

**UNIVERSITY OF TARTU
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES**

**USING VLOGGING FOR REDUCING FOREIGN LANGUAGE
ANXIETY IN THE EFL CLASSES: CASE STUDY ON ESTONIAN
UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

MA thesis

**ÜLLE LAUMETS
SUPERVISOR: *Lect.* KATILIINA GIELEN**

**TARTU
2020**

ABSTRACT

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) has been a subject of a growing body of research because FLA is an intense as well as frequent experience. The purpose of the study is to investigate whether and how can vlogging reduce students' foreign language anxiety and promote their self-confidence when performing oral tasks in the EFL classroom. The hypothesis was that after completing the program of vlogging and giving feedback on each other's vlogs in EFL classes, anxious students would show a decrease in verbal anxiety, somatic symptoms and tendency to overthinking.

According to the purpose of the study, qualitative research methods were used to carry out the research. Four upper secondary school students whose anxiety was rated high or very high according to the modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire, participated in an optional subject course in English on vlogging and were later interviewed about their experience and the perceived outcome. The course took place in one of the Estonian upper secondary schools from September 3 to November 15, 2019, and the post-vlogging interview and questionnaire were carried out in December 2019 and January 2020. The students' responses were categorized and the results of the questionnaires and the interviews were analysed.

This paper is divided into two parts. The first chapter discusses the importance of communication in the EFL classroom, provides an overview of some researches on FLA and introduces vlogging as a possible tool for reducing students' anxiety. The second chapter focuses on the study set out to examine the implementation of vlogs in the optional subject course that aimed to increase students' opportunities to use the target language and therefore, reduce their FLA. This chapter is followed by a discussion and conclusion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	5
INTRODUCTION	6
1 CHAPTER 1 VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN EFL CLASSROOM: FLA AND VLOGGING	10
1.1. The role of pronunciation in FLA	10
1.2 Foreign language anxiety: causes, types and consequences	12
1.3 Vlogging as a tool for reducing FLA.....	19
2 CHAPTER 2 THE STUDY OF VLOGGING AND ITS EFFECTS ON STUDENTS WITH FLA	22
2.1. The overview of the conducted study.....	22
2.1.1. Methodology and the procedure	22
2.2. The analysis of the study and its results	26
2.2.1. The results of the FLA questionnaire	26
2.3. The results and analysis of the pre-vlogging interviews	27
2.3.2. Students' first reactions to the vlogging task.....	30
2.4. The process of vlogging	32
2.4.1. The procedure of making vlog entries and commenting on other students' vlogs....	32
2.5. Post-vlogging interview and questionnaire	34
2.5.1. The summary of the post-vlogging interviews	34
2.5.2. The analysis of the post-vlogging interviews	36
2.5.3. The results and summary of the post-evaluation FLA questionnaire.....	38
DISCUSSION.....	42
CONCLUSION	46
APPENDIX 1 The table of participants of the study.....	53
APPENDIX 2 The FLA questionnaire	54

APPENDIX 3 PARTICIPATION FORM (Osalemisleping)	55
APPENDIX 4 The results of the pre-vlogging FLA questionnaire (carried out in September 2019).....	56
APPENDIX 5 Pre-vlogging interview questions	58
APPENDIX 6 Post-vlogging interview questions.....	59
APPENDIX 7 The results of the post-vlogging FLA questionnaire (carried out in January 2020).....	60
RESÜMEE	62

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CA - communication apprehension

CEFR - the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

EFL - English as Foreign Language

ENC - Estonian National Curriculum

FLA - foreign language anxiety

FLCA - foreign language classroom anxiety

FLSA - foreign language speaking anxiety

SLA - second language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

More and more educational practitioners start to understand the importance of the emotional state of a language learner. First, many students tend to give up certain aspects of language learning since there are so many ways to spend free time than mastering new skills. Second, the prevalent use of the English language in media and on the Internet has created an impression that the English language is something that just “sticks” to people and there is no urgent need to study it. Third, the instant feedback of peers – mostly via social media – has put more vulnerable students under the constant threat of evaluation and possible disapproval of peers, causing excessive anxiety.

All individuals experience anxious and depressing thoughts sometimes, but mostly they have the capability to deal and cope with them. Therefore, an investigation of the role of personal resources and the ways of improving them in managing and coping with one’s negative and anxiety-prone experiences when learning a foreign language seems appropriate. Horwitz (1988) suggests that some of the anxious learners’ beliefs are derived from their unrealistic conceptions about language learning and that some students are mainly concerned about the ultimate correctness of their speech and acquiring a native-like accent. At the same time, it can not be denied that speaking is a vital part of English language learning and students need to pay attention to correct pronunciation, intonation, and stress in order to sound clear and proficient. The English language is acknowledged as an international language of science and technology along with being the main lingua franca of trade and business. According to the Estonian National Curriculum (ENC) for upper secondary schools, today’s language instruction is directed, to a great extent, towards communication needs and concentrates on learners and their communication:

Communication competence is formed through developing the four constituent skills of language proficiency – listening, reading, speaking and writing –, and therefore the learning outcomes have also been presented according to constituent skills. --- Language studies enhance thinking, develop clear self-expression skills, create texts and understand them. (Riigi Teataja 2010)

ENC thus clearly stresses the necessity of speaking and therefore, the development of verbal skills should be one of the priorities of both students and teachers. However, experience has shown that some students are reluctant to speak up in their English language classes and one of the most common reasons for this is foreign language anxiety (FLA).

FLA may have a profound effect on foreign language learning and therefore, it has been the subject of a growing body of research. In his overview of language anxiety research and trends, Peter D. MacIntyre (2017) argues that FLA has been the most widely studied emotion in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). According to Horwitz et al (1986: 126), FLA is the subjective feeling of tension, nervousness and worry, experienced while learning and using a foreign language; it affects negatively almost every aspect of the process. The impact of FLA might go beyond the classroom and highly anxious students may never use the language in everyday situations due to high rates of FLA. According to Toth (2008: 56), people who are generally anxious or experience anxiety in certain types of situations are thought to have a predisposition to also experience anxiety when learning or using a foreign language. In a later study Toth (2011: 46) finds that the most alarming and anxiety-provoking circumstances in a classroom setting are the following: the presence of other students, a perceived level or standard, and the teacher. The role of the teacher cannot be underestimated since it is the teacher who is often responsible for the level of the student's anxiety as well as the student's courage to talk to the teacher about their anxiety. Ohata (2005) carried out a study among EFL teachers and examined the teachers' views or assumptions on the students' FLA, especially how they perceived and dealt with students' anxiety in their everyday teaching practices. The author found that the ways teachers were able to deal with students' anxiety were closely connected to their own teaching philosophy and their understanding of being a good teacher (Ohata 2005: 148). There are various reasons why students may feel uneasy or anxious about their performance in language classes, especially when speaking.

Teachers' task is to find suitable ways to help students to overcome their anxiety and introduce different methods to increase their verbal confidence and improve pronunciation and communication skills.

Many Estonian upper secondary school students find it difficult to cope with the demands of curriculum and tend to become passive learners who find it extremely difficult to share their thoughts and ideas with others due to the fear of being ridiculed or judged by their classmates and/or the teacher. Their unwillingness to talk may lead to insignificant improvement of their verbal skills and low grades for oral presentations that impact their self-esteem and general coping with studies.

Modern technology offers several opportunities to reduce communication anxiety, e.g. language exchange websites that give learners a chance to communicate with other students, movie trailer voiceovers and creating vlogs. A vlog is an application used for sharing one's ideas and thoughts online by enabling recording and posting them. Vlogging has many advantages over just talking to yourself since the form is attractive for young people, many of them follow celebrity vloggers, and therefore the idea of creating vlogs may seem fascinating and worth trying. According to Young and West (2008: 59), media-based verbal communication can enhance the quantity and refine the quality of language practice by providing more opportunities for speaking. For anxious students, the huge benefit is the possibility to self-monitor their work before uploading it for others (classmates and/or the teacher) to see (and evaluate).

The topic of the present study has been drawn from my personal experience gained while practising as a psychologist, student counsellor and EFL teacher. Working as an upper-secondary school counsellor, I have met a considerable number of students who describe overwhelming anxiety, nervousness, and trepidation before their English language classes, especially when they have to give a presentation or do some other verbal activity. The fear

is sometimes irrational and, in most cases, not related to students' objective language skills. FLA is often intertwined with students' self-related cognitions and in most cases, stems from the fear of being made fun of by classmates and/or the teacher. In order for anxious students to succeed, they need a sizeable quantity of qualitative language practice. Vlogs can be considered as mini-presentations that do not need another interlocutor but, at the same time, give students an opportunity to improve their verbal competence, increase self-awareness and develop more self-confident presentation skills. Vlogging is a regular spoken activity that can be performed by any student who has achieved even the lowest degree of verbal proficiency. Therefore, in order to understand the perceived level of FLA of upper secondary school students and find out how much vlogging helps to reduce their anxiety, I have carried out a study where students were asked to complete questionnaires, participate in the interviews, and create nine vlogs.

This paper is divided into two chapters. The first chapter gives an overview of the importance of communication in EFL classroom, discusses FLA and introduces the FLCAS questionnaire that has been widely used in research on foreign language anxiety for more than thirty years; it also discusses the possibilities of audio/video blogging (vlogging). The second chapter gives an overview of the methodology used in the empirical study and analyses the results of the modified FLCAS questionnaire and interviews.

1 CHAPTER 1 VERBAL COMMUNICATION IN EFL CLASSROOM: FLA AND VLOGGING

1.1. The role of pronunciation in FLA

The Estonian National Curriculum stresses the importance of verbal communication and intelligibility and therefore, the EFL teachers need to pay close attention to the students who are reluctant to speak and give them more opportunities both inside and outside the classroom to enhance their conversation and pronunciation skills. The correct pronunciation of English is a fundamental skill of its spoken aspect and plays a vital role in successful communication in every subject.

Heikkinen (2018: 22) investigated how a group of English teachers teach pronunciation to Swedish ninth graders as a part of communication skills. He points out that there may be various reasons why students may feel uneasy about sounding unnatural and this makes it hard for them to start participating in oral activities. Many students feel ashamed of their 'foreign' accent and this may be perceived as one of the reasons for non-communication. Different speaking and listening contexts give students possibilities to be aware of different sounds and sound features and these constant observations improve their speaking immensely. Acquiring the pronunciation of a new language so that it is easily understandable to a wide range of speakers should be a goal of most second language learners (Munro and Derwing 2011: 521). Therefore, the teachers should encourage students to pronounce even the most difficult words understandably, in order to enhance their intelligibility and fluency. Students get the most help from teachers who themselves can understand and imaginatively explore how the sounds sound to learners and gradually lead them to more appropriate ways of thinking about English pronunciation (Fraser 2000: 26).

Clear pronunciation is essential in oral communication. Even the minor inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar cannot prevent people from communicating effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation (Burns and Claire 2003: 5). There is, however,

a correlation between communication skills, pronunciation, and FLA. According to my experience, the students that make mistakes with pronunciation are more prone to anxiety since the understanding of being unintelligible adds another reason for being anxious and, on the other hand, poor communication skills tend to increase the pronunciation problems. Therefore, a correct pronunciation is a very important sub-skill of the speaking module in the English language learning process. Burns and Claire (2003: 5) outline three most important features the speakers of English can achieve:

1. Intelligibility (the speaker produces sounds that are recognizable as English sounds);
2. Comprehensibility (the listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said);
3. Interpretability (the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said).

Frazer (2000: 43) states that the most important recommendations for the teaching of English pronunciation in EFL context would be that the learners changed their way of interpreting sounds, from a way appropriate to their native language to a way appropriate to English. The author also described the method where the teacher provides students with examples of learners' pronunciation and they have to judge whether a native speaker would consider it 'correct' or 'incorrect'. After deciding, they receive feedback on their judgment and have the opportunity to record their own speech when they feel they are ready and willing to do it.

Kukulska-Hulme, Norris & Donohue (2015) note that an important way of supporting the students' autonomy is by their engagement with a choice. According to them, a student-centered learning approach encourages learner involvement in decision-making and in the learning processes during lessons and between them. The students may provide examples of cultural and language communication difficulties from outside the classroom; the student can assist their examples with recordings, images or notes made when the problems arise (Kukulska-Hulme et al 2015: 8). Boudreau, MacIntyre, and Dewaele (2018:

152) outline the importance of positive emotions when creating a learning environment. The authors declare that positive emotions encourage play, curiosity, creativity, and exploration in the classroom; these behaviours are very different from those produced by anxiety and fear and are therefore widely seen as beneficial in learning.

According to Kukulska-Hulme et al (2015: 8), a positive classroom environment is a place where learners can practise the target language and it also helps them to be more aware of specific individual shortcomings and problems that should be addressed. A classroom offers a supportive environment in which to prepare for target language communication outside and receive personal feedback. The authors also stress that mobile technologies expand the area where language may be rehearsed and practised, and that mobile devices enable more frequent and individual reflexion. For example, video and audio blogging (vlogging) enables learners to reflect on their own language use and reduce their foreign language anxiety.

1.2 Foreign language anxiety: causes, types and consequences

The aim of the present chapter is to give a theoretical overview of foreign language anxiety (FLA), the ways it affects the language learning process and impacts the overall English instruction in the classroom. In its general meaning, anxiety is a normal and healthy emotion; people need a certain amount of anxiety to overcome their life challenges. The problem arises when anxiety becomes so overwhelming that it starts to debilitate different processes. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines such anxiety:

An emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure or nausea. People with anxiety usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situations out of worry. They may also have physical symptoms such as sweating, trembling, dizziness or a rapid heartbeat.

Thus, according to APA, such emotion of anxiety affects a person both psychologically and physically, disabling and inhibiting normal life processes. David

Pragman (2006: 10), an educational psychologist, in his book *Managing Performance Stress: Models and Methods* defines anxiety as „a form of fear but fear with a high degree of subjectivity”. He points out that anxiety is a strong feeling of uneasiness that upsets people and activates them physiologically. Yet not all the types of anxiety which can be defined and measured are related to language learning; the one that has major influence on foreign language learning is called foreign language anxiety (FLA).

According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1991, in Dewale and Al-Saraj (2015: 204)), FLA develops over time after the learners start developing attitudes and emotions specifically to the second language learning context in the foreign language classroom. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991: 297) argue that at first, anxiety is an undifferentiated, emotional response to some negative experience in a language class; if this negative experience is repeated, anxiety becomes associated with the language class and is therefore differentiated from other contexts. In case the anxiety is limited only to the language learning situations, it belongs to the category of FLA. Subjective feelings that the anxious foreign language learner experiences, along with a broad scale of psycho-physiological symptoms, are essentially the same as for any specific anxiety – apprehension, worry, even fear, concentrating difficulties, sweating, nausea and palpitations (Horwitz et al 1986: 127). Moreover, anxious learners often miss their foreign language classes and postpone their homework. Horwitz et al (1986: 131) also state that school counsellors and psychologists find the anxiety mostly concerns the two basic task requirements of foreign language learning – listening and speaking. Oral communication (speaking) is the most frequently referred hurdle of the anxious language students. Broadly speaking, parallels can be drawn between foreign language anxiety and three related performance anxieties: communication apprehension (CA), test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al 1986: 128).

McCroskey (1977, in Holbrook (1987: 554)) defines CA as an „individual level of

fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons”. CA is a type of bashfulness and it includes difficulties in speaking in pairs and in groups. People who are generally shy and do not enjoy verbal communication are likely to experience much more problems with speaking in a foreign language classroom. The difficulties are especially significant because students have to use a medium that they possess only in a limited way. This is one possible reason why so many highly communicative people are quiet in a foreign language classroom (Horwitz et al 1986: 127). Yasima et al (2004: 121) carried out a study among Japanese students who participated in language courses abroad in order to find out what caused their anxiety and how they perceived their communication apprehension. They pointed out that although Japanese students understood the need to communicate with other students in English language classes in order to improve their language skills, interactions just did not take place due to their lack of confidence and anxiety. Many Japanese learners were overwhelmed by preparing for English language tests of universities as well as focusing on raising their potential test scores, concentrating mainly on memorizing vocabulary and translating difficult constructions. It is important to mention that speaking tests have the potential of provoking both test anxiety and oral communication anxiety.

According to Horwitz et al (1986: 126), test anxiety is a form of performance anxiety that is closely related to FLA. Performance evaluation is a part of the study process in most foreign language classes. Test-anxious students regard everything but ideal test performance as failure and fear of getting lower results makes them highly anxious. Williams and Andrade (2008) carried out a study among Japanese private university students and found that most anxiety-provoking were output-related tests. Fear of making a bad impression and receiving negative evaluation were other most often mentioned reasons for FLA.

Horwitz et al (1986: 128) point out that negative evaluation is defined as apprehension about others' negative evaluation and the fear that other people may evaluate oneself negatively. Fear of negative evaluation has common traits with test anxiety but is broader because it may emerge in different communicative situations, including speaking up in a foreign language class. According to Williams and Andrade (2008), standing in front of classmates and delivering a prepared or unprepared speech was one of the biggest sources of anxiety among the students of Japanese private universities. Public speaking was connected to the feeling that one was less able to perform well than other students. Fear of negative evaluation is not only common among the beginners or intermediate learners, but it can also happen to more advanced students who cannot accept their minor errors or mispronunciations. There are some studies conducted on anxiety and anxious thoughts that negatively affect foreign language learning among advanced students. Toth (2008: 53), who researched language anxiety among Hungarian university students stated that many students majoring in English have experienced FLA in their university English classes.

MacIntyre (2017) points out that anxiety is a complex experience and has a number of effects and sources. Therefore, anxiety is both a cause and a consequence of performance. MacIntyre (2017: 24) classifies the causes and effects of language anxiety as follows:

Academic Causes:

- Errors in pronunciation;
- Unrealistic learner beliefs;
- Instructors who intimidate their students with harsh and/or embarrassing error correction in front of other students;
- Methods of testing.

Cognitive causes:

- Fear of losing one's sense of identity;
- Biased perceptions of proficiency;
- Personality traits and/or shyness;
- Low self-esteem.

Social causes:

- Fear of being laughed at, embarrassed, and making a fool of oneself;
- A poor quality accent;

- Misunderstanding communication or using incorrect words;
- Cultural gaffes;
- Competitiveness;
- Frequency and quality of contact with native speakers.

Academic effects:

- Lowered grades and poor academic achievement;
- Impaired performance on tests;
- Affected achievement in second languages;
- Decreased self-perception of second language competence;
- Lower results scores on the measure of actual second language competence;
- “Overstudying” -increased effort at learning resulting in lower levels of achievement than expected.

Cognitive Effects:

- Increased self-related cognition (thoughts of failure, performance worry, self-deprecating thoughts); /.../
- At input stage, anxiety acts like a filter preventing information from getting into the cognitive processing system; /.../
- Affected time required to recognize words, ability to hold words in short-term memory, a memory for grammar rules, ability to translate a paragraph, length of time studying new vocabulary items, memory of new vocabulary items /.../;
- Students require more time to intake information, and more time to achieve the same result as a student not experiencing language anxiety.
- A nervous student risks performing more poorly than a relaxed one.

Social Effects:

- Reduced linguistic self-confidence, a motivating influence for the language learner;
- In an environment where the second language is predominantly spoken, students experience higher apprehension in their native language;
- Anxious learners do not communicate as often as more relaxed learners.

To measure and evaluate FLA, Horwitz et al (1986: 129) proposed a 33-item scale that they called the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The FLCAS has been used in a great number of research projects and it has proved to be a reliable tool for measuring students' classroom anxiety since FLA can occur in students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Horwitz 2010: 114).

Several researches have been conducted on questions related to FLA and its manifestation in EFL classrooms. In her research, Ziash Suleimenova (2012) tested the students of Kazakh university (English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners) in order to find out whether they feel anxious or embarrassed while speaking English. With the help of

a shortened FLCAS questionnaire, she assessed the degree to which participants feel nervous during speaking practice in class. Kenneth E. Williams and Melvin R. Andrade (2008) examined anxiety in EFL classes in a Japanese university in regard to the type of situations that provoke anxiety, the perceived cause of anxiety and the skills that helped them overcome the anxiety. Ardi Marwan (2007) studied the types of Indonesian students' foreign language classroom anxiety and the strategies they used to cope with their anxiety. Sibel Çağatay (2015) examined Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) among the students of Ankara Technical University preparatory program students, its possible reasons and the ways to reduce it. Morana Drakulic (2015) studied FLA among first-year university students in Rijeka, Croatia. The aim of the study was to determine the presence and potential sources of FLA among the first-year university students and to explore how high anxiety levels affect students' foreign language learning experience.

Analysing the results of her study, Suleimenova (2012) found that being called out to the board and performing in front of fellow students were the two most common anxiety-provoking tasks the students mentioned. These findings are similar to Williams and Andrade (2008: 186) who found that anxiety was often associated with tasks involving speaking in front of others and most commonly, it meant standing before a class to deliver a prepared speech either by reading aloud or from memory (Williams and Andrade, 2008: 186). The results of the survey of Indonesian students showed that lack of confidence, lack of preparation and fear of "losing face" were the primary causes of anxiety (Marwan 2007). The results of the Çağatay (2015: 654) study revealed that Turkish students experienced a moderate level of FLSA.

However, Turkish female students seemed to be more anxious while speaking than their male fellow students. The author suggested that such hesitation to speak might derive from the cultural background of Turkish society, meaning that women cannot express

themselves as confidently as men in a social context (Çağatay 2015: 654). It is worth mentioning that although the Kazakh students admitted that they were responsible for their poor execution, they also found that their speaking difficulties and anxiety were not caused by inadequate knowledge of the language but they just had no idea what to say (Suleimenova 2012). According to Williams and Andrade (2008: 187), the Japanese students mentioned frequently that the teacher was responsible for the anxiety-provoking situations and that they felt especially uncomfortable with the long silence that occurred while they were trying to think of something to say. Surprisingly, the survey revealed that no Indonesian participants mentioned the fear of making mistakes in their learning process, a fact that was often mentioned in the survey both among the Turkish students (Çağatay 2015), the Kazakh students (Suleimenova 2012), as well as the Japanese students (Williams and Andrade 2008). The results of Drakulic's (2015: 127) study revealed that the most significant sources of FLA are teacher, error correction, fear of negative evaluation, low proficiency, test anxiety and the lack of discipline. The author also found that the students perceived their low-quality English language classes as a reason why they felt insecurity, discomfort and, eventually FLA. All five studies agree that teachers are highly responsible for building as an anxious-free atmosphere in their classrooms as possible. It is said that teachers should strive to create a low stress, friendly and supportive learning environment (Suleimenova 2012), include confidence-building activities (Williams and Andrade 2008) and create atmospheres where a teacher can scaffold students towards their oral competence (Çağatay 2015). Drakulic (2015: 127) found that the students saw the teacher's role as extremely important but they did not perceive their language teachers as a threat.

The different researches pointed out the features related to cultural differences among participants of these studies. It was noted that some educational systems are not designed to increase the communicative competence of students and many learners experience a feeling

of uneasiness and anxiety when they have to speak in the English language. Therefore, the results of these studies have several limitations and they can only be generalized to a certain extent.

Horwitz et al (1986) state that FLA was responsible for students' embarrassing experiences in language classes and created an instrument, the 33-item FLCAS, to measure it. The findings of the described five studies showed that the reasons for anxiety are not language-related but caused by individual and cultural differences.

It can be concluded that anxiety may significantly hamper students' performance in a foreign language classroom and that there are several academic, cognitive and social causes why the anxiety arises and persists. It is also clear that teachers have a huge role in reducing anxiety and creating a supportive and warm atmosphere in the classroom since according to Walsh (2002) communication in the EFL classroom is a highly complex, complicated and elusive phenomenon.

1.3 Vlogging as a tool for reducing FLA

The 21st century and its technological development have opened new possibilities for teachers and given them new tools to enhance language learners' motivation and improve their communication skills. The generation of contemporary learners has close and even intimate relationships with their smartphones, and it would be wise to use this to promote their speaking skills and reducing FLA. Apart from a whole new world of mobile applications that are useful when it comes to learning grammar, vocabulary and correct pronunciation, video/ audio blogging (vlogging) is a simple tool every student can access in order to polish their pronunciation, enhance communication confidence and therefore, reduce their FLA when speaking.

Naismith (2004, in Comas-Quinn et al (2009: 5)) points out that smartphones support situated learning, allow young people to share information and provide support through

feedback and reinforcement. People tend to be much more interested in sharing their own experiences than taking advantage of what others have shared. Researchers and educational practitioners have started to experiment with innovative ways of integrating technologies into language learning, concentrating mostly on learner-centredness. According to Comas-Quinn et al (2009: 12), learners like to be engaged in real activities that are meaningful and encourage them to take control and responsibility for their own learning. Several researchers (Hung 2011, Combe and Codreanu 2016, Yeh et al 2016, Hsu 2016, Comas-Quinn et al 2009) have carried out studies that examine the implementation of audio/video blogs (vlogs) in English language classes in order to increase students' opportunities to use the target language and enhance their speaking performance. Cambridge Dictionary defines a blog as "a regular record of your thoughts, opinions, or experiences that you put on the internet for other people to read". Audio blogs/vlogs require no high knowledge of technology and they are easy to create and manage. Jee (2011) remarks that vlogs promote interaction between users by allowing users to give and receive comments.

According to Cong-Lem (2018: 141), vlogging provides convenient platforms for learners to practice their speaking skills by sharing their personal experiences. The author claims that the web-based learning system helps to create a ubiquitous learning environment, where learners can use the language without time and space constraints. The important fact of the study is that vlogging helps to reduce students' language anxiety and they become more active and motivated language learners. It also may help to reduce the effect of social causes of FLA - embarrassment, fear of being laughed at and making a fool of oneself - the causes pointed out by MacIntyre (2017). Combe and Codreanu (2016: 123) suggest that vlogs offer opportunities to improve students' confidence when speaking. What is more, according to Liu and Carless (2006: 280), vlogging could be an appropriate way to give and

receive feedback from the teacher and classmates in an environment that could possibly reduce anxiety and promote learners' self-esteem.

There are studies that confirm the positive effects of vlogging. In the course of another study on the topic, Hsu (2016: 971) provided her EFL students with the extracurricular speaking practice via creating vlogs related to their course materials and then analyzed the participants' vlogs in the first two weeks and the last two weeks. The author did not find significant differences in the speaking content of the subjects in terms of complexity, accuracy and fluency; however, the participants themselves pointed out that vlogging reduced their speaking anxiety. According to Hung (2011), there are a number of advantages that are associated with vlogging, such as self-evaluation, relief from time constraints and personal development. However, Comos-Quinn et al (2009) note that the new technologies and their use in the foreign language classroom should be carefully prepared and that teachers should introduce changes progressively and support learners throughout the process. The authors point out that teachers should be available for extra guidance and reassurance to reduce the learners' anxieties.

The method of vlogging is one of the examples of how new technologies can be applied to the language learning process and how this method may increase students' verbal confidence and in doing so also reduce their foreign language anxiety.

2 CHAPTER 2 THE STUDY OF VLOGGING AND ITS EFFECTS ON STUDENTS WITH FLA

2.1. The overview of the conducted study

This part of the thesis gives an overview of the study conducted in the 10th form of one of the Estonian upper-secondary schools during the first and second periods of the academic year 2019/2020 (September 2019 - January 2020). The aim of the study was to determine the students' perception of their FLA (foreign language anxiety) and suggest vlogging as a possible tool to overcome it. The particular school was chosen because I, the author of the MA thesis, work in it.

The pre-study hypothesis was that anxious students would show a decrease in verbal anxiety, somatic symptoms and tendency to overthinking when participating in the EFL classes after completing the program of vlogging and giving feedback on each other's vlogs.

2.1.1. Methodology and the procedure

According to the purpose of the study, qualitative methods were applied using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Participation in the study was proposed to all the students of my English language group (eleven 10th graders in total). The students were currently in the B stream for English, which means that their level of English was A2-B1 according to the CEFR. The language level of the students was determined by a special placement test for 10th graders on September 3, 2019. The placement test is standard practice in our school and is used at the beginning of each school year to group students according to their language level. The placement test was conducted by me because I teach the students during the academic year 2019/2020. Along with the test, I asked the students if they would like to participate in my study. Seven students in eleven found that they had no problems with anxiety in the classroom and refused to

participate. Four female students, age 16, agreed to participate (see the Table of Participants in Appendix 1). It is important to mention that the participants had studied English for seven years and they did not know each other previously. In order to find out the level of anxiety in the English language classroom, the four students were asked to fill in a questionnaire (see Appendix 2). The basis of the questionnaire was an adapted and modified version of the 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) designed by Horwitz et al (1986: 129). The modified version (hereinafter referred to as the FLA questionnaire) consists of ten statements that were chosen by me after a detailed analysis of the thirty-three (33) original statements. The selection of the statements was based on their compliance with the three performance anxieties that are closely intertwined with FLA - communication apprehension (CA), test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz et al 1986: 127). My goal was to compile a shorter and more compact questionnaire for my students. To understand the level of CA of the students, the following four statements were chosen: *I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class; It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English language class; During my English language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course; I feel more tense and nervous in my English language class than in my other classes.* Test anxiety is best examined using the following statements: *I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in my English language class; In my English language class, I get so nervous I forget things I know; Even if I am well prepared for my English language class, I feel anxious about it.* The three last statements fall into the category of fear of negative evaluation: *I keep thinking that other students are better at languages than I am; I often feel like not going to my English language class; I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.* The statements of the FLA questionnaire were given in both languages - English and Estonian. The students were asked to write down the first

thoughts they had when reading these statements. The responses of the four respondents were transcribed (see Appendix 4). In order to ensure anonymity, the respondents have been named St1, St2, St3 and St4.

After completing the questionnaire, the students were individually proposed to participate in a further study that consisted of creating nine vlogs during the first period of the 2019/20 academic year (September 3 - November 15), and give feedback to the other girls that also participated in the study. The main goal of using vlogging was to see if it can reduce the students' anxiety level, for example speaking up in the classroom as well as give them an opportunity to describe their emotions and receive feedback from the teacher and three groupmates. The latter activities were scheduled to take place in the optional subject classes twice a week.

Based on the FLA questionnaire answers, it was determined that all four students participating in the present study experienced high or very high FLA. These inferences coincided with the students' own assessments of the intensity of their anxiety. The anxiety was especially intense in the areas that comprised fear of negative evaluation and CA. After the completion of the questionnaire and analysis of the answers, the students agreed to participate in the further study, using vlogs during a longer period of time and being interviewed. A semi-structured pre-vlogging interview composed of fifteen questions (see Appendix 5) was used, in order to map their fears and self-perceptions in more detail. The interview questions were devised on the basis of the statements of the FLA questionnaire and their purpose was to give the participants an opportunity to explain their claims orally in more detail. The questionnaires and interviews were conducted at the very beginning of the academic year (September 2019) and I did not have a chance to start creating a closer relationship with the students. Therefore, the fact that the FLA questionnaire statements and the pre-vlogging interview questions were very similar and were asked by me in a

comfortable and relaxing atmosphere, helped the students open up and talk about the reasons for their fears and anxieties. The last three pre-vlogging interview questions focused on the participants' relationships with their former English teachers, their expectations of the new English language teacher and experience with vlogging. With the approval of the students, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The interview questions were asked in English, but most of the interviews were carried out in Estonian for the sake of mutual comprehension and were later translated into English by me. The interviews lasted approximately 35-40 minutes.

After completing the pre-vlogging interviews, the task of vlogging was assigned for the four students participating in the study. The topics the students had to address during the period were optional, so every student could choose their favourite field to discuss. However, the very first vlog in the first week of September was on an assigned topic *My hopes and expectations at the beginning of the school year*. The approximate duration of a vlog was agreed to be three minutes and the students had to upload it to Google Drive (visible only to me and the four participants). The four participants that comprised the sample of the study were asked, and they agreed, to comment on each other's vlogs. The second appraisal of their anxiety level, based on the teacher's observations and filling in the FLA questionnaire again, was carried out in January 2020. The four students were aware of my study and understood the need to use their interviews and questionnaire answers. Before asking to fill in the questionnaires for the first time, I created a participation form where I promised to keep all the vlogs and comments private and not to make them available or visible to anyone (see Appendix 3). They knew also that my study would use the material provided by the students anonymously.

2.2. The analysis of the study and its results

2.2.1. The results of the FLA questionnaire

As mentioned above, the FLA questionnaire consisted of 10 statements about the perceived anxiety level and emotions regarding the participation in EFL classes, which can be grouped into four most anxiety-prone themes based on the answers/comments by the participants.

The first theme based group includes physical symptoms the students experienced when they knew they were going to be called on in their EFL classes. The physical symptoms described by the respondents include: trembling, feeling sick, hand tremors, ringing in ears (whining and buzzing), palpitations and flushing. Three of the four participants described such physical symptoms when they needed to speak in English or perform in front of an entire class. Physical symptoms are not mentioned in the overview of language anxiety by MacIntyre (2017, see pg. 14, 15), but the fact that they were mentioned by all four participants demonstrates their important role in describing the effects of language anxiety.

The second theme focuses on emotional symptoms that were described by all four participants: feeling like crying, inability to concentrate on the lesson, general feeling of being unwell and unsure of themselves, extreme nervousness, thoughts of being miserable, inability to switch to more pleasant thoughts, feeling blank.

The third sub-category consists of the descriptions expressing the fear of being ridiculed by their peers. One participant (St1) thought that her companions' laughter was due to her poor command of English. Three of the four participants had previously experienced classmates' laughter when they spoke English, and only one participant (St4) found that other students' attitudes had no direct relation to her anxiety. Such fear of being ridiculed can be linked with the social causes for language anxiety brought out by MacIntyre (2017, see pg. 14).

The fourth sub-category consists of the participants' description of avoidance behavior: not appearing in EFL class, inability (or refusal) to speak in the classroom, occasional inability to listen to the teacher, concentration solely on one's anxiety. All four participants admitted having experienced avoidance behaviour, either intentionally (skipping EFL classes) or unintentionally ("*Sometimes I can't listen to her [the teacher], don't know why.*" (St 4)). That could be linked with the cognitive effects of FLA described by MacIntyre (2017, see pg. 15), as aforementioned self-related cognitions at the input stage of the language learning process hamper significantly students' performance in the classroom.

2.3. The results and analysis of the pre-vlogging interviews

While the results of the FLA questionnaire gave a general overview of the thoughts and feelings connected to FLA among the upper secondary school students, the pre-vlogging interviews (Appendix 5) added more specific details, examples and descriptions related to their fears and/or behaviors during the English language classes as well as reflected their thoughts on vlogging. The analysis of the answers is my interpretation and for the sake of objectivity the utterances are translated and transcribed as precisely as possible.

The students' answers are given in italics. The following symbols have been used:

(.) - short pause

... - a noticeable pause

/.../ - the text of the interviewee has been shortened

[] - the interviewer's note

Underlined parts – my highlight.

2.3.1. Students' thoughts about their previous English language classes

The students described their feelings about their previous secondary school English language classes as twofold. Mostly, they had liked the language (class) itself, but a constant worry of being asked to give an opinion or participate in verbal activities made it a rather painful experience.

The triggers of anxiety can be broadly grouped in two according to the participants' answers: people-related (being judged by the teacher and peers) and fear-related (fear of making mistakes and fear of speaking). In the following I will elaborate on the answers of the participants by bringing examples of their utterances concerning FLA regarding their previous experiences in EFL classes.

Two interviewees (St1, St2) found that their previous negative experiences connected to EFL teachers' and peers' reactions and/or attitudes were one of the main reasons why they were so apprehensive about their EFL classes in upper secondary school. It can be associated with the list of social causes - fear of being laughed at and embarrassment - pointed out by MacIntyre (2017, see pg. 14). It was obvious that talking about the experience was difficult for them - both students avoided eye contact with the interviewer and paused often during the interviews. Before the interviews they also mentioned that it was uneasy for them to formulate these feelings, regardless of the fact that the interviews were conducted in Estonian.

St2: *"There were ... how to say it ... the moments ... where I felt like drowning. I don't know why I was so afraid of speaking ... maybe because of my previous experience in fifth grade when I had a very bad pronunciation and everybody laughed at me ... even the teacher. It really happened ... she kind of ... tried to hold it back but I saw that she found it funny."*

St2: *"I think my teacher felt sorry for me because she gave me good grades or praise /.../, even if I didn't speak and didn't do presentations. I hate to be pitied!"*

St4: *"My teacher was ok, I guess, although she didn't understand why I don't want to say anything. But after our class-teacher talked to my English teacher (,) she kind of understood*

and let me do all works in written form. That was a blessing, really. My mother talked to my class teacher and she knew that I was shy ... very shy in English.”

The students' interviews show the reasons for their fears - they were afraid to speak English because they had experienced the ridicule and misunderstanding that came from both their peers and their teacher. It is also clear that they tried to avoid speaking English at all costs with the help of parents and the class teacher; both the parent and the teacher were ready to help the student but due to incompetence or some other reason, these things did not work out as they could and rather created the feeling of hopelessness in the student. The previous examples also show the presence of physical symptoms of anxiety.

All the participants found that the most difficult in-class tasks had been oral presentations on books or films, and these had caused a considerable number of unpleasant and painful memories. They described trembling (St1, St2) and losing their voice (St2) when standing in front of their EFL classroom, also almost constant thoughts of skipping the classes or just being absent from school all day - the clear examples of avoidance behaviour.

St3: *“Yes, it happened sometimes [that I skipped classes]. I told my mom that I couldn't possibly go to school and she understood ... wrote a note of absence. It was such a relief!”*

Although the role of the teacher was described as important, the students did not talk about them much. They were more focused on their own experience and the reaction of their classmates. Three in four students (St1, St2, St3) were certain that their previous classmates had laughed at them - even if they did not do so in the class, the respondents harboured the feeling that they must have done it outside of it.

A positive aspect brought out in interviews was that the participants considered themselves efficient students and estimated their English language skills as averagely good.

St3: *“I know I am not bad at it [English language] ... because I could understand much more than some other student in our class who was considered pretty good. But since I didn't talk much ... or didn't talk at all, to be honest ... nobody knew. Sometimes I felt really frustrated about it.”*

St1: *"I don't think I was particularly good at English but it was because of my fear of talking. If you don't do dialogues or freeze up every time you have to say something, nobody doesn't believe that you are actually smart."*

St3 was frustrated about the inability to talk in public as well as the ensuing opinion of the peers. There was a strong contradiction between the existence of knowledge and the inability to express it, which created a negative self-image in students and highlighted FLA cognitive effects such as increased self-related cognitions (thoughts of failure, performance worry, self-deprecating thoughts) (MacIntyre 2017, see pg. 14). St1 recognizes the connection between developing oral skills and a high level of performance in English. She realizes that her inability to communicate with others on the same level of English made others realize that her skills were not good enough.

2.3.2. Students' first reactions to the vlogging task

First, I described the process of vlogging to the students and pointed out the importance of being consistent in making them. The students found the idea of presenting their thoughts in the form of visual media slightly challenging but at the same time, they expressed their excitement and hope for more self-confidence:

St1: *"./.../ well, I don't know, if you promise that nobody won't see them then ok, I may do that ... but at first, I make many mistakes because I make them [mistakes] when I am nervous. But if you [the teacher] say that it [vlogging] may help me to be more brave, then of course I give it a try."*

St2: *"Since I have to take two optional subjects in this period, I may as well take this one. ./.../ but I don't know about the comment part I don't know the other participants and maybe they will find too many mistakes ./.../ I wouldn't like it. So, if you [the teacher] agree to remove the nastiest ones, then maybe ... yes, I can do it."*

St3: *"I like watching bloggers and vloggers on the Internet and I had actually thought about starting to create a vlog ./.../ of course, it was purely hypothetical thought because I never thought I could actually do something like this ./.../ I am not sure about this commenting part but I hope my classmates-to-be will be kind to me."*

St4: *If you [the teacher] say that I have to do some presentation at the end of the period ... and that I have to be in front of the classroom ... So, I will die anyway and there won't be much difference if I do this [vlogging] or not ./.../ yes, I will do it."*

While St1, St2 and St3 showed insecurity in their statements (blaming, making mistakes on nervousness, not being sure about parts of the process, expressing concern about peer feedback) then St4 can be perceived as pronouncedly desperate (I will die anyway=I will fail anyway). St1, St2, St3 concerns about their classmates' comments are derived from their previous experience; the new vlogging task was perceived as a potential threat to their hard-won security (written assignments, permission not to speak in front of the class) that they had hoped could continue in the upper secondary school. St4 seemed to be a perfection-prone student that needed constant positive feedback from the teacher. However, she did not ask extra permission not to do certain tasks in the classroom and therefore, it may be considered as an attempt to step out of her comfort zone and start fighting against her FLA. This shows, in addition to their test results, that the anxiety levels of the students were high indeed. We also discussed the form of presenting the vlogs and their participation in commenting on each other's vlogs. The latter was the biggest obstacle for the students because their fear of negative evaluations started to emerge at once.

After interviewing the students separately, I proposed to come together and have an introduction session - to get more acquainted with each other (since it was a start of the school year and the students did not know each other well) and discuss the effects of seeing each other's vlogs and commenting on them. In the first session, I did not want to pay too much attention to talk about their fears and anxiety, but to promote the positive encouragement that they will perform well and everybody will be kind to each other. I explained the meaning of constructive criticism and emphasized the importance of being supportive and tolerant.

2.4. The process of vlogging

2.4.1. The procedure of making vlog entries and commenting on other students' vlogs

In September 2019, the four students participating in the study created four vlogs (one vlog task for each week) and uploaded them to Google Drive. The topic of the first vlog was chosen by the teacher: *My hopes and expectations at the beginning of the school year.*

Although the participants could choose the topics for their following vlogs, the chosen topics were similar to the first compulsory one - a new school, new teachers and unusually long lessons (70 minutes). The first comments under the vlogs by other participants in the study were short and positive (*Great vlog! Super! You are so brave!*). In the fourth week, comments became longer and more meaningful (it happened without the teacher's initiative): St2: *You did well but maybe you should look directly at the camera because your voice was lost.* St3: *I liked your vlog but it was too short - I would like to know more about your emotions;* they also contained recommendations and suggestions: St1: *You may consider a more suitable place for vlogging because you seemed to feel uncomfortable in the front of the mirror.*

The October vlogs were more distinctive; two students (St1, St4) focused on their recent successes and shortcomings in various lessons (not only in EFL classes) and vlogging seemed to be a good way to ventilate their emotions and draw comfort from the positive comments the other students gave them. The third participant (St2) concentrated mainly on her recreational activities and the fourth student talked about her family and their daily routines (St3). The comments on vlogs were mostly short and encouraging. In one of our weekly lessons, we discussed the possibility to write longer comments, but it seemed that succinct comments suited the students better; creating vlogs was already a time-consuming extra activity and the requirement to add longer comments could have significantly dampened their enthusiasm. The comments show the employment of techniques of

constructive criticism, where first something positive and encouraging is pointed out and suggestions follow.

At this stage, my role as a teacher was more supportive than coordinating; I decided to give the participants as much freedom as possible. We did not talk about the subject of vlogging during our regular classes and the students found this arrangement satisfying; it was, according to St2, “*our private business that others did not need to know.*” At the same time, I felt that my virtual presence via comments was important to the participants and they pondered every phrase and word I wrote. We saw each other four times a week - during our regular classes (two times a week) and optional subject classes (also two times a week); the optional subject lessons gave the students excellent opportunity to express their thoughts and doubts, discuss different topics and ventilate their emotions. The cohesiveness of our small group (me as a teacher and four participants) grew fast during these ten weeks and the students got accustomed to discussing their positive and negative emotions on vlogging with me. It was important to the participants that they could come to me and share their feelings.

On November 15, the participants uploaded their last vlog and we agreed to conduct longer interviews in December where the students can analyze their experience of vlogging and assess their confidence in speaking in their EFL lessons. After uploading the last vlog entry I asked the students to write a comment that would summarize the whole process of vlogging. All four participants wrote that although at first it seemed as though they had nothing to contribute and at first sight they were terribly embarrassed to look at their entries, after a few weeks vlogging became a habit and even a pleasure (St1, St3). It was also admitted that it was interesting to wait for and read peer comments and compliments (St1, St2, St3, St4). The post-vlogging interviews (see Appendix 6 for the questions) were conducted over one week (16-19 December 2019) and are summarized and analysed below.

The interviews were carried out in Estonian and the examples of the answers given by the students have been written in italics.

2.5. Post-vlogging interview and questionnaire

2.5.1. The summary of the post-vlogging interviews

At the beginning of the post-vlogging interview, I asked the students to describe their feelings during the vlogging process and remember the positive and negative emotions of doing the task. Three in four students (St1, St2, St3) described the experience mostly positively due to the supportive feedback of the first weeks; they admitted that the groupmates' encouraging comments made them feel more confident and therefore they tried to use a little more complex vocabulary. This shows the importance of peer assessment - if the peers are positive, a previously negative experience can be resolved or even turned around. One participant (St4) admitted that she felt significant insecurity until the last week because she constantly compared herself to the other participants and found that her performance was poorer: *"I don't know ... I felt kind of ... okay when doing it [vlogging] but when I had to listen to others ... they just seemed so free and relaxed compared to me."*

All four participants agreed that vlogging forced them to focus fully on the task. St4: *"Well, the thing that I had to speak English for five minutes every week (,) it wouldn't have been that difficult for me, but knowing that others would be watching made it difficult ... yes ... and it was also a bit ... interesting what they think about my performance."* St3: *"It was actually really exciting to do it because sometimes I was surprised at how much I could talk."* St2: *"I liked receiving praise from the teacher and reading her supportive comments - because no English teacher has ever praised me."* As for negative moments, the respondents mentioned the fear of negative comments from both the teacher and the peers, especially regarding the pronunciation. St2: *"I actually thought that they couldn't understand some words ..."* St4: *"Well, I thought the teacher might still say that I did nicely, but what about*

others ... I wasn't always so sure." One student (St3) also pointed out that she found it difficult to find a place and time to do the task at home because of their large family and lack of space.

The second question focused on the current situation and examined whether the participants now feel more confident in their EFL class. Three out of four students (St1, St2, St3) said they felt more confident. St3: *"I know now that my pronunciation is not that bad, and in fact, no one said for two months they didn't understand me."* St2: *"I just used to speak more English and it wasn't so awful to talk in the classroom anymore, especially considering the fact that there were some students with whom we did that (the task of vlogging) together."* St1: *"Yeah, I feel more confident, I can't quite say why, but I know that at least the teacher supports me."* One student found that her fear of speaking in the EFL class had not diminished. St4: *"Because of the fact that I speak to myself is not the same as it would be in front of others."* Speaking of specific things that had changed after vlogging, the following was pointed out: there is no more fear or panic when the teacher turns to them (St1, St2, St3), more courage to talk to others in English (all four students), a deeper understanding of the importance of learning grammar. St2: *"It was funny that after revising the future tenses in our English class, I used it in the vlog four times in a row and did it correctly!"* Two participants (St1, St3) mentioned that they feel more confident about their pronunciation.

All participants confirmed that their English language skills had improved, but this was not only due to vlogging but also due to general studies. Three out of four students (St1, St2, St3) found that their confidence in speaking English had increased and two of the students (St1, St2) found that they now realized that other students' English skills were not better than theirs. Two students (St3, St4) still believed that the others were better than them.

St4: *“Not as much in grammar as in speaking, but I still think so much and then I lose sight of it and then I start to think how crap I am and all that...”*.

Three out of four students (St1, St2, St3) concluded that their anxiety had decreased. According to their answers, they were feeling more relaxed and the EFL classes did not seem so frightening anymore. St2: *“I can think of other things too (during the EFL classes) and I am not afraid of being made fun of.”* St1: *“It is not my favorite lesson, but I come and sit there and not afraid of starting vomiting or anything like that.”* St3: *“I feel generally not as anxious as I felt at first, can't really tell why but just don't.”* The three participants (St1, St2, St3) found that they started to become more confident in about the fifth week after we had talked about self-confidence and how accepted it was to make mistakes when speaking in any foreign language. St4: *“Although, I wouldn't mind of being perfect in English!”*

Three out of four students (St1, St2, St3) said they would recommend vlogging to others and that this optional course could be on the list again next year. St2: *“Actually, this is a very good way to get rid of fear.”* St3: *“The teacher is so supportive and we just had such a nice group and it was so great how we supported each other.”* St1: *“Actually a very good thing to do in terms of practicing pronunciation and courage.”* What is more, the role of a supportive teacher can also be elicited from these answers.

In conclusion, three out of four students rated their experience of vlogging as positive and found that their courage to speak has increased and anxiety decreased. One participant felt that her English language anxiety remained at the same level and that vlogging had no effect on it.

2.5.2. The analysis of the post-vlogging interviews

The interviews were conducted in a supportive and friendly atmosphere (in the school lounge) and all the participants found that they were able to express their thoughts and emotions without fear of being judged (by their teacher). Although it could easily be

seen that describing their own dreads and delving into them was not an easy task for the participants. From pre-vlogging interviews, two potential sources of anxiety about vlogging can be highlighted. First, the students' biggest dread was the fear of making mistakes and the inability to be fluent when speaking. Second, two participants pointed out that in previous years they had been ridiculed for their English language skills (mostly for pronunciation), so it was obvious that their first thought was the fear of negative evaluation and also of receiving negative comments. All four participants expressed the possible discomfort with watching their own presentation and listening to their voices but at the same time, they were excited and ready to take up the challenge.

The role of the teacher was viewed in two ways. First, it was perceived to be supportive and helpful. The students expressed the hope that she would remove the most negative comments and therefore can spare them feeling humiliated. The students (St4, St3) who perceived their previous English teacher(s) to be supportive and understanding (by allowing them to perform tasks in written form, or not asking them to speak in the front of the class), expressed the bigger trust in teacher than the two students (St1, St2) who perceived their previous teachers to be more strict or unable to hide their emotions. It was also perceivable that the students were afraid that the teacher would see their poor language skills and that they might be accused of making mistakes.

In the post-vlogging interviews, I noted that the participants were more confident, used longer sentences when describing their emotions and were able to keep good eye contact. This was probably due to the closer relationship and mutual trust between the students and the teacher which may not have existed at the time of the pre-vlogging interview.

In the answers of the first two questions (Q 1-2), all four students confirmed that the encouraging and supportive feedback from the teacher, especially during the first weeks of

vlogging, was very important to them and made the uploading of new vlogs much less fearful. However, one participant (St4) stated that albeit it was nice to feel supported by the teacher, there was nothing commendable about her vlogs and that the teacher simply wanted her not to give up. Based on the student's excellent period grades and good grammar knowledge such self-assessment was slightly surprising and is indicative of low self-esteem.

Q 3-6 focused on the students' self-assessment; the purpose of the questions was to find out how language learners evaluate their English language skills compared to the pre-vlogging period. Three in the four participants agreed that they felt more confident in their English language skills after the vlogging process was over; the need to speak more in English and to think about the vlogging-related topics and vocabulary made the English language a part of everyday life. The participants admitted that they created much more vlogs than uploaded. In response to the author's question as to why they did this, it was told that they wanted to make sure that they upload the best version for others to see. In the sixth question, students were asked to rate whether their classmates were better English speakers than them. Two participants (St1, St3) thought that some classmates might be, but generally, all students considered themselves equal to others.

The aim of question 7 was to find out how participants themselves rate their level of anxiety and whether it has decreased compared to the pre-vlogging period. Three of four participants (St1, St2, St3) stated that their verbal expression had improved and therefore they felt less anxious and more confident in speaking in front of others. In response to question 8, three out of four students (St1, St2, St3) said they would recommend vlogging to others as a useful tool for overcoming difficulties in speaking the English language.

2.5.3. The results and summary of the post-evaluation FLA questionnaire

In January 2020, participants were asked to complete the FLA questionnaire (see Appendix 6) a second time and assess their anxiety level (after a two month period). The

compilation of the questionnaire after a two-months-period was important in order to assess whether the positive changes caused by vlogging have remained the same.

It is noticeable that the three in four students (St1, St2, St3) reported their anxiety has decreased and they feel more confident when attending English classes and doing verbal activities. One student (St4) admitted that she was feeling better (compared to the time when the pre-vlogging FLA questionnaire was completed), but the nervousness and anxiety were still there. As is apparent from the results of the post-vlogging FLA questionnaire, it is quite obvious that unrealistic beliefs held by learners themselves can lead to greater anxiety and frustration. For example, if a student believes that pronunciation is the single most important aspect of English language learning, they will naturally get frustrated to find the reality of their imperfect speech even after much practice. In this sense, a learner's strong beliefs can also play a major role in creating the English language learning anxiety in students.

It can be assumed that the participants of the study grew in terms of oral competence and presentation skills because vlogging provided them with opportunities to listen to their own language and revise and record their vlogs for several times. The students admitted that they created quite many drafts before submitting their best version and therefore, the number of actual vlogs the participants created is much bigger than the nine that were uploaded.

FLA can be influenced by many different factors, many of which are connected to individual psychology and therefore are not easily convertible. However, the teacher's role and the teachers' beliefs about language teaching in the classroom cannot be overlooked, as they have the potential to reduce anxiety in students by being sensitive to their individual differences.

One of the main concerns for the foreign language teacher in the classroom is to ensure that the tasks they give are understandable and manageable for students. The students have to understand the instructions and have sufficient lexis to fulfill the task. The teacher

should discuss the role of mistakes and give students confidence that they will develop through making mistakes while using the target language. The feedback to errors should be constructive and supportive. The students found written feedback interesting and useful; they admitted that the first weeks' fear for negative evaluations made them insecure and apprehensive about comments, but the encouraging remarks from peers and the teacher gave them a lot of confidence. The positive and encouraging way of giving feedback was mentioned as crucial by the participants in the study. The students also mentioned that they liked the compulsory topic more than the free topics because "*I feel much more confident when I know on what I have to talk.*" (St3). Since the compulsory topic was connected to the new school year, most of September vlogs were made on the topic of a new school. The teacher's role was to explain that part of being a fluent speaker also means to be creative. Spontaneous speaking is difficult for anxious students and therefore it is a teachers' task to discuss the students' uneasiness and hesitation, encourage them to reveal their fears and worries and finally give them encouragement that they will be able to perform well ("*The teacher supports me and I like that.*" (St1)). During the course, the teacher was aware that the participants constantly compared their vlogs to these of other students and often found their performances less attractive or sophisticated. During the optional subject classes, the teacher initiated discussions about the students' perceptions and feelings about their performances. At first, these discussions were awkward and reluctant but, over time, they became more open. According to one participant (St2), "*It was good that we talked about this ... After these discussions, I didn't feel like competing with others anymore.*"

Before the course, I familiarized myself with the background of the students in order to support them during the vlogging period and understand the possible reasons for their foreign language anxiety. The effects of a friendly and open communication between the students and the teacher were obvious during the post-vlogging interviews. The students

admitted being slightly anxious, but remained to keep a good eye-contact and relaxed body language.

DISCUSSION

The results of the study confirm that the students admit a significant reduction in their verbal anxiety when participating in their EFL classes. This result is consistent with the previous research (Cong-Lem 2018; Hung 2011), where the participants pointed out that vlogging had reduced their foreign language anxiety.

All four students who participated in the study state that despite their initial discomfort and nervousness, the process of vlogging and participating in the optional subject course gave them much confidence in oral performance in their EFL classes. The change is also observed through the responses to the FLA questionnaire statements. The initially described reasons for students' FLA were similar to those stated by Marvan (2007) and Drakulic (2015) who found that a lack of confidence and fear of “losing face”, alongside the fear of negative evaluation were the primary causes of FLA.

The responses to the first group of statements that are selected to study the CA of the participants reveal that because their FLA is reduced, they contribute more to their EFL lessons and understand more of what the teacher and the classmates say in the classroom. While completing the FLA questionnaire for the first time in September, it could be seen that the one of the most common fears of the students was CA, i.e. speaking in front of other students, the post-vlogging FLA questionnaire completed in January shows that this fear has been significantly alleviated. The students confirm that they still do not consider themselves great communicators in the English language class, but it is very important to note that all four participants feel much more courageous and no longer (almost at all) experience the physical symptoms initially mentioned when speaking in class. Giving presentations in front of the classroom caused great problems for the students in September, and also in January, one student mentioned that her hands were shaking when she spoke in front of the class, although in the normal class situation these symptoms no longer occur. This coincides with

the findings of Williams and Andrade (2008) and Suleimenova (2012) that speaking in front of classmates is one of the biggest sources of anxiety. It is important to note that while three in four students express satisfaction that their speaking and presentation skills are improved, one student (St4) feels that her pronunciation is still poor and that although the situation has improved, she feels insecure and nervous in the English language class. As a teacher, I see how her high demands on herself do not allow her to notice the progress, and even the application for perfection in the smallest activities interferes with her objective assessment. This constant self-monitoring coincides with academic causes of a students' unrealistic beliefs about herself listed by MacIntyre's (2017, see pg. 14) and her all-or-nothing attitude. In terms of the objectivity of the study, I let St4 perform the task on the same basis as others and did not offer her extra support, but on the other hand, perhaps more personal feedback and constant reference to her positive development would have helped her to see her progress better. The student's avoidance behavior and fear of acknowledging her success — which I, as a teacher, can clearly notice — are consistent with one of the cognitive causes listed in the MacIntyre's list (see pg. 14): fear of losing one's sense of identity (see pg. 14, 15). Low self-esteem, which is also on the MacIntyre's list of cognitive causes, can be attributed to all four participants, as can the fear of being laughed at, embarrassed, and making a fool of oneself. Low self-esteem also plays a major role in test anxiety, which was another criterion for selecting the statements. In the first period of the academic year 2019/20, I took many oral tests and in September the students' fear and anxiety were evident, as were the physical symptoms of anxiety. It is therefore important to note that the oral mid-term-exam in November no longer caused physical fear reactions such as trembling and crying. In my opinion as a teacher, this is a clear example of how weekly vlogging and uploading them for their classmates and teachers to see has the effect of lowering students' anxiety and improving presentation.

The biggest improvement occurs in the third category, which is the fear of negative evaluation. While in September all the students were afraid that they would be laughed at by their classmates and, in the opinion of some students, by the teacher, in January everyone confirms that no one would laugh at them and they feel that their teacher supports them. This is linked to Comas-Quinn et al (2009) claim that teachers need to encourage students in the vlogging process, as well as support them throughout their way and be available for extra guidance and reassurance to reduce learners' anxieties.

As the EFL teacher of the students, I have conducted a post-performance assessment in every EFL lesson during December-May and I see that the participants of the study have developed in terms of speaking proficiency and presentation skills; they also are more fluent and more confident when performing verbal activities. Watching and commenting on one another's vlogs has improved the participants' self-assessment and communication skills when participating in EFL lessons' activities. Creating vlogs helps the students to think about their pronunciation, analysing their drafts and/or final versions gives an opportunity to more reliably assess their successes or shortcomings. The vlogging process was extremely useful also for me as their teacher, as it showed me more clearly how I should guide the students to improve their pronunciation and presentation skills.

The teacher should be aware of their students' beliefs about themselves, the language learning process and possible outcomes. All students participating in the present study agree that there is a significant difference between an optional subject class and ordinary EFL classes; the main difference is scoring. The students were not graded for making vlogs and writing comments and this gave them many possibilities to express themselves without another reason for anxiety and without the fear of making mistakes and being punished for them.

What is more, this study would have been different if I had previously taught these students and been familiar with their characteristics and learning techniques, as well as the way they communicated and what kind of support they needed.

CONCLUSION

The present thesis set out to investigate the issues connected to foreign language anxiety (FLA) and vlogging as a tool to reduce it. The topic stemmed from my previous experience as a student counsellor and EFL teacher and the need to find an easily implemented tool to help students to overcome their anxiety of speaking when participating in EFL classes.

In the introduction of this thesis, the importance of speaking in EFL classrooms is discussed and connected to the need for the development of communication competence referred to in the Estonian National Curriculum for upper secondary schools. The introduction also gives a short overview of foreign language anxiety that is estimated to be one of the most widely studied emotions that hampers successful foreign language learning; the introduction includes the importance of mastering communication competence and introduces vlogging as a possible tool to reduce students' FLA.

The first chapter gives an overview of the importance of oral communication in EFL classroom, discusses and summarises the ideas found in the literature on FLA and introduces the FLCAS questionnaire that has been widely used in research on FLA for more than thirty years. The chapter concludes with a discussion of vlogging and the researches that have been carried out to study how effective the method is in order to reduce students' FLA.

The second chapter discusses the methodology of the study conducted by me, introduces the FLA questionnaire and explains the reasons for choosing the statements for the modified questionnaire and the following interviews. The selection of statements was based on their compliance with the three performance anxieties that are closely intertwined with FLA - communication apprehension (CA), test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Four upper secondary school students whose anxiety was rated high or very high according to the FLA questionnaire participated in an optional subject course on vlogging and were

later interviewed about their experience and the outcome. The students' answers are categorized and the results of the pre-vlogging questionnaire and the pre-vlogging interview are analysed. The description of the optional subject course gives a detailed overview of the process of vlogging, introduces the participants and their previous experiences and related emotions about EFL classes and their English teachers. According to the analysis of the pre-vlogging questionnaire and interview, it may be said that the main reasons for the students' FLA were fear of being laughed at by their classmates and the teacher, fear of making mistakes when speaking in the EFL classroom and the lack of self-confidence. The pre-vlogging and post-vlogging interviews show the improvement of the students' self-confidence during the vlogging process and emphasize the importance of the supportive role of the teacher. It is also noted that the feedback the students' received from each other helped them improve their presentation skills and concentrate on the positive sides of speaking. While three out of four students are satisfied with their progress and rate the vlogging experience as highly useful in terms of improving their speaking confidence and presentation skills, one participant finds that although her speaking skills are improved, she is still nervous and apprehensive about oral expression in her EFL classes. The possible reasons for her insecurity and lack of self-estimated progress are given and analysed.

Although the study revealed that the students have a positive attitude to vlogging, it is obvious that the small scale research cannot provide reliable data to prove the usefulness of vlogging for reducing FLA. However, in the light of the results of this study, teachers can employ different assignments appealing to smartphone-prone students to decrease their anxiety level when speaking English or some other foreign language. Teachers' approaches and attitudes to teaching are also a decisive component in making students become anxious or not in their EFL classes. Future similar studies with a larger sample or different age groups

of students will be useful to provide a better understanding of FLA as well as the usefulness of vlogging as a tool for reducing foreign language anxiety.

REFERENCES

- Burns, Anne and Stephanie Claire. 2003. *Clearly speaking Pronunciation in action for teachers*. Available at: http://www.ameprc.mq.edu.au/docs/research_reports/Clearly_Speaking.pdf?, accessed February 25, 2020.
- Boudreau, Carmen, Peter D. MacIntyre and Jean-Marc Dewaele. 2018. Enjoyment and anxiety in second language communication: An idiodynamic approach. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, SSLT 8 (1), 2018, 149-170. Available at: <https://eprints.bbk.ac.uk/25472/>, accessed December 12, 2019.
- Comas-Quinn, Anna, Raquel Mardomingo and Chris Valentine. 2009. Mobile blogs in language learning: making the most of informal and situated learning opportunities. *ReCALL* 21 (1), 96-112. Available at: http://people.kmi.open.ac.uk/chris/publications/ReCALL_MALL_2008.pdf, accessed November 13, 2019.
- Combre, Christelle and Tatiana Codreanu. 2016. Vlogging: a new channel for language learning and intercultural exchanges. *CALL communities and culture -short papers from EUROCALL 2016* (119-124). Research-publishing.net. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED572023.pdf>, accessed November 13, 2019.
- Cong-Lem, Ngo. 2018. Web-Based Language Learning (WBLL) for Enhancing L2 Speaking Performance: A Review. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 9.4, 143-152. Available at: <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3f7c/3270ee29ad0d2828bdd0b91277ca2c4b5484.pdf>, accessed November 13, 2019.
- Çağatay, Sibel. 2015. Examining EFL students' foreign language speaking anxiety: The case at a Turkish state university. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 199, 648-656. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0914508713002359>, accessed November 12, 2019.
- Dewaele, Jean-Mark and Taghreed M. Al-Saraj. 2015. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety of Arab learners of English: The effect of personality, linguistic and sociobiographical variables. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching Department of English Studies*, SSLT 5(2), 205-228. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1134878.pdf>, accessed November 15, 2019.
- Drakulić, Morana. 2015. The 'unforgettable experience of foreign language anxiety'. *The Journal of Education, Culture, and Society*, (1), 120-128. Available at: books?hl=en&lr=&id=Zy9cCgAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA120&ots=~SKbXoEj3k&si, accessed January 23, 2020.
- Fraser, Helen. 2000. Coordinating improvements in pronunciation teaching for adult learners of English as a second language. *DETYA (ANTA Innovative project)*.

Available at:

<https://helenfraser.com.au/wp-content/uploads/ANTA-REPORT-FINAL.pdf>,
accessed November 14, 2019.

Harmer, Jeremy. 2015. *The practice of English language teaching*. Harlow, Essex England

Heikkinen, Kalle. 2018. Teaching and assessing English pronunciation in the communicative classroom: A qualitative study about teaching and assessing English pronunciation as part of oral skills in the ninth grade in Sweden. Available at: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1176595/FULLTEXT01.pdf>,
accessed December 1, 2019.

Holbrook, Hilary Taylor. 1987. Communication Apprehension: The Quiet Student in Your Classroom. *ERIC Digest*. Available at:
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED284315.pdf>,
accessed December 2, 2019.

Horwitz, Elaine K. 1988. The beliefs about language learning of beginning university foreign language students. *The modern language journal* 72.3: 283-294. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1988.tb04190.x>,
accessed November 26, 2019.

Horwitz, Elaine K. 2010. Foreign and second language anxiety. *Language Teaching* 43.2: 154-167. Available at:
<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/language-teaching/article/>
accessed November 22, 2019.

Horwitz, Elaine K., Michael B. Horwitz and Joann Cope. 1986. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The modern language journal*, 70:2, 125-132. Available at:
<https://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/research/groups/lacqueys/readings/horowitz.pdf>,
accessed November 13, 2019.

Hsu, Hsiu-Chen. 2016. Voice blogging and L2 speaking performance. *Computer Assisted Language learning* 29.5: 968-986. Available at:
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09588221.2015.1113185>

Hung, Shao-Ting. 2011. Pedagogical Applications of Vlogs: An investigation into ESP learners' perceptions. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 42.5 (2011): 736-746. Available at: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/14678535/42/5>, accessed November 19, 2019.

Jee, Min Jung. 2011. Web 2.0 Technology Meets Mobile Assisted Language Learning. *IALLT Journal of Language Learning Technologies*, Vol 41(1), 161-175. Available at: [Web 2.0 and mobiles.pdf](#), accessed November 12, 2019.

Kukulska-Hulme, Agnes Lucy Norris and Jim Donohue. 2015 *Mobile pedagogy for English language teaching: a guide for teachers*. British Council. Available at:
[Mobile pedagogy for ELT FINAL v2.pdf](#), accessed December 19, 2019.

- Liu, Ngar-Fun and David Carless. 2006. Peer feedback: the learning element of peer assessment. *Teaching in Higher education*, 11(3), 279-290. Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/37890778.pdf>, accessed December 18, 2019.
- MacIntyre, Peter D. 2017. An overview of language anxiety research and trends in its development. *New insights into language anxiety: Theory, research and educational implications*, 11-30. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/33688160/An_overview_of_language_anxiety_research_and_trends_in_its_development?auto=download, accessed March, 17, 2020.
- MacIntyre, Peter D., and Robert C. Gardner 1991. Investigating language class anxiety using the focused essay technique. *The Modern Language Journal* 75.3: 296-304. Available at: [Focused_Essay1991.pdf](#), accessed November 19, 2019.
- Marwan, Ardi. 2016. Investigating students' foreign language anxiety. *Malaysian Journal of ELT Research* 3.1: 19. Available at: <https://journals.melta.org.my/index.php/majer/article/viewFile/196/106>, accessed November 12, 2019.
- McCroskey, James C. 1977. Classroom consequences of communication apprehension. *Communication education* 26.1: 27-33. Available at: <http://www.jamescmccroskey.com/publications/073.pdf>, accessed November 15, 2019.
- Munro, Murray J., and Tracey M. Derwing. 2006. The functional load principle in ESL pronunciation instruction: An exploratory study. *System* 34: 520-531. Available at: j.system.2006.09.00420190204-551-xhndfh.pdf, accessed December 12, 2019.
- Naismith, Laura. Sharples, Mike. Vavoula, Giasemi. Lonsdale, Peter. 2004. *Literature review in mobile technologies and learning*. Available at: <https://telearn.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-00190143/document>, accessed January 20, 2020.
- National Curriculum for upper secondary schools. Riigi Teataja, 2011. Available at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/524092014009/consolide>
- Ohata, Kota. 2005. Language anxiety from the teacher's perspective: Interviews with seven experienced ESL/EFL teachers. *Journal of Language and Learning* 3.1: 133-155. Available at: [JLL--language anxiety.pdf](#), accessed January 20, 2020.
- Pragman, David. 2006. *Managing Performance Stress*. Routledge, United Kingdom. Available at: [Managing-Performance-Stress-Methods-2006-06-01](#), accessed November 12, 2019.
- Suleimenova, Ziash. 2012. Speaking anxiety in a Kazakhstani foreign language classroom. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93, 1860-1868. Available at: [2dd597ac88c8699fb3aa870bf541a802ed6d.pdf](#), accessed November 12, 2019.

- Tóth, Zsuzsa. 2008. A foreign language anxiety scale for Hungarian learners of English. *WoPaLP* 2.1: 55-77. Available at: [aa4050e23037da0ea48845be8ffc6df321b1.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1080/15393000801884588), accessed February 20, 2020.
- Tóth, Zsuzsa. 2011. Foreign language anxiety and advanced EFL learners: An interview study. *WoPaLP* 5: 39-57. Available at: [aa4050e23037da0ea48845be8ffc6df321b1.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1080/153930011058458845be8ffc6df321b1.pdf), accessed February 21, 2020.
- Walsh, Steve. 2002. Construction or obstruction: Teacher talk and learner involvement in the EFL classroom. *Language teaching research* 6.1: 3-23. Available at: [D5FA3E5A-A0B5-4090-BCD0-3A610F6304CC.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1080/104079102088458845be8ffc6df321b1.pdf), accessed November 26, 2019.
- Williams, Kenneth E., and Melvin R. Andrade. 2008. Foreign language learning anxiety in Japanese EFL university classes: Causes, coping, and locus of control. *Electronic journal of foreign language teaching* 5.2: 181-191. Available at: [Foreign Language Learning Anxiety in Japanese EFL](https://doi.org/10.1080/1539300080188458845be8ffc6df321b1.pdf), accessed November 27, 2019.
- Yashima, Tomoko, Lori Zenuk-Nishide, and Kazuaki Shimizu. 2004. The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language learning* 54.1: 119-152. Available at: [http://www.jimelwood.net/students/adv_english/yashima et al \(2004\).pdf](http://www.jimelwood.net/students/adv_english/yashima_et_al_(2004).pdf), accessed November 27, 2019.
- Yeh, Hui-Chin, Sheng-Shiang Tseng, and Yu-Sheng Chen. 2017. Using online peer feedback through Blogs to promote speaking performance. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society* 22.1: 1-14. Available at: http://140.125.168.120/journals/22_1/1.pdf, accessed January 22, 2020.
- Young, Eric H., and Rick E. West. 2018. Speaking practice outside the classroom: A literature review of asynchronous multimedia-based oral communication in language learning. *The EuroCALL Review* 26.1: 59-78. Available at: <https://riunet.upv.es/bitstream/handle/10251/116116/> accessed February 22, 2020.

APPENDIX 1 The table of participants of the study

Student	Communication apprehension	Test anxiety	Fear of negative evaluation	Perceived anxiety on the scale of 1-10 (by the student)
St 1	High fear of communication; extremely low self-esteem; hard to focus on the task on hand.	High test anxiety; cries a lot; negative self-talk; insufficient learning skills.	A lot of previous negative experiences when speaking English; grades are not important.	9
St 2	Learned helplessness, refusal to speak up in the classroom; low self-esteem.	High test anxiety; refuses to speak during oral tests.	Clings to previous neg. experiences; avoidance behaviour; grades are important.	10
St 3	Can talk in pairs, not in groups.	Hard-working but inconsistent; insufficient learning skills.	A people-pleaser, has many friends, sociable; grades are important; intelligent.	8
St 4	Highly anxious about her performance; strives for perfection.	Hard-working; skips classes when no prepared properly.	Constantly monitors her performance; grades are extremely important; not sociable, does not have friends in school; highly intelligent.	9

APPENDIX 2 The FLA questionnaire

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.
(Ma ei tunne end inglise keele tunnis rääkides kunagi enesekindlana).
2. I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in my English language class.
(Ma tunnen, kuidas hakkab värisema, kui pean inglise keele tunnis rääkima).
3. It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in the English language class. (Tunnen ärevust, kui ei saa õpetaja inglise keeles räägitud jutust aru).
4. During my English language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course. (Avastan end õppetöö ajal mõtlemast muudele asjadele).
5. I keep thinking that other students are better at languages than I am.
(Olen kindel, et mu klassikaaslased räägivad inglise keelt minust paremini).
6. In my English language class, I get so nervous I forget things I know. (Mu ärevus kasvab inglise keele tunnis nii suureks, et ma unustan ka neid asju, mida ma tean).
7. Even if I am well prepared for my English language class, I feel anxious about it. (Ma tunnen ärevust isegi siis, kui tean, et olen korralikult tunniks õppinud ja ette valmistunud).
8. I often feel like not going to my English language class.
(Tunnen tihti, et ei taha inglise keele tundi minna).
9. I feel more tense and nervous in my English language class than in my other classes.
(Tunnen, et olen inglise keele tunnis rohkem ärevil, kui teistes tundides).
10. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English. (Ma kardan, et klassikaaslased hakkavad naerma, kui ma inglise keeles räägin).

APPENDIX 3 PARTICIPATION FORM (Osalemisleping)

STUDENT (name and class) participates in the study
“Using vlogging for reducing anxiety in the EFL classroom” that is carried
 out in (the name of the school)by Ülle Laumets
 (an English teacher) in September-January 2019/2020.

All the vlogs created and uploaded by the student are for the teacher only to see
 and she has no right to share them with anyone.

A student

A teacher

Date:

APPENDIX 4 The results of the pre-vlogging FLA questionnaire (carried out in September 2019)

Statement 1: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.

St1: *I feel totally out of myself and feel like crying [during my EFL classes].*

St2: *I kind of don't talk at all, my previous teacher knew it and didn't ask me.*

St3: *[I] never feel sure!*

St4: *I feel so bad, I don't want to go there and be there.*

Statement 2: I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in my English language class.

St1: *Yes, I have felt trembling and sickness.*

St2: *I always tremble when I have to do dialogues.*

St3: *I feel like crying and I know that everybody laughs at me.*

St4: *My hands are shaking and my heart is pounding and my face is red.*

Statement 3: It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in my English language class.

St1: *I mostly do understand but sometimes I am so nervous I can't hear anything.*

St2: *I feel like there are voices in my head whining and buzzing.*

St3: *I understand her but I am afraid so much that I have to say something.*

St4: *Sometimes I can't listen to her, don't know why.*

Statement 4: During my English language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

St1: *I think of how miserable I am and why I can't be like others.*

St2: *Sometimes I just hope that it will be over soon.*

St3: *Yes, I try to think of pleasant things such as my friends and boyfriend. But mostly I can think nothing else but English grammar and grades.*

St4: *I read of a magazine that you have to think of pleasant things when nervous. I have tried it but I am not very good at it.*

Statement 5: I keep thinking that other students are better at languages than I am.

St1: *Yes, and they are! Everybody in my class knows more words than I do.*

St2: *In my previous class, some people were better than me in writing but of course, they are all better when it comes to speaking.*

St3: *I don't know... maybe they are not better but they have more courage.*

St4: *I feel so bad when speaking, so I even don't know am I good or bad.*

Statement 6: In my English language class, I get so nervous I forget things I know.

St1: *It has happened many times.*

St2: *It happens mostly during tests and when I have to say something without preparation.*

St3: *Sometimes.*

St4: *I often feel that I am blank.*

Statement 7: Even if I am well prepared for my English language class, I feel anxious about it.

St1: *Yes, that is true.*

St2: *Yes, I know everything at home but forget so many things when speaking in the classroom.*

St3: *Yes.*

St4: *My speech is bad sometimes and I don't like it.*

Statement 8: I often feel like not going to my English language class.

St1: *Every time!*

St2: *Yes, I have felt this way many times.*

St3: *I have skipped my classes.*

St4: *Yes.*

Statement 9: I feel more tense and nervous in my English language class than in my other classes.

St1: *I like English but I don't like speaking in English and then I feel really nervous.*

St2: *Yes, other classes are much easier.*

St3: *I feel nervous everywhere but English is so hard that it makes me super nervous.*

St4: *Sometimes.*

Statement 10: I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

St1: *Yes, they [my classmates] laughed at me in secondary school. I hope it will be different in the gymnasium [upper secondary school].*

St2: *Boys laugh and some girls too. I am used to that.*

St3: *I don't know, my classmates were nice but sometimes they didn't feel good when I didn't speak.*

St4: *No. Or maybe very little.*

APPENDIX 5 Pre-vlogging interview questions

1. Could you describe your feelings towards the English language classes?
2. Could you tell me what you like best about your English language classes?
3. Have you felt uncomfortable when you have to speak in your English language class?
4. Have you felt trembling when you knew that you were going to be called on in your English language class? If so, what did you do?
5. Have you felt frightened when you didn't understand what the teacher was saying in the English language class? If so, what did you do?
6. Have you found yourself thinking of other things during your English language classes? If so, how did you feel?
7. Do you think that your classmates were/are better English speakers than you?
8. Have you been so nervous in your English language class that you have forgotten things you knew for sure? If so, how did you feel? What did you do?
9. Have you felt like skipping your English language classes? If so, what did you do?
10. Do you feel more anxious in your English language classes compared to any other class?
11. In your opinion, how do your classmates react if you make mistakes?
12. Did you feel that your previous English teachers were supportive and encouraged you to speak in English classes?
13. Do you have any expectations for your new English teacher?
14. Have you ever created a vlog? If no, would you like to give it a try?
15. How do you feel after answering the questions?

Thank you!

APPENDIX 6 Post-vlogging interview questions

1. Could you describe your feelings during the vlogging process?
2. Could you describe your feelings now when the vlogging process is over? What were the positive moments of doing the task? What were the negative moments of doing the task?
3. Do you feel more comfortable speaking up in your English language class?
4. Do you feel that your English language skills have improved?
5. Do you feel that your verbal confidence in English has improved?
6. Do you still think that your classmates are better English speakers than you?
7. How do you rate your FLCA on a scale of 1 to 10?
8. Would you recommend vlogging to other anxious-prone students?

Thank you!

APPENDIX 7 The results of the post-vlogging FLA questionnaire (carried out in January 2020)

Statement 1: I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English language class.

St1: *I don't speak much and sometimes I feel like not speaking but if I know something I would say it, even if it may feel awkward. The teacher supports me and I like that.*

St2: *I am not very sure but I speak if I have to.*

St3: *I kind of do already.*

St4: *I feel better than last year and if the topic is interesting and when the teacher asks me then I say my opinion.*

Statement 2: I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in my English language class.

St1: *My hands shook and felt a bit sick when I did a presentation in front of the classroom. But if I have to talk in our ordinary lessons, I feel ok.*

St2: *Sometimes.*

St3: *It is not trembling but just nasty feeling inside. But it is much better than before.*

St4: *My heart is pounding and I feel sick sometimes. I don't like pauses ... when I have to say something and I just don't know what to say .. It sucks.*

Statement 3: It frightens me when I do not understand what the teacher is saying in my English language class.

St1: *I understand almost everything. She talks calmly and often repeats the most important points.*

St2: *Sometimes I don't understand but then she says it again and then I do. She doesn't mind repeating.*

St3: *I understand her.*

St4: *I understand her and I can ask later or write on Studium.*

Statement 4: During my English language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.

St1: *I do sometimes that.*

St2: *There are so many things in my head and yes, sometimes I don't pay enough attention.*

St3: *Everybody does that sometimes.*

St4: *I try not to because we have only two lessons a week and want to improve.*

Statement 5: I keep thinking that other students are better at languages than I am.

St1: *Some girls are better but boys are not. I think I am ok and they are not so much better.*

St2: *We are not very strong group and all people are average. But everybody understood my vlogs, so I am quite OK.*

St3: *Some people may be but not that much. The teacher says we are an quite even group.*

St4: *No, they are not. Just my pronunciation is bad.*

Statement 6: In my English language class, I get so nervous I forget things I know.

St1: *I don't like tests and then I get really nervous. But I am not so nervous as I was before, like autumn ... September was difficult .. then I was really nervous.*

St2: *If I have to speak to people I don't know so well.*

St3: *Sometimes.*

St4: *During tests I definitely forget some things but usually I can cope.*

Statement 7: Even if I am well prepared for my English language class, I feel anxious about it.

St1: *Yes, I feel sometimes anxious but sometimes I have not prepared well and then I feel really anxious. The teacher is kind and helpful*

St2: *Yes, because I am not always sure in myself.*

St3: *My classmates and the teacher are nice and because I am not so much (nervous) anymore.*

St4: *Yes, I feel nervous. It is better than before but I still am.*

Statement 8: I often feel like not going to my English language class.

St1: *No, I like our English classes and the teacher.*

St2: *I have felt that.*

St3: *No.*

St4: *No.*

Statement 9: I feel more tense and nervous in my English language class than in my other classes.

St1: *I always nervous when there are tests. And I don't like speaking very much.*

St2: *Sometimes I do when I know that we will do a lot of talking.*

St3: *Not really. It is important to have a friendly teacher and our teacher is friendly. She is helpful.*

St4: *Yes, I often do.*

Statement 10: I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.

St1: *No, my classmates are friendly and (they) don't laugh.*

St2: *No, our class is nice.*

St3: *No.*

St4: *No, I haven't felt that.*

RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

Ülle Laumets

ENG: Using vlogging for reducing anxiety in the EFL classes: case study on Estonian upper secondary school students

EST: Vlogide kasutamine ärevuse vähendamise eesmärgil Inglise keele tunnis: juhtumiuuring ühe Eesti gümnaasiumi õpilaste näitel

Magistritöö

2020

Lehekülgede arv: 63

Käesoleva magistritöö eesmärk oli uurida, kas vlogide tegemine, nende kaasõpilastega jagamine ning konstruktiivse tagasiside andmine ja saamine aitab vähendada õpilaste ärevust inglise keele klassis. Sellest lähtuvalt esitatakse järgmine hüpotees: vlogimine aitab leevendada rääkimisärevust, vähendab ärevuse kehalisi ilminguid ja kahandab kalduvust ülemõtlemisele nendel õpilastel, kes tunnevad ärevust võõrkeele klassis suhtlemise ees.

Lähtudes uurimistöö eesmärgist kasutati kvalitatiivseid uurimismeetodeid, vastavalt küsitlust ja intervjuud. Intervjuu küsimused olid sarnased küsimustiku väidetega, andes õpilastele võimaluse oma mõtteid täpsemalt kirjeldada ja lahti seletada. Ärevusele kalduvatel õpilastele on intervjuude keskkond äärmiselt oluline, seega viidi intervjuud läbi sundimatus õhkkonnas ja eesti keeles.

Uurimistöö empiirilise osa esimese poole moodustab valikaine kirjeldus, mis viidi läbi ühes Eesti riigigümnaasiumis. Valikaine keskendus ingliskeelsete vlogide tegemisele ja õpilaste omavahelisele suhtlusele nii online-keskkonnas vlogidele kirjaliku tagasiside andmise näol kui ka kontaktundides kaks korda nädalas. Valikaine kursus kestis 3. septembrist kuni 15. novembrini 2019 ja selles osales neli õpilast, kes hindasid oma ärevust kõrgeks või väga kõrgeks. Kõigepealt täitsid õpilased võõrkeeles rääkimise ärevust mõõtvat (FLCAS) modifitseeritud küsimustiku ja seejärel viis töö autor nendega läbi pikemad intervjuud, mille küsimused põhinesid küsimustiku väidetel. Seejärel said õpilased ülesande koostada üheksa vlogi ja laadida need üles turvalisse keskkonda, kus ainult õpetajal ja teisel kolmes valikaines osalejal oli võimalus neid vaadata ja kommenteerida. Peale vlogimist viidi läbi teine intervjuude voor, mis puudutas vlogimise kogemust ja kontrollis hüpoteesi paikapidavust. Jaanuaris 2020 täitsid õpilased teistkordselt modifitseeritud küsimustiku ja hindasid oma ärevuse taset pärast kahe kuu möödumist valikaine kursusest.

Käesolev magistritöö on jagatud kahte ossa. Esimeses peatükis käsitletakse suhtlemise olulisust inglise keele õpetamisel, vaadeldakse mõningaid teadustöid, mis käsitlevad võõrkeeleärevuse olemust ja uuringuid erinevates riikides ning tutvustatakse vlogimist kui vahendit, mis võib vähendada võõrkeeles rääkimise ärevust. Teine peatükk kirjeldab valikaine kursust, mis keskendus vlogide tegemisele ja tagasiside andmisele/saamisele ning analüüsitakse küsimustiku ja intervjuude tulemusi ning arutletakse õpilaste edusammude üle.

Lähtudes kursuse järgsetest intervjuude ja küsimustike tulemustest võib öelda, et kolm õpilast neljast hindasid kursusel osalemist ja vlogide tegemist kõnelemisärevust vähendavaks. Ka neljas osaleja leidis, et tema esinemisjulgus on kasvanud, kuid arvas siiski, et tema ärevus ei ole silmatorkavalt vähenenud. Arutluse osas on analüüsitud võimalikke põhjusi, mis osaleja(te) arvamust ja enesehinnangut võisid mõjutada.

Antud uurimus andis kinnitust hüpoteesile, et ärevad õpilased, kes tunnevad hirmu võõrkeele klassis rääkimise ees, saavad oma kõnejulgust kasvatada väikeses grupis ja turvalises keskkonnas rääkides ja oma sooritusele positiivset tagasisidet saades. Väga suur roll on siinjuures ka õpetajal, kes on ärevatele õpilastele toeks ja loob grupis pingevaba ja sõbraliku õhustiku.

Märksõnad: inglise keel ja õpetamine, rääkimise tähtsus inglise keele tunnis, võõrkeeleärevus, võõrkeeleärevuse küsimustik, võõrkeeleärevuse leevendamine, vlogimine.

Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprotrudtseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks

Mina, Ülle Laumets,

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) enda loodud teose Using vlogging for reducing anxiety in the EFL classes: case study on Estonian upper secondary school students, mille juhendaja on Katiliina Gielen,
 - 1.1 reprodutseerimiseks eesmärgiga seda säilitada, sealhulgas lisada digitaalarhiivi DSpace-i kuni autoriõiguste kehtivuse lõppemiseni;
 - 1.2 Annan Tartu Ülikoolile loa teha punktis 1 nimetatud teos üldsusele kättesaadavaks Tartu Ülikooli veebikeskkonna, sealhulgas digitaalarhiivi DSpace'i kaudu Creative Commons'i litsentsiga CC BY NC ND 3.0, mis lubab autorile viidates teost reprodutseerida, levitada ja üldsusele suunata ning keelab luua tuletatud teost ja kasutada teost ärieesmärgil, kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
2. Olen teadlik, et punktis 1 nimetatud õigused jäävad alles ka autorile.
3. Kinnitan, et lihtlitsentsi andmisega ei riku ma teiste isikute intellektuaalomandi ega isikuandmete kaitse õigusaktidest tulenevaid õigusi.

Ülle Laumets

Põlvas, 19.05 2020

Autorsuse kinnitus

Kinnitan, et olen koostanud käesoleva magistritöö ise ning toonud korrektselt välja teiste autorite panuse. Töö on koostatud lähtudes Tartu Ülikooli maailma keelte ja kultuuride kolledži anglistika osakonna magistritöö nõuetest ning on kooskõlas heade akadeemiliste tavadega.

Ülle Laumets

19.05.2020