

MEASURING LANGUAGE ANXIETY PERCEIVED BY SPANISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS OF ENGLISH

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Having students that perceive considerable levels of anxiety in the classroom has been regarded as an experience that is more likely to occur in foreign language lessons than in lessons on other subjects of the curriculum. This course of events seems natural if we take into account that in foreign language classrooms the students have to cope with the demands of being able to sustain communication by means of an instrument they are not completely familiar with. This consideration may have more or less unconsciously impelled most researchers to study the problem of language anxiety with reference to groups of students of foreign languages at an elementary level. But the problem of language anxiety is not exclusive to beginners. University students with an extensive language learning background can also perceive considerable levels of language anxiety, as the results of this study indicate. The main concern of this article is therefore to describe the author's experience of measuring the language anxiety perceived by Spanish University students of English using a Spanish version of the FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986). Describing this experience has entailed in turn the following aims with reference to the issue of language anxiety: (1) to review the different factors involved in the so-called *foreign language classroom anxiety* experience as they appear reflected in the *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986); (2) to discuss the process followed for attaining Spanish version of the scale that has been piloted and can be applied to groups of Spanish learners of any foreign language for classroom research purposes; (3) to present and discuss the results of administering the scale to a group of 33 Spanish students of English who were studying their second year of English Philology at the University of Jaén in 1998; (4) to show the pedagogical usefulness of this mode of enquiry as a way of openly addressing the issue of anxiety in the language classroom.

1. The object of study

Language Anxiety has been one of the so-called personal factors that have been considered worth studying once a psychological theory of the process of second language learning started to develop. In fact, the anxiety variable has been taken into account by the best known models of Second Language Acquisition/Learning that have been proposed for the last thirty years, especially by those who highlighted the importance of affective variables in the learning process, i.e. Krashen's *Monitor Model* and his *Affective Filter Hypothesis* (Krashen 1981; Krashen 1987), Giles and Byrne's *Intergroup Model* (Giles and Byrne 1982), Clement's *Social Context Model* (Clément 1980; Clément and Kruidenier 1985), Schumann's *Acculturation Model* (Schumann 1986) and Gardner's *Socio-Educational Model* (Gardner, Lalonde and Pierson 1983; Gardner and MacIntyre 1993). Nonetheless, the first researchers who developed a complete research instrument specifically focused on the learner's experience of anxiety inside the foreign language classroom were Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986). After forming a support group for students who were having difficulties in learning languages, and on the basis of students' reported experiences, Horwitz *et al.* (1986) devised a Likert scale of five points which consisted of 33 items and was aimed at probing students' experiences of anxiety related to the learning of a foreign language in the classroom context, i.e. the *FLCAS or Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (cf. Appendix 1).

According to Horwitz *et al.* (1986), there are three main interrelated factors that intervene in the foreign language classroom anxiety experience: *communication apprehension* (McCroskey 1977) or fear about real or anticipated communication with other people, *test anxiety* or fear of failing in test situations and *fear of negative evaluation*. The uniqueness of this experience in comparison with other academic anxieties, such as maths anxiety, lies in the special requirements of the language classroom context: on the one hand, the student is continuously required to communicate by means of an instrument that s/he only knows imperfectly, which is very likely to provoke a feeling of insecurity inside the learner;

on the other hand, the difficulties perceived at trying to communicate are likely to challenge the concept that the individual has of him/herself as a competent communicator and result in his/her self-consciousness, fear or reticence; the learner's self-consciousness is usually associated with his/her worry about not being able to transmit an image of him/herself that corresponds to his/her true personality, but a basically incompetent self instead (Schumann 1978; Tsui 1996, 156; Hilleson 1996, 255). All these considerations seem to indicate that the interactive nature of language classrooms and their continual requests on learners to communicate are likely to make language classrooms more anxiety-inducing than other classroom contexts. In fact, communicating orally in the foreign language has often been considered by both teachers and learners as more anxiety-inducing than the practice of other language skills (Horwitz *et al.* 1986, 36; Koch and Terrell 1991, 123; MacIntyre and Gardner 1991; Young 1992, 163;).

Even though, we have mainly used psychological terms to describe the feelings associated with the phenomenon, it is necessary to also take into account that the anxiety experience often presents physiological manifestations such as feeling cold, alterations in breathing rhythm, heart rate increase, sweating or even behavioural manifestations such as squirming, stuttering, stammering, giving short responses, joking, nervous laughing or avoidance responses. In addition, one needs to consider too that both physiological and behavioural manifestations can differ from one learner to another or even be the responses to stimuli other than anxiety. Taking all these factors into account, it seems that the instruments that are more valid and reliable for the study of anxiety are the psychologically oriented research instruments or self-reports elicited by interviews or questionnaires like the one used in this research study and described below (McCroskey, 1977: 82; Scovel, 1978:135-136).

2. Research methodology

The research session here discussed was part of a larger study on situational factors involved in the phenomenon of communication apprehension in the foreign language classroom (Ortega Cebrenros 2000). The **research instrument** used for this first part of the study was a translated version of the *FLCAS* designed by Horwitz *et al.* (1986). Several reasons encouraged the researcher to use the *FLCAS* in her study: on the one hand, this scale had been designed on the basis of previous in-depth qualitative research, which rendered it as one of the most comprehensive and valid instruments that were available for measuring the situational anxiety directly associated to the specific context of the foreign language classroom; on the other hand, the scale had demonstrated satisfactory reliability coefficients with the first samples of population to which it had been administered (Horwitz 1991); in fact, nowadays it is the most frequently scale used -often shortened or adapted- in other research studies concerned with similar purposes.

After choosing the *FLCAS* as the research instrument to use in our study, this English scale was translated into Spanish for our own research purposes and subsequently tried out in a pilot study. The resulting Spanish questionnaire (cf. Appendix 2) was administered during a regular class period to a group of 33 **subjects** who were studying their second year of English Philology in the University of Jaén (Spain) in 1998, the study being conducted at the end of the first term of the course. The group of subjects was constituted by 24 female and 9 male students, most of them between the ages of 19 and 20. The students were accessed in three intact groups that had been formed at the beginning of the academic year for conducting the practice lessons of a subject of instrumental English. In contrast with an initial proliferation of studies which were mainly concerned with measuring anxiety levels among beginners, the cohort of students chosen for our study was expected to throw light about the possibility of language anxiety taking place among students of an intermediate level of competence and above.

After administering the Spanish scale in our research study, the Spanish research instrument demonstrated satisfactory reliability with this group of subjects since internal consistency, as measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .8164. Several steps were taken to contribute to the **reliability** of the study. First, as regards external circumstances, uniform and non-distracting circumstances of administration were provided, the test being

administered by the researcher in all cases. Second, as regards the instrument itself, the students were provided with clear, explicit and unambiguous instructions given in Spanish; the scale administered to the students was preceded by an introductory note about the nature and the conditions of the study, which were further explained orally to the students. Third, the real aim of the study was not openly presented to the students so that students' responses could not be biased by the researcher's goals; in turn, the research being conducted was presented as a study on the general topic of *classroom interaction*. Fourth, after reminding our group of informants of the importance of giving honest answers, they were assured of the confidentiality of the data. To further this aim, since the questionnaires could not be anonymous because the larger study being conducted could also require personal interviews at a later stage, the students were assured that the study was being developed on the researcher's own initiative and not on the University's or the Department's initiative and that the data provided by every student could not be accessed by anybody but the researcher herself nor influence their academic results.¹ We thought it would be important as well for students to see that the researcher was not their teacher but someone else (myself), who actually introduced herself to the informants as a Ph.D student. In fact, the questionnaires were administered and collected by the researcher and the teacher was absent during the time period when the study was being conducted. Fifth, as regards the testing of the items were concerned and taking into account that we wanted our Spanish version of the scale to be as faithful as possible to the original English scale, already considered as a valid research instrument, the translation of the items was subject to critical scrutiny in our pilot phase of the study, which is subsequently described.

Taking into account that the original research instrument, the *FLCAS* used by Horwitz *et al.* (1986), was written in English (cf. Appendix 1) and after presuming that the misunderstanding of the items could pose serious problems to obtaining reliable and valid results, we considered the convenience of using a translation of the English scale into Spanish (cf. Appendix 2). Since we were not aware of the existence of any Spanish version of the scale, an important part of the research process lied in the preparation of a suitable **translation of the FLCAS into Spanish and the piloting of this new instrument**.

For that purpose, a first draft of the Spanish instrument was administered and during the pilot study, students' comments or doubts about the content of different items of the scale were recorded by taking notes. These comments were later taken into account while preparing the second and final version of the Spanish instrument. Besides, since the *FLCAS* was originally written in American English, we also looked for advice from a native speaker of American English when preparing the final research instrument².

One of the points of difficulty for which both our discussion with a native speaker of American English and getting feedback from students during the pilot study were specially helpful was the process of translating items with a heavy emotional load; this task required (1) to grasp the intensity of the feelings expressed in the items of the scale, (2) to discover whether this intensity should be understood literally or rather should be interpreted at the level of a conversational register, where the initial strength of emotional statements wanes by force of use, and (3) to find a suitable equivalent of the original English item in Spanish.³

Special care had to be taken in the translation process in order to preserve the original meaning of the English items to the maximum, while trying to get as close as possible to our informants' point of view and the way they describe the world in their mother tongue, as questionnaire design specialists often recommend (cf. Harvatopoulos *et al.* 1992, 53; Oppenheim 1992, 122; Cea D'ancona 1996, 263). For instance, the pilot study revealed that understanding scientific words such as *ansiedad* (anxiety) was difficult for students. Consequently, the word *ansiedad*, which actually referred to the object of our study but probably sounded too technical or too far from our students' way of interpreting reality, was avoided in the final version.

Finally, thanks to the piloting of the new research instrument the researcher was able to resolve certain ambiguities that had been detected in the first draft or version of the Spanish instrument⁴.

After Horwitz *et al.*'s (1986) study, data were analyzed by quantifying the number of

students who agreed or disagreed to different degrees, with the items contained in the questionnaire. Also like in Horwitz *et al.*'s study, these numbers have been represented in a table by indicating the percentages of subjects who endorsed each extent of agreement or disagreement below each of the items of the questionnaire (cf. Appendix 2).

3. Results⁵

After administering the translated *FLCAS* to our group of subjects, the resulting data revealed interesting information about the anxiety levels of this group of students. The thematic relationships among the different items of the scale have allowed us to organize the presentation of the resulting data in four groups regarding their relationship with the following different sub-topics of foreign language classroom anxiety: *speaking anxiety*, *listening anxiety*, *test anxiety* and *general anxiety reactions towards the foreign language classroom*.

As far as ***speaking anxiety*** is concerned, we appreciated similar levels of communication apprehension in different items. To start with, speaking the language seemed to be difficult for a large amount of students, since item 30 indicated that 45% of the students felt overwhelmed by the number of rules they had to learn to speak a foreign language. Students' lack of self-confidence when speaking the foreign language was revealed by the fact that also 45% of the students agreed with item 1 (*Nunca me siento muy seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de lengua extranjera*) and the same amount disagreed with item 18 (*Me siento seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de lengua extranjera*). Still in connection with the self-confidence factor, 45% of students also showed their reticence to volunteer answers in the language class (item 13) and the same percentage of students said that they trembled when they knew that they were going to be called on in class (item 3).

As far as the manifestations of speaking anxiety are concerned, item 27 revealed that 39% of the students got nervous and confused when they spoke in the foreign language classroom. Still, feeling one's heart pounding when being called on in class was a much more frequent sensation among students since, according to item 20, 61% of the students actually had this experience.

With regard to the intervening factors, we found that not feeling prepared made a larger amount of students anxious since item 33 indicated that 66% of the students got nervous when the language teacher asked questions which they had not prepared in advance. An important factor involved was students' fear of making mistakes, since there were 69% of the students who showed that they were worried about making mistakes in the language class (item 2). The fear of being evaluated by others could have been involved in the process to some extent. In this regard, we could appreciate among the students of this group that their fear of being evaluated by the teacher was not as big as their fear of being evaluated by their classroom mates: whereas 36% of students were afraid that the teacher was ready to correct every mistake they made, 48% of the students felt very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students (item 24) and a similar percentage (45%) were afraid that the other students would laugh at them when they spoke the foreign language (item 31). Comparing themselves with the other students could also have been involved to some extent in the process, since 27% of the students had a permanent feeling that the other students spoke the foreign language better than they did (item 23) and a similar percentage, 30% of the students, thought that the other students were better at languages than they were (item 7). Along with the factors already mentioned, the presence of native speakers of English seemed to be intimidating for some students in our group of subjects: on the one hand, 18% of the students denied they would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language (item 32). On the other hand, 24% of the students showed their disagreement with the statement *No me pondría nervioso hablando la lengua extranjera con hablantes nativos*.

Listening anxiety reactions were not as frequent as those corresponding to *speaking anxiety*, since items 29 and 4 showed that only about 25% of the students felt restless when they didn't understand what the teacher said in the foreign language. Quite in

consonance with students' high level of worry about making mistakes, we found that the level of *listening anxiety* increased considerably when error correction was involved in the process, since 57% of the students said that they got upset when they didn't understand what the teacher was correcting (item 15).

Nonetheless, the most critical level of classroom anxiety was exhibited by those items related to the phenomenon of **test anxiety**. As we can see in item 8, 72% of the students denied being usually at ease during tests in their language class. This piece of data was most probably related to the fact that also a very high amount of students, about 88%, were worried about the consequences of failing the subject, as item 10 shows.

After administering the questionnaire, we could also contemplate **general reactions of anxiety towards the foreign language classroom** existing in our group of subjects. Several items revealed that there was a considerable level of concern over foreign language lessons in general, both outside and inside the classroom. For instance, 72% of the students revealed that they felt pressure to prepare very well for the foreign language class (item 22); 60% of the students seemed to understand that foreign language classes could be a cause of distress (item 11) and 54% of the students actually said that they worried about the foreign language class even when they were well prepared for it (item 16). Besides, 39% of the students denied feeling sure and relaxed when they were going to the English class (item 28); 30% of the students often felt like not going to the language class (item 17) and 15% denied that it wouldn't bother them at all to take more foreign language classes (item 5).

As regards the anxiety experiences lived inside the classroom, 36% of the students worried about being left behind because of the lesson's pace (item 25) and the same amount of students showed that they felt more tense and nervous in the foreign language class than in other classes (item 26); 45% of the students also said that in class they could get so nervous that they forgot things they knew (item 12); finally, 21% of students normally found themselves in class thinking of things that had nothing to do with it (item 6).⁶

4. Discussion

The results of administering our translated version of the *FLCAS* showed the existence of considerable levels of anxiety in the foreign language classroom, levels that, in certain items, are even higher than those registered by Horwitz *et al.* (1986) among groups of beginners. The use of this research instrument with a group of students who had accumulated a long experience as learners of English as a foreign language has allowed us to check that the phenomenon of foreign language classroom anxiety is not necessarily characteristic or exclusive to beginners as seemed to suggest the fact that the *FLCAS* and other scales devised for a similar purpose had been recurrently applied to groups of beginners in previous research (Horwitz *et al.* 1986; Samimy and Tabuse 1992). Researchers' interest in studying anxiety levels among beginners may have been stirred up by the natural belief that the lower the communicative competence of our students is, the more communication anxiety they are likely to perceive; however, we must not overlook the fact that in any educational system the demands on students normally get bigger as their knowledge increases. Thus, there is the possibility that students may perceive an imbalance between their own linguistic skills and those required in order to succeed in the tasks undertaken in class at any stage of interlanguage development and not only at elementary levels.

Whereas the group of subjects in Horwitz *et al.*'s (1986) study were attending introductory Spanish lessons at University, students of English Philology in Spain normally enter University having at least an intermediate level of English. The personal data gathered in our study revealed that our group of subjects had been studying English for 9.5 years on average. If the findings of their study led Horwitz *et al.* (131) to conclude that "anxious students are common in foreign language classrooms (at least in beginning classes at university level)", it seems relevant that many items of our study have revealed noticeably higher levels of anxiety among experienced learners of English. As a matter of fact, there are 17 items of the scale whose results exceed those of Horwitz *et al.*'s study, 14 of which

showing differences of over 10 %. Some of the most outstanding differences can be appreciated in relation to speaking anxiety: item 13, which referred to students' reticence to participate voluntarily, was endorsed by 45% in our study against 9% in Horwitz *et al.*; item 31, which referred to students' fear of being evaluated by their mates, was endorsed by 45% in our study against 10% in Horwitz *et al.*; item 20, which referred to the heart rate increase experienced when going to be called on in class, was endorsed by 61% of our subjects against 32% in Horwitz *et al.*; item 33, regarding students' anxiety about being asked questions that have not been prepared in advance, was endorsed by 66% in our study against 49% in Horwitz *et al.*.

In examining the results in the two studies, we must not overlook the fact that contextual circumstances are likely to influence the levels of students' perceived anxiety. Consequently, we could make use of contextual factors in order to try to speculate about the most outstanding differences observed between the two groups. In this regard, it could be relevant to consider that the 75 subjects that participated in Horwitz *et al.*'s (1986) study belonged to four different intact classes of about 18 or 19 students each; in contrast, the group of students to which our informants belonged was constituted by about 90 students. Since our subjects were encouraged by the researcher to have in mind this habitual language learning context (their English lessons at university) when answering the questionnaire, it seems logical that sharing the classroom with a much larger group of students would determine the presence of more fear of evaluation among the subjects of our study and, therefore, a higher level of fear to use the foreign language in front of such a large amount of students.

Other comparative differences due to background and contextual factors are those we were able to appreciate in items 14 and 32. As a matter of fact, the answers to these two items seem to indicate that the presence of a native speaker as an interlocutor was much less intimidating for our subjects than for Horwitz *et al.*'s. In this regard, it might be relevant to take into account that the informants of our study were much more likely to have had contact with native speakers of their target language due to their much longer experience as learners of that language as well as to the fact that most of them had participated in conversation sessions with a native foreign language assistant two hours a week for the two years they had been studying at the University of Jaén. In addition, 11 of the subjects had received lessons from native teachers of English and 8 had been abroad.

5. Conclusion and pedagogical Implications

We must not overlook the fact that the first step to take in order to overcome students' anxiety is to detect its presence among our students beyond mere intuition and diagnose which are the most influential causes of this experience in a particular classroom context, hence the importance of having available a research instrument like the one proposed here. Indebted as we are to the *FLCAS* (Horwitz *et al.* 1986), and taking into account the dangers implicit in administering a research scale written in English to informants that are non-native speakers of English, our translation -piloted and revised- of the *FLCAS* into Spanish has intended, among other things, to offer a suitable research instrument that can be used in the Spanish education system not only with Spanish students of English but also with students of any other foreign language. Besides, once a Spanish version of the scale is available, this can be used with students of any competence level in the foreign language or with mixed-ability groups, which presents an obvious advantage over the use of the English scale in our teaching situation.

The anxiety scale can be actually used by either researchers interested in the topic of *language anxiety* or by reflective teachers interested in what is going on in their classrooms. Having the experience of administering an anxiety scale to Spanish students of English in our current educational system may be specially relevant for two reasons: on the one hand, the use of communicative methodologies implies greater demands on learners to communicate and therefore higher likelihood of exposure to anxiety-inducing situations; on the other hand, the number of learners of English as a foreign language in our educational system, particularly at University, is so large in comparison with the number of students of other foreign languages that English classrooms normally require learners' communication

to take place in less than ideal conditions and that can be anxiety-inducing for the learner.

Our study has also revealed that anxiety levels among foreign language students can be worth considering even beyond elementary and intermediate stages of interlanguage development. In fact, if the evolution of learning itself requires that language demands keep on growing as learners progress in their interlanguage development, it is not surprising to find that foreign language anxiety can be perceived at any stage of the language learning process due to the continuous challenge posed to individuals by new learning and communication tasks.

Consequently, the various pedagogical measures suggested by the specialized literature (Lucas 1984; Price 1991; Young 1991; Ortega Cebberos 2002b) to compensate for the anxiety-inducing influence of common factors of the foreign language classroom are still worth considering at University levels. For instance, noticing the anxiety-inducing effect of listening comprehension problems suggests the convenience of accommodating speech to students' level of competence by repeating, paraphrasing, speaking more slowly or articulating sounds better; on the other hand, students' perception of being evaluated by classmates, which is so commonly connected with feelings of communication apprehension in the classroom context, suggests the importance of giving students opportunities to practise the spoken language in pairs and smaller groups, of introducing activities aimed at creating rapport among learners, or simply of giving them opportunities to prepare well for their oral presentations; feelings of being constantly evaluated by the teacher, which can result in students' fears of making mistakes and attitudes of reluctance to speak, set a warning about overcorrection and they call as well for the use of positive language when correcting in an attempt to change learners' negative views of the role of errors in language learning or of their own competence as language learners through cognitive restructuring procedures; fears of being called on to participate in class can be alleviated to some extent by the introduction of predictable patterns of participation or the formulation of a question before asking a specific student to answer in order to reduce the element of surprise, and by asking for volunteers when posing difficult questions or simply by giving students enough time to prepare and give their answers.

In spite of the above recommendations, decisions on any particular course of action in order to compensate for the effects of language anxiety when teaching foreign languages are best taken on the basis of previous assessment of anxiety levels among students. Teachers can benefit from using an anxiety scale in the classroom in different ways. It allows them to assess the socioaffective atmosphere that is breathed by the learners in the classroom. Moreover, through this type of assessment teachers can identify the factors of a particular teaching context that are more anxiety-inducing for the group in general and then devise their own plan of classroom intervention in order to compensate for the problems detected. Besides, when questionnaires are not anonymous teachers can even identify particular cases of learners that perceive critical levels of anxiety and therefore require special attention.

Precisely because it brings the learner's point of view into consideration, the scale can also be used as a basis for later discussion and cognitive-restructuring of students' negative ideas about language learning, ideas that can be anxiety-inducing and thus damaging for the learners, like their impression of being worse than other students at learning languages or their belief that one's performance in the foreign language needs to be perfect when participating in class (cf. McCoy 1979, 186-188; Horwitz 1988, 292; Crookall and Oxford 1991, 145-148; Ortega Cebberos 2002a). Even before discussing learners' views, the mere act of completing the anxiety scale may have a salutary effect in itself since it can help students understand that their negative thoughts and worries can be anticipated by the teacher and thus must be part of the natural course of learning. Still, by later group discussion on the topic, students who experience anxiety may develop the impression that they are not the only ones who feel that way, which may in turn help alleviate their tension. Last but not least, putting into practice some of the measures here suggested may contribute to create an appropriate socioaffective atmosphere in the classroom, one that allows the teacher to be perceived by the learner more as an understanding figure and less as an authoritative figure.

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APPENDIX 1

FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY SCALE (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope 1986)

SA= Strongly agree
A= Agree
N= Neither agree nor disagree
D= Disagree
SD= Strongly disagree

SA A N D SD

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. I frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is sayinng 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 well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

APPENDIX 2

SPANISH VERSION OF THE FLCAS AND RESULTS OF OUR RESEARCH STUDY

5=Estoy muy de acuerdo (MA)
4=Estoy de acuerdo (A)
3=No estoy de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo (NA/ND)
2=Estoy en desacuerdo (D)
1=Estoy muy en desacuerdo(MD)

5(MA) 4(A) 3(NA/ND) 2(D) 1(MD) **1**

1. Nunca me siento muy seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de lengua extranjera. 12 33 27 18 09
2. *No* me preocupa el cometer errores en la clase de lengua extranjera. 03 15 12 45 24
3. Tiemblo cuando sé que me van a llamar en la clase de lengua extranjera. 12 33 18 21 15
4. Me da miedo cuando no comprendo lo que el profesor está diciendo en la lengua extranjera. 00 27 27 21 24
5. No me importaría en absoluto recibir más clases de lengua extranjera. 42 27 15 09 06
6. Durante la clase de lengua extranjera, me doy cuenta de que pienso en cosas que no tienen nada que ver con la clase. 00 21 36 21 21
7. Continuamente pienso que a mis compañeros se les dan mejor las lenguas extranjeras que a mí. 12 18 36 21 12
8. Normalmente estoy relajado durante los exámenes en la clase de lengua extranjera. 03 12 12 45 27
9. Me entra pánico cuando tengo que hablar en la clase de lengua extranjera sin haberme preparado antes. 09 12 30 27 21
10. Me preocupan las consecuencias de suspender la asignatura de lengua extranjera. 58 30 03 03 06
11. No comprendo por qué razón alguna gente se preocupan tanto por las clases de lengua extranjera. 03 06 30 24 36
12. En la clase de lengua extranjera puedo ponerme tan nervioso que llegue a olvidar las cosas que sé. 18 27 12 24 18
13. Me da vergüenza contestar de modo voluntario en la clase de lengua extranjera. 15 30 21 15 18
14. *No* me pondría nervioso hablando la lengua extranjera con hablantes nativos. 21 18 36 18 06
15. Me inquieto cuando no comprendo lo que el profesor está corrigiendo. 18 39 15 24 03

1 For administration purposes this sequence should be repeated after each item for students to mark their personal point of agreement.

2 In the wording of the items the term "lengua extranjera" can be replaced with the specific name of any L2 being studied

17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	21	33	24	12	09
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	09	21	15	27	27
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	09	18	27	39	06
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	12	24	18	33	12
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	21	39	15	18	06
22. I <i>don't</i> feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	00	06	15	52	27
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	09	03	15	36	36
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	06	21	36	27	09
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	15	33	24	18	09
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	03	33	12	36	15
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	06	30	18	21	24
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	03	36	30	21	09
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	06	12	42	30	09
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	03	21	18	36	21
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	18	27	24	21	09
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	06	39	15	15	24
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	18	27	36	15	03
16. Me preocupo por la clase de lengua extranjera incluso si estoy bien preparado para la misma.	21	33	24	12	09
17. A menudo me apetece no asistir a la clase de lengua extranjera.	09	21	15	27	27
18. Me siento seguro de mí mismo cuando hablo en la clase de lengua extranjera.	09	18	27	39	06
19. Me produce temor que el profesor de lengua extranjera esté pendiente de corregir cada error que cometo.	12	24	18	33	12
20. Se me acelera el corazón cuando mi intervención va a ser solicitada en la clase de lengua extranjera.	21	39	15	18	06
21. Cuanto más estudio para un examen de lengua extranjera, más me confundo.	00	06	15	52	27
22. <i>No</i> siento la presión de tener que prepararme muy bien para la clase de lengua extranjera.	09	03	15	36	36
23. Siempre tengo la sensación de que los demás alumnos hablan la lengua extranjera mejor que yo.	06	21	36	27	09
24. Me preocupo mucho de lo que los demás piensan de mí cuando hablo la lengua extranjera frente de otros estudiantes.	15	33	24	18	09
25. La clase de lengua extranjera va tan deprisa que me preocupa quedarme atrás.	03	33	12	36	15
26. Me siento más tenso y nervioso en la clase de lengua extranjera que en las otras clases.	06	30	18	21	24
27. Me pongo nervioso y me confundo cuando hablo en la clase de lengua extranjera.	03	36	30	21	09
28. Mientras voy a la clase de lengua extranjera me siento muy seguro y relajado.	06	12	42	30	09
29. Me pongo nervioso cuando no entiendo cada una de las palabras que dice el profesor.	03	21	18	36	21
30. Me siento agobiado por el número de reglas que tienes que aprender para poder hablar la lengua extranjera.	18	27	24	21	09
31. Temo que los otros alumnos se rían de mí cuando hablo la lengua extranjera.	06	39	15	15	24
32. Probablemente me sentiría cómodo entre hablantes nativos de la lengua extranjera.	18	27	36	15	03
33. Me pongo nervioso cuando el profesor de lengua extranjera me hace preguntas que no he preparado de antemano.	18	48	9	21	03

¹ As Oppenheim (1992:49) points out, the general belief that anonymous questionnaires encourage the informants to be more honest when answering must be counterbalanced by the possibility that people lose interest in the study because of its impersonality.

² Consulting with a native speaker of American English also helped us to rephrase item 15, which had initially been translated like *Me molesta cuando no comprendo lo que el profesor está corrigiendo*, in a manner more consonant with the underlying theme of the scale: *Me inquieto cuando no comprendo lo que el profesor está corrigiendo*.

³ In this sense, item 4, which initially had been translated as *Me aterra el no comprender...* was reformulated in softer terms by *Me da miedo cuando no comprendo....*, after having registered that students considered that item too exaggerated in the pilot study. However, the high tone of other conversational expressions such as those contained in item 3 (*I tremble...*) and item 9 (*I panic...*) was preserved due to the existence of similar conversational uses of those expressions in Spanish (*tiemblo... y me entra pánico...*).

⁴ After piloting the instrument, we realized that our initial translation of item 28 into Spanish, *Cuando me dirijo a mi clase de lengua extranjera me siento muy seguro y relajado*, resulted ambiguous, since the Spanish verb *dirigirse* has two meanings in Spanish: going and speaking to someone. Therefore, we had to disambiguate this item by using the expression *Mientras voy a la clase de lengua extranjera....* in the final translation of the scale.

⁵ For the sake of simplification, in the results section percentages are presented in two main groups and presented those who either agreed or disagreed with the different items as a whole.

⁶ Notice that, within the group of data of other anxiety reactions towards the foreign language classroom, the results displayed by items 6 and 5 are not as outstanding as those shown by other items. Moreover, items 5 and 17, which are similar in content to some extent, do not show similar results. This makes us consider the possibility that these items might be less clearly related to the foreign language classroom anxiety construct than other items. In fact, we could find reasons other than language anxiety that could induce learners to agree or disagree with these items. For instance, we cannot know for sure if the 21% of students that endorsed item 6 normally found themselves in class thinking of things that had nothing to do with the class because of anxiety or for other reasons such as boredom, lack of interest or being worried about other things. Similarly, we don't know for sure if those 15% of students who showed their disagreement with item 5 and those 30% of students who agreed with item 17, did not show enthusiasm about the idea of taking more foreign language lessons or attending lessons due to the anxiety perceived or for other reasons such as laziness, lack of time, lack of interest or tiredness.