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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY AMONG ESTONIAN BASIC
SCHOOL ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS: CONTRIBUTING
FACTORS AND COPING STRATEGIES**

MA thesis

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ABSTRACT

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a prominent issue and affects a large number of people, including students. Even though the issue has been researched for decades, further study is necessary, especially in the Estonian socio-cultural context. The present thesis aims to determine which parts of the lesson and tasks regarding language skills are the most anxiety-provoking among 9th graders of an Estonian basic school. It also aims to identify which coping methods are used by students to reduce FLA.

The study was conducted using a 25-item questionnaire which included open- and closed-ended questions. It was answered by 35 basic school students who were 15–16 years old 9th graders at the time of the study. Their level of language proficiency was supposedly B1.

The thesis consists of an introduction, two main chapters and a conclusion. The introduction gives an overview of why the issue of FLA is relevant and needs to be studied. The first chapter discusses the nature and different types of FLA, its causes, effects, students' coping strategies and possible methods for reduction of FLA in the EFL class. The second chapter describes the methodology, analyses the results of the questionnaire and discusses possible reasons for the results. The conclusion summarizes the findings of the thesis.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL – English as a foreign language

FLA – foreign language anxiety

FLCA – foreign language classroom anxiety

FLLA – foreign language listening anxiety

FLSA – foreign language speaking anxiety

FLRA – foreign language reading anxiety

FLWA – foreign language writing anxiety

WTC – willingness to communicate

INTRODUCTION

A significant proportion of population, students among them, may be affected by anxiety related disorders during their lifespan. Even though people's awareness of different types of anxieties has increased in time, some may still be unable to recognize anxiety when they experience it. This becomes especially problematic when levels of anxiety become so high that it starts to negatively affect one's daily life. When it comes to second language learning, foreign language anxiety (FLA) is a factor that a number of students and teachers may not always recognize. MacIntyre and Gardener (1994: 284) define FLA as the following: "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening and learning". Nevertheless, FLA seems to incorporate more factors than provided by the definition and may bring along serious consequences. In many cases FLA can inhibit the process of learning and acquisition of the target language. It is therefore of utmost importance to raise awareness of FLA as a hindering factor of the learning process. Also, instructors can benefit from recognizing the students who suffer from FLA and acknowledging which activities provoke language anxiety and what methods are the most effective in reducing FLA.

The construct of FLA as a situation-specific anxiety was introduced in 'Foreign language classroom anxiety' by Horwitz et al (1986), where various contributing factors and effects were described. This has given important points of reference to further studies. However, it seems that most of FLA research has not been conducted in the Western world. A large amount of research has been carried out in Asia, especially in China and Japan. This could imply that FLA may be more prominent in certain cultures. Even though the research carried out in other cultural settings cannot be fully incorporated into Estonian context, such studies provide reliable

background and introduce various methodologies that are beneficial for the present thesis. Relying on my personal observations and experience, the issue definitely needs to be addressed from the point of Estonian students as well.

Onwuegbuzie et al (1999:218) point out that some of the factors which are connected to language anxiety include three aspects of self-perception: students' expectation of their achievement, self-worth and anticipated scholarly competence. Krashen (1982: 30-31, 72-75) states in his Affective Filter Hypothesis that there are various factors that include motivation, self-confidence and anxiety which affect language acquisition. He notes that the lower the anxiety, the more effective is the process of second language acquisition. Liu and Huang (2011: 6) concluded in their study that FLA and the motivation to learn English were negatively correlated, meaning that a student with very high FLA had a rather low motivation to study. They also pointed out that anxiety was found to be the most powerful predictor for poor results in the English classroom. Matsuda and Gobel (2004: 32-33) argue that the teacher has a substantial role in reducing the students' FLA in the classroom. For example, the teacher should encourage the students to participate in the classroom activities, but also have a relaxed character and make the classroom as relaxed as possible. Most importantly, the students should be given a sense of achievement, because this raises their motivation. Recently in Estonia, Ülle Laumets (2020) suggested that vlogging could be used to reduce FLA in English language classes. However, further research is required to gain more insight into the students' perspectives regarding FLA.

The present thesis aims to give an insight into the issue of FLA among Estonian basic school English language students. It mostly focuses on the students' perspectives regarding

FLA. It concentrates on determining which aspects of the EFL classes are perceived to be most anxiety-provoking, but also which strategies are and can be used by the students to reduce FLA.

The present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Which aspects of learning English as a foreign language are perceived as the most anxiety provoking by the 9th graders (based on the example of one of the Estonian basic schools)?
2. Which strategies are used to cope with language anxiety in the English classroom by the 9th graders of an Estonian basic school?

The topic of the present thesis was chosen due to anxiety being a rather prominent issue among Estonian youth. Furthermore, while teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) in an Estonian basic school, I have come across numerous students who have reported not being able to complete or participate in certain tasks during the lesson due to increased anxiety. Quite often, such situations seem not to be caused only by general anxiety of the students. Instead, in many of the cases the use as well as being exposed to the foreign language seems to induce anxiety, implying that they may suffer from FLA. I have also observed that many students lack the knowledge of how to manage FLA. The present thesis allows to gain a better overview of the issue and contribute to the research regarding it.

The study consists of two main parts. The first part (literature review) aims to give an overview of the literature dealing with FLA anxiety. This includes covering the types of FLA, its causes, effects, students' coping strategies and different methods which have been suggested to reduce the amount of FLA. It incorporates the results and theoretical information given in various papers that have been carried out among students of English as a foreign language. The

second part of the thesis (empirical study) gives an overview of the methodology used, explains what the questionnaire questions aim to achieve. Most importantly, it analyses the students' answers given in the questionnaire and draws conclusions based on the results.

1. FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY: CAUSES, EFFECTS, AND STRATEGIES TO COPE AND REDUCE IT

1.1. Types of FLA

It has been observed that FLA is quite distinct from other types of anxiety. Horwitz (2001: 113) and Onwuegbuzie et al (1999:218) indicate that psychologists have made a distinction between anxiety as a personality trait and anxiety that is triggered by certain stimuli including the usage of foreign language. Furthermore, different types of FLA have been described of which some are more prominent than others. Listening and speaking seem to be the most FLA provoking parts of using the foreign language (Horwitz et al 1986: 126). Nevertheless, research has been carried out regarding both receptive (listening and reading) and productive (writing and speaking) language skills (Horwitz et al 1986, Cheng et al 1999: 439). Interestingly, some students suffer from a general form of FLA, while other students' anxieties tend to be based on a certain aforementioned skill (Bekleyen 2009: 665). However, it has been noted that a large number of research regarding FLA has concentrated on the oral aspect of language anxiety (Saito et al 1999: 202). Nevertheless, all aspects of the foreign language learning that could potentially create anxiety among students need to be addressed.

Foreign language anxiety that occurs in classroom is referred to as foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA). It has been noted that classroom situations often result in more anxiety than other situations which require the use of a foreign language. At the same time, FLCA can spread out of the classroom, affecting other aspects of students' lives. (Horwitz et al 1986: 125, 131).

One of the situations in which language learners come to contact with foreign language anxiety is reading. Foreign language reading anxiety (FLRA) seems to be caused by both failure to understand the text and by insufficient knowledge of the target language cultural aspects

(Saito et al 1999: 203). It has been concluded that reading anxiety is correlated with reading comprehension, while general anxiety is not (Chow et al 2021: 2). This indicates that FLRA falls under the category of situational-specific anxiety and is differentiated from other anxiety disorders and other foreign language anxieties (Chow et al 2021: 2, Saito et al 1999: 215). However, a recent study found no sufficient evidence for distinguishing FLRA and other FL anxieties (Hamada and Takaki 2021: 11). What is more, various studies have explored the correlation between FLRA and achievement. A 2021 study concluded that FLRA caused by teacher-student relations affects both reading proficiency and course achievement Hamada and Takaki (2021: 11). Moreover, students' satisfaction with their achievement seems to depend on the students' first language (Saito et al 1999: 213).

Foreign language listening anxiety (FLLA) is experienced by students who are in a situation requiring listening to the target language. Even though listening is one of the skills in language learning, the research on FLLA has not been very extensive due to it being a receptive skill in which student output is not present (Bekleyen 2009: 665, Zhang 2013: 166). It has been noted that the development of FLLA is related to the type of listening output, the process of listening, and how language training is carried out (Zhang 2013: 166). Furthermore, a quantitative study carried out in 2013 revealed a negative correlation between FLLA and performance, meaning that high listening anxiety levels tend to cause lower performance in the classroom (Zhang 2013: 173). Due to FLLA hindering the process of language learning, teachers need to be able to notice and provide instructions to the students in need.

Foreign language writing anxiety (FLWA) refers to situations in which the production of a written text causes anxiety and therefore may inhibit the process of writing in the target language. Studies have shown that measuring FLWA's connection with performance has proven to be difficult (Cheng 2002: 648). Similarly to other foreign language anxieties, a correlation

between anxiety levels and self-confidence has been noticed. Lower self-confidence seems to result in lower self-expectation among learners (Cheng et al 1999: 438). Also, self-evaluation of writing competence seems to have a major role in the development of writing anxiety (Cheng 2002: 652). A more recent study suggests that academically weaker students tend to feel more anxiety during writing tasks and stronger students experience less anxiety (Daud et al 2016: 16). This suggests that some EFL students may be subject to lower results in writing tasks due to that specific type of foreign language anxiety. Different correlations with FLCA have been observed. For example, Cheng (2002: 652) states that writing anxiety and classroom anxiety correlate to some extent.

In the English classroom, practising speaking skills, including correct pronunciation and intonation, is as important as any other language skill. Unfortunately, speaking tends to provoke relatively high foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA) in some students. Also, it depends on a particular task that the students are told to participate in during the lesson. For example, it has been stated that students often feel more anxious during role-play situations when compared to answering questions or giving prepared speeches (Horwitz et al 1986: 126). Horwitz also claims that generally more anxious students tend to show even higher levels of anxiety when they are in a target language situation and have to provide an oral input. Furthermore, extroverted students tend to feel more comfortable in making presentations in ESL class due to extroversion being a personality trait that usually correlates with lower levels of anxiety (Kelsen 2019: 99)

Apart from skill-based foreign language anxieties, there are certain situations in the English classroom that may trigger FLA in some students. For example, test anxiety can become problematic, when a student's test results are negatively affected by their FLA. The percentage of such students may be as high as 35% (Bensoussan 2012: 203). Some students may forget the correct answers during high-stress situations such as tests and this may raise anxiety and the

number of mistakes even more (Horwitz et al 1986 126). It is also claimed that test anxiety could result in unrealistic expectations in the target language, which produces further problems (Horwitz et al 1986: 127-128). Moreover, higher age seems to cause higher test anxiety, probably because higher age makes some aspects of the language (such as speaking without an accent) more difficult to acquire (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 229).

1.2. Causes of FLA

Since FLA has a major role in foreign language learning and acquisition, it is critical to address, how successful language acquisition takes place. To start with, Krashen (1982: 30-31) has introduced the Affective Filter hypothesis, where he describes how affective factors influence second language acquisition. He mapped and categorized three variables that affect second language acquisition: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety. Students with higher motivation, self-confidence and lower anxiety tend to be more successful in acquiring the target language. Moreover, people with strong Affective Filter do not have suitable attitudes for second language acquisition and seek less target language input and vice versa (Krashen 1982: 31). It is important to notice that the affective filters described above seem to be interrelated and contribute to FLA.

To fully understand the contributing factors of developing FLA, Horwitz et al (1986: 127-128) have compared FLA with related performance anxieties: 1) communication apprehension (trouble communicating with people, especially in larger groups); 2) test anxiety (an increase of anxiety during different tests, including speaking tests); and 3) fear of negative evaluation (more extensive than test anxiety, includes speaking in the classroom and being evaluated by other students). Furthermore, according to Horwitz et al (1986: 128), it is important to notice that FLA

should not be seen as the combination of the aforementioned aspects, but as a system of different self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours that are caused by the complexity of language learning.

Self-perception seems to strongly affect the development of FLA. According to a study, carried out by Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 228), factors related to self-perception that contribute to the development of FLA include students' expectation of their achievement in foreign language courses, perceived self-worth, and perceived competence in academic environments. It can be said that students with negative aspects of self-perception tend to show increased levels of FLA, it is also suggested that negative beliefs towards foreign language learning may be linked to poor skills in their native language (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 229). They also noted that starting language learning at a younger age results in lower levels of FLA and that older students tend to have higher anxiety when time restriction is present.

There are not many studies that concentrate on the effect of age on FLA. Nevertheless, the two seem to be linked. Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 230) suggest that older adults experience higher levels of FLA due to having relatively poor performance in tasks performed under time constraints. Also, a positive correlation between age and test anxiety has been described (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 229). A meta-analysis by Li (2021: 1008) suggests that children show higher levels of FLRA than adolescents and adults.

One of the most described factors that may result in FLA is low self-confidence and low self-esteem. Cheng (1999: 437) notes that low self-confidence can also influence the students' expectations towards second language learning. This is because students who have lower self-confidence could potentially have negative expectations towards the language course and are more likely to give up. It is probable that they avoid certain tasks and have poor anxiety management skills. On the other hand, students with higher self-confidence have a more positive

attitude towards learning the target language and therefore achieve better results (Cheng et al 1999: 437). Students with low self-esteem have also been claimed to show increased levels of FLA, while higher self-esteem seems to make coping with anxious situations easier (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 220, 229). It has been claimed that language learning situations can have an overall negative effect on students' self-esteem because it hinders their ability to communicate with other people (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 229).

Another concept to focus on is Willingness to Communicate (WTC), because it seems to be closely connected with FLA, especially the speaking aspect of it. The term stands for the probability of speaking when one is free to do so (MacIntyre: 2007: 564). In the classroom context, there are always more talkative students and those, who are not willing to talk at all. Similarly, cultural background seems to be closely connected to WTC – some cultures are more communicative (MacIntyre: 2007: 572). Interestingly, students who are unwilling to communicate may have high motivation for learning and also high anxiety of communication (MacIntyre: 2007: 564). WTC is also affected by self-confidence which assumes low anxiety (MacIntyre: 2007: 569).

As stated before, motivation, as one of the factors of the Affective Filter hypothesis (Krashen 1982: 30-31), affects second language acquisition. Not all students are motivated to use and acquire the target language. This becomes especially prominent in situations, where the major purpose of language learning is to pass certain tests and meet course requirements, and when students are not exposed to the target language outside of the classroom, as small amount of practice can also increase the level of FLA (Liu and Huang 2011: 2). Furthermore, motivation and FLA are also closely connected, as they seem to correlate. According to Liu and Huang (2011:6) a study carried out among university students in China suggested that motivation and

FLA have a strong negative correlation, the higher the motivation, the lower the FLA and vice versa.

Various studies indicate that FLA and gender are also correlated. A study carried out in Turkey (Öztürk and Gürbüz 2013: 661) shows that female students tend to have higher speaking anxiety in the classroom than their male counterparts. Although it may be culture specific or related to certain historical reasons, it was suggested that one of the underlying causes of this phenomenon is higher level of fear of negative evaluation among female students. Interestingly, the study also suggests that female students show higher level of motivation. Another study carried out among Korean university students (Park and French 2013: 469) showed similar results. However, it furthermore indicates that female students with higher anxiety received better grades than low anxiety and male students. Park and French (2013: 468) also imply that socio-cultural aspect may have an impact on the results.

Interaction among the learner and the teacher has been described as a potential source of FLA. This implies that a healthy relationship between the instructor and their students is necessary to root out a possible cause of FLA in the classroom. Young (1991: 429) points out that students may become anxious, if they are constantly corrected by the teacher in front of other students. She also indicates that error correction must be done in a suitable manner (Young 1991: 429). Krashen (1982: 119) suggests that not all errors should be corrected and they have to meet certain conditions, but even then, error correction may be ineffective. Nevertheless, teachers may trigger FLA in some students due to poor means of error correction.

1.3. Effects of FLA

Effects and cause of FLA are strongly connected and it may be difficult to determine if FLA is the cause or effect of a particular phenomenon. Nevertheless, FLA has various negative effects on students who suffer from it, ranging from poor academic results, low confidence to avoiding participation in classes. Skipping homework has been also noted to be one of the effects of FLA (Horwitz et al 1986: 131). On the other hand, in some circumstances FLA's positive effect on EFL learning can be observed.

An interesting relationship between achievement and FLA has been described – the exact strength of the relationship seems to be difficult to determine (Trang et al 2013: 99). Research among adult students has shown different levels of negative correlation, depending on the target and native language (Horwitz 2001: 116). A difference between the relationship of anxiety and grades may be dependent on the type of the course – oral courses tend to result in higher levels of anxiety and therefore impact students' achievement to a higher extent when compared to a reading-focused class. (Horwitz 2001: 116). Furthermore, higher language anxiety does not only affect grades, it also makes achieving a high level of foreign language proficiency unlikely (Trang et al 2013: 100). High anxiety students also tend to rate their language proficiency poorly (Horwitz 2001: 116).

Since modest anxiety is necessary for the human body to adjust and cope with difficulties in life, positive effects of FLA have been also described. Some students have reported benefiting from FLA. The positive effects include causing students to put more effort towards learning the target language and paying more attention (Trang et al 2013: 113). However, positive effects tend to only have temporary effects and are outnumbered by negative effects. A study carried out among Vietnamese university students reported experiencing both positive and negative

effects, but positive effects were greatly outnumbered by negative effects, the corresponding percentages being 63,2% and 36,8% (Trang et al 2013: 118; 103). Also, positive effects seem to be only perceived when levels of FLA are reasonable, not high (Trang et al 2013: 116).

FLA anxiety may influence how errors made by students in the target language are perceived by them. Differences in error correction among anxious and nonanxious students have been also observed, students with greater levels of language anxiety are afraid of making mistakes (Gregersen 2003: 26). This is closely connected to the fear of evaluation, one of the aspects of FLA. It has been argued that highly anxious students fail to perceive making mistakes as a positive part of learning a foreign language, even though, addressing one's errors is essential in developing good language skills (Gregersen 2003: 25). Horwitz et al (1986: 127) claim that some students prevent using the target language due to fear of errors, which results in further FLA; however, even outstanding students sometimes make mistakes, it is natural. According to Gregersen (2003: 29-39) a study, in which native Spanish-speakers participating in university English classes were interviewed and asked to assess their errors while speaking English, concluded that anxious students tend to think that they make more errors than they actually do, also, the more errors they make, the more anxious they become. Additionally, high anxious students may have trouble recognizing their errors due to poor overall language skills (Gregersen 2003: 29-30). This once again suggests that there is a reason to believe that FLA and language proficiency are connected.

FLA relation to different tests in English as a foreign language classroom have been also addressed. Zheng (2008: 8) points out anxiety among learners may be provoked due to EFL test scores being used in entrance exams by different institutions. Even though the conclusion was drawn on the example of Chinese students, Estonian basic school students face similar examination when they apply for schools to obtain secondary education. It has been reported

that test-anxious students tend to have low motivation to learn English (Liu and Huang 2011: 5). In'nami (2006: 330) claims that there is no correlation between test anxiety and listening test performance.

1.4. Students' FLA coping strategies

Students tend to use different strategies to cope with FLA. Some of the strategies are useful, while other strategies may have a negative impact on one's performance in the classroom. There are various categorizations of coping strategies. A study carried out among 209 Japanese EFL undergraduate learners (Kondo and Ying-Ling 2004: 262) aimed to identify as many different coping strategies as possible and categorize them. The strategies were the following: preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation. This is supported by other authors, who have come across similar observations and have suggested the following strategies: “/.../ cognitive restructuring, written reflection, relaxation training, skills and strategy training and support groups” (Williams and Andrade 2008: 188).

Students who suffer from FLA may seek help and reassurance from peers to alleviate their condition. This includes seeking comfort by believing that other students may also feel anxious in their English class (Kondo and Ying-Ling 2004: 262). At the same time, making mistakes in the target language in front of peers, may elevate FLA (Onwuegbuzie et al 1999:220). Also, receiving emotional support from other students may not always be helpful (Yasuda and Nabei 2018: 912). A study by Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 230) indicated that asking help from peers is more popular among students who put less stress on their academic achievement and vice versa. The reason behind this may be the sense of failure when seeking help.

In situations, where a student does not possess sufficient vocabulary, they may opt for using their native language instead. It has been observed that students who show higher FLA tend to

replace words of the target language with vocabulary from their mother tongue (Gregersen 2003: 28). It should be noted that this was the case when both participants of the interview understood the subject's native language. Using native language seems to offer a safe place for anxious learners, which once again confirms that FLA is specific to situations, where a person is in contact with a foreign language (Gregersen 2003: 30). When the use of native language vocabulary during speaking the target language was compared among students with high and low FLA, it became clear that low anxious students used synonyms or paraphrasing instead (Gregersen 2003: 30). The same study also suggests that FLA tends to cause students to forget vocabulary items that they would remember in low-anxiety situations (Gregersen 2003: 28).

There are a number of coping strategies that students can use to alleviate test anxiety. Previous research has described students using preparation and suppressing the thoughts which may raise anxiety, such as worrying about the results and performance (Bensoussan 2012: 209). This seems to be directly related to positive self-talk. Also, it has been reported that coping strategies regarding test anxiety influence affective outcomes (Bensoussan 2012: 209). It is also suggested that encouragement from both other students and the teacher may motivate the students, increase their self-esteem and reduce anxiety (Bensoussam 2012: 213). Interestingly, a study by In'nami (2006: 331) indicates that when test anxiety is reduced using coping strategies, the anxiety's effect of performance can be minimised.

1.5. Methods of reducing FLA in the classroom

Various methods help to greatly reduce the amount of FLA among students in the English classroom. It is important for teachers to be able to identify students who show signs of FLA. Horwitz et al (1986: 131) propose that there are two main options for working with students

who suffer from FLA – helping them cope with anxious situations and reducing the anxiety in a specific situation. For example, teachers can create a suitable environment in the classroom and show a positive attitude towards students. They can also opt for activities that are less anxiety-provoking but still enable the students to acquire necessary language skills (Horwitz et al 1986: 131). Depending on the specific group of the students, some methods and classroom activities may prove to be more suitable than others.

One of the most important factors, which help to reduce classroom anxiety, is creating a suitable and supportive atmosphere for learning. Both teachers and students are responsible for building and maintaining an environment, where effective language learning and acquisition can take place. It has been claimed that anxiety level is largely dependent on the subjects' overall attitude towards the classroom situation - those with a positive attitude seem to feel less anxiety when compared to more negative students (Jin and Dewaele 2018: 154-155). Nevertheless, researchers have provided contradicting results. Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 232) have suggested that the teacher should acknowledge that their students may be subject to FLA and attempt to provide the students with positive experiences in the classroom, which include “encouragement, reassurance, positive reinforcement, and empathy”. This may help to positively affect students' Affective Filters (motivation, self-confidence, anxiety) described by Krashen (1982: 31) and thus enables more efficient language acquisition. On the contrary, Jin and Dewaele (2018:155) have stated that emotional support provided by teachers has virtually no effect on students' level of FLA; however, they pointed out that emotional support from other students helps to greatly reduce FLA.

Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 232) suggest that encouragement and positivity towards students help to boost their self-esteem. They also imply that instructors should be cautious when correcting errors and realistic expectations should be given to students. Cheng's (2002: 652)

suggestion complements this, as he suggests students should be given a fair overview of their writing skills, they should be given information on how to face difficulties in the process of learning.

When it comes to reducing FLA in classroom, increasing the students' motivation is as important as any other method that could potentially decrease FLCA. Liu and Huang (2011:6) have suggested that watching films in English, reading, using English out of the classroom, but also analysing the mistakes made in the classroom all contribute to increasing the students' motivation and therefore reducing their FLA. Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 230) have suggested that being exposed to cultures, where the target language is spoken, can decrease the level of FLA, because it may result in perceiving language learning as more important.

Using music in classroom has been suggested to reduce FLA. A study carried out in Estonia (Semerik 2016) concluded that songs do help to reduce anxiety among students. It was found out that students looked forward to the part of the lesson in which songs were listened to, as it offered a moment to relax (Semerik 2016: 45). Similar results were obtained in a study where students of French as a foreign language were observed. However, it also indicated that only highly anxious students' anxiety was reduced and not the anxiety of students with low FLA (Dolean 2016: 649). Similarly, (Bensoussan (2012: 207) indicates that students who have high test-anxiety benefit from background music while low-anxiety students do not.

To reduce listening anxiety and the fear of new vocabulary, a number of methods have been suggested. Zhang (2013: 174), for example, suggests using vocabulary lists to introduce new items before a listening task. He also adds that making mistakes should be allowed to encourage higher student participation, music can also have beneficial effects.

Taking everything into account, it has become quite clear that FLA has various forms, causes, and effects. Some students' anxiety levels seem to be affected by practicing different

subskills of the target language. Also, many different coping strategies and potential methods can be used in classroom to reduce FLA. Current studies have shown a correlation between the levels of FLA and age, gender, self-confidence, motivation etc. Moreover, since socio-cultural context has an effect on FLA, it is sensible to investigate, which factors contribute to FLA among Estonian basic school students and which coping strategies are most commonly used by them. Also, to ensure effective language learning, awareness among teachers and students needs to be raised. Teachers could make use of activities which do not result in high amounts of FLA.

2. IN CLASS FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY: ANXIETY-PROVOKING PARTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LESSON AND THE REDUCTION OF ANXIETY FROM STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

2.1. Participants of the study

9th grade students of an Estonian basic school were chosen to participate in the study. The first language of most of the participants is Estonian and they had studied English as a foreign language for 8 years having reached language proficiency level of A2-B1. At the time of the study the participants were 15-16 years old. There were a total of 35 participants of whom 19 were male, 15 female, and one participant did not wish to specify their gender. The participants studied in two groups – one group consisted of advanced learners and the other one of “regular” students. The course of the latter group is less intensive than the course of the advanced group, even though the same curriculum for Estonian basic schools is followed. It must be noted, that there were a few students in the regular group, whose English language skills were very low. Permission from parents was asked via *Stuudium*, a platform used by many Estonian schools for grading and communicating.

2.2. Methodology of the study

A questionnaire was created and distributed among 35 15–16-year-old Estonian basic school EFL students to answer the research questions of the study (Appendix 1). To determine the level of FLA, the foreign language classroom anxiety scale (Horwitz et al 1986: 129-130). was taken as the basis of the questionnaire. This questionnaire has been successfully used for decades to determine the level of FLA among participants. The original questionnaire consists of 33 5-point Likert scale questions. In order to develop a suitable questionnaire for this thesis,

some of the questions were left out of the questionnaire and some were added. To give the participants a chance to share their own ideas, 4 open-ended questions were added. Furthermore, to eliminate the chance of some participants not being able to understand the questions of the questionnaire, it was translated into their first language (Estonian). This was decided on the basis of the information given by the participants' language teachers that some students might not be able to understand the questionnaire because of the differences in their language level. The survey took place on March 16, 2022. The concept of FLA and different coping strategies including preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation were introduced to the participants before handing out the questionnaire. Also, the questions were thoroughly explained in class to ensure that everyone understands them similarly.

The questions in the questionnaire were grouped followingly – Questions 1-2 give general information about the participants' attitudes toward English lessons. Questions 3-16 concentrate on which activities regarding the four basic language skills (reading, listening, writing, speaking) are the most anxiety-provoking, they also cover the aspect of test anxiety. Questions 17-20 show which coping mechanisms are used by the students. This allows finding a link between the level of FLA and different methods of reducing anxiety. Questions 23-24 are open-ended and allow to gain extra information regarding students' perception of FLA.

2.3. The results and analysis of the study

2.3.1. FLCA among participants and anxiety-provoking parts of the lesson

The first question of the questionnaire aimed to determine whether the student perceives English class to be more anxiety-provoking environment than other classes. Question number two allowed the subject to choose which aspects of English learning result in higher levels of

FLA (writing, reading, listening, speaking, tests or other). It also allowed the participant to add any other parts of the lesson that they perceive as anxiety-provoking to ensure that all possible aspects are covered.

The response to the first question (Figure 1) indicates that most of the students do not believe that English classroom specifically makes them anxious. 60% (21 students) of the participants strongly disagreed and 26% (9 students) disagreed with the statement. A small minority found that agree or strongly agree with the statement, respective figures being 6% (2 students) and 3% (1 student). 5% (2 students) of the students answered 'neutral'. This indicates that most of the participants do not specifically find their English lessons to be anxiety provoking. This can be explained by the fact that most people do not find language learning anxiety provoking and that the relationship between the teachers and particular groups are rather positive. However, the fact that some students feel anxious in EFL lessons indicates that the issue of FLA is relevant. Significant difference between genders was not noticed.

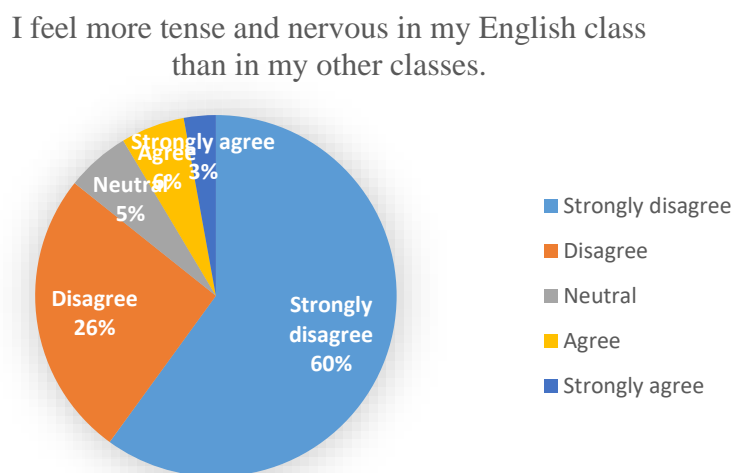


Figure 1. *Perceiving English classroom as anxiety provoking.*

However, it becomes clear that some parts of the lesson do provoke quite high anxiety among students (Figure 2). As expected, the most anxiety provoking parts of the lesson were deemed to be speaking and tests. 46% (16 students) of the participants perceive tests to be the most anxiety provoking part of the lesson and 40% (14 students) of the students thought that speaking causes the most anxiety. 8% (3 students) decided not to answer and a very small number of participants sense listening (3% - 1 student, or reading (3% - 1 student)) to be the most anxiety provoking part of the lesson. This indicates that students tend to be more anxious during activities in which they may become a subject to evaluation by peers and/or the teacher.

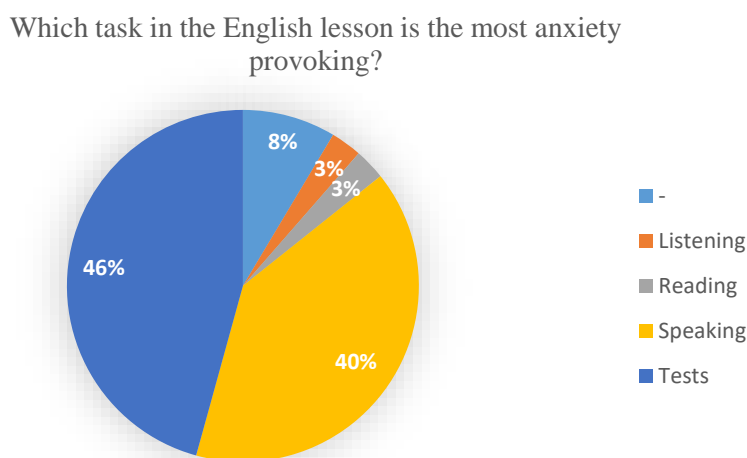


Figure 2. Anxiety provoking parts of the English lesson.

2.3.2. FLRA among the participants

Questions 3-5 concentrated on reading tasks. Question number three determined whether the participant perceives reading tasks as an anxiety-provoking part of the lesson. Question number 4 asked whether the participant has problems understanding a written test in their English classroom. Question number four aimed to determine if the student believes that other students understand texts in English better than them.

In relation to Q2, reading tasks were not perceived to be anxiety provoking, as most of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement and three participants remained neutral. Figure 11 shows that only three participants answered positively to Q3 and thought that text comprehension may be an issue for them. Furthermore, a small number of participants (4) felt that other students understand the text better (Figure 3.). This may suggest that teenagers tend to compare themselves to peers and fear negative evaluation. Low levels of FLRA correlates with previous studies, which suggest that adolescents do not usually show high levels of FLRA (Li 2021: 1012). Moreover, in regards of the participant's gender, female participants showed higher levels of fear of negative evaluation, as all of the participants who chose 'strongly agree' were female. Figure 4 shows that only a minute number of participants (3) thought that they have problems understanding the text, reflecting that reading exercises in the classroom are of suitable level of difficulty and do not cause much anxiety among the students.

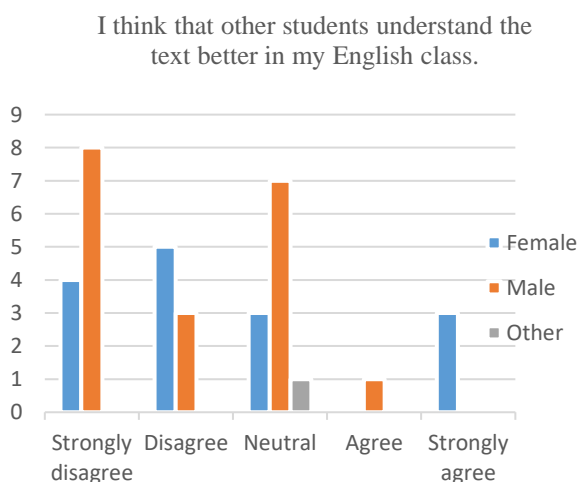


Figure 3. FLRA (1).

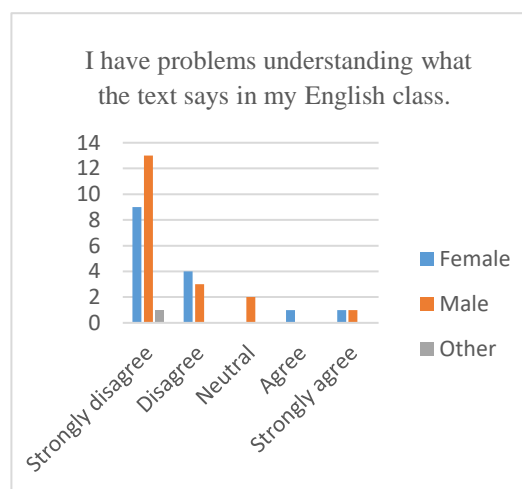


Figure 4. FLRA (2).

2.3.3. FLLA among the participants

Questions 6-8 concentrated on whether listening to the target language induces anxiety in students. Question number six showed if the participant feels anxious during listening tasks.

Question number seven showed if the anxiety level is elevated when the student does not understand what the teacher says during English class. Question number eight showed if the student believes that other students understand spoken English better.

Similarly to reading, completing listening tasks in the lesson was not deemed to be anxiety-provoking by the majority of the participants. Nevertheless, three students (female) strongly agreed and two students (male) agreed on that listening tasks make them nervous. When exploring FLLA further, some students (7 in total) feel nervous when they do not understand what their teacher says (Figure 5.). This indicates that not understanding spoken target language may result in higher communication apprehension described by Horwitz et al (1986:127) and therefore raises the amount of FLA perceived by the student. Once again, a difference between male and female participants can be observed - female participants seem to experience higher communication apprehension regarding FLLA than their male counterparts. Similar results can be noticed when comparing the results regarding self-comparison to other students (Figure 6.).

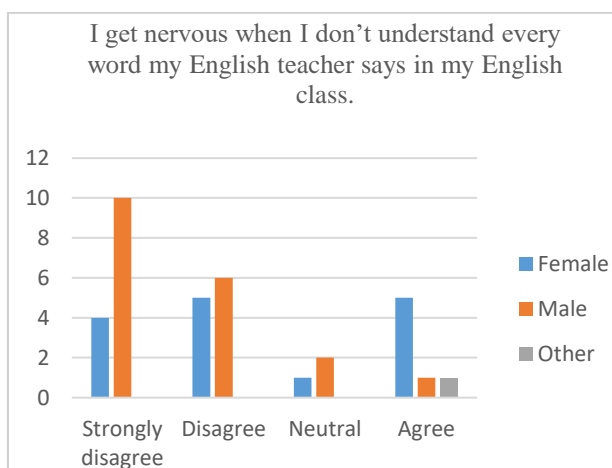


Figure 5. FLLA (1).

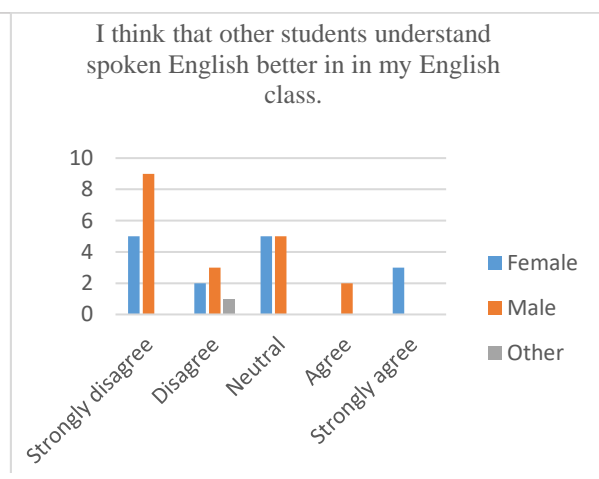


Figure 6. FLLA (2).

2.3.4. FLWA among the participants

Questions 9-11 showed whether writing tasks in the English classroom induce anxiety. Question number nine showed if composing a text in English is seen as anxiety-provoking. Question number ten determined if the student believes that they are capable of writing properly in English. Question number 11 showed if the student believes that other students write better in English.

Participants' answers to the sixth question (Figure 11) show that writing tasks generate somewhat higher levels of anxiety than reading or listening. four participants in total thought that writing tasks cause FLA. When bearing the issue of gender in mind, it becomes clear that male participants seem to be more confident in their writing skills (Figure 7.). Since previous studies (Cheng et al 2002: 652) have shown that low confidence is a predictor of FLRA it may be argued that women are at a higher risk of developing FLA. Figure 8 shows that six students thought that their writing skills are poorer when compared to their peers, this trend was more common among female participants.

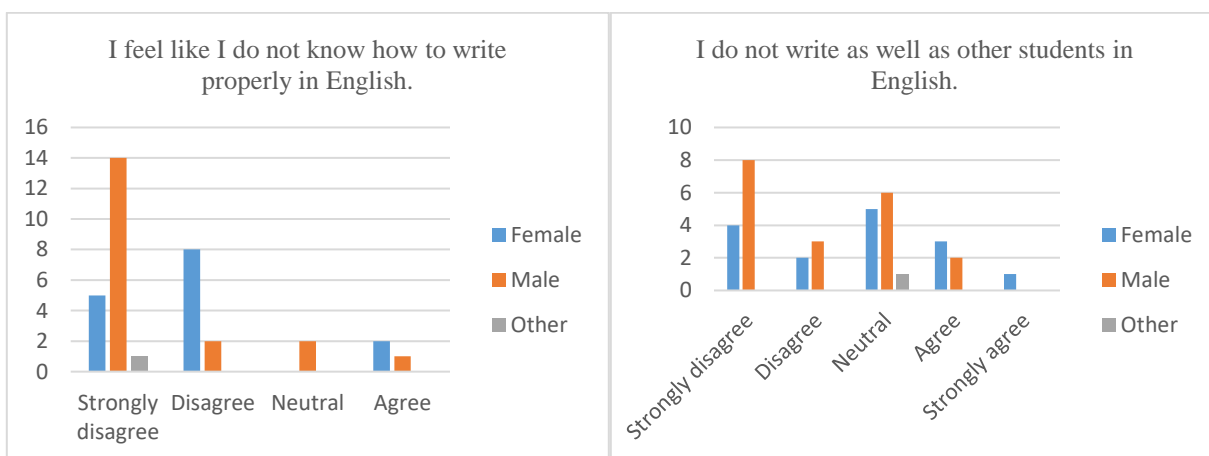


Figure 7. FLRA (1).

Figure 8. FLRA (2).

2.3.5. FLSA among the participants

The next set of questions concentrated on foreign language speaking anxiety. Questions 12-14 determined the amount of anxiety resulting from using the target language orally in the

EFL classroom. Question number 12 showed whether the student feels anxious when they have to speak in English during their English class. Question number 13 aimed to show if the participant believes that they are being laughed at when they speak English. Question number 14 shows if the student believes that other students speak English better.

The results of the study indicate that speaking exercises in the classroom tend to result in higher levels of anxiety when compared to other language skills (Figure 11). Six students agreed with feeling nervous during speaking in their English class. Interestingly, they were all female. Also, seven participants remained neutral. In general, male students seem to show more self-confidence. Figure 9 shows that a similar trend can be observed regarding participants' fear of negative-evaluation – none of the male students are afraid of being laughed at while speaking the target language.

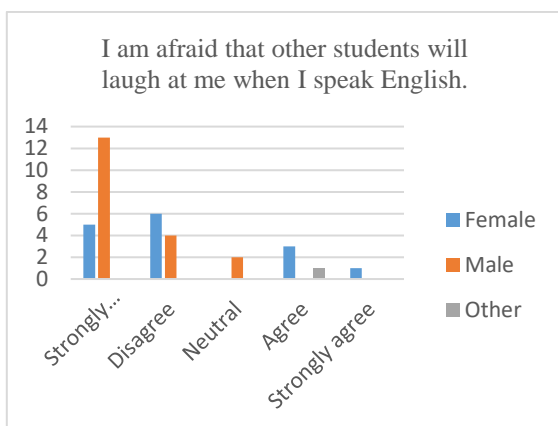


Figure 9. FLSA (1).

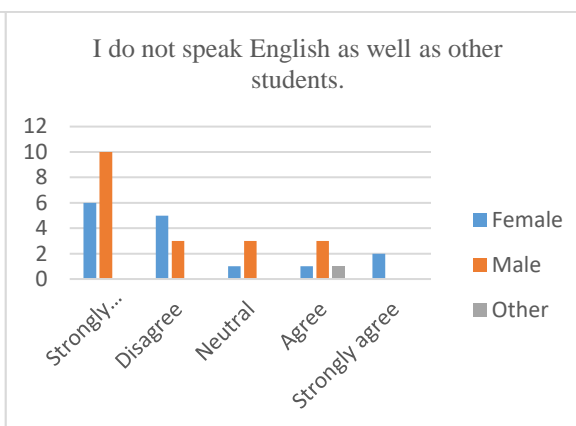


Figure 10. FLSA (2).

When teaching all of the language skills are compared, it becomes clear that productive language skills generate higher level of FLA and receptive the least amount (Figure 11). This can be explained by the fact that less effort is needed when completing reading or listening task in class and the level of a task's difficulty may have an effect on the level of anxiety it generates.

Also, speaking tasks make the student become a subject to evaluation by peers, one of the building blocks of FLA (Horwitz et al 1986: 127-128). A study carried out in Estonia also suggested that some EFL students experience a fear of negative comments regarding pronunciation (Laumets 2020: 34). Additionally, gender seems to be predictor of confidence and the level of FLA. In fact, female participants showed lower and male participants higher self-confidence in some aspects of all skill-based anxieties, as male students were more prone to choose ‘strongly disagree’ instead of ‘disagree’. This correlates with previous FLA research, as Öztürk and Gürbüz have also suggested that female students tend to fear negative evaluation more than their male counterparts (2013: 661), which in turn elevates their level of FLA.

	Strongly disagree			Disagree			Neutral			Agree			Strongly agree		
	M*	F*	O*	M	F	O	M	F	O	M	F	O	M	F	O
Reading makes me nervous.	13	6	0	5	7	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	19			13			3			0			0		
Listening tasks make me nervous.	12	5	1	7	8	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	18			15			1			1			0		
Composing a text makes me nervous.	11	9	1	4	2	0	2	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	0
	21			6			4			3			1		
Speaking makes me nervous.	7	4	0	6	5	0	6	1	0	0	4	1	0	1	0
	11			11			7			5			1		

Figure 11. Skill-based anxieties.

M, F, O - male, female, other*

2.3.6. Test anxiety among the participants

Since test anxiety contributes to the development of FLA, two questions (15-16) were included to determine if tests in the EFL classroom create anxiety among students. Question

number 15 aimed to show whether the student is able to focus during a test in the English classroom (Figure 12.). The results show that most of the students do not have any problems with concentration during the tests. Question number 16 (Figure 13.) shows their attitude towards test result in the English classroom. Male participants once again seem to be more confident, as the majority of mail participants strongly disagree with the statement, while a larger number of female participants chose ‘disagree’. Test anxiety seems to contribute to FLA to the same extent as speaking and writing.

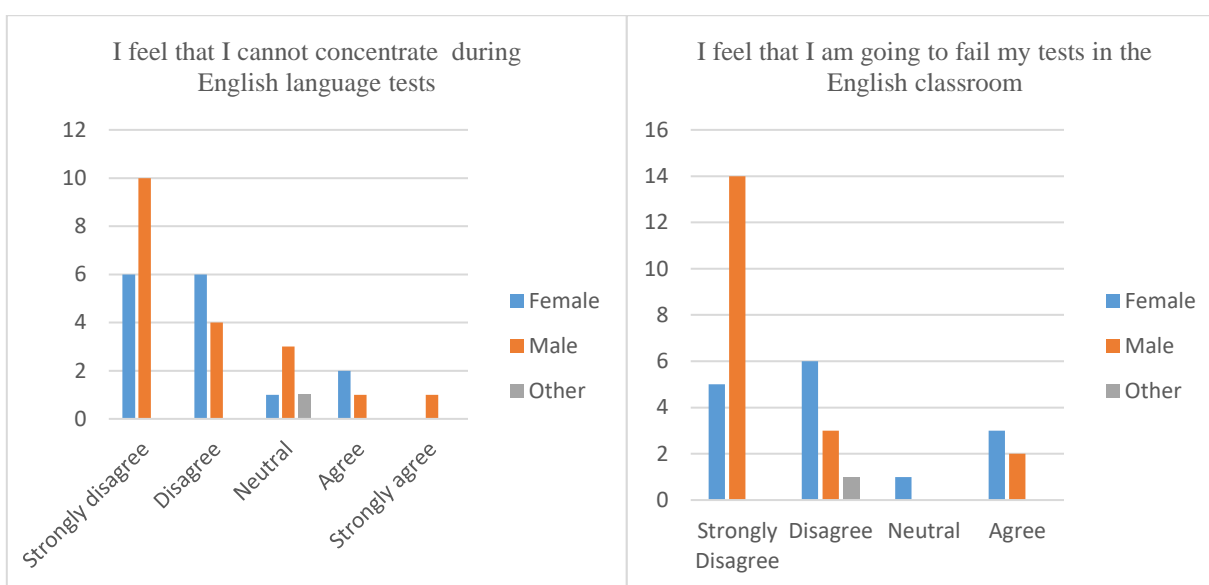


Figure 12. Ability to concentrate during tests.

Figure 13. Negative expectations towards tests.

2.3.7. Coping strategies used among the participants

Questions 17-21 intended to determine which strategies are used by students to reduce their FLA in the classroom. They can be categorized as following: preparation, relaxation, motivation and positive thinking, communication with other students, and avoidance. They can be further categorised into two categories: effective and ineffective strategies.

Question number 17 determined if preparation for the English class is problematic for the participants. It became clear that a large majority of the students did not have any issues with preparation. In fact, Figure 14 shows that 27 out of 35 participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This can be explained by the fact that the majority of the students do not suffer from FLA and therefore negative emotions are not present when preparing for the class or EFL class specifically.

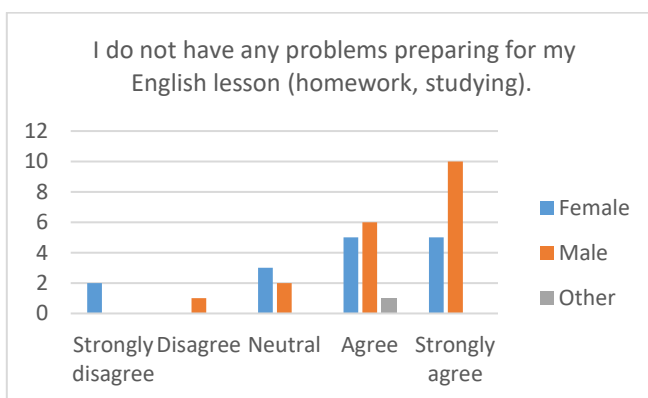


Figure 14. Preparation for the English class.

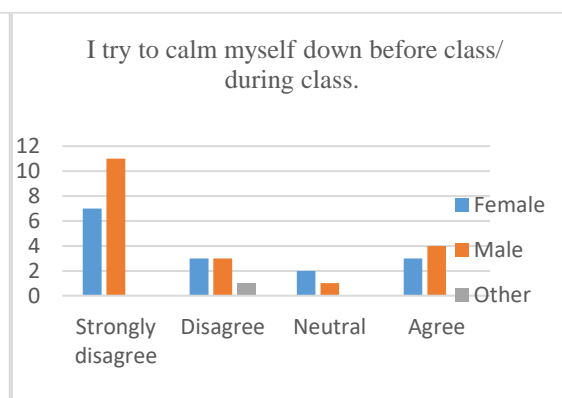


Figure 15. Relaxation.

Question number 18 aimed to show if the participants try to calm themselves down when they feel anxious. Figure 15 shows that most of the students showed no attempt to calm themselves down before the class. This is likely because most of the students do not need to calming down due to not being in a state of anxiety before the EFL class. Also there seems to be no correlation between relaxation and FLA, as the participants who showed signs of FLA according to the survey did not answer positively to the question either.

Question number 19 determined whether positive thinking and self-motivation are used by the participants to reduce FLA. Figure 16 suggests that self-motivation and positive thinking is a rather popular technique among students. Nevertheless, eight students in total did not favour the use of these particular strategies.

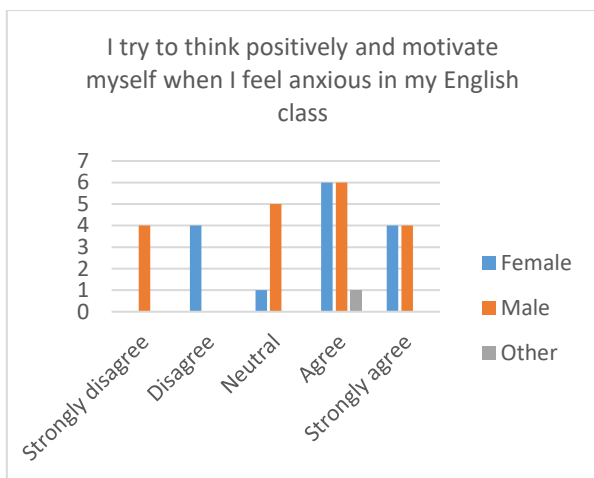


Figure 16. Self-motivation and positive thinking.

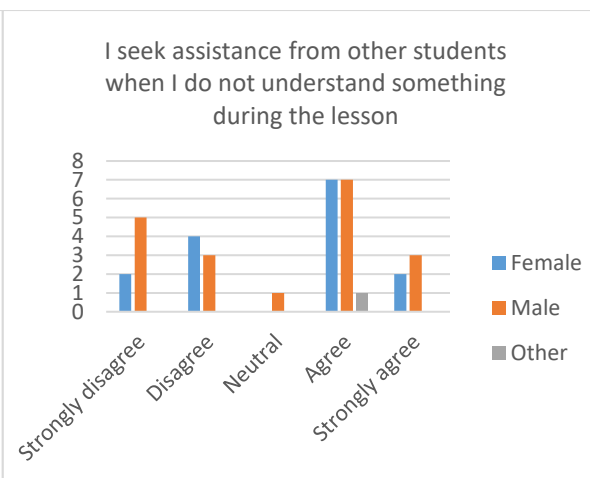


Figure 17. Seeking help from peers.

Question number 20 allowed to determine whether the participants tend to seek help and support from peers regarding EFL classes. Figure 17 illustrates that a substantial number of students indeed do seek assistance from their peers. This may be explained by students feeling more comfortable with speaking to other students rather than seeking assistance from the teacher. This confirms the importance of maintaining a positive atmosphere in the classroom and that inter relationship within the classroom cannot be undermined.

Questions number 21-22 allowed to see how many students use avoidance strategies such as not going to their English class, or being more passive in the classroom. Figure 18 shows that avoiding certain tasks in the classroom was not common among the participants. Furthermore, avoiding going to the class (Figure 19) also was not a popular answer (only 2 students). The reason for this may be good relationship with the teacher and peers, which is a negative predictor for FLA (Matsuda and Gobel 2004: 32).

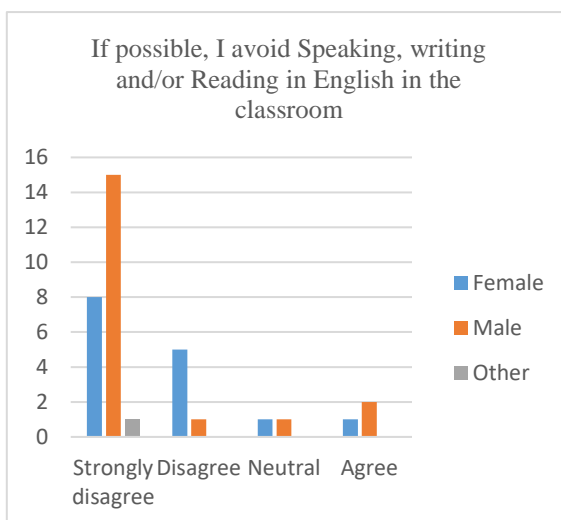


Figure 18. Avoidance (1)

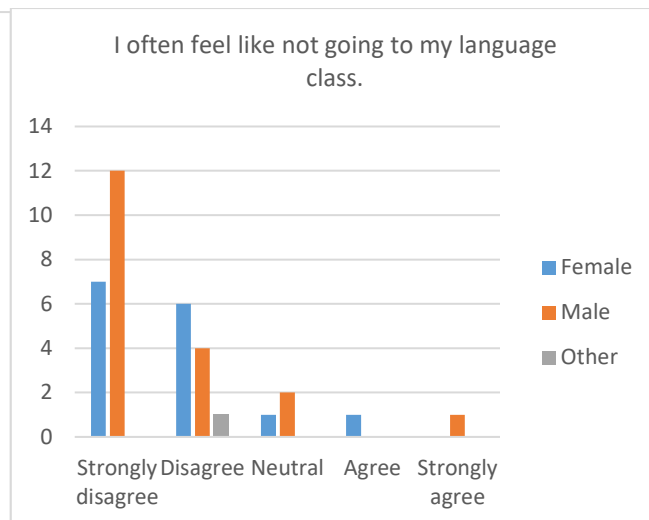


Figure 19. Avoidance (2)

Question number 23 (What do you do to reduce language anxiety in your English class?) allowed to gain even more information on which strategies of coping with FLA are used. Although almost half of the respondents (16) decided not to answer the question, probably since they do not perceive FLA, strategies that were suggested by the participants fall into similar categories as described before. Common answers were the following: less overthinking, positive self-talk, preparing for English classes, asking for help, concentrating. One of the most prominent strategies suggested by the respondents was positive self-talk. This correlates with Figure 16, suggesting once again, that thinking positively allows the students to calm down when feeling nervous. Two participants also pointed out that watching movies helps them to reduce FLA. Unfortunately, based on the answers of the questionnaire, it is difficult to tell in what circumstances does watching movies take place and whether it can be seen as an avoidance strategy or as a conscious effort to improve their English proficiency by exposing themselves to the target language.

2.3.8. FLA related suggestions from the participants

Question number 24 (What can a teacher do to reduce foreign language anxiety in the classroom?) aimed to determine which methods and tasks should English teachers use to reduce FLA from students' perspectives. The question was answered by 22 students out of 35. Answers seem to fall into the following categories: motivation, good atmosphere, use of native language.

Suggestions regarding a friendly atmosphere in the classroom included no shouting, more jokes, and encouragement. These were suggested by 10 participants out of 22. This confirms that friendly learning environment is perceived as an important factor to control and reduce FLA by the students and it helps the students to maintain a positive attitude towards learning. Previous studies have provided similar results and have suggested that teachers should be encouraging because it can alleviate FLA (Onwuegbuzie et al (1999: 232), showing that positive attitude is essential for low anxiety. In Estonian context Laumets (2020: 47) has suggested that since the fear of being laughed at is one of the most common reasons for FLA, supportive role of the teacher is essential for creating a low-anxiety classroom environment. Even though Jin and Dewaele (2018:155) have claimed that teacher's emotional support has little effect on students' level of FLA, the results of the present thesis suggest that the effect of encouragement and positive atmosphere on FLA should not be underestimated.

Another popular item was motivation which was suggested by 5 students. This shows that some students may lack motivation and wish to receive it from the teacher. Since motivation is one of the Affective Filters described by Krashen (1982: 31) and it affects language acquisition, it is important for teachers to know how to motivate their students. Previous studies have also shown that FLA is reduced by high motivation (Liu and Huang 2011: 6).

Three participants answered that more native language (Estonian) should be used in the classroom. Interestingly, all of those particular participants seemed to also showed higher levels of FLA. In fact, one of those participants had answered positively to almost questions that determined FLA. This correlates with previous studies – it has been suggested that using native language in the classroom (avoiding the target language) is more favoured among highly anxious students (Gregersen 2003: 30). Results of the current study confirm that some forms of avoidance are indeed used among highly anxious students.

Question number 25 (What are your favourite activities in the English classroom?) asked the students to write down any activities that they enjoy in their English lessons. 12 students named one or more skill-based tasks (listening, reading, writing, and speaking), confirming that practising some particular skills seem to generate more anxiety. Interestingly, eight students named information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly Kahoot!. The reason for this may be the aforementioned platform's popularity and wide use in classroom, also its competitive nature, which may increase motivation in some students. Furthermore, five participants suggested teamwork, indicating that support from peers does indeed help to reduce FLA. Two students also suggested listening to music during the lesson.

2.4. Discussion and suggestions for further research

The first aim of the thesis was to establish which parts of the EFL lesson are perceived as the most anxiety provoking by Estonian basic school students. The results indicate that speaking, writing and tests result in a higher anxiety level than listening or reading. This contradicts a study carried out among Korean university students (see Pae 2013:250) which suggested that listening and speaking anxieties have a stronger influence than writing on the level of FLA felt

in the classroom. The reason for this may be the age difference of the participants but also a different socio-cultural context. Nevertheless, the results of the study confirm that FLA can be seen as a combination of anxieties regarding tasks related to skills. Moreover, the present study confirms that self-confidence, communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation indeed are closely related to FLA. Across language skills, fear of negative evaluation was quite prominent. This correlates with the findings of other authors, importantly also with Laumets (2020) because making mistakes in front of peers may elevate FLA (see Onwuegbuzie et al 1999: 220). Laumets (2020: 24) observes an especially intense anxiety among her Estonian EFL students in the areas that comprised fear of negative evaluation and communication apprehension. Also test anxiety seems to be one of the most anxiety-provoking part of EFL lessons. Tests in general are often regarded as high-stress situations because there are usually several negative consequences that students face when they perform poorly. This may be the reason why the participants of the present study see tests as anxiety provoking. Two out of four participants in Laumets' (2022) study also showed high anxiety levels regarding tests (see Laumets 202: 53). What is more, similarly to previous studies (Eg. Öztürk and Gürbüz 2013), there seems to be a difference between some aspects in male and female participants regarding FLA. Generally speaking, male students seemed to show higher self-confidence and lower fear of negative evaluation. This seems to confirm one of the most common gender-related stereotypes of our society.

The second aim of the thesis was to establish which coping strategies regarding FLA are used by students of an Estonian basic school. Among the participants of the present study positive thinking and seeking assistance from peers were the most widely used coping strategies regarding FLA, while avoiding going to the EFL lesson or trying to avoid certain tasks were rather unpopular. Neither did the majority of the participants admit having problems with

anxiety when preparing for the class. Since the particular school has put conscious effort on raising awareness of motivation and learning strategies, the results of the study may have been influenced by it. Such results somewhat contradict a previous study carried out among Japanese University students which implied that peer seeking and relaxation are among the least used strategies by the students (see Kondo and Ying-Ling 2004: 263). This may be explained by differences in age and socio-cultural context of the participants. Moreover, the present study suggests that a good relationship between students and teachers is essential for language learning, because the participants suggested encouragement, positive atmosphere, and motivation as the aspects on which the teacher should focus on in his/her lessons. This is supported by Kongi (2015: 37-38) who interviewed Estonian EFL students and suggests that they indeed are in need of support from both peers and the teacher. Moreover, interactive activities using such as ICT and music were suggested. This implies that teachers need to be aware of the issue of FLA and use the means necessary to help to reduce the negative effects of FLA.

Obviously, this small-scale study does not allow generalisation. Further research should incorporate more questions to the questionnaire regarding each anxiety-related language skill to provide deeper understanding of the topic and allow to establish further connections. Also, while the sample of this study consisted of 35 15-16-year-old teenagers, different age groups could be compared to see whether age has an influence on the use of coping strategies or FLA. Further studies should investigate whether there is a link between coping strategies and the level of FLA in this particular age group; however, such correlation has not been observed among older students (Kondo and Ying-Ling 2004: 263; Yasuda and Nabei 2018: 910). Furthermore, course achievement in regards to FLA and coping strategies could be also studied.

CONCLUSION

The present thesis explores the issue of FLA among 15-16-year-old Estonian basic school students and different coping strategies regarding FLA. It aimed to find out which aspects of learning English as a foreign language are the most anxiety provoking and which coping strategies are most widely used by these particular students.

The analysis of current research regarding FLA and its history shows that building blocks of FLA are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Also, tasks regarding all the language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) and tests can provoke FLA in EFL classroom. FLA has various negative effects on students, such as poor academic results, low confidence, and it can cause students to avoid EFL classes. To cope with FLA, a number of strategies are used by the students. These include preparation, relaxation, positive thinking, peer seeking, and resignation.

Based on the results of this study, it may be said that productive language skills (writing and speaking) seem to cause somewhat more FLA than receptive skills (listening and reading) among these particular participants. Test seem to also be a major cause for anxiety in the classroom. Furthermore, male students tend to show more self-confidence, a predictor for low FLA, than female students. When it comes to coping strategies, thinking positively, self-motivation and seeking help from peers are most widely used according to the respondents, while avoiding the class is rather unpopular. This could be explained by the participants' age and socio-cultural context. When participants were asked for suggestions regarding low-anxiety classroom, popular answers included positive atmosphere, emotional support and encouragement.

Taking everything into account, it can be said that FLA among EFL students is an important topic and further research is need. Both teachers and students need to be aware of the issue to help reducing FLA's effects to the minimum. With proper support and conscious effort, negative outcomes regarding FLA and language learning can be avoided.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 Questionnaire in English

Foreign Language anxiety questionnaire

Gender: Male Female Other/prefer not to say

Answer the questions or choose and circle the option that best fits you.

1. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

2. Which task in the English lesson is the most anxiety provoking?

Writing Reading Listening Speaking Tests

Other:

.....

3. I get tense and nervous when I have to complete a reading task in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

4. I have problems understanding what the text says in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

5. I think that other students understand the text better in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

6. I get nervous when I have to complete listening tasks in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

7. I get nervous when I don't understand every word my English teacher says in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

8. I think that other students understand spoken English better in my English class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

9. I get nervous when I have to compose a text in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
10. I feel like I do not know how to write properly in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
11. I do not write as well as other students in English.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
12. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
13. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak English.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
14. I do not speak English as well as other students.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
15. I feel that I cannot concentrate during English language tests.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
16. I feel that I am going to fail my tests in the English class.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
17. I do not have any problems preparing for my English lesson (homework, studying).
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
18. I try to calm myself down before class/ during class.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
19. I try to think positively and motivate myself when I feel anxious in my English class.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
20. I seek assistance from other students when I do not understand something during the lesson.
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
21. If possible, I avoid speaking, writing and/or reading in English in the classroom
Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

22. I often feel like not going to my language class.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree

23. What do you do to reduce language anxiety in your English class?

.....

24. What can a teacher do to reduce foreign language anxiety in the classroom?

.....

25. What are your favourite activities in the English classroom?

.....

APPENDIX 2 Questionnaire in Estonian

Võõrkeele ärevuse küsimustik

Sugu: mees naine muu/ei soovi avaldada

Vasta küsimustele või tõmba kõige sobivamale variandile ring ümber

1. Ma tunnen end inglise keele tunnis rohkem pinges kui teistes tundides
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

2. Milline osa inglise keele tunnist tekitab kõige rohkem ärevust?
Kirjutamine | Lugemine | Kuulamine | Rääkimine | Hindelised tööd
Muu:
.....

3. Ma tunnen end pinges ja ärevana, kui pean inglise keele tunnis lugemisülesannet tegema.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

4. Mul on tunnis probleeme inglise keelsest tekstist arusaamisega.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

5. Ma arvan, et teised õpilased saavad inglise keelsest tekstist paremini aru kui mina.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

6. Ma tunnen ärevust, kui pean tunnis inglise keele kuulamisülesannet tegema.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

7. Ma tunnen ärevust, kui ma ei saa aru, mida õpetaja inglise keele tunnis räägib.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

8. Ma arvan, et teised õpilased saavad ingliskeelsest kõnest paremini aru kui mina.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
9. Ma tunnen ärevust, kui pean tunnis inglise keeles teksti kirjutama.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
10. Mulle tundub, et ma ei oska inglise keeles kirjutada.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
11. Mulle tundub, et teised õpilased kirjutavad inglise keeles paremini kui mina.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
12. Ma tunnen ärevust, kui pean tunnis inglise keeles rääkima.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
13. Mul on hirm, et teised õpilased hakkavad naerma, kui ma inglise keeles räägin.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
14. Ma ei räägi inglise keelt sama hästi kui teised õpilased.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
15. Ma tunnen, et ei suuda inglise keele hindeliste tööde ajal keskenduda.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
16. Mul on tunne, et ma põrun inglise keele hindelistes töödes.
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus
17. Mul ei ole probleeme inglise keele tunniks valmistumisega (kodused tööd, õppimine).
Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

18. Ma üritan end enne inglise keele tundi/inglise keele tunni ajal maha rahustada.

Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

19. Ma üritan mõelda positiivselt ning end motiveerida, kui ma inglise keele tunnis ärevust tunnen..

Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

20. Ma küsin kaasõpilastelt abi, kui ma inglise keele tunni ajal mõnest asjast aru ei saa.

Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

21. Ma üritan inglise keele tunnis vältida inglise keeles rääkimist ja/või kirjutamist ja/või lugemist.

Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

22. Mul on sageli tunne, et ma ei soovi inglise keele tundi minna.

Pole üldse nõus | Pigem ei ole nõus | Ei oska öelda | Pigem nõus | Täiesti nõus

23. Milliseid mooduseid kasutad, et inglise keele tunnis tekkivat võõrkeele ärevust vähendada?

.....

24. Mida saaks õpetaja teha, et vähendada tunnis võõrkeele ärevust?

.....

25. Mis on sinu lemmiktegevused inglise keele tunnis?

.....

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Oliver Lambrik

Foreign language anxiety among Estonian basic school English language students: contributing factors and coping strategies

Võõrkeeleärevus Eesti põhikooli inglise keele õpilaste hulgas: soodustavad tegurid ning toimetulekustrateegiad

Magistritöö

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Lehekülgede arv: 54

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Selle magistritöö eesmärk on uurida, millised tegevused ning milliste osaoskustega tegelemine (lugemine, kuulamine, kirjutamine, rääkimine ja testid) tekitavad inglise keel võõrkeelena tunnis enim keeleärevust. Teine eesmärk on välja selgitada, milliseid strateegiaid kasutavad õpilased võõrkeeleärevusega toime tulemiseks.

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Uurimiseesmärkide saavutamiseks kasutatakse töös 25-st küsimusest koosnevat küsimustikku, mille hulgas on nii valikuvariantidega kui ka avatud küsimusi. Küsimustikule vastas 35 15-16-aastast Eesti põhikooliõpilast, kelle keeletase oli tol ajahetkel orienteeruvalt B1.

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Märksõnad: inglise keel, võõrkeeleärevus, keeleoskus, toimetulekustrateegiad, lugemine, rääkimine, kirjutamine, kuulamine, võõrkeeleõpe, võõrkeel, põhikool, osaoskused.

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