Foreign Language Anxiety

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Introduction

> *"Minds without emotions are not really minds at all."*
> *(LeDoux, 1996)*

The fact that some learners are more successful at acquiring a **foreign language** than others even though the circumstances of their learning are almost identical has led to investigations of individual characteristics as predictors of successful foreign language learning, most of them agreeing with the following categories (Olivares-Cuhat, 2010):

a) cognitive factors (e.g., language aptitude, learning strategies);
b) affective factors (e.g., attitudes, motivation, anxiety);
c) metacognitive factors;
d) demographic factors.

Researchers had to accept the fact that personality traits such as self-esteem, inhibition, anxiety, risk-taking and extraversion, may well shape the ultimate success in mastering a foreign language (Dörney, 2005). As there is a growing acceptance of learners' feelings and reflections in the learning process within the **foreign language teaching and learning** community, one of the most highly examined variables in the field of foreign language learning is the **foreign language anxiety (FLA)**, sometimes called also the second language anxiety (Horwitz, 2001).

There is a great deal of research focusing on FLA which is necessarily interdisciplinary as FLA is rather a multi-

dimensional and multifactorial construct representing human complexity. Though it is widely recognised as a mental block against foreign language learning and conceived as an obvious factor in foreign language learning, yet there are many inconsistent conclusions.

The differences between studies over several decades in design and methodology and the complexity of individual differences in foreign language learning, have led to the limited amount of research findings about the influence of various factors on foreign language learning that could be generalized (Ehrman, Leaver, & Oxford, 2003).

Therefore, the purpose of this book is to summarize the most relevant information and research findings on FLA from the very beginning of its study in 1970s up to the present day and to introduce FLA to a general audience of researchers, learners and teachers who are interested in this multi-faceted phenomenon.

1 The Characteristics of Foreign Language Anxiety

"Wealth is the ability to fully experience life."
(Henry David Thoreau)

1.1 The Definition and Classification of Anxiety

Anxiety can be defined as a mental and physical state characterized by specific emotional, physical, cognitive and behavioral symptoms. It is an **adaptive reaction** which mobilizes the organism and helps it defend, attact or avoid an anxiety stimulus. The stimulus can be a previous extenal or internal **antecedent** or trigger. To state the definite causes of anxiety can be rather complicated as it is influenced by many factors – biological, psychological, social or other (Doubek, & Anders, 2013).

Spielberger (1972, p. 482) defines anxiety as "an unpleasant emotional state or condition which is characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry". Scovel (1991, p. 18) further states, that "anxiety is a psychological construct, commonly described by psychologists as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object".

When anxiety is limited just to a specific situation, such as using a foreign language, we use the term **specific anxiety**. On the other hand, the term **general anxiety** is used with those who are generally anxious in various situations (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).
Traditional psychological classification of anxiety types (Horwitz, 2001) distinguishes anxiety of people who

are generally anxious in a variety of situations (**trait anxiety**) from those who are anxious only in specific situations (**state anxiety**). Trait anxiety is a relatively stable personality characteristics (Scovel, 1978) while state anxiety is a temporary response to a particular stimulus (Spielberger, 1983).

Anxiety when associated with learning a foreign language is termed as "**second/foreign language anxiety**" related to the negative emotional reactions of the learners towards foreign language acquisition (Horwitz, 2001). FLA is generally viewed as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to foreign language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

There are two approaches to identifying foreign language anxiety (Horwitz, & Young, 1991):

1. **transfer approach** – where FLA is viewed as a manifestation of other forms of anxiety;
2. **unique approach** – where foreign language achievement is correlated with FLA but not with other types of anxiety.

FLA can be viewed both as a stable characteristic trait and the temporary state caused by various factors. The classical study of Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) introduced a construct of FLA as a **situation-specific anxiety** aroused by a specific type of situation or event (MacIntyre, & Gardner, 1991).

Two approaches to the description of FLA can thus be distinguished:

1. The broader construct of anxiety as a basic human emotion that may be brought on by numerous combinations of situational factors (McIntyre, & Gardner, 1989; McIntyre, 1995).
2. A combination of other anxieties that create a separate form of anxiety intrinsic to language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

Two models of FLA emerged from Tobias's (1986) research:

1. **an interference retrieval model,**
2. **an interference model of anxiety**,

An interference retrieval model relates to anxiety as inhibiting the recall of previously learned material at the output stage, whereas the interference model is a skills deficit model. It relates to problems at the input and processing stages of learning as a result of poor study habits, or a lack of knowledge. The research in foreign language learning has provided support for both models (e.g., MacIntyre, & Gardner, 1994; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 2000).

1.2 The Causes of Foreign Language Anxiety

When understanding the **cause** as something that produces an effect and the **factor** as something that contributes to the production of an effect (Merriam-Webster Thesaurus) we should deal with the primary causes and influencing factors of FLA separately, though they are often confused and used as synonyms in literature.

In a situation perceived as threatening and beyond one´s ability to deal with the threat, anxiety is a natural consequence. Guiora (1983) said that foreign language learning itself is a "profoundly unsettling psychological proposition" (p. 8) because it threatens learner's **self-concepts** and world-concepts which are rarely challenged when communicating in a native language.

Learners` **self-expression** is limited by their imperfect command of a foreign language. Inability to present oneself according to one`s **self-image** can set a learner into the cycle of negative **self-evaluation** as language and the self are intimately bound. Probably no other field of study implicates such a disparity between the "true self" and the "limited self" as foreign language learning (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

Most of foreign language learners report strong speaking anxiety and indicate their inadequate speaking ability as the strongest barrier in foreign language communication (Bilá, 2013). They were afraid of being ridiculed and not accepted as an authority by their students. Speaking in a foreign language is often sensed as

a "threat to peoples' self-concept, **self-identity**, and **ego**, which they have formed in their first language as reasonable and intelligent individuals" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

According to Bennett (1998), when our internal and consistent beliefs are threatened by any external stimulus, we activate our defense mechanisms to overcome such a "**cognitive inconsistency**" and foreign language learning inevitably requires learners to go through constant change or reconstruction.

The starting point of the "chicken and egg" discussion about the causal relationship of the FLA and **foreign language achievement** was the article of Sparks, & Ganschow (1991). They viewed FLA as a natural result of difficulty and poor achievement in foreign language learning.

On the other hand MacIntyre (1995) states that FLA anxiety is a well-established impediment to learning of all types. The debate whether anxiety is a cause or a consequence of poor language command has continued and still continues (see Chapter 2 – The research of Foreign Language Anxiety).

Nevertheless, it cannot be definitely stated so far whether the self-perceived unsatisfactory level of **foreign language competence** (the knowledge and the ability to use a foreign language) leads to FLA or FLA affects the level of mastering the foreign language. The causal issue of FLA and foreign language proficiency

remains controversial and FLA and foreign language achievemet seem to be "communicating vessels" with causality in either direction (cf. Sparks, & Ganschow, 1991; MacIntyre, 1995; Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová /forthcoming/).

Horwitz (2001) examined and reviewed the literature on FLA and foreign language achievement which is very helpful not only in documenting the relationship but also for our understanding of this multi-faceted phenomenon.

Although the results of researches were similar in demonstrating the presence of anxiety in the classrooms and its negative effect on foreign language achievement, more studies need to be done in this area to investigate the interplay of various contributing variables as the exact nature of this relationship is still blurry and may be influenced by various **concomitant factors**.

1.3 The Factors of Foreign Language Anxiety

Attempting to understand the overall process of foreign language learning, researchers have investigated the relationship of language learning and different **lingual** (related to the language system) and **extra-lingual** (related to the language learning process) variables (Kráľová, 2009).

Lingual factors can be subdivided into the categories **intra-lingual** and **inter-lingual**. Intralingual factors result from the system of a foreign language itself while the interlingual factors result from the contact of two language systems (mostly a native language and a foreign language) (Kráľová, 2009).

Several studies concluded that the typological distance between languages (as one of the intra-lingual factors) increases FLA, for example – Turkish (Kunt, 1997), Chinese (Yan, 1998), Spanish (Sellers, 2000), Japanese (Kitano, 2001), Arabic (Alrabai, 2015) or Mandarin (Yan, & Wang, 2001). Sparks, Ganschow, & Javorsky (2000) consisted on the fact that learners with poor first (native) language skills are naturally anxious in a foreign language.

Kráľová (2010) stated that the contrastive approach (comparison of a foreign language and a native language phonic systems) in teaching foreign language pronunciation resulted in better pronunciation and closer approximation to foreign language vowels than

the application of monolingual (foreign language only) approach.

Nevertheless, FLA is considered more of a psychological (**identity-based**) construct than a linguistic (**competence-based**) construct (Alrabai, 2015), and it most likely stems from the learner's perception of "self" (Scovel, 1991), where self-perceptions, perceptions of others, perceptions about foreign language learning and performance play important roles (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Gardner, & MacIntyre, 1993; Yon Yim, 2014).

The extralingual factors are thus believed to affect FLA more intensively than the lingual factors. Numerous studies trying to identify the learning-related variables of FLA most frequently recognized the cathegories of **personal** (**intra-personal** and **inter-personal**) and **impersonal** determinants (e.g., Bailey, 1983; Gardner, & MacIntyre, 1993; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Kráľová, 2009; Paradowski, Dmowska, & Czasak, 2015).

The intra-personal determinants of FLA result from the learners' personal characteristics, their beliefs and attitudes within foreign language learning, while the inter-personal ones are bound to the inter-personal interactions (learner-teacher or learner-learner) during the learning process. The impersonal factors are related to non-personal aspects of foreign language learning.

From the temporal perspective, the **static** and the **dynamic** variables affecting FLA can be further distin-

guished within the extra-lingual factors. The static factors involve rather stable characteristics (gender, nationality, native language, type of personality, etc.) and the dynamic factors (such as language proficiency, motivation, and stay in a foreign language country) can change over time.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) explained that FLA mostly shows up in its strongest form in testing situations. Learners commonly report various kinds of evaluative situations in which their knowledge and performance of foreign language is monitored by people around them as the most stressful situations contributing to FLA. They fear to make mistakes and as a result get corrected by the teacher in front of their classmates.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) established three related situation-specific performance anxieties:

1. **communication apprehension**,
2. **test anxiety**,
3. **fear of negative evaluation**.

Communication apprehension is defined as the anxiety to communicate with people, including both the **production apprehension** (talking in front of others or in groups), and the **reception apprehension** (receiving and responding spoken message). Despite the fact that communication apprehension leads to fear of speaking, it also causes the fear of not being able to understand the others' speech.

Test anxiety, arises out of the fear of failing to perform. It can be explained through the high demands that learners put on themselves to be perfect masters of the foreign language. Fear of negative evaluation is explained as the learners' expectation to be evaluated negatively by others in any kind of situation (Wörde, 2003).

Even though the three anxiety-related concepts were often named differently across studies (e.g., examination anxiety, criticism anxiety – Park, & Lee, 2005), some of the authors suggested the four-factor model (Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, & Rahman, 2013) and sometimes, test anxiety is refuted as the concept related to general anxiety (Aida, 1994), they more or less support the Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope's (1986) model.

However, Aida (1994) in his factor analytic study argues that number of scholars misinterprets the communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation as the underlying subcomponents of FLA while Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) suggested them as analogies to FLA.

Young (1990) listed six potential factors of FLA – personal and inter-personal anxieties, learner beliefs about language learning, instructor beliefs about language teaching, instructor-learner interactions, classroom procedures, and language testing.

Aida (1994) identified four factors causing anxiety within a foreign language classroom environment:

speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, fear of failing, comfortableness in speaking and negative attitudes towards the class.

In exploring the causes of FLA, Horwitz (1983) emphasized considering learners' emotional reactions to language learning. In order to identify adult students' beliefs about language learning, Horwitz (1983) created an instrument called the *Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI)*.

Several studies support Horwitz (1983) in emphasizing the important role of learners' beliefs in foreign language learning. For example, Peacock (2001) conducted a longitudinal research on learner beliefs and Altan (2006) administered the questionnaire Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) to measure foreign language learners' beliefs.

The studies concluded that some beliefs are derived from unrealistic conceptions about language learning, for example learners' great concern for speaking with a native-like accent or their belief that language learning is just memorization and translation. The clash of learners' beliefs and reality is often one of the potential sources of anxiety.
Bailey (1983) was the first who examined FLA from the learners' point of view and he claimed that the competitive nature can lead to anxiety because students tend to compare themselves or idealize their self-images. Moreover, low-esteem causes worry and fear of the negative responses or evaluation from the classmates.

MacIntyre, Clément, Dörney, & Noels (1998) suggested a close correspondence between FLA and self-evaluation and considered them as a single construct – self-confidence. Self-confidence was indicated as a key variable of foreign language performance in several other studies (e.g., Matsuda, & Goebel, 2004).

Gardner, & MacIntyre (1993) reported significant relationship between learners' foreign language self-rating and their level of FLA. It appears that anxious learners often underestimate their actual language proficiency. Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley (1999) confirmed that highly anxious learners have negative perception of both their scholastic competence and their self-worth.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) also state that over-studying is an FLA related phenomenon. Although students devote a lot of time to studying, they still do poorly in tests or oral exams. They become even more frustrated when they realize they do the same mistakes repeatedly as FLA has a cyclical nature (as learners experience more failure, their FLA level may increase even more).

Ohata (2005) indicated that teachers' perceptions play an important role in students' FLA as teacher is the person in the classroom who can regulate the atmosphere, search for the signs of anxiety and help students overcome it. The classroom that follows traditional learning styles, its strictness and formality was declared as the major source of stress.

As teachers and learners constantly interact, the emotions of one group cannot be considered separately from the emotions of the other group. Morton, Vesco, Williams, & Awender (1997) studied the correlation of student-teachers' FLA and concluded that their demographic, experiential and dispositional variables may contribute to FLA, psychological disposition being the strongest predictor.

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings of the research focused on FLA differed according to the level of instruction is that advanced learners and learners who have lived or stayed in a foreign language country are more susceptible of FLA (Saito, & Samimy, 1996; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Kitano, 2001; Gregersen, & Horwitz, 2002). On the contrary, Matsuda, & Gobel (2004) concluded that learners with experience in a foreign language country were less anxious speaking the foreign language.

Among other factors that received attention are undoubtedly individual characteristics such as extraversion, verbal intelligence (Káľová, 2009), emotional intelligence, perfectionism (Gregersen, & Horwitz, 2002) or tolerance to ambiguity (Dewaele, & Shan Ip, 2013).

Káľová (2011) examined the correlation of several personality characteristics and the level of foreign language pronunciation of learners applying the *Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)* (Cattell, Cattell, Cattell, 1997). She detected significant positive relation-

ship in sensitivity, perfectionism and openness to change and significant negative proportion in vigilance, tough-mindedness and anxiety.

Kitano (2001) found a relationship between gender and FLA – male learners, who perceived themselves as less competent in a foreign language, suffered from FLA more than female learners. Dewaele, MacIntyre, Boudreau, & Dewaele (2016) revealed that female learners reported more fun in their foreign language class than male learners. On the other hand, they experienced higher FLA than their male peers. However, most of gender-related studies yielded rather conflicting results.

Cultural and social environment, mainly the environment where learning takes place may influence the learners' level of anxiety. Other causes of anxiety may be learners' own concerns about their ethnicity, foreignness, social status, relations within the class or gender (Hashemi, & Abbasi, 2013).
Clement (1986) adds another perspective to the psycho-social dimension of foreign language learning. He argues that some foreign language learners in a multicultural setting can suffer from an emotional dilemma between the need to learn a foreign language and weakening their ethnic identity more that learners learning a foreign language in their native language and cultural setting.

Learning can thus be a threat not only for learners' self-identity but also for their cultural or social identity. In

Woodrow's research (2006) it is stated that English language learners from countries such as China, Korea and Japan were more anxious than other ethnic groups.

Further, Al-Saraj (2011) explains why Saudi Arabian culture creates a social and cultural setting for examining FLA. The education system in Saudi Arabia is free for all levels, where male and female students are separated, typically attending segregated schools. The combination of factors such as the importance of learning English, the educational system and conservative culture create an environment for FLA.

Larger social circumstances such as the availability of supportive conversational partners and foreign language role models may play a role in helping learners overcome their FLA (Dewaele, Petrides, & Furnham, 2008). Krashen (1985) contends that the affective filter can be lowered by learner's "target language group identification" when learner feels to be a member of particular foreign language group.

Spitalli (2000) found a significant negative relationship between FLA level and attitudes toward people from different cultures. In this context, Schumann's (1978) *Acculturation Model* suggests that learners' perceived "social distance" to a foreign language group can affect their interaction in the foreign language.

Social status of interlocutors can considerably influence the level of FLA especially when communicating with someone having better command of foreign language.

Unequal language competencies are often reported as very stressful.

In addition to the above-mentioned influences, many other factors have received research attention: age; length of foreign language study; self-perceived foreign language proficiency; academic achievement (e.g., Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Kunt, & Tüm, 2010; Hashemi, & Abbasi, 2013); perfectionism (Gregerson, & Horwitz, 2002); competitiveness among learners and evaluation coming from the classmates (Bailey, 1983); societal interference and lack of preparation (Wei, 2014); error correction techniques (Young, 1991; Gregersen, 2003); and self-presentation concerns (Cohen, & Norst, 1989).

Moreover, English plays an important role in the global market as it is a communication language of business, education, science and technology and an effective oral communication is seen as a socialy valued skill. This fact may, on the one hand, serve as a motivator for learners, but on the other hand, it may be perceived by learners as pressure and consequently negatively contribute to FLA (Tran, Moni, &Baldauf, 2012).

Nevertheless, the factors involved in FLA as its **inhibitors** or **activators** are numerous and the list of potential sources of FLA can be rather long. However, Horwitz (2016) added that the components of FLA likely vary in different learner populations depending on their culture and proficiency.

1.4 The Consequences of Foreign Language Anxiety

FLA has the same clinical picture and **symptoms** as any other types of anxiety (Horwitz, 1986) – sweating, palpitations, trembling, apprehension, worry, fear, threat, difficult concentration, forgetfulness, freezing, going blank, and avoidance behavior (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

In the research conducted by Hashemi, & Abbasi (2013) the participants described their own signs of FLA such as blushing, perspiration, headaches, tension and pain in any part of the body, abnormal verbal behavior, such as staggered voice, either too fast or too slow speed of speech, rubbing the palms, squirming, fidgeting, playing with hair or clothes, touching objects, stuttering or stammering, poor performance, less interpretativeness, less eye contact because of reading from the paper or screen while giving presentations, etc.

Language learning is a cognitive activity that relies on encoding, storage and retrieval processes and FLA can interfere with each of these by causing a **divided attention** situation (MacIntyre, 1995). Eysenck (1979) explained the negative effects of anxiety in foreign language learning saying that anxious people divide their attention between task-related cognition and self-related or emotion-related cognition, making cognitive performance less efficient on all three stages of cognitive processing: input, processing (mental planning) and output (MacIntyre, & Gardner, 1991).

The "socio-affective filter" constructed by Dulay, & Burt (1977) is considered to be a source of the well-known Krashen`s (1985) *Affective Filter Hypothesis*. An affective filter makes learner unreceptive to foreign language input. Some other psychological concepts related to FLA include the *Concept of Social Distance* (Schumann, 1978), the *Theory of Clash of Consciousness* (Clarke, 1976) or the *Concept of Language Ego* (Guiora, 1972).

Various consequences of FLA may appear at any phase of learning. At the input stage learners might pretend to be sick, hide in the last rows, or miss the classes to alleviate their anxiety. During the processing stage some of them tend to give up, procrastinate, or avoid studying which in the output stage results in freezing-up or memory lapses.

Students often claim that they know and understand the given foreign language phenomenon, but they tend to "forget" it when it comes to test or oral exercise, when many foreign language points must be recalled at the same time. Doing persistent errors in morphology, syntax or spelling due to nervousness is very common (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

According to the above mentioned researches, anxiety, which is present among learners of foreign languages, negatively influences their acquisition and further performance in a foreign language. Learners are very individual and therefore, the signs may differ in their manifestation or severity. That is, some learners may com-

pletely forget what they have learnt and be unable to perform in any way (oral or written) and some learners need only a small hint, help or motivation to be able to perform with imperceptible signs of anxiety.

However, **facilitating anxiety** is hardly being mentioned in literature (Kleinmann, 1977) and its effect has rarely been documented (Phillips, 1992). It was considered to occur in later stages of learning process (Beeman, Martin, & Meyers, 1972). Scovel (1991) considers facilitating and **debilitating anxiety** working in tandem – one arouses, the other depresses.

It has been suggested that some little anxiety may improve performance (Scovel, 1978). Similarly to the *Yerkes-Dodson Law* (Smith, Sarason, & Sarason, 1982), Eysenck (1979) describes a curvilinear relationship between FLA and foreign language performance as a function of task difficulty.

2   The Research of Foreign Language Anxiety

"Variety of opinion is necessary for objective knowledge."
(Feyerabend, 1975)

After the mid 20th century researchers began realizing that the affective factors are equally relevant in learning as the cognitive factors. The early 1970s **descriptive studies** were focused mostly on the definition of FLA and examined its nature, symptoms, causes and consequences (e.g., Kleinmann, 1977; Eysenck, 1979).

Early **correlational studies** produced rather inconsistent results in determining the relationship between FLA and achievement in a foreign language – some studies found negative relationship between the anxiety and achievement; others found positive relationship, while others found no relationship at all.

Scovel (1978) was the first who acknowledged such inconsistent results. Chastain's (1975) findings of positive, negative and insignificant correlations between FLA and foreign language achievement within one study are cited as an example of such inconsistency.

Scovel's (1978) study *"The Effect of Affect on Foreign Language Learning: A Review of the Anxiety Research"* is recognized as a turning point in the study of FLA which led to the need of more precious conceptualization of FLA and a step towards measuring instruments specificity.

Since 1980s when Krashen (1981) hypothesized that the affective factors (anxiety, motivation and self-confidence) correlate with the success in foreign language learning, one of the most examined affective variables in the field of foreign language learning was foreign language anxiety.

The pioneer in studying affective variables in foreign language learning – R. C. Gardner (1985) – hypothesized that anxiety specific to foreign language learning is related to foreign language achievement. He introduced the *Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB)* to measure affective factors significant in foreign language learning such as motivation, attitude and anxiety.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) made a valuable contribution not only to the theory but also to the measurement of FLA by their milestone work *"Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety".* They developed the most frequently used and adopted self-report tool to measure FLA in a classroom setting – the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS).*

The thirty-three item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" has been already used in a large number of research projects in different foreign language contexts (Horwitz, 2001). It has been found to have high internal reliability, test-retest reliability and construct validity (Horwitz, & Young, 1991; Aida, 1994; Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999).

Several relevant instruments for general anxiety measurement had been developed before FLCAS, e.g., Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene's (1970) self-report scale *The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory* to assess anxiety as a central construct in the theories of personality; Sarason's (1978) assessment of anxiety by the *Cognitive Interference Questionnaire* or Spielberger's (1980) *Test Anxiety Inventory* (TAI).

The structure of FLCAS was developed from foreign language students' reports, clinical experience of the authors and a review of related instruments, e.g., *Personal Report of Communication Apprehension* (McCroskey, 1984). Horwitz's (1986) subsequent paper reported the reliability and validity of FLCAS and concluded non-significant relationship between FLA and communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and trait anxiety.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
(Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986)

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.
12. In language class I can get so nervous I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.
14. I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.

22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.
31. I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

The universal scale by Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986), has been later adjusted by other researchers according to the language or cultural background where the research has been conducted. As FLA has been studied mostly in classrooms where English was taught as a second/foreign language, the *English Learning Anxiety Scale (ELAS)* (Papamihiel, 2002) has been created for

learners of English as a second language and reported homogeneous results in anxiety level.

Firstly, the majority of research has been conducted in Western countries. Later on, more and more research results have been coming from Asian countries using modified scale versions. Moreover, in Saudi Arabia, the *Arabic Foreign Language Anxiety Questionnaire (AFLAQ)* (Al-Saraj, 2011) has been developed. To examine anxiety among non-native teachers the *Teacher Foreign Language Anxiety (TFLAS)* scale was developed (Horwitz, 1996). Today, the web-based versions of evaluation scales are frequently used (Wilson, & Dewaele, 2010).

Besides FLCAS and its adaptations, FLA is frequently measured by behavioral tests, subjects' self-reports, observations or by physiological tests. Physiological measures have long been used as a reliable quantificator of subjects' emotional state but there is an enormous variation in psychological reactions and physiological responses among individuals.

Tests of behavior, self-reports and observation are not as easily quantifiable, but they seem to be more precise in focusing on a specific affective construct (Scovel, 1991). Most studies use self-report because of its practicality and availability. Anyway, Beeman, Martin, & Meyers (1972) concluded that the correlation between these measurements of FLA remains low.

Studies of FLA used mostly **quantitative methods**, applying correlational analysis where questionnaires and

scales have been proved to be reliable instruments (e.g., FLCAS, TFLAS, and ELAS). From the **qualitative methods**, mostly interviews of anxious learners were performed.

It seems the correlational studies only will not provide a valid and reliable answer and in-depth understanding of FLA complexity. The investigation thus should not be limited to either quantitative of qualitative methods. FLA as a complex human phenomenon needs to be explored in a holistic perspective and the solution seems to be the **mixed methods** research.

The studies on FLA have developed from the beginning descriptive studies to the **experimental studies** increased considerably in 1990s. They looked more at the causes and factors of FLA and its effect under various learning conditions and aspects of language learning – skills and language levels (e.g., Young, 1990; Koch, & Terrell, 1991; Oh, 1992).

Most FLA research took place in the classroom setting in a non-English speaking environment. Nevertheless, Gardner, & MacIntyre (1993) reminded that FLA can appear not only in a learning and classroom situation but also when using a foreign language in any other context.

On the contrary, learning a foreign language outside the classroom can be even more stressful. Whatever a learner says in a foreign language is no longer excused

as a part of the learning process but considered to be the learner's legitimate representation (Clarke, 1976).

There are fewer studies examining studying foreign languages in a distance context (e.g., White, 2003). White (2003) claimed that distance learners apply metacognitive and affective learning strategies more than classroom learners in their need for self-direction. Hauck, & Hurd (2005) compared FLA in face-to-face language learning settings and virtual distance setting as both having their pros and cons.

Moreover, Horwitz (1996) using the Teacher Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (TFLAS), was the first researcher to propose that non-native teachers and student teachers may experience feelings of FLA as well. Nevertheless, the research on foreign language teachers and student teachers' feelings of anxiety remains very limited to this day.

Teachers' FLA can have a number of undesirable effects on foreign language education (Horwitz, 1996). As the number of non-native foreign language teachers increases by the year, it is clear that more research is desperately needed in this area.
Intensive research in the area of FLA made anxiety one of the most highly examined variables in psychology and education (Horwitz, 2001). Most of them proved the debilitating effect on foreign language competence and performance (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

Negative correlation between FLA and foreign language achievement has been well established in literature (e.g., Horwitz, 1986; Young, 1991; MacIntyre, & Gardner, 1991; Aida, 1994; Horwitz, 1996; Kunt, 1997; Mac Intyre, 1999; Kitano, 2001; Yan, & Wang, 2001; Liu, & Zhang, 2013).

Researchers have mostly focused on the negative side of foreign language learning for a long time with FLA being one of the most studied topics. The current trend of **positive psychology** (Frederickson, 2003) interested in positive emotions in foreign language learning has been increasing only in recent years.

Positive psychology is considered to have the potential to become a significant factor in foreign language learning as it moves toward activating learners' strengths and self-regulted learning (MacIntyre, Gregersen, & Mercer, 2016). Similarly as the new conceptual framework *EMPHATIC* developed by Oxford (2016).

Dewaele, & MacIntyre (2014) introduced the concept of **Foreign Language Enjoyment** (FLE) and concluded that positive emotions (Foreign Language Enjoyment) and negative emotions (Foreign Language Anxiety) are related, though independent, but not opposite phenomena in foreign language learning. In line with this trend, the latest studies introduced and verified the effectiveness of various intervention strategies in foreign language learning (see Chapter 4 – Foreign Language Anxiety Coping Strategies).

Dewaele, & MacIntyre (2016) as first created and applied the *Foreign Language Enjoyment Scale (FLES)* containing twenty-one items divided into two dimensions FLE-Social and FLE-Private evaluated in a five-point scale (strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, strongly agree):

1. I can be creative.
2. I can laugh off embarrassing mistakes in the FL.
3. I don't get bored.
4. I enjoy it.
5. I feel as though I'm a different person during the FL class.
6. I learn to express myself better in the FL.
7. I'm a worthy member of the FL class.
8. I've learnt interesting things.
9. In class, I feel proud of my accomplishments.
10. It's a positive environment.
11. It's cool to know a FL.
12. It's fun.
13. Making errors is part of the learning process.
14. The peers are nice.
15. The teacher is encouraging.
16. The teacher is friendly.
17. The teacher is supportive.
18. There is a good atmosphere.
19. We form a tight group.
20. We have common ´legends´, such as running jokes.
21. We laugh a lot.

FLA has been a great concern in foreign language research over the last decades and triggered many intensive debates (see Chapter 1.2 – The Causes of Foreign Language Anxiety). Although the opinions on many issues are different, it does not mean they exclude or reject each other (Tran, 2012). On the contrary, the challenges play a vital role in the research of such a complex phenomenon as FLA is.

3   The Subtypes of Foreign Language Anxiety

"The limits of my language are the limits of my world."
(Wittgenstein, 1961)

3.1 Skills-Based Foreign Language Anxiety

Numerous studies have examined FLA in relation to specific language aspects distinguishing between the **systems-based** and **skills-based** FLA. The research has been dominantly focused on language skills – such as **reading** (e.g., Oh, 1992; Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999; Sellers, 2000; Argaman, & Abu-Rabia, 2002), **listening** (e.g., Goh, 2000; Kim, 2000; Elkhafaifi, 2005; Zhai, 2015), **writing** (e.g., Cheng, Horwitz, & Schallert, 1999; Hilleson, 1996; Cheng, 2002), and **speaking** (e.g., Steinberg, & Horwitz, 1986; Young, 1990; Woodrow, 2006).

Until the Hilleson's (1996) study on reading and writing anxieties, researchers associated FLA mostly with speaking and listening as the skills most affected by anxiety. This anticipated the research on skill-specific anxieties and most studies provided evidence for the existence of skill-specific FLA.

Pae (2013) indicated significant intra-relations and independent inter-relations of FLA types related to all four language skills with general FLA. In general, learners feel more comfortable about receptive skills than about the productive skills (Kim, & Kim, 2004).

Many authors created and used a skill-specific instrument to measure FLA, for example *Second Language Speaking Anxiety Scale (SLSAS)* (Woodrow, 2006); *Speaking Anxiety Scale* (Pae, 2013); *Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS)* designed by Kim (2000); *Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS)* developed by Saito, Horwitz, & Garza (1999) and *Writing Anxiety Scale* by Daly, & Miller (1975).

Woodrow's (2006) results indicate that FLA is the most crucial predictor of foreign language oral performance. As regards speaking, more anxious students produce less personal and interpretive speech (Steinberg, & Horwitz, 1986); smaller continuous speech and make longer mid-clause pauses (Djigunovic, 2006). Gregesen, & Horwitz (2002) reported different reactions in foreign language oral communication between anxious learners who tried to avoid mistakes and non-anxious learners who continued talking in spite of mistakes.

Negative correlation was observed between sustained attention levels during conversation tasks and levels of FLA in classroom condition (Chang, Fang, Yang, Luo, Chew, & Chen, 2017). Interestingly, the authors detected positive correlation between the attention levels and states of FLA in the real-world situated condition.

MacIntyre, Clément, Dörney, & Noels (1998) conceptualized and offered a model of the *Willingness to Communicate (WTC)* in a foreign language as an alternative concept to FLA explaining the influence of FLA on foreign language oral production. MayIntyre (2007) sug-

gested that FLA and WTC should be viewed as state, situation-specific, and trait characteristics and he formulates the essential question of the WTC model and the critical decision for foreign language learning: "Does a learner choose to communicate when the opportunity arises?" (p. 567).

Dixson (1991) found out that while listening, anxious students had difficulty to comprehend the content of the target language. Zhai (2015) stated significant negative correlation between FLA and listening comprehension and put forward some useful suggestions to enhance listening proficiency of foreign language learners.

Sellers (2000) investigated the relationship between anxiety and reading and concluded that anxious students do not understand the tasks correctly and tend to recall less passage content while reading than their less anxious mates. Saito, Horwitz, & Garza (1999) revealed that reading anxiety increased with learners' perception of the difficulty of reading.

Argaman, & Abu-Rabia (2002) found significant relationships between FLA and achievement in foreign language writing comprehension tasks. Cheng's (2002) regression analysis results indicated that perceived writing competence predicts writing anxiety better than writing achievement does.

3.2 Systems-Based Foreign Language Anxiety

Though the correlational studies of FLA and proficiency at different language levels have been by far outnumbered by skill-specific studies, there was also found the negative relationship between FLA and foreign language **vocabulary** and **grammar** across studies (Van Patten, & Glass, 1999; Sheen, 2007). For instance, learners were concerned about their lack of vocabulary and less concerned about grammar and not concerned about the limited knowledge of foreign language **culture** (Kim, & Kim, 2004).

Foreign language **pronunciation** anxiety appears to be significantly related to the learners' willingness to communicate (Price, 1991; Phillips, 1992; Baran-Lucarz, 2011; 2014) as one of its most immediate determinants, because speaking, listening and pronunciation are closely related. However, only a few experiments studying foreign language pronunciation anxiety and verifying the strategies of its reduction have been conducted so far.

Since pronunciation is the most salient aspect of the language ego (Guiora, Beit-Hallahmi, Brannon, Dull & Scovel, 1972) and difficult to acquire in a new language, it is strongly related to human identity and the learner's level of self-confidence. Moreover, pronunciation plays a dominant role in the way we view our communication partners (Lev-Ari, & Keysar, 2010), therefore the apprehension of one's ego being endangered in front of significant others can be rather a strong cause of FLA

among foreign language learners (Szyszka, 2011; Baran-Łucarz, 2014).

The study of Guiora, Beit-Hallahmi, Brannon, Dull & Scovel (1972) on changes in ego states induced by the ingestion of alcohol on pronunciation ability in a foreign language is one of the most cited experiments within foreign language learning in the popular press. Nevertheless, it proved the hypothesized psychological inhibitions as the most significant factor in achieving foreign language pronunciation.

Early arguments relating the relationship of foreign language pronunciation and FLA come from Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986). Concerned the nature of FLA related to the communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) we can expect foreign language pronunciation to be a significant variable of the overall FLA.

However, a few experiments studying the foreign language pronunciation anxiety (Baran-Łucarz, 2013) and verifying the strategies of its reduction (Shams, 2005; Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová /forthcoming/) have been conducted so far.

Baran-Łucarz (2013) investigated the effect of anxiety on learning foreign language phonetics (*Phonetics Learning Anxiety*) – which represents an interesting step in understanding of the impact of affective factors on pronunciation learning.

She points out that no instrument has been designed yet to examine specifically the pronunciation anxiety and she introduced the *Measure of Pronunciation Anxiety* (Baran-Łucarz, 2016). Shams (2005) compared the effectiveness of two FLA-reducing approaches in pronunciation training (training in a listening laboratory and in a computer laboratory).

Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová (forthcoming) tested the psycho-social training as a strategy reducing foreign language pronunciation anxiety among non-native pre-service teachers of a foreign language. The authors created and applied the *Foreign Language Pronunciation Anxiety Scale* evaluated in 6-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, partly agree, partly disagree, disagree, strongly disagree) as an instrument to measure this subtype of anxiety:

1. I feel nervous when speaking English.
2. I do not like talking to more advanced English speakers.
3. I feel embarrassed talking to people with good English pronunciation.
4. I get nervous when I have to speak English in front of other people.
5. I am not satisfied with my English pronunciation.
6. I am bothered about making pronunciation mistakes.
7. I realize how many pronunciation mistakes I make.

8. I feel embarrassed when I realize that I pronounce some words incorrectly.
9. I am afraid people will think I am silly and incompetent because of my poor English pronunciation.
10. I consider imitating native-like English pronunciation ridiculous.
11. I am afraid my future students will have better English pronunciation than I do.
12. Other students have better English pronunciation than I do.
13. I am worried about not being understood because of my improper pronunciation.
14. I feel ashamed when people correct my pronunciation mistakes.
15. It seems to me that I cannot get rid of my native language accent in English.
16. I can never master good English pronunciation.
17. I think English pronunciation is very difficult.
18. I consider the rules of English pronunciation incomprehensible.
19. It is very difficult to pronounce like a native speaker.
20. I think that good English pronunciation is very important for an English teacher.

The studies proved, among other things, that pronunciation training combined with an intervention strategy resulted not only in the improvement of foreign language pronunciation but also in reducing FLA which is an important contribution to discussing the idea that FLA anxiety may be the result as well as the cause of

insufficient command in a foreign language (Sparks, & Ganschow, 1991).

Almost all the above mentioned research has been carried out among the main-stream classes. Learners with **special educational needs** have been long-neglected (Sparks, & Young, 2009). Though, they in many cases experience quite serious feelings of anxiety that influence their further understanding and production in a foreign language.

Supposing a student has problems with reading, they see the text blurred, they mistake letters, they are not able to concentrate, they need longer time to understand the subject or finish the exercise and the parents, teachers and the environment generally bring pressure on the learners to do the task as expected by intact learners, the feelings of anxiety and discomfort emerge. For example, dyslexic students often feel stressed and "dumb" and less capable what leads to discouragement about continuing in learning (Dyslexia Basics, 2012).

4   Foreign Language Anxiety Coping Strategies

"Peak experiences can never be a goal; they are by-products of engaging fully in something meaningful."
(Oxford, 2015)

Considerable scholarly attention has been paid to strategies to alleviate the anxiety of people in various situations and contexts for many years. Several anxiety workshops (e.g., the Foreign Language Anxiety Workshop at the Defense Institute in San Francisco, U.S.A., in 1987); programs (e.g., the Support Group for Foreign Language Learning at the University of Texas at Austin, U.S.A., operating since the 1980s) and clinics (e.g., the Science Anxiety Clinic at Loyola University, U.S.A. in 1976) have been successfully implemented in various fields of education (Campbell, & Ortiz, 1991).

Within foreign language learning numerous **FLA coping** (reducing or management) **strategies** have been discussed. Already Horwitz (1990) suggested a three-strategy approach as the most effective treatment including: systematic desensitization – learning how to relax in the presence of anxiety stimuli; cognitive modification – changing learners' own cognitive appraisals and managing their self-evaluation; and skills training.

When verifying ways of reducing FLA, earlier studies focused on two primary strategies – skills development and behavioral therapy. The combination of these two strands was considered to be the best therapeutic approach (Daly, 1991). Many learners of foreign languages

intuitively assume that the most effective "remedies" in relieving their FLA are – intellectual (more intensive foreign language practice) and emotional (something which would reduce their psychological inhibitions regarding communication in a foreign language) (MacIntyre, 1995; Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová /forthcoming/).

Foss, & Reitzel (1991) presented a relational model for coping with FLA including several treatment strategies for five components of foreign language competence – motivation, knowledge, skills, criteria outcomes and context.

Young's (1986) finding that ability level has been an important variable in anxiety examination was a significant contribution to FLA research. There is a lot of evidence that FLA decreases as foreign language proficiency increases (e.g., Gardner, Smythe, & Brunet, 1977; Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová, /forthcoming/).

Researchers have already verified strategies of various kinds (e.g., Shams, 2005; Nagahashi, 2007; Tsiplakides, & Keramida, 2009; Alrabai, 2015) where the remediation of FLA has focused mainly on three approaches – cognitive, affective and behavioral (Hembree, 1988; Kondo, & Ying-Ling, 2004) according to the modality emphasized.

Studies which verified the **cognitive approach** focused on changing learners' own cognitive appraisals. The cognitive modification method is recommended for

teaching learners more realistic self-evaluation (Mejías, Applebaum, Applebaum, & Trotter, 1991). Researchers have examined (inter alia) the effectiveness of cooperative learning techniques (Nagahashi, 2007), traditional vs. modern teaching techniques (Hismanoglu, & Hismanoglu, 2010), summative vs. formative evaluation (Hashemi, & Abbasi 2013) as well as oral corrective feedback (Lee, 2016).

The **affective approach** is focused on reducing the negativity of the foreign language experience and includes therapies such as systematic desensitization (Fuller, 1978; Mejías, Applebaum, Applebaum, & Trotter, 1991), biofeedback (Walton, 1981), support groups (Foss, & Reitzel, 1991), relaxation (Ratanasiripong, Sverduk, Hayashino, & Prince, 2010), meditation (Oxford, 2015), an engagement program (Ismail, 2016), doodling (Siagto-Wakat, 2016) and recall techniques (Cinkara, 2016).

The **behavioral approach** presumes that FLA occurs as a result of poor language skills, prompting the attempt to train learners in skills, applying different methods and techniques, e.g., computerized pronunciation practice (Shams, 2005), explicit instruction and self-analysis in the acquisition of foreign language pronunciation (Lord, 2005) and teaching speaking in a virtual environment (Grant, Huang, & Pasfield-Neofitou, 2014).
FLA reducing strategies can also be classified according to whether they refer to either **internal** or **external** parts of the education process. Within the internal elements of the education process – a teacher and a learn-

er, two types of FLA reducing strategies can be distinguished.

Teaching strategies are applied by foreign language teachers to help their students learn a foreign language more effectively (Horváthová, 2013). **Learning strategies** are applied by foreign language learners consciously or subconsciously and they usually develop from their learning styles (Oxford, 1990).

Today, strategies external to the education process are intensively applied in line with the post-communicative approach in foreign language pedagogy integrating affective, cognitive and behavioral modalities of learning. Such **intervention strategies** are often led by psychologists in close cooperation with foreign language teachers.

4.1 Teaching Strategies

Although mostly theoretical, several researchers have made useful suggestions for teachers on how to help learners diminish their FLA in the classroom (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; Horwitz, 1990; Young, 1990; Horwitz, & Young, 1991; Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999; Young, 1999; Arnold, 1999; Kondo, & Ying-Ling, 2004; Hauck, & Hurd, 2005; Hashemi, & Abbasi, 2013; Alrabai, 2015).

In their edited volume Horwitz, & Young (1991) offered both theoretical and practical perspectives on FLA and practical advice for decreasing FLA in language instruction. Young (1990) also offered some advice for teachers to decrease FLA of their students:

1. Using an anxiety graph to pinpoint the highest level of anxiety of a given interaction.
2. Providing supplemental instruction or a support group.
3. Using more pair and group work.
4. Playing language games with an emphasis on problem-solving.
5. Using role-playing.

A later volume by Young (1999) addressed all four language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing along with the cultural aspect and offers specific suggestions for teachers to alleviate learners' FLA in a foreign language classroom.

Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) collected some helpful re-commendations for teachers to alleviate their students' anxiety:

1. Scan for the signs of anxiety by students and apply quick strategies to help them overcome the destructive feelings.
2. Create student-friendly and learning-supportive environment in the class.
3. Create friendship and cooperation among students.
4. Put more emphasis on formative assessment and constructive feedback rather than summative assessment.
5. A communicative approach should be adopted so that students get more chances to practise their speaking skills.
6. Encourage students not to be afraid of making mistakes.
7. Do not correct student's each mistake.
8. Make students feel successful and satisfied when using foreign language.
9. Choose activities and tasks that do not cause instant frustration.
10. Initiate discussion about how the students feel, for instance, when giving presentations, and help them overcome their worries.
11. Search for more training courses on general psychology including language anxiety and learning differences.

Various approaches, methods and techniques have already been verified to make foreign language learning more effective. They have mostly pursued efforts aimed at making the classroom environment a more friendly place where learners can make mistakes – the *Constructivist Theory of Learning* (Vygotsky, 1978); can succeed even with imperfect foreign language competence – the *Communicative Approach* (Nunan, 1991), feel safe with a pretended identity in role-play activities – *Suggestopedia* (Lozanov, 1979); let foreign language communication emerge spontaneously – the *Natural Approach* (Krashen, & Terrell, 1983); talk about one's state of learning – *Counselling-Learning* and use interaction as a vehicle for learning – *Community Language Learning* (Curran, 1976) or coordinate language learning with physical movement – *Total Physical Response* (Asher, 1977).

Koch, & Terrell (1991) studied learners' reactions to activities and teaching techniques within the Natural Approach that is generally concerned with FLA reduction. They found out that some activities (peer work and personal discussions) were perceived as less stressful though there was high inter-individual variability in judging the activities.

Nagahashi (2007) examined the effectiveness of cooperative learning techniques where the group has a common learning goal and members can learn from each other. Cooperative learning proved to be effective in reducing FLA by providing a non-threatening and

supportive environment where learners feel less intimidated working with "equal" partners.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) proposed several specific techniques teachers may use to allay learners' FLA: e.g., behavioral contracting (a learner agrees to spend a specific amount of time on a task, and then reportsback to the teacher).

Crookall, & Oxford (1991) discussed several classroom activities that can be used with learners and teachers to deal with FLA (e.g., agony columns, ghost avengers, mistakes panels, anxious photos, reversed accents, trigger pictures and linguethic). Several other strategies (e.g., written reflections and support groups) are also mentioned in literature related to this topic (McCoy, 1979; Crookall, & Oxford, 1991; Foss, & Reitzel, 1991).

Grant, Huang, & Pasfield-Neofitou (2014) consider virtual environments (chats and computer games) as more effective FLA reducing strategies then those which take place in real world communication. Here, interlocutors communicate through their virtual identities and thus protect their language egos. Learners reported greater engagement in learning in a virtual environment and found it less FLA-inducing in terms of foreign language use (due to anonymity, not having to perform in front of others, conversations evolving in slow motion, and so on).

A video-stimulated recall technique was employed to assist learners in reflecting upon the symptoms and

causes of FLA during speaking and it was proven to be an effective reflective tool (Cinkara, 2016). Doodling was explored as a non-verbal tool in surfacing FLA experiences of foreign language learners (Siagto-Wakat, 2016). It appeared to be a helpful technique in enabling learners to express their classroom experiences. This can help foreign language teachers realize the impact of FLA on their learners.

Beyond any doubt a teacher plays one of the most important roles in increasing or alleviating the anxiety of foreign language learners. In research carried out by Al-Saraj (2011), the majority of participants pointed out that their teachers' characteristics and personalities were the major cause of their anxiety.

Teachers providing incomprehensible explanations, over-correcting students, demonstrating visible favouritism, being authoritarian, and embarrassing and humiliating students create a stressful environment in class and thus contribute strongly to increasing anxiety (Tanveer, 2007).

Learners appreciate it when their teachers are friendly, patient, and helpful, as well as when they smile and care (Young, 1990). Therefore, it is important that teachers pay attention to signals of anxiety radiating from their students and respond sensitively to these feelings in order for students to most benefit from the education process.

In Williams, & Andrade's (2008) study, learners reported the procedure in which a teacher calls on students to answer publicly, as one of the most significant sources of their foreign language classroom anxiety. Calling on students in a predictable order caused less anxiety than them being randomly selected.

Price (1991) explains that students need to feel their teacher's support, encouragement and patience with their errors, without the teacher being excessively critical. As learners appear sensitive and defensive to corrections in foreign language production perceiving every correction as a failure, the selection of error correction techniques should be very empathic.

Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) recommended that teachers select error correction techniques and base them on instructional philosophy so as to reduce defensive reactions in students. For both teachers and learners it is essential to realize that errors are an inevitable part of foreign language learning. Interlanguage is continually changing and fluctuations in foreign language competence are natural.

Learners report less FLA when foreign language teachers have attitude that mistakes are no big deal, their manner of correction is not harsh, when learners can volunteer answers and are not called on to provide responses (Young, 1990).

Summative and constructive feedback on errors is recommended rather than interrupting and correcting

learners during their communication. Lee (2016) e-xamined the oral corrective feedback and changes in foreign language students' anxiety levels and the study highlighted the potential affective risks of oral pronunciation corrections.

Nearly all interventions to reduce FLA are learner-oriented and assume foreign language teachers will implement anxiety-relieving behavior and practice in their classrooms. It is often forgotten that many foreign language teachers are not native speakers of a foreign language and may face FLA as well (Horwitz, 1996; Numrich, 1996; Ohata, 2005).

However, to this day, research on teachers' and student teachers' FLA is limited to more or less descriptive studies. Nevertheless, this kind of FLA can have rather an undesirable influence on foreign language learning. The role of a teacher is undoubtedly one of the most crucial ones in making foreign language learning less stressful and more enjoyable (Horwitz, 1996; Al-Saraj, 2011; Hashemi, & Abbasi, 2013; Lee, 2016).

Foreign language teachers are supposed to be perfect foreign language speakers and much of their FLA stems from the inherent threat to their self-concept of competence (Horwitz, 1996). High-level foreign language competence can be best achieved by intensive communication with foreign language native speakers or a longer stay in a foreign language country (Matsuda, & Gobel, 2004).

In fact, not many foreign language teachers have access to this. Moreover, teaching today is extremely demanding, both cognitively and emotionally. Students are likely to sense their teachers' uncertainty in a foreign language so the teachers should be supported to cope with their problems (including foreign language anxiety) prior to their teaching career, so that they will be able to manage their own FLA and FLA of their students. The courses on general psychology focused on teachers' needs and problems should be incorporated into the teacher-training curricula.

Though practice in teaching foreign language appears to be a viable strategy to reduce FLA (Morton, Vesco, Williams, & Awender, 1997), some kind of post-communist countries' paradox should be mentioned in this context (Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová /forthcoming/) corresponding to the previous findings that high level of FLA is associated with older learners, who had never visited a foreign country (Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley, 1999).

More experienced foreign language teachers often experience higher speaking anxiety due to some previous socio-political factors. Lack of communication in an authentic foreign language and limited opportunities to stay in a foreign language speaking country during the communist years caused higher communication inhibitions among teachers of Western foreign languages. Similar findings have been revealed in the Korean context (Kim, & Kim, 2004).

Anyway, native speakers are not always the best foreign language teachers. Non-native teachers' strong point is that they have also been foreign language learners and understand the pitfalls of the learning process specific for the given language and cultural context (Malá, Gadušová, & Zelenický, 2008). Teachers with a realistic appreciation of their foreign language competence will be more willing to seek out improvement opportunities and using more communicative teaching practices (Horwitz, 1996).

4.2 Learning strategies

It may also be helpful for foreign language learners to find their own strategies to overcome anxiety in stressful situations. Many students like to have some rituals before big exams or they keep talismans close. Hauck, & Hurd (2005) have collected a few strategies for learners to deal with FLA:

1. Use positive self-talk (e.g. I can do it; it doesn't matter if I make mistakes; others make mistakes).
2. Actively encourage myself to take risks in language learning, such as guessing meanings or trying to speak, even though I might make some mistakes.
3. Imagine that when I am speaking in front of others, it is just a friendly informal chat.
4. Tell myself when I speak that it won't take long.
5. Give myself a reward or treat when I do well.
6. Be aware of physical signs of stress that might affect my language learning.
7. Write down my feelings in a day or notebook.
8. Share my worries with other students.
9. Let my tutor know that I am anxious.
10. Use relaxation techniques, e.g. deep breathing, consciously speaking more slowly, etc.

The most employed model of language learning strategies is the *Strategy Inventory for Language Learning* (Oxford, 1990) in which language learning strategies fall into six categories:

1. memory – storing and retrieval of information;
2. cognitive – manipulation or transformation of the foreign language;
3. metacognitive – relate to learners' cognition;
4. compensation – compensation or production in spite of limitations in knowledge of the foreign language;
5. affective – regulation of feelings and attitudes;
6. social – involve communication with other people.

Lu, & Liu (2011) explored cognitive and metacognitive language learning strategies in relation to FLA among Chinese university students of English. They concluded that less anxious language learners tend to choose more language learning strategies that are more appropriate to a given task.

Kondo, & Ying-Ling (2004) developed a typology of strategies that learners use to cope with FLA in five categories: preparation (e.g., studying hard, getting to use a foreign language, concentrating in class); relaxation (e.g., taking deep breaths, drawing to calm down); positive thinking (e.g., imagining one's good performance in a foreign language, thinking of something pleasant, trying not to take it too seriously); peer seeking (e.g., asking other learners for advice, talking with friends in their proximity), and resignation (e.g., accepting the situation, giving up on studying).

Paradowski, Dmowska, & Czasak (2015) studied coping strategies that foreign language learners employ to conquer speaking anxiety. They consider learner-centered humanistic techniques emphasizing positive atmosphere crucial in this context.

Two types of awareness are distinguished within humanistic techniques (Bowen, 2004) – experiential awareness (helping learners get rid of unrealistic expectations about the foreign language learning process) and group awareness (helping learners create a sense of common objective and collective success in foreign language learning).

4.3 Intervention strategies

Modern trends in teaching foreign languages emphasize an affective aspect of learning to counterbalance the cognitive aspect. The **post-communicative approach** (Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World, 2007) in foreign language teaching and learning utilizes psychological methods and techniques to make it more effective and enjoyable.

While FLA researchers have mostly focused on reducing the negative effect of FLA, the current trend of positive psychology (Oxford, 2015) that aims to activate character strengths and self-regulated learning to enhance professional and personal well-being has been increasing in recent years (Dewaele, & MacIntyre, 2014).

The current trend of positive psychology increasing positive emotions, relationships and accomplishment has the potential to become a significant approach in coping with FLA (Seligman, 2011). Oxford (2015) analysed several emotion theories and how they apply to foreign language learning. In the *PERMA* theory within positive psychology, five "elements of well-being" (Seligman, 2011) are included – Positive emotion (P), Engagement (E), Relationships (R), Meaning (M) and Accomplishment (A).

Oxford (2015) further demonstrates how FLA can be managed through particular emotional strategies. *ABCDE macro-strategy* (Seligman, 2011) and *REBT – Rational Emotion Behavior Therapy* (Ellis, 2003) contain a set of interlocking strategies to self-identify irrational

beliefs connected with foreign language learning. The strategy of identification must always be accompanied by strategies of creating counter-evidence and creating a new (positive) mindset (Oxford, 2015).

Relaxation techniques are becoming more and more discussed nowadays and research has verified their effectiveness regarding the control of FLA. Biofeedback therapists teach anxious individuals to control their FLA in anxiety-provoking situations and settings by generating relaxation instead of anxiety responses through the gradual introduction of anxiety-provoking stimuli (Walton, 1981).

Robinson, Segal, Segal, & Smith (2015) suggest progressive muscle relaxation, visualization, meditation, yoga or tai chi as further techniques to overcome stress and alleviate anxiety from the longitudinal point of view. Through the meditation-like strategies, learners should bring their negative emotions concerning foreign language learning under control – accept them, learn from them and let them go (Oxford, 2015).

Paradowski, Dmowska, & Czasak (2015) discuss overcoming learners' detrimental beliefs about foreign language learning by building experiential awareness, and overcoming fears stemming from classroom interactions by enhancing group awareness.
Cohn, & Frederickson (2010) published one of the first and most detailed survey of positive psychology intervention – loving-kindness meditation intervention. Though not specifically focused on foreign language learning, they provided evidence about the long-term

and continued effect of positive psychology intervention on behavioral maintenance.

Stranovská et al. (2013) examined the psycho-linguistic intervention program on learning foreign languages from multi-layer and longitudinal perspectives. They concluded that the integration of information and emotions with an emphasis on practical application is a significant trend in learning and teaching (not only for foreign languages).

The effect of the engagement program including learning activities, drawing, writing on the board, exercises and educational videos, was verified among Saudi female university students of English in alleviating their FLA and enhancing their motivation for learning English (Ismail, 2016).

Kráľová, Škorvagová, Tirpáková, & Markechová (forthcoming) examined an affective intervention in the form of psycho-social training as an FLA reducing strategy. Psycho-social training is a non-therapeutic intervention training program of active social learning that should help individuals cope with stressful situations by developing their social abilities (sensitivity, assertiveness, empathy, communication and cooperation). It helps them enhance their self-confidence, acquire adequate reactions, realize reasons for diffidence, strengthen their will and active self-knowledge and cope with stage fright (Škorvagová, 2015).

Psycho-social training is widely accepted and applied at all levels of education in the United States and Western

Europe (Coleman, & Deutsch, 2000; Topping, Holmes, & Bremner, 2000; Polk, 2000). Compared to more traditional forms of education, it induces deeper and longer-term positive changes in participants' social competence (Positive Youth Development, 2014).

Matsumoto, Kudoh, Scherer, & Wallbott (1988) unearthed particularly interesting findings about the locus of control – foreign learners' belief about who or what is responsible for negative emotion-eliciting events during foreign language learning. Participants who attributed the responsibility to other forces or people (external locus of control) demonstrated more limited coping abilities than those who thought they were personally responsible for the event (internal locus of control).

Apart from recent attempts to test the effectiveness of FLA reducing strategies, an empirical work with sound comparative and longitudinal aspects testing the effectiveness of such strategies in a longitudinal design is yet to be established. The recommendations and strategies mentioned above may be very helpful for foreign language learning and teaching but it is important to bear in mind that all learners differ and thus each learner requires a different approach.

Conclusions

> *"Language learning is a life-long commitment."*
> *(Horwitz, 1996)*

Foreign language learning is a life-long commitment (Horwitz, 1996), so it should be the main objective of foreign language methodologists to find the most efficient methods for foreign language learning and teaching. They should take into consideration the real needs of foreign language learners and teachers, thus making the acquisition of foreign language more effective, enjoyable and less frustrating.

The multifactorial nature of FLA and the demand on communication in modern language learning pose a challenge to researchers to help foreign language learners. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of FLA cannot be defined in a linear way, it should be better understood as a complex psychological phenomenon influenced by many different factors. As every human is individual and distinct in their character, the above mentioned factors influence each learner in a different way and intensity.

It is human and natural to feel stress or anxiety in certain situations. However, it is important to be able to cope with the negative feelings so that they do not affect one's life, learning and performance. Because an anxious foreign language learner is a less effective foreign language learner (Horwitz, 1996).

Certainly, the information presented above is neither exhaustive nor definite to understand the entire phenomenon of foreign language anxiety. However, it is hoped that this book will add more systematized information to the study of anxiety among foreign language learners which could prove to be of interest for foreign language teaching methodology.

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