

Pre-service EFL Teachers' Anxiety about Teaching

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J.J. Strossmayer University of Osijek

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Double Major MA Study Programme in English Language and Literature –
Teaching English as a Foreign Language and Pedagogy

Martina Brodar

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Master's Thesis

Supervisor: dr. Višnja Pavičić Takač, Full Professor

Osijek, 2020

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Dvopredmetni sveučilišni diplomski studij engleskog jezika i književnosti –
nastavnički smjer i pedagogije

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Strah od poučavanja kod budućih nastavnika engleskoga jezika

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Abstract

This study investigates the foreign language teaching anxiety of pre-service EFL teachers. The theoretical part of the study brings an overview of the role of anxiety in foreign language learning and teaching, followed by the overview of the foreign language teaching anxiety in different educational contexts. The analytical part of the study presents the results of the research aimed to investigate the foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service EFL teachers in the Croatian context. The results showed that all participants experienced either low or moderate foreign language teaching anxiety. However, no significant difference in anxiety levels was found between those participants who have had more English teaching practice and those who have had less teaching practice. Also, there was no significant correlation between the number of methodological classes taken and the level of anxiety.

Keywords: pre-service EFL teachers, anxiety, foreign language teaching anxiety, TEFL

Sažetak

U ovom se radu istražuje strah od poučavanja kod budućih nastavnika engleskog kao stranog jezika. U teorijskom se dijelu rada daje pregled uloge anksioznosti kod učenja i poučavanja te pregled straha od poučavanja stranog jezika u različitim obrazovnim kontekstima. U analitičkom dijelu rada predstavljeni su rezultati istraživanja koje je za cilj imalo istražiti strah od poučavanja kod budućih nastavnika engleskog kao stranog jezika u hrvatskom obrazovnom kontekstu. Rezultati su pokazali kako su svi ispitanici iskusili nisku ili umjerenu razinu straha od poučavanja stranog jezika. No, nije pronađena značajna razlika u razini straha između ispitanika koji su imali više prakse u poučavanju engleskog jezika i onih koji su imali manje prakse. Također, nije utvrđena značajna povezanost između broja metodičkih kolegija i razine straha od poučavanja.

Ključne riječi: budući nastavnici, anksioznost, strah od poučavanja stranog jezika, engleski kao strani jezik

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1. Introduction

The significance and the complexity of affect in the field of second language acquisition has been the topic of many research studies because affect covers a range of constructs and behaviours that may play a role in the process of language acquisition. Affective factors can be defined as all those emotionally relevant characteristics that influence the individual in the language learning context and are not related to cognition (Scovel, 1978; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993). Among others, some of the often-researched affective variables are language attitudes, motivation, willingness to communicate and anxiety. Anxiety is an affective factor most extensively researched in the context of foreign language learning and teaching. This is due to the fact that anxiety has been proven to greatly influence the language learning process. Anxiety can be defined as a state or a feeling characterized by negative emotions and feelings of worry, fear, and uneasiness. As for the effects of anxiety, it can have either facilitating or debilitating effects. In some cases, mild anxiety can promote an individual's performance, whereas in some cases of high anxiety it can inhibit the language performance due to the negative impact of worry.

Understanding the ways anxiety influences the processes of language learning and teaching has been in the focus of educators and researchers for decades. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) were the first researchers to introduce the concept of foreign language anxiety. They define it as a situation-specific type of anxiety that represents a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours which are related to the language learning process. Similarly, according to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994), language anxiety is a specific type of anxiety characterized by the feelings of tension and apprehension that are often experienced in the foreign language learning context. Also, studies have shown that foreign language classes have been more anxiety provoking than others, such as math or science classes.

Only recently has foreign language teaching anxiety started gaining researchers' attention. Teaching anxiety can play a major role in the development of behaviours that might cause unwanted effects on the teachers' abilities to teach. Horwitz (1996) introduced the concept of foreign language teaching anxiety. Since language learning is a process that is never complete, non-native foreign language teachers can be considered as advanced students of the target language. Therefore, it is likely that they can experience anxiety about their own level of the knowledge of the language they teach. When these concerns about the teacher's language performance combine with the lack of confidence and other factors such as the emotional and

cognitive demands of classroom teaching, classroom management issues, evaluation and performance standards, foreign language teachers are prone to experience the foreign language teaching anxiety than can in turn negatively influence their instructional practices.

The theoretical part of this thesis presents an overview of the significance of anxiety as an affective variable in foreign language learning and teaching. Next, the importance and the influence of foreign language anxiety and foreign language teaching anxiety on the foreign language learning and teaching is presented and elaborated. Also, relevant research studies and their results are analysed in terms of their connection to the topic of this study. The analytical part of this thesis reports on the study done to investigate the foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language in the Croatian context.

2. Anxiety as an affective variable in foreign language learning and teaching

2.1. Affect in foreign language teaching and learning

Early research into emotion in language learning identified the significance and the complexity of affect in language acquisition processes (White, 2018). The literature on the relationship between affective variables and foreign language learning has shown that the term “affect” covers a range of constructs and behaviours. According to Scovel (1978), affective variables or factors deal with the emotional reactions and motivations of the learner. In other words, they represent everything that influences language learning which is not related to cognition. Similarly, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) stated that affective variables are all those emotionally relevant characteristics that influence how the individual responds in the language learning context. However, even though the terms affect and emotion are often used as synonyms in the research literature, affect is seen as an umbrella term which includes other affective states, not just emotions (Martínez Agudo and Azzaro, 2018). Furthermore, giving attention to affective factors can lead to more effective language learning and teaching.

When it comes to affective language teaching, teachers should be aware that their teaching practices could be more effective if they also considered the impact of their own emotional intelligence in the process of teaching. Teaching methods such as Suggestopedia, Silent Way, Community Language Learning, and Total Physical Response have come to the fore in the 1970s because they took into account the affective side of the language learning (Arnold and Brown, 1999). Also, research has shown that the affectivity of the teacher in a foreign language classroom context is one of the most salient factors that contribute to the student-teacher interaction, classroom dynamics, and student language achievement (Gabryś-Barker, 2018). However, even though evidence shows that teacher emotions influence their cognition, well-being, and overall performance, the area of teacher emotion is yet to be researched thoroughly in the foreign language teacher education context (Xu, 2018). Many affective factors have been identified in the language learning situation, such as language attitudes, motivation, anxiety, and willingness to communicate.

Researchers have been interested in the idea that learners’ attitudes towards the target language and the learning context can contribute to the success or failure of learning the target language. However, research conducted on foreign language attitudes has mostly been done within the framework of research on motivation and the two variables have been considered interconnected (Mitchell and Myles, 2004).

According to Gardner and MacIntyre (1993), motivation is a complex construct defined by three components: desire for achieving a certain goal, effort invested in achieving the goal, and satisfaction with the task. They have developed instruments to measure motivation and carried out research that has discovered relationships between language attitudes, motivation, and foreign language achievement.

Language anxiety is presumably the affective factor most extensively researched in the context of foreign language learning and teaching. That is due to the fact that anxiety has been recognized as an emotion that influences the language learning experience of many language learners (White, 2018). Language anxiety is defined as “the apprehension experienced when a situation requires the use of a second language with which the individual is not fully proficient” (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993:5). Since non-native foreign language teachers can also be considered students of the target language, they can also be affected by this variable (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Willingness to communicate in a foreign language is an affective factor that combines language anxiety and confidence to determine one’s readiness to communicate in a particular situation using the target language. The purpose of communicative language teaching is promoting learners’ communicative competence, but many teachers encounter the situations where learners avoid communication in the target language because they are not willing to communicate (MacIntyre, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels, 1998).

2.2. Anxiety and the conceptualisations/definitions of anxiety

Anxiety has been identified as one of the most important affective variables when it comes to learning and teaching (Scovel, 1978). Also, it is the affective factor that extensively obstructs the learning process (Arnold and Brown, 1999). Extensive literature on the topic of anxiety provides a considerable amount of definitions of the concept of anxiety. According to psychologists, anxiety is a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object (Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson, as cited in Scovel, 1978). Spielberger (1983) defines the concept of anxiety as a subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry which is activated by the arousal of the autonomic nervous system. Arnold and Brown (1999) also add that anxiety can be associated with the feelings of uneasiness, frustration, apprehension, self doubt or tension. From the above mentioned definitions of anxiety, it can be concluded that anxiety is mostly seen as a state or feeling which is characterized by negative emotions of worry, fear, and uneasiness. Scovel (1978, as cited in White, 2018) concludes that,

since anxiety is not a well-understood concept, it is crucial for researchers to specify the type of anxiety they are referring to in relation to language learning.

Therefore, researchers have defined three types of anxiety, and those are trait, state, and situation specific anxiety. Trait anxiety refers to an individual's likelihood of being anxious in a number of different situations. Therefore, trait anxiety can be seen as a personality trait. State anxiety is seen as an apprehension that is experienced at a particular moment or in a particular anxiety-provoking situation. Those individuals that experience trait anxiety are also prone to display high levels of state anxiety in stressful situations. Moreover, individuals with higher trait anxiety are likely to experience state anxiety in situations that involve interpersonal relationships and those that threaten self esteem, such as learning a foreign language (Spielberger, 1983). The third type of anxiety is called situation specific anxiety and it was adopted by researchers as an alternative to the state anxiety concept (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). This type of anxiety is associated with situations such as public speaking, taking exams, or participating in class. According to Horwitz et al. (1986), when anxiety is limited to the language learning situation, it falls into the category of specific anxiety reactions.

As for the effects of anxiety, Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) differentiate between beneficial or facilitating, and inhibitory or debilitating anxiety. In some cases, anxiety can actually promote performance due to the affective component of emotionality. Therefore, facilitating anxiety improves the individual's performance. As for the debilitating anxiety, it inhibits the performance due to the negative impact of the cognitive component of worry. Similarly, Van Deurzen (2012, as cited in Cuéllar and Oxford, 2018) states that anxiety can be experienced either as excitement and anticipation or as aguish, which conforms to the above mentioned distinction between the beneficial and debilitating anxiety.

2.3. Foreign language anxiety and its performance anxieties

For years, scholars have been researching the effects of anxiety on learning a foreign language. Understanding the mechanism of anxiety in the field of language learning and teaching has been a major concern for educators and researchers due to language anxiety being associated with problems in language learning. Krashen (1982) states that anxiety might interfere with the process of learning and acquiring a language. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) were among the first researchers that introduced the concept of foreign language anxiety. They conceptualize foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific type of anxiety and define it as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language

learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (Horwitz et al., 1986:128). Similarly, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) state that language anxiety is a specific type of anxiety that is defined as the feeling of tension and apprehension experienced in the foreign language learning context.

Over the years, a number of studies have been conducted in order to investigate the relationship between anxiety and achievement in the foreign language. Scovel (1978) explains that the results of such studies have been very different because researchers have not been specific about the type of anxiety they were measuring. Furthermore, when it comes to the relationship between foreign language anxiety and achievement, Horwitz (2001) concludes that the role of anxiety in language learning should be distinguished from its role in language performance. Horwitz et al. (1986) have offered an instrument to measure the situation specific foreign language anxiety. They created the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and the instrument has helped to have more consistent findings concerning the researches in the field of foreign language anxiety.

Horwitz et al. (1986) identify three performance anxieties related to foreign language anxiety. Those are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is “is a type of shyness characterized by fear of or anxiety about communicating with people” (Horwitz et al., 1986:127). This performance anxiety includes having difficulties in oral communication with others, stage fright, and difficulties in listening or learning a message, i.e. receiver anxiety. People who are usually anxious about speaking in front of others or in groups are likely to experience even more anxiety when faced with communicating in foreign language classes where their performance is constantly being monitored. It is possible that many talkative people are quiet during language classes because they know that their knowledge of the target language is limited and therefore they believe that they will have difficulty communicating as well as understanding others. However, self-conscious and inhibited people may feel less anxious communicating in a foreign language because communicating in a foreign language makes them feel as someone else is talking. Next, test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety that emerges from the fear of failure (Gordon and Sarason, 1955, as cited in Horwitz et al. 1986). Students who are anxious about testing in foreign language classes usually experience difficulties because of the frequent tests and quizzes, as well as oral tests that provoke both test anxiety and communication apprehension. The third anxiety related to foreign language learning is the fear of negative evaluation. Although similar to test anxiety, it is a broader area because it can occur in any evaluative situation such as speaking in a

language class or at an interview. Also, students may be sensitive to feedback or the correction received from the teacher or their peers in a language classroom. However, even though the above mentioned performance anxieties provide useful guidelines for the description of foreign language anxiety, the authors suggest that foreign language anxiety is not just the combination of these fears transferred to foreign language learning.

2.4. Foreign language anxiety as a specific type of anxiety

Horwitz et al. (1986) state that, just as anxiety can prevent people from good performance in mathematics or science, many find learning a foreign language in a classroom context extremely stressful. However, foreign language anxiety is different from other academic anxieties because other fields of study do not implicate self-concept and self-expression as much as language study does (Lee and Lew, 2011, as cited in Xu, 2018). In other words, the discrepancy between the 'true' self as the language learner sees himself and the more limited self that can be presented at any given moment in the language learning process is the reason why foreign language anxiety distinguishes from other academic anxieties (Horwitz et al., 1986).

Furthermore, research has shown that foreign language classes are more anxiety provoking than other classes. Research conducted by Horwitz et al. (1986) has shown that the participants felt more anxious in their language classes than in other classes. Also, both teachers and students generally feel that anxiety is a crucial obstacle that needs to be overcome in the process of learning another language. Similarly, in a study by MacIntyre and Gardner (1991), foreign language class was rated as more anxiety provoking than the other two classes.

An anxious foreign language student is the one that feels insecure in a foreign language learning environment, is afraid of making mistakes, avoids participating in class discussions, and is unwilling and feels discomfort when asked to try newly learnt linguistic and conversational forms (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). Furthermore, Horwitz et al. (1986) suggest that anxiety centers on the two basic requirements of foreign language learning, those being listening and speaking. Furthermore, anxiety also affects the communication strategies students employ in foreign language classes. Difficulty in speaking in a foreign language class is the most frequent concern of the students, so they tend to avoid conveying difficult messages in the target language. When it comes to writing, research has shown that students who display higher levels of writing anxiety usually write shorter compositions than their calmer classmates do (Horwitz et al., 1986). Also, anxiety affects listening as well and students complain of difficulties when it comes to discriminating the sounds or structures in the target language.

2.5. Foreign language anxiety in the Croatian context

There have also been some contributions to the field of foreign language anxiety in the Croatian context.

Mihaljević Djigunović and Legac (2008) explored foreign language anxiety and listening comprehension of monolingual and bilingual EFL learners in Croatia. A foreign language anxiety scale and a listening achievement test were used to collect the data from 112 Croatia EFL learners that took part in the study. Those participants whose both parents were Croatian native speakers and Croatian was the only language of instruction in school (except EFL class) were assigned to the monolingual group. The other half of the participants that were assigned to the bilingual group knew two languages, Croatian and another one (Albanian, Czech, or Italian) and either learned the other language at home or in school. Findings showed that foreign language anxiety was lower in bilingual learners than in monolingual learners. Researchers concluded that bilingual learners' extensive experience in using both languages regularly prevented or reduced feelings of foreign language anxiety.

Mihaljević Djigunović, Andracka, Brajković, Cergol, Dombaj, Kacun, Kresojeić, Rakoš, and Sviben (2004) developed a scale to measure foreign language anxiety in the Croatian context. Since foreign language anxiety is both culturally and socially determined, the authors argued that an instrument measuring anxiety in the Croatian context needs to be based on cultural and social grounds of the targeted population. Therefore, a 24-item instrument CROEFLA was designed with the purpose of helping in the identification of foreign language anxiety in the Croatian context.

Another study investigating foreign language anxiety of university student was conducted by Kostić-Bobanović (2009). The aim of the study was to identify the differences in language anxiety perceived by Austrian and Croatian university students of Economics who studied Business English as a foreign language. The researcher used the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) designed by Horwitz et al. (1986) in order to collect data from 200 participants. 100 of them were Croatian university students, and an equal number attended university in Austria. Both groups attended the university course of Business English as a foreign language. Results showed that a higher number of Croatian students get nervous when speaking in the foreign language class, as well as when they know they will be called on in a language class. However, Austrian students were more anxious about their language proficiency, since

they were more worried about other students being more proficient and better in English than they were.

3. Foreign language teaching anxiety

3.1. Teaching anxiety

Teaching is known to be an emotionally demanding profession which is both highly stressful, as well as rewarding. The daily work of teachers involves different forms of emotional labour both in and outside the classroom (Hochschild, 1983, as cited in Xu, 2018). It has been assumed that the presence of teaching anxiety can play a significant role in the development of attitudes and behaviours that have unwanted effects on the teachers' ability to teach, as well as on their health (Gardner and Leak, 1994).

Fuller and Brown (1975, as cited in Capel, 2001) identify three stages of concern through which teachers go during their development as teachers. Self concerns imply coping with the teaching environment, i.e. the ability to control the class, being liked by the students, understanding the expectations imposed by supervisors and parents, and being evaluated. Task concerns include grasping the everyday routines and teaching tasks, as well as working with too many students, the lack of instructional materials and time constraints. Lastly, impact concerns include various concerns regarding students' learning and progress and their emotional needs, as well as the teacher's own ability to individualise and tailor the contents to the needs of the students. They also conclude that teachers go through these stages in sequential order, which is something Capel (2001) does not agree with. In her study, she used the Teachers Concerns Questionnaire to measure students' concerns and concluded that students held more than one type of concern at a time.

To assess the occurrence of teaching anxiety, Gardner and Leak (1994) conducted a study in which they discovered that the vast majority of psychology teachers experienced anxiety in relation to some aspect of teaching. Specific triggers of teaching anxiety were identified as standing in front of class before speaking, preparing for class, hostile comments from students, and being unable to provide adequate answers to students. They also suggest that training programs raise awareness of teaching anxiety among future teachers and that they equip individuals with coping mechanisms for when they experience teaching anxiety.

3.2. Foreign language teaching anxiety

In addition to what teachers in general may be anxious about, foreign language teachers may also have other concerns related to teaching of a foreign language. In comparison with the affective experiences of teachers who teach disciplines such as mathematics, science, or history, the issue of emotions is very prominent for teachers of a foreign language because the language of instruction is neither their or their students' mother tongue and that can in turn result in

anxiety and apprehension (Lee and Lew, as cited in Xu, 2018). Horwitz (1996) was among the first to introduce the topic of foreign language teaching anxiety. Since language learning is never complete, foreign language teachers can be considered as advanced students of the target language. Even though non-native foreign language teachers are supposed to be advanced speakers of the target language, it is likely that they also feel anxious about their level of knowledge of the foreign language they teach. Becoming a certified foreign language teacher does not necessarily mean that the teacher's language learning is complete. Also, getting a teaching certificate does not imply that the teacher is automatically self confident about his own knowledge of the language (Horwitz, 1996). Moreover, when teachers do not feel competent enough when it comes to their own foreign language knowledge, they tend to reflect the anxiety reactions that are usually displayed by inexperienced language learners (Tum, 2015).

The existence of foreign language teaching anxiety may negatively affect language instruction. Teachers who display high levels of foreign language anxiety are more prone to using the target language less in their classroom than they should. Moreover, when the teachers themselves are not comfortable using the target language, they tend to choose instructional practices that do not encourage the use of the target language as much as some other practices. Instead, they use teaching practices that are very predictable and allow them to easily control the input. However, when the teachers do not feel comfortable and do not encourage the use of the target language in the classroom, then that kind of teaching style can communicate negative messages about language learning to students. This then leads to students being less motivated for learning and using the foreign language (Kim and Kim, 2004; Horwitz, 1996).

Apart from worrying about language performance, there are numerous other factors that may potentially be sources of anxiety for language teachers. These include the emotional and cognitive demands of classroom teaching, some of them being unruly students, classroom management problems, challenges to the teacher's authority and competences, performance standards, and evaluation from the authorities, colleagues, and parents. These factors can cause the teacher to use more cautious instructional practices and therefore limit the teacher's attempts for innovations or practicing different instructional practices. When these concerns combine with the above mentioned lack of confidence and anxiety about the teacher's own language performance, teachers are prone to experience foreign language teaching anxiety (Horwitz, 1996).

Even though research evidence reveals that teacher emotion influences their cognition, performance, and well-being, the area of teacher emotion is not very much researched in the field of foreign language teacher education (Xu, 2018).

3.3. Studies on foreign language teaching anxiety

Because the foreign language teaching anxiety affects the way teachers teach, as well as the amount of the language students receive, this topic started gaining attention among researchers in the last couple of decades. The Teacher Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (TFLAS) was designed by Horwitz in order to measure the teachers' anxiety about teaching (Horwitz, 2008, as cited in Machida, 2011).

Ipek (2016) conducted a qualitative study on foreign language teaching anxiety in the Turkish context in order to investigate the sources of anxiety experienced by non-native teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) while teaching the target language. The participants were 32 non-native EFL teachers whose foreign language teaching experience ranged from no experience at all to 16 years of experience. A combination of two self-report instruments, diaries and interviews, was used to identify the sources of anxiety in non-native EFL teachers. Results revealed that non-native EFL teachers experience anxiety specific to teaching English as a foreign language and were further classified into five categories. These include making mistakes, teaching a particular language skill, feeling discomfort while using the native language, teaching students at particular language proficiency levels and fear of failure. Ipek (2016) states that the first three above mentioned sources of anxiety are characteristic for teaching a foreign language, i.e. they are very unlikely to occur when teaching any other subject apart from foreign language. Furthermore, she concludes that by determining the incidents that create anxiety among foreign language teachers it is possible to help become aware of what makes them anxious in the foreign language classroom and to overcome their foreign language teaching anxiety.

Merç (2011) conducted a similar study where he wanted to identify the sources of anxiety experienced by student EFL teachers also in the Turkish context. 150 students studying to become English foreign language teachers participated in the study. The data were collected from the diaries the participants kept during their teaching practicum, as well as from semi-structured interviews that were conducted with the randomly selected 30 participants. Qualitative analysis of the collected data indicated six categories as the sources of anxiety experienced by foreign language student teachers throughout their teaching practicum. The category that student teachers felt most anxious about concerns students and class profiles. In other words, students

were anxious because of the unfamiliarity with awaits them in the classroom. Next, student teachers were anxious about classroom management, i.e. about maintaining discipline and time management. The category of teaching procedures was another source of anxiety for student teachers. They were more anxious about teaching productive skills, rather than the receptive ones. Student teachers were also anxious about being observed, be it by their peers, cooperating teachers or supervisors. Receiving criticism from cooperating teachers and mentors was another source of anxiety for student teachers. Lastly, some diverse technical issues concerning teaching material and teaching instruments made student teachers anxious. The researcher concludes that the anxiety student teachers experience when what they face in classrooms does not correspond with what they learnt during their courses can be dealt with by teacher education programs connecting theoretical and methodological issues.

Another study that investigated EFL teachers' teaching anxiety and its sources was conducted by Machida (2011) in the Japanese context. He conceptualizes teaching anxiety as anxiety about a teacher's own English proficiency and anxiety about teaching English. Questionnaires and follow-up interviews were used to gather the data from a total of 137 participants. The results showed that a considerable amount of EFL teachers felt anxious about teaching English primarily because of lack of training and experience, as well as the lack of confidence in their communicative abilities in English. Machida also adds that having more teaching experience and formal training helps in decreasing teaching anxiety.

Kim and Kim (2004) investigated professional anxiety in foreign language teachers by identifying the sources of the teaching anxiety and the anxiety-coping strategies. The study took place in the Korean context of teaching English as a foreign language. The participants were 147 EFL in-service teachers and a questionnaire was used for data collection. Results showed that some of the most common sources of teaching anxiety were limited knowledge of vocabulary, limited ability in productive skills, fear of negative evaluation and teaching English through English.

What can be concluded from the results of the above mentioned studies is that teaching anxiety among non-native teachers of English as a foreign language was found to be a relatively stable feature in different context, from Turkish, Korean to Japanese. Since this type of anxiety affects the way teachers teach and the instructional practices they choose, which can be detrimental to the students' acquisition of the target language, foreign language anxiety among teachers should be acknowledged and properly dealt with.

When it comes to the field of foreign language teaching anxiety, the field is still much under researched in the Croatian context. However, seeing that foreign language teaching anxiety has proven to exist in multiple contexts, it is possible to conclude that the Croatian context would offer interesting results and insights into this problem which could shed light on the foreign language teaching anxiety among Croatian EFL teachers.

4. The study

4.1. Aim and research questions:

The main aim of this study was to investigate foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers of English in the Croatian context. Previous studies showed that foreign language teaching anxiety is present in different contexts, i.e. it was found in the Turkish, Japanese and Korean context (Merc, 2011; Machida, 2011; Kim and Kim, 2004). The following research questions were imposed by the study:

1. What is the level of foreign language teaching anxiety of pre-service teachers of English?
2. Is there a significant difference in anxiety levels between those participants who have had English teaching practice and those who have not?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the number of teaching methodology classes taken and the level of anxiety?

4.2. Participants

A total of 52 participants took part in the study. They were all enrolled in the Graduate Study Programme of Teaching English as a Foreign Language. There were 25 participants enrolled in the 1st year of the graduate study, and 27 participants enrolled in the 2nd year of the graduate study. 71.2 % were female students, whereas 28.8 % were male students. All of the students who took part in the study were double majors. Table 1 below shows what other study programme participants were enrolled into.

Table 1: Other study groups the participants were studying along English

Other study group	N
German	10
Croatian	5
Hungarian	6
Pedagogy	12
History	9
Philosophy	10
Total	52

Furthermore, Table 2 shows the number of teaching methodology classes taken by the participants. During their graduate study, the participants were enrolled into various courses

related to the foreign language acquisition, teaching methodology, teaching materials, error correction and all the classes were taught in English. The highest percentage of participants (36.5 %) attended an average of 3 methodological classes during their graduate study.

Table 2: Number and percentages of methodical classes taken by the participants

Number of methodological classes	N	%
1	10	19.2
2	12	23.1
3	19	36.5
4	9	17.3
5	2	3.8
Total	52	100

Lastly, when it comes to their previous experience in teaching the subject of their other study group, 50 % or 26 of the participants have had previous teaching experience regarding their other study group. On the other hand, 25 participants (48 %) have not had prior teaching experience. One participant did not state his/her previous teaching experience.

4.3. Instrument

The instrument designed for this study was a two-part questionnaire in Croatian (see Appendix A). A pilot study was conducted with a group of pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language who were attending the course Research in Teaching English as a Foreign Language during the fall semester of 2018. The participants were asked to fill in the questionnaire and provide feedback about the structure, items on the questionnaire, as well as anything else they found confusing or relevant about the questionnaire. Also, one of the purposes of the pilot study was to measure the time required to complete the questionnaire, as well as to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire. After collecting their feedback, the original questionnaire was updated and the final version was created. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of demographic questions concerning gender, year of study, other study group, previous foreign language teaching experience, number of methodological classes taken during the graduate study and previous teaching experience in their other field of study. The second part featured 36 items referring to possible fears and concerns future teachers might have

about teaching English. The items were accompanied by a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*This does not refer to me at all*) to 5 (*This refers to me entirely*). Cronbach's α was .825.

4.4. Procedure

The data were collected in 2018 and 2019. The first part of the study was conducted during the fall semester of 2018. The two-part questionnaire in Croatian was administered to 1st and 2nd year students of Teaching English as a Foreign Language during their regular classes and with the prior approval of their professor. Before completing the questionnaire, the participants were given clear instructions in their mother tongue on the purpose of the study and time required to fill in the questionnaire. They were informed that the data collected was anonymous and that taking part in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any moment.

The second part of the study was done during the spring semester of 2019. After finishing their compulsory teaching practice that took part that semester, 2nd year students who previously took part in the study were asked to fill in the same questionnaire from the previous semester. Data collection was once again done during their regular classes with the prior approval from their professor. The participants were also given clear instructions, they were aware that the participation was voluntary, that they could withdraw at any moment, and that the data collected from them would be treated confidentially.

After all the data were collected, they were entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme which was then used to analyze the data in order to answer the previously formulated research questions.

In order to find out the levels of foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers of English, descriptive statistics were calculated. Mean scores and standard deviation were calculated. Next, Mann Whitney test was used to find out whether there was a difference in anxiety levels between those participants who had had English teaching practice and those who had not. Lastly, Spearman's rank-order correlation was conducted to investigate whether there was a relationship between the number of methodological classes taken and the level of anxiety.

4.5. Results

This section focuses on the results that were obtained by the quantitative analyses.

4.5.1. Foreign language teaching anxiety level scores

The minimum anxiety score was 59 points, whereas the maximum score was 116 points and the mean value was 89.87 points, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Minimum, Maximum, Mean score and Standard Deviation for total anxiety score

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Total anxiety score	46	59.00	116.00	89.87	15.05

After the anxiety scores were calculated, they were classified into four categories according to the total anxiety score. The category No Anxiety was ranging from 0 to 45 points on the scale, the category Low Anxiety from 46 to 90 points, Moderate Anxiety from 91 to 135 points, and lastly the category High Anxiety from 136 to 180 points. Participants' total anxiety scores were then grouped into the four categories and the results showed that all participants displayed either low or moderate anxiety and that there was no one who was not anxious or who belonged to the high anxiety group, as seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Number of participants according to the category of anxiety

Category of anxiety	N
No anxiety	0
Low anxiety	23
Moderate anxiety	23
High anxiety	0

When looking at items that refer to possible anxiety sources, no item exceeded $M=3.45$. As shown in Table 5 below, participants were most anxious about not being able to adjust their lessons to students with disabilities, as well as about not being able to deal with students' problematic behaviour ($M=3.45$). They were also very anxious about managing unexpected situations which could be classified as worries about classroom management ($M=3.20$).

On the other hand, when it comes to the least anxiety-provoking items, participants were least anxious about some of their own teaching characteristics. Namely, they were not very anxious

about not being able to speak loud enough (M=1.65), forgetting what they have planned for the lesson (M=1.90). They were also not very anxious about teaching beginners (M=1.88). It could be interesting to add that participants were more anxious about teaching advanced students (M=2.00).

Table 5: Items with highest and lowest anxiety scores

Item	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Items with highest scores					
I will not be able to adjust my classes to students with disabilities	51	1.00	5.00	3.45	1.24
I will not know how to deal with students' problematic behaviour	51	1.00	5.00	3.45	1.01
I will not know how to face unexpected situations while teaching	51	1.00	5.00	3.20	1.04
Items with lowest scores					
I will forget what I have planned for the lesson	51	1.00	5.00	1.90	1.06
I will not know how to teach beginners	51	1.00	5.00	1.88	1.22
I will not be able to speak loud enough	51	1.00	5.00	1.64	.98

4.5.2. Mann-Whitney test results

In order to find out whether there was a difference in anxiety levels between those participants who have had previous English teaching practice and those who have not, a Mann-Whitney test was conducted. The participants were divided into two groups: one group comprised participants who have had only three or fewer hours of English teaching practice and the other group consisted of those participants who have had more than three hours of English teaching practice.

A Mann-Whitney test showed that there was no significant difference between those participants who have had three or less hours of English teaching practice (Mdn=92.5) and those who have had more than three hours of English teaching practice (Mdn=88), $U=233.00$, $p=.495$.

However, mean values indicated that the anxiety of the group who had three or fewer hours of English teaching practice ($M=24.79$) was higher than the anxiety of the group who had more than three hours of teaching practice ($M=22.09$).

4.5.3. Correlation results on the relationship between the number of methodological classes taken and the level of anxiety

A Spearman's rank-order correlation was run to determine the relationship between the number of methodological classes taken and the level of anxiety. Results showed that there was no significant correlation between the participants' anxiety levels and the number of methodological classes taken ($r=0.050$, $p=.742$).

4.6. Discussion

This study examined the levels of foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language, as well as if there is a difference in foreign language teaching anxiety between those participants who have had teaching practice and those who have not had it. Also, it examined the relationship between the number of methodological classes taken and the levels of foreign language teaching anxiety.

4.6.1. Foreign language teaching anxiety scores – findings and issues

The descriptive analysis revealed that an equal amount of participants displayed either low or moderate anxiety, therefore indicating that all of the pre-service teachers indeed feel anxious about teaching English. However, the results also showed that there was no one who was highly anxious about teaching English. The existence of the foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers is understandable, since the process of becoming a teacher and learning to teach is an emotionally demanding one, as well as complex and unpredictable in terms of classroom situations (Sutton and Wheatley, 2003, as cited in Martínez Agudo and Azzaro, 2018). Also, these findings confirm the results of similar studies of pre-service and non-native English teachers' foreign language teaching anxiety. Namely, Merç's (2004, as cited in Merç, 2011) study on the problems of pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language found that teaching anxiety was one of the most frequently reported problems during the pre-

service teachers' teaching practicum. Similarly, Kim and Kim's (2004) study proved the existence of the foreign language teaching anxiety among Korean teachers of English as a Foreign Language. Furthermore, having none of the participants in this study classified as highly anxious about teaching has some similarities with Capel's (2001) study which found that its participants were not extremely anxious about teaching. She justified the lack of high anxiety by the fact that the participants were well-prepared for the task of teaching and had support from their mentors. It is likely that the participants in the present study were also quite aware of the requirements and challenges of their future teaching profession. In addition, their own choice of the study indicates that they willingly chose a teaching career over other possible career paths, which could explain why no one felt extremely anxious about teaching English.

When it comes to the items with the highest mean scores, not knowing how to adjust the classes to students with disabilities ($M=3.45$) was the item that the students were most anxious about. This has also been a problem for the participants in Merç's (2011) study where pre-service teachers expressed great concern about dealing with inclusion students. Namely, the participants feared that they would fail to teach the students with disabilities properly because they did not have any experience with dealing with the needs of those types of students. It can be assumed that the lack of instructions received during the graduate study about how to teach students with special needs is the cause of the participants' high anxiety scores. Furthermore, students encountering intellectual challenges or having difficulties accomplishing tasks can leave teachers feeling frustrated for not successfully transferring knowledge to their students (Madalińska-Michalak and Bavli, 2018).

The next two items that sparked the most anxiety in participants were both about classroom management and students' behaviour. Namely, participants were very anxious about not knowing how to deal with problematic behaviour in class ($M=3.45$) and facing unexpected situations while teaching ($M=3.20$). This is not very surprising because the participants in Merç's (2011) study also displayed high levels of anxiety concerning classroom management issues and maintaining discipline. Horwitz (1996) also points out that unruly students and the fear of classroom management problems arising during the lessons are one of the reasons future teachers can feel anxious. Moreover, Kim and Kim (2004) also found out that the participants felt very anxious about the possibility of being asked unexpected questions in class. The fear of not being able to control the class might stem from the fact that the participants in this study are at the beginning of their teaching career and are yet unaware of all the possible issues that might occur in the classroom. Also, not being able to deal with problematic behaviour and establish control

over students implies that the lesson might end up a failure, which might be the reason why the participants feel very anxious concerning these issues.

On the other hand, the participants in this study were least anxious about not being able to speak loud enough when delivering a lesson ($M=1.64$). Since Gabryś-Barker (2018) states that, among others, tone and loudness are also elements of non-verbal teacher behaviour that affect the classroom communication, it can be concluded that the participants in this study are fairly confident in their abilities of conveying comprehensible input to their students.

A more interesting finding concerns the participants' low levels of anxiety when it comes to teaching beginners ($M=1.88$). Perhaps the reason the participants did not feel that teaching beginners is very challenging might be because they might not have yet had the chance to teach beginners. It is interesting to compare these findings to Merç's (2011) who found that the student teachers were very anxious about teaching students who are at low proficiency levels. On the other hand, Kim and Kim (2004) discovered that the participants in their research, who were non-native teachers of English, felt highly anxious about teaching advanced students. The level of anxiousness about teaching advanced students was also researched in this study. Namely, the participants in this study were not very anxious about teaching advanced students, either ($M=2.00$). However, it shows that they are slightly more anxious about teaching advanced students than the students with lower proficiency levels. This might be explained by the fact that the participants might not know how to prepare classes for students who can learn at a much faster pace and those who are gifted. Moreover, Ipek (2016) found that the non-native teachers of English were anxious about teaching students on various levels, from high proficiency level to the low proficiency level. These findings just show that the existence of foreign language teaching anxiety might not very much depend on the proficiency levels of students, rather that the teachers experience it while working with different proficiency level students.

4.6.2. English teaching experience and anxiety levels – findings and issues

When it comes to the difference in anxiety levels between those participants who have had more hours of English teaching practice and those who have had less hours of English teaching practice, the results showed that there was no significant difference between the two groups. It should be noted here that not finding any statistically significant results might be due to the low level of participants in the study. Nevertheless, the findings could also be explained by the fact that all of the participants were still at the beginning of their teaching careers and that

even those participants who have had more experience in teaching English, still have not had a lot of experience in teaching English. Also, this could also show that both groups of participants, those with lesser teaching experience and those with more teaching experience, still feel anxious about teaching English, no matter the amount of experience they have had. The results of a study conducted by Merç (2011) somewhat support these findings. Namely, Merç found out that there was no significant difference in anxiety levels among the three stages of the teaching practice. He concluded that the findings show that, no matter the stage of the practicum or the amount of experience students gained, they still had certain concerns throughout the practicum. Interestingly enough, Kim and Kim (2004) found out that there exists a difference in anxiety levels between non-native teachers of English in relation to their teaching experience. Namely, those non-native teachers who taught English as a Foreign Language for more than 10 years reported considerably higher levels of anxiety than those teachers with less than 10 years of teaching experience. Even though the teaching experience of those teachers is considerably higher than the teaching experience of the participants in this study, this might indicate that the foreign language teaching anxiety might even grow with the amount of experience gained. The reason behind this might be that the more experienced teachers have a deeper understanding of all the requirements of being a teacher and all the possible issues that might occur, therefore being more anxious about having to deal with those issues.

4.6.3. The number of methodological classes and the level of anxiety – findings and issues

Even though the results showed that there was no significant correlation between the participants' anxiety levels and the number of methodological classes taken, some conclusions could be drawn from it. Namely, the lack of statistically significant results could, once more, be attributed to the lower number of the participants involved in the study. Nevertheless, the participants in this study, apart from attending three obligatory methodological classes, took an average of three elective methodological classes during their graduate study, which shows that they all have already acquired a substantial amount of knowledge concerning how to teach. These elective courses include material preparation, teaching early English, error correction procedures, ways of teaching literature to students, teaching culture and civilisation, and some other. Language teacher education has recently been criticized for preparing future language teachers only for delivering the predetermined curriculum, leaving out an important aspect of handling complex classroom situations (Barcelos and Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018). This might indicate that a quality, all-encompassing approach to future teachers' education during their

graduate study is the key to equipping future teachers with all the knowledge they might need in a classroom, not only the theoretical one.

4.6.4. Implications about the importance of dealing with the foreign language teaching anxiety

The importance of setting an encouraging and a positive classroom climate has been the topic of many studies. In addition, the ability to communicate freely and to radiate positive feelings was one of the key characteristics of effective language teachers, according to White (2018). However, in this study, teaching a foreign language, and especially learning to teach a foreign language, has been proven to be an emotionally intense practice. Teachers, being emotional creatures, in the course of their teaching education and teaching practice, experience a variety of emotions, ranging from enthusiasm and enjoyment to insecurity and anxiety.

The feelings of low and moderate anxiety about teaching English that the participants in this study experience might stem from a couple of sources. Firstly, the participants might have experienced foreign language anxiety as language learners during their education. Secondly, since the participants are approaching the end of their teacher education, perhaps they are becoming more and more aware of the challenges that await them once they become teachers. That might lead them to question their teaching abilities and cause foreign language teaching anxiety. Lastly, getting their teaching certificate might not instil them with the confidence they need in order to successfully enter the teaching world and deal with all the requirements of being a foreign language teacher (Tum, 2015). All of these three factors might have influenced the participants of this study to experience a certain level of foreign language teaching anxiety.

Moreover, when foreign language pre-service teachers feel anxious, their emotional state may influence their teaching and instructional practices. Horwitz (1996) mentions several things anxious foreign language teachers do in order to deal with their anxiety in the classroom. Namely, she states that the foreign language teaching anxiety might be the reason why the classroom language slips so easily from the target language to the native language of both the students and the teacher. Also, when the non-native teachers are not comfortable with using the target language, they may choose instructional practices that do not foster the use of the target language as much as it should and that can communicate negative messages to their students about learning from mistakes.

This is important for policy makers and the creators of the teacher education programmes to take into consideration because, if the teachers are not themselves confident about using the target language in the classroom, it can affect the education their students receive. Therefore, it might be one of the aims of the teacher education courses to continually develop pre-service teachers' target language proficiency, apart from developing their instructional and pedagogical competences. Also, for the participants in this study, who experience foreign language teaching anxiety, it might be useful to stress to them that both native and non-native teachers can always rely on supporting teaching materials such as dictionaries or different tools that can help them in the foreign language classroom.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate foreign language teaching anxiety among pre-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language in the Croatian context, as well as if the teaching practice and the number of the teaching methodology classes taken have an influence on the level of the foreign language teaching anxiety.

The results showed that all of the participants experienced either low or moderate foreign language teaching anxiety, which confirmed the existence of foreign language teaching anxiety among the pre-service teachers in the Croatian context. There was no one that was not anxious about teaching English but there was also no one who was classified as highly anxious. The participants were most anxious about adjusting their classes to students with disabilities and about classroom management issues, such as dealing with problematic students' behaviour and unexpected situations while teaching. These findings indicate that the students might benefit from learning more on how to work with inclusion students during their teacher education. Also, when it comes to classroom management issues, findings might suggest that more attention should be given to educating future teachers about dealing with possible problems that are likely to occur in classrooms. Next, no statistically significant difference was found between the participants who have had more English teaching practice and those who have had less English teaching practice. However, the tendency was that those participants with more hours of English teaching practice were less anxious than those who had less hours of practice, suggesting that the foreign language teaching anxiety might decrease with gaining more teaching experience. Also, no statistically significant relationship was found between the number of the teaching methodology classes taken and the level of anxiety.

In order to help teachers deal with the foreign language teaching anxiety, the first step might be to determine the instances that cause the anxiety and then take further measures to help overcome the anxiety. Apart from ensuring that the future teachers are equipped with the latest theoretical knowledge about teaching foreign languages, institutions that educate future teachers might also emphasize the importance of all the emotional demands the teaching profession requires, as well as strategies to deal with the issues that cause the teachers to be anxious about teaching.

Further research of this topic is welcomed since foreign language teaching anxiety can negatively influence the instructional practices teachers use and therefore the quality of the input students receive. A similar study but with a higher number of participants could yield significant

results and shed more light on the problem of the foreign language teaching anxiety in the Croatian context. Also, more possible factors that might cause anxiety could be included, such as the teachers' feelings towards the curriculum demands, their relationship with their mentors and colleagues, and the coping strategies they use to deal with the anxiety.

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5. U potpunosti se odnosi na mene

1. Bojim se da me učenici neće shvatiti ozbiljno.	1 2 3 4 5
2. Bojim se da neću moći prenijeti svoje znanje učenicima.	1 2 3 4 5

1. Uopće se ne odnosi na mene 2. Većinom se ne odnosi na mene 3. Ponekad se odnosi na mene, a ponekad ne 4. Većinom se odnosi na mene 5. U potpunosti se odnosi na mene

3. Brine me da se neću znati suočiti s neočekivanim situacijama dok poučavam.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Bojim se da učenici neće biti zainteresirani za gradivo koje poučavam.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Brine me da učenici neće htjeti sudjelovati na nastavi.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Bojim se da će učenicima moja nastava biti dosadna.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Bojim se da učenici neće razumjeti moje upute/objašnjenja.	1 2 3 4 5
8. Brine me da se neću dovoljno pripremiti za svaki nastavni sat.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Bojim se da ću praviti greške u engleskom jeziku prilikom poučavanja.	1 2 3 4 5
10. Bojim se da će me učenici ismijavati.	1 2 3 4 5
11. Bojim se da će me učenici smatrati nekompetentnim nastavnikom engleskoga jezika.	1 2 3 4 5
12. Brine me da neću moći uspostaviti disciplinu u učionici.	1 2 3 4 5

13. Brine me da neću imati dovoljno vremena provesti sve isplanirane aktivnosti tijekom nastavnoga sata.	1 2 3 4 5
14. Bojim se da neću moći prilagoditi svoju komunikaciju razini znanja učenika.	1 2 3 4 5
15. Brine me da neću moći improvizirati na satu ako bude potrebno.	1 2 3 4 5
16. Bojim se da neću moći govoriti dovoljno glasno.	1 2 3 4 5
17. Bojim se da neću imati autoritet u učionici.	1 2 3 4 5
18. Bojim se da aktivnosti koje isplaniram neće biti prikladne razini znanja učenika.	1 2 3 4 5
19. Brine me da se učenicima neće svidjeti moj izbor aktivnosti.	1 2 3 4 5
20. Bojim se da će učenici primijetiti kada sam nervozan/na.	1 2 3 4 5
21. Brine me da će učenici imati problema s razumijevanjem moga izgovora na engleskom jeziku.	1 2 3 4 5
22. Bojim se da neću prepoznati potencijal pojedinih učenika.	1 2 3 4 5
23. Bojim se da neću znati prilagoditi nastavne sate učenicima s posebnim potrebama.	1 2 3 4 5
24. Brine me da ću zaboraviti što sam isplanirao/la za nastavni sat.	1 2 3 4 5
25. Brine me da učenici neće sudjelovati u aktivnostima na satu.	1 2 3 4 5
26. Bojim se da neću znati motivirati učenike na rad.	1 2 3 4 5

1. Uopće se ne odnosi na mene 2. Većinom se ne odnosi na mene 3. Ponekad se odnosi na mene, a ponekad ne 4. Većinom se odnosi na mene 5. U potpunosti se odnosi na mene

27. Bojim se da neću znati kako pristupiti problematičnom ponašanju učenika.	1 2 3 4 5
28. Brine me da učenici neće naučiti ništa iz mojih predavanja.	1 2 3 4 5
29. Bojim se da neću znati poučavati napredne učenike.	1 2 3 4 5
30. Bojim se da će moji učenici postizati niske rezultate.	1 2 3 4 5
31. Bojim se da ću završiti nastavni sat prerano, prije kraja sata.	1 2 3 4 5
32. Brine me da neću znati ocijeniti rezultate i postignuća učenika.	1 2 3 4 5
33. Bojim se da neću znati kako raditi s učenicima unutar istog razreda koji su na različitim razinama znanja.	1 2 3 4 5
34. Brine me predavati učenicima koji su početnici.	1 2 3 4 5
35. Brine me kako ću se koristiti engleskim jezikom u nastavi.	1 2 3 4 5
36. Bojim se da neću znati odgovoriti na pitanja učenika.	1 2 3 4 5