have learned with a partner.					
18. During virtual classes, I am not comfortable with the idea that my teacher and fellow students can see my house/room in the background.					
19. I feel fear to be disconnected during virtual class.					
20. I feel anxious thinking that teacher does not see my non-verbal response (mimics and gestures) and seriousness during virtual class.					
21. I usually feel more comfortable if I take a test in a real classroom than if I take an online test.					
22. Since I do not have to expose my physical appearance in virtual class, I feel comfortable, anxiety-free and relaxed here.					
23. I feel anxious about my mental and physical health due to spending long hours					

in front of the computer in virtual classes.					
	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
24. Direct presence or eye contact of the teachers makes me more nervous than virtual environment.					
25. Real classroom setting makes me feel more suffocated than virtual classroom.					
26. Real classroom environment fits me more for English class.					
27. Virtual class environment fits me more for English class.					
28. It is easier to communicate with the teacher in virtual class.					
29. I am less scared of making mistakes in virtual classes.					
30. I have trouble focusing in virtual English classes.					
31. I find virtual English lessons more fun than real lessons.					

**Thank you for your answers. Would you like to have a very short meeting to share more ideas about foreign language anxiety during online education? If yes, choose the option below.**

**Yes**

## APPENDIX C: Sanal Öğrenme Ortamında Genç Ergenlerde Yabancı Dil Kaygısını Ölçme Anketi

Sevgili Katılımcılar,

Bu anket, “Sanal Öğrenme Ortamında Genç Ergenlerde Yabancı Dil Kaygısı” başlıklı bir çalışma için verileri elde etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu anketin amacı, yabancı dil kaygısı ve çevrimiçi eğitime yönelik algılarınızı araştırmaktır. Ankette 31 adet soru bulunmaktadır. Tamamlamanız için gereken tahmini süre 5 ila 10 dakikadır.

Katılımlarınız için teşekkürler.

Lütfen aşağıdaki bölümleri kişisel bilgilerinize göre doldurunuz.

3. Cinsiyet                      Kadın                      Erkek  
4. Sınıf                              5.Sınıf                      6. Sınıf                      7. Sınıf

### C. Yabancı Dil Kaygısı

	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
32.Yüz yüze işlenen İngilizce dersimde kendimden emin olduğumu tam olarak hissedemiyorum.					
33.Yüz yüze işlediğim İngilizce derslerimde öğretmenim bana seslendiğinde kaygılanıyorum.					
34.Yüz yüze işlediğim İngilizce derslerinde öğretmenimin dediklerini anlamadığımda endişeli hissediyorum.					
35.Gün içinde bir İngilizce dersim varsa gerilmeye başlıyorum.					

36.İngilizce derslerinde önceden hazırlanmadan konuşmam istendiğinde panik olmaya başlıyorum.					
	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Kararsızım</b>	<b>Katılıyorum</b>	<b>Kesinlikle Katılıyorum</b>
37.Öğretmenlerin ve sınıf arkadaşlarımla önünde, gerçek sınıf ortamında yabancı dil etkinliklerine katılmayı kolay buluyorum.					
38.Yüz yüze dersler sırasında kendimi derse fazlasıyla dahil olmuş hissediyorum.					
39.İngilizce derslerinde o kadar gergin hissediyorum ki bazen ne diyeceğimi unutuyorum.					
40.Çoğu zaman diğer öğrencilerin İngilizce 'de benden daha iyi olduğunu düşünüyorum.					
41.İngilizce konuştuğumda diğer öğrencilerin bana güleceğinden korkuyorum.					

#### D. Çevrimiçi Ders Tecrübeleri

	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Kararsızım</b>	<b>Katılıyorum</b>	<b>Kesinlikle Katılıyorum</b>
42. Çevrimiçi derslerine daha önce katıldım.					
43. Teknolojiyi kullanma konusunda kendime çok güvenmiyorum.					

44. Gerçek bir sınıfta sanal sınıfta olduğumdan daha rahat hissediyorum.					
	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Kararsızım</b>	<b>Katılıyorum</b>	<b>Kesinlikle Katılıyorum</b>
45.Çevrimiçi İngilizce derslerimde öğretmenimin söylediklerini anlamamak beni daha az kaygılandırıyor.					
46.Çevrimiçi sınıflarda yabancı dil etkinliklerine katılmak bence daha kolay.					
47.Çevrimiçi sınıfta yalnız ve izole hissediyorum.					
48.Öğrendiklerimi bir partner ile pekiştiremediğimde eksik hissediyorum.					
49.Çevrimiçi ders sırasında öğretmenin veya diğer öğrencilerin arka planda evimi/odamı görmesi beni rahatsız ediyor.					
50.Çevrimiçi eğitim sırasında bağlantı kopukluğu yaşamaktan korkuyorum.					
51.Çevrimiçi eğitim sırasında öğretmenin sözsüz iletişim (mimik ve jestler) yoluyla verdiği yanıtları ve ciddiyetimi görmediğinden endişeleniyorum.					
52.Çevrimiçi bir sınava girmek, beni yüz yüze bir sınava girmekten daha az endişelendiriyor.					

53. Çevrimiçi derslerde fiziksel görünümümü sergilemek zorunda olmadığım için kaygısız ve daha rahat hissediyorum.					
	<b>Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Katılmıyorum</b>	<b>Kararsızım</b>	<b>Katılıyorum</b>	<b>Kesinlikle Katılıyorum</b>
54. Çevrimiçi derslerde bilgisayarın önünde uzun saatler geçirdiğim için fiziksel ve zihinsel sağlığım konusunda kaygılanıyorum.					
55. Yüz yüze sınıflarda öğretmenlerin varlığı veya doğrudan göz teması kurması beni çevrimiçi ortamdaki derslerden daha fazla endişelendiriyor.					
56. Yüz yüze sınıf ortamı, beni çevrimiçi sınıf ortamından daha çok bunaltıyor.					
57. Yüz yüze eğitim ortamı İngilizce dersi için bana daha uygun geliyor.					
58. Çevrimiçi eğitim ortamı İngilizce dersi için bana daha uygun geliyor.					
59. Çevrimiçi derslerde öğretmenimle iletişime geçmek daha kolay.					
60. Çevrimiçi derslerde hata yapmaktan daha az çekiniyorum.					
61. Çevrimiçi İngilizce derslerine dikkatimi vermekte zorlanıyorum.					

62. Çevrimiçi İngilizce derslerini yüzyüze derslerden daha eğlenceli buluyorum.					
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**Yanıtlarınız için teşekkürler. Çevrimiçi eğitim sürecinde yabancı dil kaygısı hakkında daha fazla fikir paylaşmak için çok kısa bir görüşme yapmak ister misiniz? Evet ise, aşağıdaki seçeneği işaretleyiniz.**

**Evet**



## **APPENDIX D: Semi-Structured Interview Form**

1. Which situations do you feel uncomfortable while speaking English?
2. Do you feel isolated during virtual classes?
3. Do you think virtual learning is fruitful and beneficial for students of your age?
4. Do you feel ensured when you have eye-contact with your teacher in a real classroom?  
Are face-to-face classes make you feel more serious?
5. Is it easier to reach and communicate with the teacher in virtual classroom or real classroom?
6. Do you feel safer and less anxious in virtual classroom? How? Please explain.
7. Do you experience fear of missing out in virtual classrooms?
8. Can you name some of the advantages and disadvantages of virtual education? Which one (virtual or face-to-face education) makes your feel more comfortable and eager to participate?
9. Do you feel bored, or do you have fun during online English lessons? Please explain.
10. You had to have online education approximately for two years due to the pandemic. Would you like to receive your entire foreign language education in a virtual class? Why?

## APPENDIX E: Yarı Yapılandırılmış Görüşme Formu

1. İngilizce konuşurken hangi durumlarda kendinizi rahatsız hissediyorsunuz?
2. Sanal derslerde kendinizi izole hissediyor musunuz?
3. Sizin yaşınızdaki öğrenciler için çevrimiçi eğitimin faydalı olduğunu düşünüyor musunuz?
4. Öğretmeninizle yüz yüze bir sınıftayken göz teması kurmak sizi kendinizden emin hissettiriyor mu? Yüz yüze dersler size daha ciddi hissettiriyor mu?
5. Öğretmenlere ulaşmak ve onlarla iletişime geçmek sanal sınıfta mı yoksa gerçek sınıfta mı daha kolay?
6. Çevrimiçi derslerde daha güvende ve daha az kaygılı hissediyor musunuz? Nasıl? Lütfen açıklayın.
7. Sanal sınıflarda bazen dersi kaçırdığınızı hissediyor musunuz?
8. Çevrimiçi eğitimin bazı avantajlarını ve dezavantajlarını söyleyebilir misiniz? Hangisi (sanal veya yüz yüze eğitim) sizi daha rahat ve derse katılmaya daha istekli yapıyor?
9. Çevrimiçi İngilizce derslerinde sıkılıyor musunuz yoksa eğleniyor musunuz? Lütfen açıklayın.
10. Pandemiden dolayı yaklaşık iki yıl süreyle çevrimiçi dersler aldınız. Yabancı dil eğitiminizi tamamıyla çevrimiçi bir ortamda almak ister miydiniz? Neden?

## APPENDIX F: Ethical Board Approval



T.C.  
İSTANBUL SABAHATTİN ZAİM ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ  
ETİK KURULU BAŞKANLIĞI

Sayı : E-20292139-050.01.04-22851  
Konu : Etik Kurul Kararları

Sayın Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT  
Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Bilim Dalı Tezli Yüksek Lisans Programı Öğrencisi

"Sanal Öğrenme Ortamında Genç Ergenlerde Yabancı Dil Kaygısı" başlıklı araştırmanız kurumumuzun 28.01.2022 tarihli ve 2022/01 sayılı toplantısında değerlendirilerek etik açıdan uygun bulunduğu katılanların oy birliği ile karar verilmiştir.

Bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Nasuh USLU  
Kurul Başkanı

Ek:14-Sena Damla YEŞİLYURT Etik Onay Belgesi (1 sayfa)

**Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.**

Belge Doğrulama Kodu : \*BSD2S17Y7\* Pin Kodu : 77891  
Adres: Halkalı Caddesi No: 281 Küçükçekmece/İstanbul  
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Bilgi için: Zeynep Funda TEZ  
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**APPENDIX G: Social Sciences Graduate Student Congress  
Participation Certificate**



## CURRICULUM VITAE

**Name:** Sena Damla

**Last Name:** Yeşilyurt Özer

**Location:** Istanbul / Turkey

### EDUCATION

**Master of Arts:** Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, English Language Teaching, 2022

**Undergraduate:** İstanbul Kültür University, English Language and Literature Department, 2018

### PROCEEDINGS

Görgülü, E., & Yesilyurt, S. D. (2022). Foreign Language Anxiety in Young Adolescents in a Virtual Learning Environment. *3<sup>rd</sup> IZU Social Sciences Graduate Student Congress*. Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Istanbul.