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**REDUCING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION
APPREHENSION WHEN ACTIVATING VOCABULARY IN ENGLISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE—A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC APPROACH**

**REDUCIRANJE JEZIČKE ANKSIOZNOSTI PRI AKTIVACIJI
VOKABULARA NA ENGLESKOM KAO STRANOM JEZIKU—
PSIHOLINGVISTIČKI PRISTUP**

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Abstract

According to research (Horwitz et al.,1986; MacIntyre, 1999; McCroskey, 1997), individuals who experience foreign language anxiety most often and most intensely do so while *speaking* in a foreign language. FLA is independent of L1 abilities and it needs to be treated as a critical aspect of language learning and is said to occur mostly during the processing and output stage. Furthermore, short term and long-term memory are also affected by FLA, which can even decrease one's ability to self-correct or resort to short and long pauses. In this regard, the present paper aims to research features of foreign language communication apprehension in order to find comprehensive ways to reduce it during oral communication in English as a foreign language. A theoretical background of studies concerning oral communication in a foreign language within the scope of psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and language acquisition was presented in the first part of this thesis and three hypotheses were proposed. In the second part, the research attempts to prove that foreign language anxiety is a *situation-specific* anxiety because this kind of anxiety is only provoked by a specific situation in which speakers are orally communicating in EFL. Further, it aims to prove that FLA is a *debilitating anxiety* which is validated by the struggle to activate vocabulary during the output stage (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) leading to pauses and word errors. Finally, it addresses the assumption that speakers use various code coping mechanisms to reduce performance anxiety and maintain fluency at the output stage, which is a model of speech production. The research included 21 participants (students enrolled in the MA teacher education program at the Department of English Language and Literature) whose responses were analysed with regard to three questionnaires, i.e., one questionnaire containing three sections (68 questions in total). The first section collected data about the participants' background; the second section included the PRCA-24 (Personal Report of Communication Apprehension) to measure the degree of communication apprehension, while the third section investigated oral CSs using the OCSI (Oral Communication Strategy Inventory). Furthermore, the participants who enrolled in 2018 were significantly more apprehensive than their 2019 peers. However, the degree of CA did not affect their use of oral communication strategies and non-verbal strategies were the most frequently used strategies overall. In consequence of the inability to use these strategies while communicating online, it is proposed that face-to-face communication is vital for highly apprehensive individuals.

From these findings it can also be concluded that activating vocabulary is the process which is most negatively impacted by FLA. These data will contribute to the better understanding of FL communication apprehension within the scope of oral communication and provide possible suggestions for reducing and coping with FLA.

Key words: foreign language anxiety, communication apprehension, word errors, oral communication strategies, language production, speech, output stage, activating vocabulary, debilitating anxiety, situation-specific anxiety

Sažetak

Prema istraživanjima (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre, 1999; McCroskey, 1997), pojedinci koji najčešće i najintenzivnije doživljavaju jezičku anksioznost to čine dok govore na stranom jeziku. Jezička anksioznost i anksioznost pri komunikaciji na stranom jeziku je neovisna o sposobnostima maternjeg jezika i treba je tretirati kao kritični aspekt učenja jezika koji se javlja uglavnom u fazi obrade i proizvodnje govora. Nadalje, utiče i na kratkoročno i dugoročno pamćenje što čak može smanjiti nečiju sposobnost samoispravljanja ili povećati prisustvo kratkih i dugih pauza. S tim u vezi, ovaj rad ima za cilj istražiti karakteristike anksioznosti i straha od komunikacije na stranom jeziku kako bi se pronašli sveobuhvatni načini za reduciranje anksioznosti i straha od komunikacije na engleskom kao stranom jeziku tokom usmene komunikacije. U prvom dijelu ovog završnog magistarskog rada predstavljen je teorijski okvir studija o usmenoj komunikaciji na stranom jeziku u okviru psiholingvistike, neurolingvistike i usvajanja jezika, te su postavljene tri hipoteze. U drugom dijelu, istraživanje pokušava dokazati da je anksioznost pri komunikaciji na stranom jeziku anksioznost specifična za određenu situaciju (engl. *situation-specific anxiety*) jer ovu vrstu anksioznosti izaziva samo specifična situacija u kojoj govornici usmeno komuniciraju na engleskom kao stranom jeziku. Također, cilj je dokazati i da je anksioznost stranog jezika iscrpljujuća anksioznost (engl. *debilitating anxiety*) koja se realizuje kroz poteškoće aktiviranja vokabulara tokom faze proizvodnje govora (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994) što dovodi do pauza i pogrešaka. Konačno, pretpostavljeno je da govornici koriste različite mehanizme za suočavanje s ovim problemom kako bi smanjili anksioznost u izvedbi i održali fluentnost u fazi proizvodnje govora, odnosno u sistemu produkcije govora. U istraživanju je učestvovao 21 ispitanik (studenti postdiplomskog studija na Odsjeku za anglistiku-nastavnički smjer) čiji su odgovori analizirani u odnosu na tri upitnika, odnosno jednog upitnika koji se sastoji od tri sekcije i ukupno 68 pitanja. U prvom upitniku su prikupljeni podaci o iskustvu učesnika kad je u pitanju usmena komunikacija na stranom jeziku; drugi dio istraživanja sastoji se od analize odgovora na PRCA-24 upitnik (engl. *Personal Report of Communication Apprehension*) kad je u pitanju određivanje stepena straha od komunikacije, dok se u trećem dijelu istraživanja analiziraju usmene strategije komuniciranja pomoću OCSI (engl. *Oral Communication Strategy Inventory*) upitnika. Također, odgovori učesnika koji su se upisali na studij 2018. godine pokazuju da je među ispitanicima prisutnija anksioznost pri

komunikaciji na engleskom kao stranom jeziku nego kod učesnika istraživanja koji su se na studij upisali 2019. godine. Međutim, stepen anksioznosti i straha od komunikacije na stranom jeziku nije uticao na njihovu upotrebu strategija komunikacije, a neverbalne strategije su bile najčešće korištene strategije u cjelini. Kao posljedica nemogućnosti korištenja ovih strategija za vrijeme komuniciranja u online okruženju, zaključuje se i da je komunikacija uživo od iznimne važnosti za učesnike koji su potvrdili da imaju visok stepen anksioznosti pri komunikaciji na engleskom kao stranom jeziku. Iz ovih zaključaka također se može vidjeti da je aktiviranje vokabulara proces na koji jezička anksioznost najviše negativno utiče. Prikupljeni podaci će doprinijeti boljem razumijevanju jezičke anksioznosti kada govorimo o usmenoj komunikaciji (na engleskom kao stranom jeziku), a u radu će biti ponuđena i moguća rješenja za reduciranje anksioznosti pri komunikaciji na stranom jeziku.

Ključne riječi: anksioznost pri komunikaciji na stranom jeziku, strah od komunikacije, pogreške, strategije usmene komunikacije, proizvodnja jezika, govor, produkcija govora, aktiviranje vokabulara, iscrpljujuća anksioznost, anksioznost specifična za situaciju

1 Introduction

Speakers of English as a foreign language are reported to regularly feel nervous or anxious when communicating in English. While anxiety is a natural reaction especially during the early stages of language learning, some individuals continue to endure these feelings associated with speaking a foreign language for years to the extent that they become apprehensive despite their knowledge of English or their expertise in the subject matter. The type of anxiety that is identified with learning and speaking a second or a foreign language is referred to as *second/foreign language anxiety*.

Foreign language anxiety is a significant obstacle that a vast majority of EFL students experience which obstructs their performance abilities. Communication apprehension does not only reference to the anxiety individuals feel when speaking in front of a large group of people, rather it can encompass a range of different situations from conversations in dyads to group discussions. Causes, sources and consequences of foreign language anxiety are complex and diverse. Difficulties can arise during the input, processing and/or output stages of language processing hindering performance in the target language. This is because speaking a foreign language is cognitively demanding and the presence of FLA is quickly noticeable at the output stage by an abundance of errors speakers make because of their inability to adequately activate the correct vocabulary. The process of uttering a word is complex and involves different stages and there are many problems that can occur within these stages that lead speakers to make errors. When speakers encounter errors, they proceed to create a conscious plan, or oral communication strategies to be used as a vehicle in maintaining fluency to reach their communicative goal. This research also briefly explores vocabulary-related errors speakers with a high degree of communication apprehension report while activating vocabulary and the strategies they use in order to reduce foreign language communication apprehension when they encounter problems in communication from a psycholinguistic perspective. Based on this, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Foreign language oral communication apprehension is a *situation-specific anxiety* at the output stage.

H2: Foreign language oral communication apprehension can be classified as *debilitating anxiety*.

H3: At the output stage, a model of speech production, various code coping mechanisms are used to reduce performance anxiety and maintain fluency.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Foreign Language Anxiety

Learning a foreign language is by no means an easy task. Learners can be faced with many obstacles during this difficult process, some of which hinder development more than others. Speaking a foreign language tends to be one of the most complex skills to cultivate. This is because communicating orally in a foreign language does not only entail a learner to be fairly competent in their linguistic abilities; they also have to take into consideration everything beyond it:

To learn to communicate expertly in another language a speaker must change and expand identity as he or she learns the cultural, social, and even political factors, which go into language choices needed to speak appropriately with a new ‘voice’ (Hughes, 2011, p. 9).

This can be challenging for beginners as well as advanced speakers of EFL, to the extent that they can feel apprehensive or develop an anxiety about communicating in the foreign language as research has supported the claim that anxiety is prevalent among foreign language learners (Aida, 1994).

The type of anxiety that is identified with learning and speaking a second or foreign language is referred to as *second/foreign language anxiety*. Considering that foreign language anxiety is a broad and complex phenomenon, trying to define it is undoubtedly a challenging task. Since the encounter of researchers with foreign language anxiety, each attempted to put forth comprehensive definitions of this phenomenon. Horwitz et al. (1986) first established the notion of foreign language anxiety as an important part of language learning, defining it as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 128). MacIntyre (1999) defines foreign language anxiety as “the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language” (p. 27).

Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of foreign language anxiety is “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including

speaking, listening, and learning” (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994, p. 284). This definition encompasses the complicated and extensive nature of foreign language anxiety.

Contrary to popular belief, foreign language anxiety is not limited to EFL classrooms and situations when a language teacher calls on a student that is unable to answer a question in English because his or her mind went ‘blank’. Foreign language anxiety can affect anyone in any situation and during every stage. From early contact with the foreign language to language production, anxiety is a debilitating factor that affects many individuals.

2.2 Trait, situation-specific and state anxiety

Early research studies on foreign language anxiety failed to differentiate the type of anxiety in question within the language learning context, often resulting in mixed and misleading findings. Some researchers have found FLA to negatively affect learning (Clement, Gardner, & Smythe, 1977), while others found that it can even positively affect learning, or have no effect on learning at all (Pimsleur, Mosberg, & Morrison, 1962; Scovel, 1978). The results were puzzling because it is difficult to separate foreign language anxiety from trait anxiety, test anxiety or even public speaking anxiety. Taking into consideration people who suffer from many forms of anxiety, there is a fine line between them. Due to these conflicting reports, it was almost impossible to have a comprehensive depiction of FLA.

Scovel (1978) solicited the need to specify the type of anxiety that is being researched and measured. Most researchers largely agree that there are three categories of anxiety, namely trait, situation-specific and state anxiety (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989, 1991; Spielberger, 1972). Trait anxiety is considered to occur when a person has a permanent intent to be anxious (Scovel, 1978). It can be said that *trait anxiety* mostly correlates to one’s personality because anxiety is present despite the situation in which the person experiencing it is found in. *Situation-specific anxiety* is anxiety that is felt in certain situations and “it is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation” (Ellis, 1994, p. 480). Learning a second or foreign language is considered to be a situation-specific anxiety because this kind of anxiety is only provoked by a specific situation. Similar to trait anxiety, it is stable over time but does not occur in all situations. State anxiety is defined by Spielberger (1972) as “the emotional reaction or pattern of

response that occurs in an individual who perceives a particular situation as personally dangerous or threatening, irrespective of the presence or absence of objective danger” (p. 489).

Despite the struggle to put forth a broad and complete definition of foreign language anxiety, one thing that is made clear is the separation of FLA as an anxiety that is specific to the foreign/second language context. Most researchers who are investigating the link between anxiety and the foreign language learning context consider foreign language anxiety as a *situation-specific anxiety*, separate from trait and *state anxiety* (Horwitz et al., 1986).

2.3 Foreign language speaking anxiety

In daily conversations and interactions people speak spontaneously and effortlessly. Chit-chatting with friends, texting family members or having casual discussions with colleagues are usually things not to be worried about. Be that as it may, for speakers whose native language is not English, even these daily exchanges can be nerve-racking. Perhaps even more troublesome if they are speaking in front of students, giving a presentation or holding a conference. Speakers may find themselves making mistakes such as saying the wrong word or accidentally uttering something in their mother tongue. Combined with other debilitating factors such as public speaking anxiety, foreign language communication apprehension harms and impairs speech production and output of all of those who are affected by it. Even if a person who learned EFL knows it fluently, they can have problems speaking fluently under the influence of foreign language anxiety.

Speaking a foreign language is a cognitively demanding process. If one’s attention is self-related rather than task-related then this will result in effortful and hesitant speech. Eloquent speech requires the speaker to make quick and proper word choices because “normal, fluent speech proceeds at a speed of two to three words per second” (Levelt, 1989, p. 22). Failure to obey to this principle will result in listeners’ frustration and struggle to comprehend what the speakers are trying to convey. As a result of this misunderstanding, speakers of EFL feel discouraged and apprehensive, which leads to even more obstacles in communication.

Although all the four skills can be affected by anxiety not all four skills are affected equally. People who experience foreign language anxiety most often and most intensely do so while

speaking in a foreign language. Learners can feel comfortable reading, writing or even listening to English but feel anxious when they are expected to speak the language:

What distinguishes speaking is the public nature of the skill, the embarrassment suffered from exposing our language imperfections in front of others (Arnold, 2000, p.3).

Furthermore, McCroskey (1997) defined communication apprehension as “an individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (p. 78). This reveals the multifaceted and serious nature of communication apprehension as a burden that individuals carry even if they are not engaging in communication at the time being. Considering speaking to be the most problematic skill, most research concerning foreign language anxiety has been done under the scope of speaking anxiety, communication anxiety and communication apprehension. Perhaps the reasoning of this is the extensive research on public speaking anxiety that individuals endure speaking their native language. It is plausible to assume that if communication apprehension exists within the speech of L1 speakers than it unquestionably permeates L2 speech as well. To measure the degree of communication apprehension in oral performances, McCroskey (1982) proposed the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA) which is widely used. It contains 24 statements related to communication apprehension. Scoring high in the PRCA would mean that the learner has high communication apprehension whereas scoring low would show that the learner’s communication apprehension is low. Taking into account that listening is also a fundamental skill in communication, it can be said that these two skills (speaking and listening) are most likely to be impaired as a consequence of language anxiety.

2.4 Sources of FLA

Anxiety is a natural reaction to a perceived threat that an individual feels they cannot manage. Similarly, foreign language anxiety is the reaction to a situation in which the EFL speaker feels they cannot deal with and they perceive that situation as threatening. If an individual considers a particular EFL task to be challenging and threatening to them then they feel anxiety. It is important to note that in an EFL context threatening situations are those which threaten individuals’ self-concepts, self-identity, and their ego that they have already formed

in their first language as knowledgeable individuals (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.128). Oftentimes it is painful for individuals to be vulnerable and exposed to the scrutiny of others.

The question whether foreign language anxiety is the root of poor performance in English or if poor performance and achievement lead to anxiety is still unanswered. Sparks & Ganschow (1991) considered FLA to be a consequence of insufficient knowledge of the foreign language and poor proficiency. It was argued “FL (foreign language) learning is based primarily on one’s native language learning ability (i.e., language aptitude), and students’ anxiety about FL learning is likely to be a consequence of their FL difficulties” (Sparks et al., 2000). In contrast, MacIntyre (1995) asserted that FLA obstructs the process of learning a foreign language and that learners encounter obstacles because of it. Although one of the causes of FLA can be poor linguistic abilities, Horwitz, et al. (1986) and MacIntyre (1995) asserted that FLA is independent of L1 abilities and it needs to be treated as a critical aspect of language learning.

Horwitz, et al. (1986) maintained that the inability of students to adequately present themselves in English as a foreign language leads to foreign language anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner (1993) considered foreign language anxiety to develop from constant negative experiences related to EFL. Young (1991) offered six sources of FLA: personal and interpersonal anxieties, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing. Yan and Horwitz (2008) determined seven causes of FLA: regional differences, class arrangement, teacher characteristics, learning strategies, test types, parental influence, and comparison with peers. Luo (2012, as cited in: Luo, 2013, p. 454) believes that language anxiety originates from the classroom environment, learner characteristics, the target language, and the foreign language learning process itself.

The causes of foreign language anxiety are manifold and complex because they are rooted in both linguistic and psychological processes. FLA is mostly considered a psychological construct that stems from the way a learner perceives themselves, others, the learning process and their performance (Scovel, 1991). The importance of linguistic processes must not be belittled because they do affect FLA, nevertheless, identity-based factors are said to impact FLA more intensively than any other factor.

2.5 Performance anxieties

Horwitz et al. (1986) linked foreign language anxiety to three related performance anxieties asserting that in these situations individuals tend to report the highest degree of anxiety: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Horwitz et al. (1986, p. 128) define communication apprehension (CA) as “a type of shyness characterized by fear or anxiety about communicating with people”. Individuals who suffer from communication apprehension may tend to avoid speaking in L2. Communication apprehension can be very complex because it can appear under different circumstances. Public speaking is one of the most anxiety provoking situations regardless of whether a speaker is speaking in their first, second or foreign language. However, communication apprehension is not only limited to public speaking, which is something that many people experience. It can be present during daily conversations even within conversations of people who are already very familiar to each other.

Furthermore, test anxiety “refers to a type of performance anxiety stemming from a fear of failure” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). This arises out of the consistent need to regularly evaluate one’s performance, such as in an EFL classroom. Oral testing can cause both test and oral communication anxiety simultaneously (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127). When it comes to fear of negative evaluation, while it can be related to test anxiety, it is not restricted to it. Fear of negative evaluation can arise in many different settings and situations. In EFL classrooms, teachers are those who evaluate the students. However, speakers can fear negative evaluation from other students, colleagues, an audience, etc.

2.6 Consequences of FLA

The manifestations and symptoms of foreign language anxiety are congruent to those of other forms of anxiety. Individuals might find themselves sweating profusely, trembling, feeling fear or worry, having difficulties concentrating, being forgetful or even going blank. Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) reported that individuals described sweating, having headaches, body pain, abnormal verbal behaviours, playing with objects, fidgeting, etc. MacIntyre (1995) described the way anxiety impacts cognitive processes by dividing the person’s attention and

making it impossible for them to focus on the linguistic task. This makes cognitive performance less productive during input, processing and output. As a result of FLA, speakers who would typically be able to produce appropriate responses might find their minds going blank, forgetting, being unable to recall information or making persistent errors and lapses. Research has shown that anxiety negatively interferes with performing tasks (Sarason, 1980; Schwarzer, 1986, as cited in: Luo, 2013, p. 451). Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis asserts the learner's affective filter makes it impossible to receive foreign language input when the individual is under the influence of anxiety. In addition, Horwitz et al. (1986) designed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to measure and explain students' emotional reactions to foreign language learning. Researchers who investigated the relationship between FLA and achievement mostly reported a negative relationship (Horwitz, 2001). Liu and Huang (2011) reported a negative relationship between foreign language anxiety and course grades. Individuals who suffer from foreign language anxiety are more prone to avoid communicating in the foreign language. Liu and Jackson (2008) found a negative correlation between students' unwillingness to communicate in English and their degree of foreign language anxiety. It is important to note that anxiety does not only affect the individual but also the language learning process itself, it is likely that anxiety influences the way students feel about language study (Horwitz, et al., 2010).

More recently, Spitalli (2000, as cited in: Luo, 2013, p. 452) found that anxiety creates negative attitudes toward other cultures. Anxiety typically negatively affects the language learning process, language acquisition and performance. In consideration of individual's diversity, the degree and severity of foreign language anxiety can differ, as well as symptoms.

In addition, language anxiety can be classified into *debilitating* and *facilitating* anxiety. Facilitating anxiety "motivates the learner to "fight" the new learning task; it gears the learner emotionally for approach behaviour" (Scovel, 1991, p. 22). Debilitating anxiety "motivates the learner to "flee" the new learning task; it stimulates the individual emotionally to adopt avoidance behaviour" (Scovel, 1991, p. 22). Many researchers dealt with debilitating or harmful anxiety (MacIntyre, 1999; Horwitz et al, 1986; Oxford, 1999), while others dealt with facilitating or helpful anxiety (Bailey, 1983; Ellis, 1994). It has been suggested by Scovel (1978) that a small amount of anxiety can be helpful in improving performance, however, FLA usually negatively impacts performance and the language learning experience.

2.7 Cognitive effects of anxiety

In order to be able to communicate effectively in English as a foreign language, for instance, one needs to actively learn the language. Regardless of the stage in which difficulties arise, making constant errors will only result in more anxiety, which in turn results in more errors and so on. Using previously learnt linguistic knowledge is vital in producing adequate and appropriate speech. However, people who suffer from language anxiety feel its effects even throughout the language learning process. This can significantly impact how fluent the speaker will be and how well they will learn the language. Anxiety can obstruct the learning process even during the earlier stages, when a learner is first exposed to a foreign language. MacIntyre (1995), for instance, describes the link between foreign language anxiety and cognition in the following way:

Language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage, and retrieval processes, and anxiety can interfere with each of these by creating a divided attention scenario for anxious students. Anxious students are focused on both the task at hand and their reactions to it. For example, when responding to a question in a class, the anxious student is focused on answering the teacher's question and evaluating the social implications of the answer while giving it (p. 96).

Once the learner creates a negative association, the components of language will be remarkably more difficult to acquire. In turn, as a result of insufficient knowledge, the speaker will have poor performance which causes even more language anxiety. This is to say that dealing with foreign language anxiety is a constant struggle. Learning a foreign language is an exhausting cognitive process which requires all of the learners' attention as "humans have a capacity for consciously focusing their attention on only a very limited amount of information" (Baddeley, 1997, as cited in: Robinson, 2001, p. 263) and, being preoccupied with anxiety, the mind will block linguistic abilities which can interfere with all stages of processing. Ellis (1994) concludes that "attention (but not awareness) is necessary and sufficient for learning the perceptual aspects of novel word forms, while learning word meanings requires both attention and explicit awareness" (as cited in: Robinson, 2001, p. 24).

Eysenck (1979) proposed that people who suffer from language anxiety are likely to divide their attention between task-related cognition and self-related cognition. At the output stage,

for example, task-related cognition would require the speaker to plan what they are going to say, appropriately activate vocabulary and grammatical structures and accurately pronounce it. When someone suffers from foreign language anxiety, self-related cognition correlates to, for example, worry about pronunciation, fear of saying the wrong words and being concerned about what others will say about them. This might be the reason why the influence of anxiety on self-related cognition commonly hinders performance; considering the capacity to process information is limited, task-related cognitive demands have to compete with demands of self-related cognition (Eysenck, 1979).

2.8 Anxiety during the input stage

Input is the first stage of the language learning process. It refers to the process during which a speaker is first exposed to new words or phrases in the foreign language. Anxiety at the input stage would hinder the learners' ability to encode and "receive" the content due to the preoccupation of the mind with apprehension.

As for input, Krashen (1985, p. 3) states that "speech cannot be taught directly but emerges on its own as a result of building competence via comprehensible input". If a learner is apprehensive then the input is incomprehensible. This is due to what Krashen called the "affective filter" which is referred to as anxiety or lack of confidence that prevents the input the learner is receiving to be utilized properly (Krashen, 1985). A learner that is affected by foreign language anxiety will not be able to successfully acquire the language they are being exposed to because they are "filtering out" the input due to their inability to fully focus on the language being taught. The process of learning a foreign language requires the learner's undivided attention and if this is not fulfilled, the amount and quality of the input the learner receives will be restricted. This can result in misinterpretations and misunderstandings which can cause even more anxiety on behalf of the receiver and lead to miscommunication. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) report that students with high levels of input anxiety constantly ask others to repeat what they have said or may have to reread materials numerous times in order to compensate for inadequate and incomprehensible input.

2.9 Processing stage

Processing refers to the stage in which the language content is said to be understood, and in this context, the “apprehension students experience when performing cognitive operations on new information” (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000, p. 476). As understanding takes place, content is being learned. Anxiety at this stage prevents the learner to process and learn the content. Segalowitz (2003, as cited in: Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 39) attempted to present an ‘information processing model’ which puts forth the notion that learners have to use cognitive sources in order to consciously produce any kind of language. Nonetheless, they cannot pay attention to an infinite amount of stimuli and the amount of cognitive sources that can be used is limited, “the extent to which a learner can pay attention to new information is limited as is the focused mental activity one can engage in simultaneously” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 39). Speaking, for instance, involves many activities happening simultaneously such as “choosing words, pronouncing them, and stringing them together with the appropriate grammatical markers” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006, p. 39). The mental operations that undergo the seemingly superficial task of communicating in a foreign language are elaborate and complicated. If foreign language anxiety or unexpected circumstances are added to this equation then we can expect a large amount of speech breakdowns and malfunctions the learner will proceed to produce. Even if the learner did not have communication apprehension initially, they might develop it as a result of negative experiences in the EFL context. Researchers have revealed a cyclical relationship between anxiety, cognition and behaviour (Leary, 1990; Levitt, 1980, as cited in: MacIntyre, 1995, p. 92). Whatever the situation may be, for apprehensive EFL speakers the results are always the same. What may be linked to the processing stage is how MacIntyre (1995) illustrated the relationship between anxiety, cognition and behaviour:

For example, a demand to answer a question in a second language class may cause a student to become anxious; anxiety leads to worry and rumination. Cognition performance is diminished because of the divided attention and therefore performance suffers, leading to negative self-evaluations and more self-deprecating cognition which further impairs performance, and so on (p. 92).

This cognitive processing model can put forth explanations as to why the speech of apprehensive speakers of English as a foreign language tends to come across as not fluent or eloquent as perhaps “non-anxious” EFL speakers. This can have a particularly strong impact on communication because as a result of divided attention, speakers can experience difficulty both remembering words others have uttered or activating the necessary vocabulary they need to speak. Difficulties concerning vocabulary tend to be one of the most anxiety provoking situations for EFL speakers. Perhaps the reason as to why this can be the case is because both short term and long-term memory are affected by anxiety. MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) have found a negative correlation between the ability to repeat short number strings and recall vocabulary items. Furthermore, according to Tobias (1977, as cited in: Onwuegbuzie et al., 2000, p. 475) “processing anxiety can impede learning by reducing the efficiency with which memory processes are used to solve problems”.

2.10 Anxiety during the output stage

At the output stage, learners are expected to produce content in a foreign language. If anxiety occurs at the output stage, speakers are unable to retrieve vocabulary, form grammatically correct sentences or give a response altogether. FLA anxiety is said to occur mostly during the output stage. Tobias (1986) asserted that output anxiety involved the concept of interference that arises after the processing stage but before appropriate output. Anxiety at this stage, according to MacIntyre & Gardner (1994), will block students’ ability to speak the foreign language.

When it comes to the three stages mentioned, language and cognition are connected in the context of FLA. Inappropriate input and arduous mental process can be reasons as to why learners have difficulty learning a foreign language which are then perceived as sources of anxiety during the output stage (Horwitz, 2001). For instance, Tobias (1979, 1986) considered cognitive effects of anxiety to lay in its interference with the three stages of cognitive processing: input, processing and output. Language anxiety affects these three stages both psychologically and linguistically. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) developed three anxiety scales related to three stages of cognitive processing, namely, the input anxiety

scale, the processing anxiety scale and the output anxiety scale. They confirmed that anxiety does interfere with all the three stages of cognitive processing. Moreover, they discovered that anxiety had the greatest impact on processing and output.

All three stages of the cognitive processing model are dependent on one another. How successful each stage is depends on how successful the previous ones are. Despite the fact that separating these three stages can be abstract, it is crucial for a better understanding of the sources of foreign language anxiety. For instance, a speaker can make mistakes while speaking a foreign language because of the interference of anxiety at the stage when they were learning the language. However, a different speaker can also make errors because anxiety interfered at the stage when they were supposed to activate and retrieve the vocabulary that has already been acquired and stored in the mental lexicon. Although the performance of both speakers would superficially be similar, their performance would be diverse under different circumstances.

Tobias (1986) also theorized that output anxiety interferes with the *retrieval* of language that was formerly learned. For this reason, production and output fluency do not always correlate with foreign language proficiency. It is necessary to recognize this because even proficient speakers, such as teachers and professors, can struggle with communication apprehension. Likewise, they also need to be aware of this in evaluation of students' oral skills that might not be an accurate representation of EFL learning.

3 Activating vocabulary

When speakers plan speech, they start off with an initial idea of what they want to say. In order to utter a response, they need to activate the appropriate vocabulary. The process of uttering a word is complex and involves different stages:

According to Levelt, Roelofs and Meyer (1998), the process of uttering a word proceeds along four stages: (1) conceptual preparation, (2) lemma selection (i.e., selection of syntactic information), (3) morphological encoding, and (4) computation of a phonetic articulatory gesture (Robinson, 2001, p. 259).

However, this process does not always go according to plan. Between these four stages, there are many disruptions and mishaps that can occur. Most breakdowns occur between the stages of conceptual preparation and lemma selection or between the stages of morphological/phonological and articulation computation (Robinson, 2001). However, breakdowns can happen even between stages, for instance in tip-of-the tongue situations when a lemma is already selected though the speaker is unable to retrieve the word form.

Considering that when individuals communicate, they utter two to three words per second and are unable to pay attention to large amounts of information at once, in order to speak fluently, speech production processes should take place automatically. This would mean that the speaker would only pay attention to the concepts they are conveying. Formulation and articulation would take place automatically. In order to speak fluently, accessing words in the mental lexicon must be automatic:

Automatic processes are executed without intention or conscious awareness. They also run on their own resources, i.e., they do not share processing capacity with other processes. Also, automatic processing is usually quick, even reflex-like; the structure of the process is wired in, either genetically or by learning (or both). This makes it both efficient and, to a large extent, inflexible; it is hard to alter automatic processes. Since automatic processes do not share resources, they can run in parallel without mutual interference (Levelt, 1989, pp. 20–21).

However, not all discourse requires the same amount and kind of planning. Likewise, activating words from the mental lexicon does not entail the same kind of activity for words and phrases as “some words are easier to retrieve from the mental lexicon than others, if lexical retrieval is hard, it may take longer, and may be more likely to result in a pause before the difficult word” (Warren, 2012, p. 40).

For people who speak English as a foreign language, this can be one of the most challenging and demanding processes. Considering the fact that they are speaking in a foreign language they can struggle activating the appropriate word and sometimes any word at all. It can be argued that this can be related to the linguistic knowledge of the speaker because if the speaker has a rich vocabulary, it might be easier for them to activate the correct word.

Kormos and Dörnyei are reported to have obtained a negative correlation between lexical richness and anxiety (Daller et al., 2007, p. 81), however, if this were the only case, we would find that non-native speakers do not make word errors similar to those that native speakers make. In actual conversations and interactions, we can see that this assumption is false. While proficiency can make a difference in the overall effect, it does not necessarily entail “impeccable speech”. What may impair fluency is the communication apprehension and anxiety speakers are experiencing while communicating.

Due to the inability to process linguistic information while activating vocabulary because of apprehension, speakers might find themselves making more errors than usual. Language imposes demands on memory and “these demands will interact with other aspects of their cognitive system, including WM, vocabulary size, and automaticity” (Robinson, 2001, p. 89). When speakers utter the wrong words in spoken discourse, they can usually repair or self-correct their errors. Nonetheless, foreign language anxiety can even decrease their ability to self-correct because of a reduced ability to process information.

3.1 Pauses

Pauses in speech can offer a similar experience to punctuation in writing, as in spontaneous conversations people are likely to pause where one would find a period or comma in written discourse. However, it would be unreasonable to expect written and spoken discourse to be one and the same with regard to pauses. This is because pauses happen more often and vary in length in speech and they are often found in places where it would be unusual to find punctuation marks whereas around 40 to 50 per cent of an average spontaneous utterance consists of silence (Aitchison, 2008, p. 235).

Regardless of whether pauses are silent or filled, they “provide information about how a speaker constructs an utterance and about the choices that speakers have to make as they

talk” (Warren, 2012, p. 15). This is an important aspect of activating vocabulary because the harder it is to activate a word, the more likely it is that there will be a pause before that word. Although normal everyday speech is packed with pauses that generally do not impair the overall message a speaker wants to communicate, it does not mean that this is always the case. Amplitude of pauses and hesitations can make it confusing to make sense of the overall message. Moreover, speech of apprehensive EFL speakers is oftentimes burdened with short and long pauses.

Compared to reading aloud, spontaneous speaking involves considerably more planning, and planning of different kinds and this is why spontaneous speech includes more pauses, self-interruptions, false starts, and so on (Warren, 2012, p. 19-20). In addition to pauses, it also includes more hesitations and fillers. It is conceivable that perhaps pauses of speakers of EFL who have foreign language anxiety can be significant in providing information in this context.

According to research, pauses are usually found “mainly before important lexical items” (Aitchison, 2008, p. 236) and speakers might take too long to activate the suitable word which results in a long pause before the difficult word. Their expressions might seem tentative and can even result in the inability to make a choice, nonetheless a correct choice, of words and make an error. As a result of this, they might perhaps make an attempt to repair but struggle.

It is also said that “pauses are more likely and longer before content words than before function words” (Warren, 2012, p.40). There are several reasons as to why this is so. It may be due to the fact that there are more content words than function words in English so more time is required to choose the fitting word. It may also be due to the assumption that function words and content words are not found in the same part of the mental lexicon, i.e., “function words are in a separate part of the mental lexicon with faster access” (Warren, 2012, p. 40). Another possibility is that function words become available at a different stage of the production process, when the grammatical sentence frame is constructed (Warren, 2012, p.40).

3.2 Errors in the speech production process

Speech errors are so common in daily interactions that they are considered to be normal. In addition to pauses, speech errors demonstrate what could have happened to cause the error to occur. Misspeaking happens frequently and the causes of it are many. Fear of public speaking, drunkenness and anxiety may cause speech errors to increase. Due to the inability to process linguistic information while activating vocabulary because of apprehension, speakers might find themselves making more word errors than usual.

It is important to note that the scope of this paper does not take into consideration the mistakes EFL learners might make due to insufficient knowledge of the English language. Rather, it points to spontaneous errors EFL speakers make under the influence of anxiety from a psycholinguistic input-processing-output perspective.

3.3 On types of errors

Aside from the types of “word errors” to be discussed in further text, slips of the tongue could tell us more about the way a person plans and produces speech (Aitchison, 2008, p. 238) and, therefore, could provide us with information about the way in which foreign language anxiety affects vocabulary activation in order to find comprehensive ways to reduce it.

As for word errors, they could be organized into different types, according to what stage they occur in the production process. For instance, speech errors can occur when a wrong word is chosen or when the right word is chosen but the utterance is incorrectly assembled together. Therefore, according to some authors, errors may be categorized into selection errors and assemblage errors (Aitchison, 2008). Determined by the phase of activation, there is a distinction between mis-selection, mis-ordering and other categories of word errors.

Mis-selection involves word errors that occur “during the selection of words from the mental lexicon” (Warren, 2012, p. 43). There are three main types: semantic errors, malapropisms and blends. In the case of a mis-selection error the incorrect word is activated and the errors are “most commonly whole word errors” (Aitchison, 2008, p. 241). Mis-selection (semantic) word errors include substitution which occurs when one word replaces another such as:

(1) Close it so it doesn't go stale.

Close it so it doesn't go fresh. (Warren, 2012, p. 43)

Malapropisms "occur when a person confuses a word with another, similar sounding one" (Aitchison, 2008, p. 242) as in:

(2) She's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile (She's as headstrong as an alligator on the banks of the Nile),

and blends which occur when two words are merged together:

(3) spaddle (spank/paddle). (Fromkin, 1973, cited in Warren, 2012, p. 43).

Mis-selection errors occur earlier than mis-ordering errors, which are said to occur later, when the "words that have been selected are positioned in the utterance" (Warren, 2012, p.43).

Mis-ordering errors can be anticipation, perseveration or exchanges. Anticipation occurs when a word appears earlier than intended as in:

(5) I'm not a candidate for a cabinet position.

I'm not a cabinet... (Warren, 2012, p. 43).

Perseveration occurs when a word appears again later in the sentence:

(6) How many pints in a pi-... litre. (Warren, 2012, p. 43) whereas exchange occurs when two words swap places such as in:

(7) Just piece a put of cardboard in it. (Warren, 2012, p. 43).

Other kinds of word errors that can appear include omissions, when a word is left out as in:

(8) It's an extremely interesting way to look things up.

It's an extremely way to look things up (Warren, 2012, p. 43).

whereas additions occur when an extra word appears:

(9) He behaved as like a fool. (Warren, 2012, p. 43).

3.3.1 Mis-selection errors

Errors that result due to mis-selection are substitutions and blends. In all instances, the word that is the mis-selection is semantically related to the target word. In other words, they “have a clear meaning relationship to one another” (Warren, 2012, p. 43). When we plan speech, it is obvious that we have an idea of what we want to say before we utter it. Therefore, the words that are activated are those that are related to the concept or idea of what we want to say. During speech production, in the instance that an error of substituting a target word occurs, the word that substitutes is most likely an antonym, a word of the opposite meaning. Contrarily, merging two words that are synonyms will result in blends. This might be because the errors might occur at different stages, separating relationships at the conceptual and lemma level.

Occasionally when speakers talk, they might find that they can use more than one word to deliver a message. These two words are closely related to each other and have a concept-level relationship which involves “pre-linguistic abstract ideas” (Warren, 2012, p. 44). These lemmas are activated at the same time waiting for the speaker to choose which one they will utter. This is referred to as “a situation of alternative plans” and “if the speaker is unable to resolve the competition between the alternative plans, then these activated lemmas may both be inserted into the same slot, and the lexemes linked to these lemmas become blended at the level of phonological processing” (Warren, 2012, p. 44). Although speakers of all languages can and do produce word errors considered being blends, speakers that suffer from foreign language anxiety might be even more inclined to do so due to anxieties’ obstruction of information processing. Anxiety can influence their ability to resolve this competition and they will go on to utter a blend, for instance.

Blends have concept-level relationships and tend to include synonyms or near-synonyms, whereas substitutions tend to include antonyms. Word errors that take place at the lemma-level are associative as “they arise through the associations that words have with one another” (Warren, 2012, p. 44). Words that are substituted for one another are mostly antonyms or near-antonyms and can occasionally include collocations. In substitutions, for instance, the intended concept “activates its lemma, and activation flows through the associative links

between lemmas, so that an associate of the initially accessed lemma is also activated, and the wrong lexeme is inserted into the utterance” (Warren, 2012, p. 44).

There are numerous reasons as to why this can occur. Firstly, if the lemma that is associated is more frequent than the lemma that is the target then it might be available earlier but research indicates different results. Secondly, a more plausible answer could be because of imageability since the substituting words were more imageable than substituted words (Harley & Macandre, 2001, as cited in: Warren, 2012). Thirdly, the target lexeme might be unavailable and therefore is replaced by an associate, the available lexeme.

3. 3.2 Mis-ordering errors

Mis-ordering errors include anticipations, perseverations and exchanges. In the instance of mis-ordering, the correct words have been selected but placed in the wrong position in the utterance. The speaker activates the correct vocabulary item but fails to assign the correct position.

Anticipations, for instance, happen as a result of inserting the activated word in the sentence earlier than required and they are the most common mis-ordering errors. The reason for this might be “because the word is a particularly frequent one or has somehow become highly activated by the context, and consequently has a higher level of activation than the intended word” (Warren, 2012, p. 48). Errors of perseveration take effect when an activated word has already been used but it is available again later in the utterance. This may be due to a failure to cross it off the list of words cued for use, again perhaps because it is a frequent with a high level of activation” (Warren, 2012, p. 48). Furthermore, errors of exchange occur when two words swap places in the utterance.

Word errors functioning as errors of anticipation, perseveration and exchange generally involve words from the same grammatical category. For example, in sentences noun slots will be filled with nouns whereas verb slots will be filled with verbs. Errors of exchange usually also involve two nouns, etc. This indicates that “when words are selected for production, their grammatical category information is available, and words of the appropriate category are inserted into the available slots in the sentence frame” (Warren, 2012, p. 49).

3.4 Errors and foreign language anxiety during vocabulary activation

Researching word errors that individuals with foreign language communication apprehension produce can provide information about how foreign language anxiety affects activating vocabulary. Since word errors can be categorized according to what stage they occur in the production process, by analysing the type of error individuals with high communication apprehension generally make, we can gain some insight into which stage of the production process is significantly burdened by FLA. Furthermore, if speakers and interlocutors are able to recognize exactly which errors are made as a consequence of foreign language communication apprehension and which are not, both individuals can make effective and explicit efforts to reduce FLA by using various strategies that are accessible to each contributor.

Considering FL anxious speakers are more susceptible to making errors, research should seek to find appropriate means and approaches to reduce anxiety during the process of activating vocabulary. The ability to effectively access words in the mental lexicon is pivotal to being a good speaker. It may be suggested that FL apprehensive speakers will be able to cope with and reduce the apprehension they feel when speaking in English as a foreign language by using communication strategies when they produce word errors. Instead of allowing self-related cognition to dominate, they can revert back to processing information in the foreign language. As a consequence of reducing apprehension, they will become better speakers because it will be easier for them to activate the necessary vocabulary leading to fluent and eloquent speech.

4 Communication strategies

Exploring foreign language anxiety and language learning strategies have consistently been the subject matter of many researchers. Research shows that foreign language anxiety and use of learning strategies impact EFL learning (Liu & Chen, 2014; Lu & Liu, 2015; Oxford, 1990). However, rarely does research connect these two important language learning phenomena and how they relate to each other at the output stage by combining different questionnaires. Language anxiety tends to be most predominant and detectable within the domain of speaking and most research concerning FLA has been done with regard to speaking and communication skills. However, speaking strategies and communication strategies have not been widely researched, particularly within the domain of foreign language anxiety.

Faerch and Kasper (1983) defined communicative strategy as a “potential conscious plan for solving what a language learner assumes as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal” (p. 36). Many problems can arise during communication and language anxiety can affect and alter communication in many ways. Firstly, speakers might find themselves making more word errors than normal. Secondly, they might not be able to pick up on different cues from the listeners and in turn be unable to repair their speech. Lastly, they might not be able to use the strategies they would typically be able to because all of their cognitive attention is on the anxiety they are feeling.

Despite of the different ways in which language anxiety can affect the speaker, what is crucial for communication is for speakers to get their message across and when faced with anxiety, this is almost unattainable. All individuals, apprehensive or not, sometimes struggle to adequately convey the intended message during the output stage. Bialystok (1990) asserts that a gap forms between what the speaker wants to say and what linguistic resources are immediately available to them. In order to fill this ‘gap’, the speaker uses communication strategies. As previously mentioned, foreign language anxiety impacts the production of speech by limiting the amount of cognitive resources needed for information processing to adequately communicate in a foreign language. It is plausible to say that because of the burden FLA casts on apprehensive speakers, we might find that they attempt to compensate for this by using communication strategies.

Learners with high communication apprehension tend to frequently resort to various communication strategies as they help speakers solve problems that emerge in conversations, which effectively contributes to the reduction of foreign language anxiety.

Communication strategies have been recognized as crucial vehicles for speakers of English as a foreign language as they help speakers to continue communicating even when faced with complex and confusing tasks. Speakers employ these strategies in situations when faced with anxiety in the interest of lowering anxiety levels to improve and maintain fluent and eloquent speech and “it is also believed that learners can improve communicative proficiency by developing an ability to use specific communication strategies that enable them to compensate for their target language deficiency” (e.g., Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei, 1995, as cited in: Nakatani, 2006, p. 151). Using communication strategies helps learners to facilitate the conversation in the target language and reduces the likelihood for anxiety to overwhelm the speaker. Dörnyei (2007), for instance, believes that using communication strategies will help EFL/ESL learners lower communication apprehension and assist the process of delivering a message during oral communication.

4.1 Classification of communication strategies

Difficulties to describe and classify communication strategies are similar to the difficulties that arise when trying to define and determine foreign language anxiety. With reference to communication strategies, much disagreement arises when the question is put forth about what constitutes a communication strategy and the classification of these strategies. Generally, two different definitions have been offered within the framework of the interactional approach and the psycholinguistic approach. The interactional view focuses on “the interaction between interlocutors and negotiation of meaning” (Nakatani, 2006, p. 151) while the psycholinguistic view focuses on “the range of problem-solving activities open to individuals” (Nakatani, 2006, p. 151).

Communication strategies are categorized into *achievement* or *compensatory strategies* and *reduction* or *avoidance strategies*. If speakers are using achievement or compensatory strategies, they try to compensate for communication breakdowns by using resources available to them to bring them closer to their goal.

However, by using reduction or avoidance strategies, they abandon their message and avoid solving the problem they have encountered. At the same time, Faerch and Kasper (1983) asserted that in order to solve communication problems, a speaker could use reduction and achievement strategies. Their proposal included fifteen sub-communicative strategies each. More recently, Nakatani (2006) put forth the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI) in an effort to specify “strategic behaviours that learners use when facing communication problems during interactional tasks” (Nakatani, 2006, p. 4). The OCSI included statements about strategies for coping with speaking problems during communicative tasks and strategies for coping with listening problems during communicative tasks. Strategies for coping with speaking problems included 32 items while strategies for coping with listening problems included 26 items. Eight factors were identified for speaking strategies: social affective, fluency-oriented, negotiation for meaning while speaking, accuracy-oriented, message reduction and alteration, nonverbal strategies while speaking, message abandonment, attempt to think in English.

4.2 Communication strategies: a psycholinguistic approach

The psycholinguistic approach that pertains to communication strategies establishes them in models of speech production (Faerch & Kasper, 1983) or cognitive organization and processing (Bialystok, 1990, Nijmegen Group). From the perspective of Faerch and Kasper (1983), communication strategies are identified within two phases of a speech production model, the *planning* and *execution phases*. During the planning phase, lexical retrieval takes place and the product of this process is what governs the execution phase. The execution phase includes the actual production of an utterance that has been previously been activated. Word errors and problems in communication can be rooted in either phase. Native and non-native speakers of English construct a plan to overcome any kind of linguistic obstacle they may encounter during communication. This plan consists of communication strategies that are applied and managed when speakers are unable to produce what they initially wanted to. By using communication strategies, as already mentioned, speakers can choose avoidance and change the message using reduction strategies or they can maintain their message and adopt a substitute plan by using an achievement strategy.

Bialystok (1990) insisted on an approach that was founded on the process of using language for the purposes of communication. This led to an establishment of communication strategies within the cognitive framework established on the analysis of knowledge and cognitive control. The “analysis of knowledge” in this context is a skill that refers to the speaker’s ability to change the content of the message by taking advantage of their knowledge about it, such as providing a definition or using circumlocution. Cognitive control involves the speaker’s ability to change the manner in which they will express the message by using means that are not related to a foreign language (English in this case), such as using their native language or mimicry.

The Nijmegen researchers explored a sub-category of communication strategies that they called “compensatory strategies” which were conceptual or code compensatory strategies. Conceptual strategies are similar to the analysis of knowledge in that the speaker tackles the communication breakdown by making an effort to provide an explanation of the original goal. Code compensatory strategies are linguistic strategies and learners manage them by using their linguistic knowledge to repair obstacles.

4.3 Using communication strategies to reduce FLA while activating vocabulary

Communication strategies are valuable because they can help speakers deal with communication breakdowns such as when they are unable to activate the particular word or they misunderstand another speaker. Additionally, they can improve the comprehensibility and fluency of speech. Communication strategies are important for all EFL/ESL speakers, especially to those speakers who have to deal with foreign language anxiety on a regular basis. As Nakatani (2006, p. 161) states, “given that EFL learners frequently face language difficulties during their communication in English, they have no choice but to use strategies to compensate for their lack of proficiency in order to facilitate their interaction”. Appropriate use and administration of communication strategies will effectively help speakers reduce the anxiety they feel by providing a sense of confidence and certainty in their language abilities. If speakers are able to break the vicious cycle of anxiety that leads to word errors, that leads to even more anxiety and so on by using communication strategies, then it can be said that communication strategies should be explicitly taught and their utilization should be enforced. More importantly, communication strategies function as convenient opportunities to buy

time, settle down and collect one's thoughts so that one can eloquently and successfully continue the conversation which is the main goal in EFL contexts.

5 Analytical framework and research method

This research aims to provide more insight into foreign language oral communication apprehension as an anxiety that is specific to certain situations and debilitating at the output stage by analyzing word errors by apprehensive individuals during language production at the output stage and the oral communication strategies they use when faced with difficulties in communication. Founded upon the theoretical framework of studies in psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics and language acquisition, this research is concerned with proving that foreign language oral communication apprehension is a *situation-specific* anxiety and that it can be classified as a *debilitating anxiety* at the output stage. Furthermore, it addresses various code coping mechanisms that are used to reduce performance anxiety and maintain fluency during the output stage in a model of speech production. In pursuance of confirming or denying these assumptions, a three-part questionnaire consisting of 68 questions in total was administered. It is important to note that participants answered all the questions exclusively and entirely related to speaking English as a foreign language. The following sections include the research findings and outcomes of the study.

5.1 Participants

The number of individuals who participated in this study was 21 in total. The participants included students from the University of Sarajevo who enrolled into the MA teacher education program at the Department of English Language and Literature. Based on the participants' year of enrolment into the teacher education program, they were divided into two groups: participants who enrolled in 2018 and participants who enrolled in 2019. The 2018 group included 10 participants, whereas the 2019 group included 11 participants. All participants speak English as a foreign language. The participation in this study conducted through Google forms was voluntary and anonymous.

5.2 Instrument

The participants were administered a three-part Questionnaire. Section 1 incorporated twelve questions. In Section 1, respondents were asked to provide information about their year of enrolment, gender, and university education with regards to foreign language communication apprehension.

Section 2 comprised of The Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-24) which was used to measure the participants' communication apprehension. It was also used to obtain sub-scores on the contexts of group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations and public speaking. The questionnaire was composed of 24 statements regarding feelings about communicating with others developed by McCroskey (1982). The PRCA-24 is a 5-point Likert scale with each of the 24 items having five alternatives. The five alternatives ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". The participants were instructed to read the statement and indicate the degree to which each statement applied to them.

The third (Section 3) and last section of the Questionnaire included the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory (OCSI). This questionnaire was used to gather data about the participants' use of oral communication strategies. Considering that this study deals with oral communication and communication apprehension, only the strategies for coping with speaking problems were included. The Oral Communication Strategy Inventory included 32 items developed by Nakatani (2006) which were used to examine strategies for coping with speaking problems. Participants were required to answer all the 32 questions. The OCSI has eight factors for speaking strategies: (1) social affective strategies, (2) fluency-oriented strategies, (3) negotiation for meaning while speaking, (4) accuracy-oriented strategies, (5) message reduction and alteration, (6) non-verbal strategies while speaking, (7) message abandonment, and (8) attempt to think in English. The OCSI is a 5-point Likert scale and each of the 32 items had five alternatives. The five alternatives ranged from "never or almost never true of me" to "always or almost always true of me". The participants were instructed to read the item, choose a response and click the statement that best reflected their perspective.

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Section 1

In total, 80.9% of all the participants identified as female, whereas 14.28% identified as male. One participant preferred not to answer this question.

When asked about whether participants had courses or classes during their education that taught them how to recognize which errors they were making because of foreign language anxiety (see: Appendix, Section 1), 38.1% of participants indicated that they had not had these kinds of courses or classes, 28.6% were not sure if they did or did not, whereas 33.3% of participants answered they did have these courses/classes during their education.

Feeling more anxious about correct pronunciation than activating adequate vocabulary (e.g., collocations etc.) led 14.3% of participants to strongly agree and 23.8% to agree with this statement. Most participants (38.1%) did not agree nor disagree. The least number of participants (4.8%) strongly disagreed with this statement whereas 19% disagreed indicating they did not feel more anxious about correct pronunciation over activating the adequate vocabulary.

Considering the phases and situations that are closely associated with communication apprehension, the participants were asked whether they felt more anxious about questions that follow their oral presentation or lesson opposed to delivering one. 9.5% of individuals strongly disagreed and 33.3% disagreed with this statement, expressing that they felt more anxious about delivering an oral presentation or lesson rather than questions. The participants who felt equally as anxious accounted for 19% of the total, whereas 23.8% and 14.3% agreed and strongly agreed, respectively.

What is important to mention is that almost all the participants (95.2%) clearly remember attending presentations during which the speakers demonstrated a high level of foreign language communication apprehension. Only one participant (4.8%) did not.

When the participants were asked about their opinion about whether learning how to reduce foreign language communication apprehension is a life-long process or not, 85.7% indicated it was, while 14.3% were not sure. No participants expressed that they believe this to be false.

With regard to the experience of teaching in an online environment, 33.3% and 4.8% of the participants agreed and strongly agreed, respectively, to using online dictionaries during their oral presentations to check the pronunciation and meaning of words. 28.6% and 4.8% disagreed and strongly disagreed and denied this while 28.6% of participants did not agree nor disagree.

During their education, 61.9% of all the participants expressed that they did not have courses or classes that taught them how to cope with speaking problems that occurred because of foreign language anxiety. However, 9.5% were not sure while 28.6% gave a positive answer to having these courses and classes.

The participants indicated that the errors they have made because of the influence of foreign language anxiety are manifold. Mispronouncing words, an option added by a participant, was the error least made by the participants resulting in only 4.8%. Nine participants (42.9%) have admitted to blending two words together into one which led them to utter a blend. 47.6% of all participants have made word errors by confusing a word with a similar sounding one, saying a word earlier in the sentence than intended, and leaving out a word. More than half (52.4%) of the participants have swapped the places of words. The errors that have predominantly been made by the participants were substituting words (61.9%), repeating the same word again later in the sentence (61.9%), and adding an extra word (61.9%).

With regard to orally communicating online, most participants (33.3%) agreed that they felt more anxious when communicating orally online than in person, while 19% strongly agreed. Only 9.5% strongly disagreed, stating that they felt more anxious communicating orally in person with an additional 19% reflecting similar opinions. The group of participants who felt neutral in this situation totalled to 19%.

A significant number of all the participants (42.9%) indicated that they struggle with activating vocabulary when they deliver a presentation or lesson in English. On the other hand, 33.3% stated that they do not struggle with vocabulary retrieval, with an additional

9.5% strongly disagreeing. The rest of the participants (14.3%) are neutral with regards to struggling to activate vocabulary while delivering a presentation or lesson in English.

5.3.2 Section 2 - Personal Report of Communication Apprehension

Overall scores

Scores of the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension range from 24-120, with 24 being the lowest level of communication apprehension and 120 being the highest level (see: Appendix, Section 2). Analyses of the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension-24 responses showed that the participants scored between 24 and 118, with a mean score of 76.14. Scores between 83 and 120 indicate a high level of communication apprehension; scores between 55 and 83 indicate a *moderate level of communication apprehension*, while scores between 24 and 55 indicate a low level of communication apprehension.

Based on these scores, the participants were divided into high communication apprehension ($83 \leq \text{scores} < 120$), moderate communication apprehension ($55 \leq \text{scores} < 83$), and low communication apprehension ($24 \leq \text{scores} < 55$) groups. In total, nine participants (42.86%) fell into the high communication apprehension group, nine participants (42.86%) were in the moderate level of communication apprehension group, whereas only three participants (14.28%) were in the low communication apprehension group.

Considering that the number of participants is relatively small, a comparison was made with regard to the year of enrolment. The mean score of individuals who enrolled in 2018 was 82.5, whereas the mean score of participants who enrolled in 2019 was 70.36.

Compared to the U.S. national norm for the PRCA-24 in which the mean total score was 65.6, the mean total score in this research was 76.14.

Sub-scores

The four contexts of sub-scores of the PRCA-24 include group discussions, meetings, interpersonal conversations, and public speaking. Scores of these contexts range from 6-30, 6 being the lowest score and 30 being the highest level of communication apprehension. Scores above 18 generally indicate some degree of apprehension, while high and low degree norms slightly differ within contexts.

Participants who score above 20 are said to have a high degree of communication apprehension within the context of group discussions. Seven participants (33.33%) have a high degree of communication apprehension in group discussions, while only 2 (9.52%) are considered to have a low degree of communication apprehension.

Taking into account meetings, almost half (47.61%) of participants have scored above 20 indicating that they have a high degree of communication apprehension within this setting. The group of participants who have a low degree of communication apprehension consists of two participants (9.52%). The mean score was 20.09, reflecting the degree of communication apprehension during meetings.

Regarding interpersonal conversations, scoring above 18 would imply high communication apprehension, which included 12 individuals (57.14%). Two individuals (9.52%) reported having low communication apprehension in contexts of interpersonal conversations. The average degree of communication apprehension during interpersonal conversations is 18.38.

Only five participants (23.8%) scored higher than 24 which indicated a high degree of communication apprehension in public speaking contexts. Two participants (9.52%) had a low degree of communication apprehension while the other participants were concluded to have a moderate degree of communication apprehension during public speaking. The mean is 20.09.

5.3.3 Section 3 - Oral Communication Strategy Inventory

The strategies for coping with speaking problems of the Oral Communication Strategy Inventory number scale ranges from 32 to 160. Analyses of the total scores of the strategies for coping with speaking problems revealed that participants scored between 90 and 135, with a mean score of 109.57. On a 5-point Likert scale, the mean of all scores for the general use of strategies would be 3.42 which would fall close to the mid-range of 3 and 4, between *somewhat true of me* and *generally true of me*.

With regard to the degree of communication apprehension, the group that scored highest on the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (see: Appendix, Section 3) scored lowest overall when it comes to the general use of strategies for coping with speaking

problems, with an average of 3.32/5. The low communication group scored slightly higher with an average of 3.33, while the group with a moderate level of communication apprehension scored highest overall on the scale of strategies for coping with speaking problems with a total of 3.55 out of 5.

Regarding the year of enrolment and the use of strategies for coping with speaking problems, scores were almost identical for the 2018 (3.44) and 2019 (3.4) groups with a difference of only 0.04. Two of the least used strategies overall were *I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence* and *I give up when I can't make myself understood*, each with an average of 2.19 out of 5 which corresponds to the *generally not true of me* category. The most highly used strategy overall was *I pay attention to my pronunciation*, totalling in a 4.2 on a 5-point scale. For this reason, learning about coping strategies and how to use them effectively should be a subject matter included in all university syllabi with regard to learning a foreign language.

Furthermore, Factor 1 included *social affective strategies* for coping with speaking problems. The average use of these strategies by participants was 3.59 on a 5-point Likert scale, inclining towards *generally true of me*. The participants who were most likely to use these strategies belonged to the group of low communication apprehension averaging in 4.22/5. Furthermore, out of all of the strategies for coping with speaking problems, the participants with low communication apprehension used social affective strategies the most. The group with moderate communication apprehension reported that using social affective strategies was generally true of them as well (3.77/5). The group that used these strategies the least was the group with high communication apprehension with an average of 3.11 on a 5-point scale.

Strategies for coping with speaking problems that are *fluency-oriented* constitute items of Factor 2. Their use totalled in an average of 3.71/5 for all of the participants. The participants who used these strategies the most (3.87) belong to the group of moderate communication apprehension participants. Low communication apprehension participants also generally used fluency-oriented strategies (3.77) while the group with the highest communication apprehension used fluency-oriented strategies the least (3.53).

Items in Factor 3 were related to *negotiating meaning* during speaking whose usage individuals reported to being generally true of them (3.82/5). Results were similar for low, moderate and high communication apprehension groups averaging at 3.83, 3.86, and 3.80, respectively. Taking into consideration all of the strategies, *negotiating meaning while speaking* strategies were the most frequently used strategies by participants with high communication apprehension. In future research, it would be interesting to analyse how exactly meaning is negotiated.

Factor 4 strategies included items and strategies that were *accuracy oriented*. Accuracy-oriented strategies are reported to be used by participants a total average of 3.67 on a 5-point Likert scale. The participants who are reported to use these strategies the least (3.46) are those with the smallest degree of communication apprehension. Individuals who belong to the high communication apprehension group expressed using these strategies an average of 3.6/5 while the group who used these strategies most (3.82) belonged to the moderate communication apprehension category.

Factor 5 included *message reduction and alteration strategies* gathered in items 3, 4, and 5 of the OCSI. The average use of these strategies was 3.28/5. Moderate and high communication apprehension groups averaged 3.4 and 3.37 on a 5-point scale, respectively, and are almost as equally likely to reduce or change their message. The group with the lowest degree of communication apprehension is least likely to alter or reduce their initial message, with a 2.77/5 average.

Factor 6 involved non-verbal strategies which were shown to be the most widely used strategies overall, with an average of 3.85/5. Non-verbal strategies were the most frequently used strategies out of all for the moderate communication apprehension group, reaching a 4.05 on a 5-point scale. The average for the low communication apprehension group was 3.83 whereas individuals with high communication apprehension had the lowest average at 3.66 with regard to non-verbal strategies.

Message abandonment strategies were not widely used by the participants of this study, totalling in only 2.43 on a 5-point Likert scale. The group that was least likely (1.66) to use message abandonment strategies was the group with the lowest communication apprehension,

in contrast to the moderate communication apprehension individuals who were most likely to use these strategies (2.61). The participants who are reported to have a high degree of CA scored right in the middle of the 5-point scale with an average of 2.52, which could lead to a conclusion that more research needs to be done on message abandonment strategies with more participants, including more experienced FL speakers.

Factor 8 included strategies related to the speakers' "*attempt to think in English*" which were realized through items 1 and 2. The results of this factor totalled in an average of 2.33/5 making them the least used strategies overall. The group with the lowest communication apprehension showed the least use of strategies related to attempting to think in English with an average of 1.66/5. The group that most often used this strategy was the moderate communication apprehension group with an average of 2.55. With regard to the group with a high score of communication apprehension, their use of strategies related to attempting "to think in English" totalled to 2.33/5.

5. 4 Discussion

The present research conducted in three phases has shown that almost half of the participants report a high degree of communication apprehension. This overall result, among others explained-above, is in line with the detailed theoretical framework analyzed and presented. Furthermore, individuals who participated in this research were studying English language and literature during their five years of university. To find that only three participants had a low degree of foreign language communication apprehension despite actively studying content and FL for five years can be safe to assume that communication apprehension needs to be given more attention on a regular basis and that research on this topic needs to be regularly updated.

5.4.1 Situation-specific anxiety

In addition to other variables, the degree of communication apprehension varied within different situations. Feeling apprehensive while public speaking, for instance, is highly common among most individuals and it was found that only a small number of participants had a high degree of communication apprehension in regards to public speaking. When most people think about foreign language communication apprehension, it is exactly this aspect they tend to associate most with feeling anxious about speaking a language. On the contrary, we would expect interpersonal conversations to be relatively free from apprehension if FLA was reduced to the nature of other anxieties such as state anxiety or equally anxiety provoking if trait anxiety was being discussed. Nevertheless, data showed that interpersonal conversations between two people accounted for the highest number of individuals with high communication apprehension. Moreover, participants reported having a higher degree of communication apprehension during meetings than group discussions and public speaking. Participants tend to be more anxious while communicating online than in person despite their use of online dictionaries to help support their presentations. This finding is not surprising considering the mostly used oral communication strategies were non-verbal strategies and negotiation for meaning strategies. Speakers heavily rely on their interlocutors' facial expressions, trying to make eye contact and paying attention to how they will react to be able (or "enabled") to alter their speech.

Additionally, the speaker's own use of gestures and facial expressions helps them communicate if they have difficulties in expressing themselves. In online settings, it is remarkably difficult to use these strategies considering the nature of online oral communication where videos and microphones of interlocutors are usually turned off, making them unavailable to speakers. This data confirms H1, stating that foreign language oral communication apprehension is a *situation-specific anxiety* at the output stage.

5.4.2 Debilitating anxiety

This study asserted that the group who enrolled in 2018 had a significantly higher degree of communication apprehension than those who enrolled in 2019. Furthermore, data revealed that the degree of communication apprehension was directly related to whether or not participants had classes that taught them about vocabulary-related speaking errors and how to cope with speaking problems that occurred because of foreign language anxiety. Almost all 2018 participants denied learning about this during their education while most 2019 participants ratified this claim. Then, it was found that participants who enrolled in 2018 were considerably more likely to struggle with activating vocabulary than their 2019 peers. Due to their struggle while trying to activate vocabulary, they make almost twice as many word errors in average than the 2019 group.

These findings maintain that learning about foreign language anxiety is crucial for the better understanding of which errors are made because of foreign language anxiety and how to cope with speaking problems that arise because of it. Learning and knowing about word errors and coping with FLA is important for low, moderate, and high CA groups alike. Almost all the participants clearly remember situations in which speakers demonstrated a high degree of communication apprehension. If listeners or interlocutors were able to recognize which errors speakers were making and strategies they use to try to cope with FLA, they would be able to provide explicit input to help alleviate the speakers' CA. Linked to the evidence that the most widely used strategy by individuals with high communication apprehension was negotiation for meaning, face-to-face interaction could be a pivotal step toward lowering communication apprehension and ensuring more fluent speech.

The participants with the highest degree of communication apprehension are the ones who struggle the most with activating vocabulary corresponding to the considerable amount of word errors they make. However, individuals generally did not report feeling more anxious about activating vocabulary than pronunciation which leads to the conclusion that struggling to activate target words can be perceived as a consequence that stems from FLA, whereas worrying about pronunciation is viewed as a cause or source of FLA. Taking this into account, it can be assumed that feeling anxious about different aspects of language such as pronunciation leads to a higher degree of FLA which leads FLA to impair the speaker's ability to adequately activate vocabulary. This, in turn, results in a greater amount of word errors made by highly apprehensive individuals.

The participants with low communication apprehension strongly deny struggling with vocabulary activation and because of the automatic process of retrieving vocabulary, they make the least number of mistakes. Combined with the fact that low communication apprehension individuals are least likely to abandon their initial message, this assures that low CA facilitates fluency and automatic speech production, whereas high CA impairs and hinders oral communication. The data collected and analyzed confirm H2, proving that foreign language communication apprehension can be classified as a *debilitating anxiety*.

As for word errors, the data collected seem to suggest that there is no significant difference between the occurrence of word errors and the stage in which these errors occur in the production process; mis-selection, mis-ordering, and other categories of errors are each as likely to occur.

Nonetheless, there is a relationship between the degree of communication apprehension and which stage of the production process these errors occur in. The participants with moderate communication apprehension make more errors by selecting the correct vocabulary item but assigning it the wrong position such as repeating a word again later in the sentence. In contrast, individuals with a high degree of communication apprehension make more word errors by activating a wrong vocabulary item while making a selection from the mental lexicon. Considering that in utterances, selecting a vocabulary word occurs prior to assigning it the correct position in the speech production process, such as in sentences the words would first be selected then they would be assigned the correct position in the sentence which could

indicate that high CA individuals make errors earlier in the speech production process than individuals with moderate CA. This can be due to cognitive overload which negatively affects WM, vocabulary size and the automaticity of the process of word selection. Additionally, leaving out a word is a typical error that individuals with high CA will make but rarely those with moderate CA.

From this finding it can be concluded that activating vocabulary is the process which is most negatively impacted by foreign language anxiety. Therefore, attempts should be made to reduce communication apprehension during the process of activating vocabulary in order to ensure fluent and eloquent oral communication.

5.4.3 Oral communication strategies

Regarding the use of oral communication strategies and degree of communication apprehension, it was found that the group that used communication strategies to the greatest extent was the group with a moderate degree of communication apprehension. There was no significant difference between low and high communication apprehension groups with regard to general use of communication strategies, with both groups scoring less than the moderate communication apprehension group. This discovery confirmed that there is no positive correlation between use of communication strategies and high communication apprehension. Likewise, this finding asserted that there is no positive correlation between low communication apprehension and use of oral communication strategies. Nonetheless, a positive correlation was found between moderate communication apprehension and oral CSs.

When the relationship between the use of oral communication strategies and year of enrolment was examined, it was confirmed that there was no significant difference in the mean scores for oral CS use between these two groups, despite the significantly higher score of the 2018 group on the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension which indicated a significantly higher degree of communication apprehension. This coincides with the data gathered from this research that a higher degree of communication apprehension does not entail a greater use of oral communication strategies.

The most frequently used strategies of participants with high communication apprehension were strategies related to negotiation of meaning. High communication apprehension

participants were most likely to make attempts to negotiate with interlocutors when they reported a speaking problem. Strategies of negotiation of meaning are important because by using these strategies, highly apprehensive participants can manage their output. This reveals that highly apprehensive individuals paid most attention to the interaction aspect of communication and considered engagement of interlocutors highly valuable. Participants with high communication apprehension pay attention to the listener's reactions while they are speaking in order to ensure mutual understanding. In addition to paying attention to reactions, speakers will also make comprehension checks to make sure that they are getting their message across fluently and correctly. Considering that highly apprehensive participants make comprehension checks, they turn their attention to the linguistic aspect of speaking and away from their anxiety. Strategies for negotiation of meaning could facilitate language acquisition as well because they provide speakers with the opportunity to modify their message by getting feedback from more fluent individuals. If any communication breakdown arises, they are likely to provide examples if the listener does not understand what they are trying to say. The participants with high communication apprehension will also sometimes repeat what they are saying until they receive confirmation that the listener understands their intended message.

The strategies least used by the group of participants with high communication apprehension were strategies related to attempting "to think in English". During oral communication, trying to think in English instead of one's native language is more useful for fluency. A high degree of communication apprehension will overburden the cognitive load of EFL speakers communicating orally and by not thinking in the target language they will have an additional barrier. Speaking fluently in a foreign language entails a highly automatic lexical access system which reduces cognitive load and allows for steady and eloquent speech. Speakers who tend to first think of what they want to say in their native language and then translate the sentence in English take a longer time to speak, make more pauses and have more difficulties activating the appropriate vocabulary word which can increase communication apprehension for individuals who already suffer from it.

These findings differ from many findings in various other research studies that state that individuals with high communication apprehension tend to use less effective strategies more often such as thinking of what they want to say in their native language and then translating the sentence in English or giving up and leaving a message unfinished. In contrast, in this study, individuals with high communication apprehension reported using some of the most effective strategies such as paying attention to the reactions of their listeners while talking. Considering that communication apprehension is largely debilitating, we would expect to find highly apprehensive participants to generally reduce and abandon their message.

These data coincide with H3 that states that at the output stage, which is a model of speech production, various coping mechanisms are used to reduce performance anxiety and maintain fluency. EFL speakers with low, moderate and high communication apprehension alike were least likely to give up when interlocutors could not understand them, leave a message unfinished when they arrived at some language difficulty or abandon what they were going to say completely and utter random words when they do not know what to say. Instead, they were more likely to use non-verbal strategies, negotiation for meaning, and fluency-oriented strategies to reduce their performance anxiety and maintain fluency. Therefore, *achievement* or *compensatory strategies* are used most often and *reduction* or *avoidance strategies* are rarely used.

6 Conclusion

The motivation for this research was to examine the impact of foreign language communication apprehension on the process of activating vocabulary and the strategies used to reduce CA when faced with communicative difficulties from a psycholinguistic perspective focusing on language processing and production when it comes to oral communication in English as a foreign language. In total, 21 participants participated in the study and answered 68 questions in total. First, the degree of communication apprehension of the participants was examined and it was revealed that a low degree of communication apprehension is rare among future teachers. In contrast, it was found that there was an inclination to have a high degree of communication apprehension among this group of individuals. Moreover, it was found that foreign language anxiety is a *situation-specific* anxiety disclosed in their tendency to be more apprehensive in situations such as meetings and interpersonal conversations than public speaking. Additionally, communicating orally online was even more challenging perhaps because of the inability to express oneself non-verbally or negotiate meaning with the interlocutor which resulted in an even higher degree of communication apprehension online.

Next, it was affirmed that a high degree of foreign language communication apprehension negatively impacted vocabulary activation which resulted in the variety and the number of errors speakers report. In this regard, evidence shows that foreign language communication apprehension can be classified as a *debilitating anxiety*. Furthermore, responses from individuals that had classes in which they gained knowledge about foreign language anxiety revealed a lower degree of communication apprehension which resulted in a greater degree of automaticity, vocabulary activation and a fewer amount of word errors.

Finally, the use of participants' oral communication strategies was examined, in which case participants responded positively to using oral communication strategies when faced with communicative difficulties. There was no positive relationship between the use of oral communication strategies and low/high communication apprehension, maintaining that a lower or higher degree of communication apprehension does not entail a higher use of CSs.

It was confirmed that various coping mechanisms and achievement strategies are used to reduce performance anxiety and maintain fluency at the output stage of a model of speech production acquired through data that showed that participants were most likely to use effective oral CSs such as negotiation for meaning, non-verbal strategies, and strategies that were fluency oriented opposed to less effective strategies, reducing messages or thinking in their native language, for instance.

In conclusion, it is important to reduce the consequences of communication apprehension while activating vocabulary in speech production because it ensures the least number of errors at the output stage. This study showed that having classes or courses about foreign language anxiety is associated with a lower or moderate degree of communication apprehension. Considering this finding, it is necessary to include such classes or courses which will help students not only learn about FLA and the errors made because of it, but also how to notice CA as an interlocutor to assist and maintain interaction with the speaker. Achievement oral communication strategies were verified as successful tools by individuals with high communication apprehension in their efforts to continue their communication in English despite communication breakdowns. Considering that a high use of oral CSs is related to moderate communication apprehension, EFL students should explicitly be taught how to use these strategies effectively. The results of this research revealed that the level of foreign language communication apprehension is high and very obvious considering the number of individuals who could recall a situation in which the speaker had a high level of CA. It would be beneficial to investigate and analyse the errors that actually occur in these situations and how speakers cope with these errors. Additionally, more research needs to be done to resolve whether interacting with an interlocutor lowers the degree of CA. Considering that this research included a small group of participants which were required to give their own account of the oral communication strategies they use, for further research it would be useful to analyse authentic speech of EFL speakers with high communication apprehension in order to acquire a more comprehensible picture of the use of oral communication strategies and the role of the interlocutor in these situations. Furthermore, considering that the strategy that was used most often was paying attention to pronunciation, foreign language oral communication apprehension should be researched in more detail to investigate whether striving to achieve native-like pronunciation could be an important source of anxiety for EFL speakers.

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Appendix

SECTION 1

Reducing foreign language communication apprehension/anxiety

Dear colleagues,

this survey is being conducted for the purpose of collecting data and responses for my MA thesis titled: Reducing Foreign Language Communication Apprehension when Activating Vocabulary in English as a Foreign Language—A Psycholinguistic Approach.

The survey consists of three sections and you will need approximately 10 minutes to complete the answers. The first section is about your university education while sections 2 and 3 are related to both your university education and your preferred communication styles.

Thank you in advance for your voluntary participation in this study.

* Required

I enrolled in teaching education in (II ciklus- nastavnički smjer): *

2018

2019

Gender *

Your answer

During my education, I had courses/classes that taught me how to recognize which errors I was making because of foreign language anxiety. *

Yes

No

Not sure

Other:

I feel more anxious about correct pronunciation than activating adequate vocabulary (e.g. collocations).

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree

Neutral

Disagree

Agree

I feel more anxious about questions that will follow my oral presentation/lesson than delivering one.

- Strongly disagree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

I remember clearly attending presentations and lessons during which the speakers demonstrated a high level of foreign language communication apprehension. *

- Yes
- No
- Other:

Learning how to reduce foreign language communication apprehension is a life-long process. *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If I teach in an online environment, I use online dictionaries during my oral presentations to check the pronunciation and meaning of words. *

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

During my education, I had courses/classes that taught me how to cope with speaking problems that occurred because of foreign language anxiety. *

- Yes
- No
- Not sure
- Other:

Tick which errors you have made due to the influence of foreign language anxiety: *

- substituted words
- confused a word with a similar sounding one
- blended two words together
- said a word earlier in the sentence than intended
- repeated the same word again later in the sentence
- swapped places of words

left out a word
added an extra word
Other:

I feel more anxious when orally communicating online (e.g. Zoom/Skype etc. classes, video links, etc.) than in person. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

When I deliver a presentation or a lesson in English, I struggle with activating vocabulary. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree



SECTION 2

Communication apprehension

This instrument is composed of twenty-four statements concerning feelings about communicating with others. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you:

Strongly Disagree = 1; Disagree = 2; are Neutral = 3; Agree = 4; Strongly Agree = 5

I dislike participating in group discussions. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Generally, I am comfortable while participating in group discussions. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I am tense and nervous while participating in group discussions. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I like to get involved in group discussions. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Engaging in a group discussion with new people makes me tense and nervous. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I am calm and relaxed while participating in group discussions. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Generally, I am nervous when I have to participate in a meeting. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Usually, I am comfortable when I have to participate in a meeting. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I am very calm and relaxed when I am called upon to express an opinion at a meeting. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I am afraid to express myself at meetings. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Communicating at meetings usually makes me uncomfortable. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I am very relaxed when answering questions at a meeting. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

While participating in a conversation with a new acquaintance, I feel very nervous. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I have no fear of speaking up in conversations. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Ordinarily I am very tense and nervous in conversations. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Ordinarily I am very calm and relaxed in conversations. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

While conversing with a new acquaintance, I feel very relaxed. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I'm afraid to speak up in conversations. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree

Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I have no fear of giving a speech. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

Certain parts of my body feel very tense and rigid while giving a speech. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I feel relaxed while giving a speech. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

My thoughts become confused and jumbled when I am giving a speech. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

I face the prospect of giving a speech with confidence. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

While giving a speech, I get so nervous I forget facts I really know. *

Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly agree

SECTION 3

Strategies for Coping with Speaking Problems

Please read the following items and choose a response.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Generally not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Generally true of me
5. Always or almost always true of me

I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence. *

- Never or almost never true of me
- Generally not true of me
- Somewhat true of me
- Generally true of me
- Always or almost always true of me

I think first of a sentence I already know in English and then try to change it to fit the situation. *

- Never or almost never true of me
- Generally not true of me
- Somewhat true of me
- Generally true of me
- Always or almost always true of me

I use words which are familiar to me. *

- Never or almost never true of me
- Generally not true of me
- Somewhat true of me
- Generally true of me
- Always or almost always true of me

I reduce the message and use simple expressions. *

- Never or almost never true of me
- Generally not true of me
- Somewhat true of me
- Generally true of me
- Always or almost always true of me

I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent. *

- Never or almost never true of me
- Generally not true of me

Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I change my way of saying things according to the context. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I take my time to express what I want to say. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I pay attention to my pronunciation. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to speak clearly and loudly to make myself heard. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I pay attention to the conversation flow. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to make eye-contact when I am talking. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I notice myself using an expression which fits a rule that I have learned. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me

Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

While speaking, I pay attention to the listener's reaction to my speech. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I give examples if the listener doesn't understand what I am saying. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to give a good impression to the listener. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to enjoy the conversation. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to relax when I feel anxious. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I actively encourage myself to express what I want to say. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I try to talk like a native speaker. *

Never or almost never true of me
Generally not true of me
Somewhat true of me
Generally true of me
Always or almost always true of me

I ask other people to help when I can't communicate well. *

Never or almost never true of me

Generally not true of me

Somewhat true of me

Generally true of me

Always or almost always true of me

I give up when I can't make myself understood. *

Never or almost never true of me

Generally not true of me

Somewhat true of me

Generally true of me

Always or almost always true of me