



## SPEECH ANXIETY OF MUSIC AND TURKISH LANGUAGE TEACHER CANDIDATES

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### Abstract

Speech, the primary element for humans in becoming social beings, is accepted as the prerequisite foundation for all types of communication. While the speech ability is a natural characteristic preordained, proper and effective use of correct speech is dependent on person's education and training. Individualized vocal training, voice and tonality, conversing and verbal explanation techniques courses present in Music as well as Turkish bachelor degree programs contain fundamental information oriented to speech education. Especially in training programs where courses concerning voice are present, individuals are expected to be free of anxiety in self-expression in addition to being correct, pleasant and effective in their speech. In this study, Music and Turkish Language teacher candidates' speech anxieties, and whether these anxieties exhibited any differences according to the field variable have been investigated. The research subject workgroup consists of 178 teacher candidates currently studying at the Music and Turkish Language Education Departments in Faculty of Education, Nigde University, Turkey. As data collection tool, Speech Anxiety Scale For Teacher Candidates developed by Sevim (2012:927) has been used. On the basis of research findings, it has been observed that speech anxieties of teacher candidates exhibit differences according to the field variable and that Turkish Language teacher candidates are more prone to speech anxiety as compared to Music teacher candidates.

**Keywords:** Turkish language, speech anxiety, music, teacher candidate

### INTRODUCTION

Humans become vocal at birth. Speech and communication can be assumed to begin with vocalization responsive to external stimuli. Initiated speech process develops in parallel to growth and becomes a tool of self-expression. Verbalization ensues to serve communication of feelings and information through vocal structures formulated (Demirel, 1999:40, Gürzap, 2001:33). Act of speech is the totality of speaker's purpose, conveyance and perceptions of the listener. It is the verbalization of a preconsidered subject matter to the listener(s) and its comprehension (Ergenç, 1999:43).

Speech is also another tool of communication developed to meet individual's social needs such as life in a community, expressing feelings and thoughts, gaining acceptance, sense of belonging, and its communicative dimension put aside, it is accepted as a distinguishing qualitative feature separating humans from other living beings (Yılmaz, 2005:8). Speech is a complex capability manifested with collaborative functionality of various organs. No single organ achieves speech solely by itself. Diaphragm, lungs, vocal cords, soft palate and uvula, teeth, lips, jaw and nose supported by facial muscles all have specific missions during speech (Temizyürek, Erdem and Temizkan, 2011:46)

Speech has three basic stages. First stage may be considered as the baby-speech, second is where conversing occurs within immediate social circles, and third is the expertly adult phase in career (Topçuoğlu and Özden, 2012:2-4).

Social communication is one of major factors affecting and directing an individual's success in education, work and private life, and is a form of verbalized dialogue between a person and the society. The key to successful communication is pleasant speech, clarity and effective use of voice (Kurudayıoğlu, 2003:288). Although words announced may occasionally not be adequate to convey feelings, thoughts, dreams, knowledge and desires, this is a condition more frequently seen at times of intense feelings, joy or anxiety (Temizyürek, Erdem ve Temizkan, 2011:18).



Speech is also at the foundation of educational-teaching activities. The informational relationship between the teacher and student is conducted mostly through speech (Kurudayıoğlu, 2003:291). Effective speech is an art form. Just as any other, the art of effective speech also requires devotion, attention experience, talent, education and training. Each word uttered is expected to meet a corresponding, meaningful and influential effect on the listener (Akbayır, 2011:46).

Speech, holding a very important position in personal and social life, is also one of the factors determining success in school and job life. In its communal functionality, speech is a process of sharing joint living (Temizyürek, 2007:118). In this respect, the general objective of speech training courses at educational institutions is achievement by students of effective communication skills conforming to the precise rules of language in use (Özbay, 2005:121).

Effective or successful speech may on occasion be impeded by various prevailing factors. Basic speech impediments may be classified as: speaker dependent, speech dependent and environment dependent (Akbayır, 2011:13). When speaker dependent impediments are considered, anxiety, due to various reasons, affecting and limiting person's expression is a very significant factor. Literature concerning the concept of anxiety provides numerous definitions and explanations. In its widest meaning, it is also described as an advance sense of powerlessness experienced in confronting a threat. Anxiety exists in three basic forms based on personality, circumstantial (situational) and event. Personal Anxiety seen in some people as a persistent condition are an inherent part of their character. Situational Anxiety on the other hand is defined as reaction encountered within a certain time against a determinable situation. Whereas the event based anxiety is experienced in response to certain types of actuality (Ellis, 1994; Aydın and Zeng et.al., 2008: 84). It also is an unclear sense of danger or threat without clear comprehension or knowledge of a specific problem (Morgan, 1998:228). While the feelings of anxiety, stress and excitement be part of personality; family and career life, environmental factors such as living standards may also contribute significantly to these experiences (Şahin, 2006:2).

Results of the study done by Ünal Topçuoğlu and Degeç (2012) involving teachers and titled "Problems Encountered in Speech Training According to Teachers" indicate that students suffer most in speech skills due to embarrassment, excitement and from failure to correct their local tongue use. The suggestion section of the mentioned study emphasizes assistance to the young in overcoming negative feelings of embarrassment, fear or repression involving public speech. At the same time, study proposes that utilization of techniques such verbal chorus and dramatization may be helpful in resolving the question of self-confidence.

Success in the teaching vocation is profoundly dependent on effective lecturing and explanation, in other words effective speech. Good speech is not merely a matter of talent. Effective speech skill can be obtained as a result of certain effort, training and education (Kavcar, Oğuzkan and Aksoy, 2004:345). In teacher degree education programs foundational courses are offered for speech training. While in Turkish Language degree programs courses such as voice knowledge, verbal explanation and speech training are present, in Music Teacher degree programs individualized voice training courses are offered for four semesters. When the contents of both course categories are examined, it can be seen that phonetics and diction knowledge forms the foundation. While phonetics provides linguistic voice rules and pronunciation, diction emphasizes proper and effective articulation skills. Hence, phonetics and diction are complementary (Akbayır, 2011:54).

When various fields of science is examined, a spectrum of anxieties such as performance anxiety, social anxiety, career anxiety are seen to be prominent. Speech forms an important dimension of education vocally and visually. Consequently, this study attempted to investigate speech anxieties in a workgroup of teacher candidates, and sought a response to the basic research question whether these Turkish Language and Music Teacher candidates receiving voice training in particular exhibited any anxiety variations according to the vocational field variable.

## METHOD

Quantitative screening model has been used in this study. Since speech anxieties of the subject teacher candidates were measured by a Likert type scale, screening method was elected as research medium.

### Subject Group

Study workgroup consists of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th year level Turkish Language and Music Teaching Departments' students of the Education Faculty, Nigde University. Table 1 provides the numeric distribution of the workgroup.

Table 1: The Workgroup

Department	1	2	3	4	Total
Music	26	20	21	21	88
Turkish Language	26	21	21	22	90
Total	52	41	42	43	178

### Data Collection Tool and Data Analysis

As the data collection tool, Teacher Candidates Oriented Speech Anxiety Scale developed by Sevim (2012:927) was utilized. Scale consists of 20 negative propositional items intended to measure speech anxieties. Scale items were scored at all times as: Always (5), Most of the Time (4), Sometimes (3), Rarely (2) and Never (1). Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was determined as 0.91. The scale was personally administered to the subject teacher candidates by the researcher and data obtained was interpreted on the basis of statistical analyses done. Validity and reliability values of the scale were evaluated for this study and Alpha reliability coefficient was identified to be 0.92.

SPSS software package has been used for data analyses, and arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were calculated on the basis of scale scores of subjects to identify their anxiety degrees. In examining whether teacher candidates exhibited speech anxiety variations according to their field of chosen vocation, the t-test for unrelational samplings was used and the t and p values were found. In five degree Likert type scale measure developed, score intervals are: Always (5) 4.20-5.00; Most of the Time (4) 3.40-4.19; Sometimes (3) 2.60-3.39; Rarely (2) 1.80-2.59; and, Never (1) 1.0-1.79.

## FINDINGS

This section presents findings relevant to speech anxieties of the study workgroup Turkish Language and Music teacher candidates and also whether these anxieties manifest any variations according to the field variable of chosen vocations.

### Findings Concerning Speech Anxieties of Music Teacher Candidates

Table 2 below exhibits findings relating to speech anxiety levels of Music Teacher candidates.

Table 2: Music Teacher Candidate's Speech Anxieties

Field	N	$\bar{X}$	s
Music	88	2,1439	1,0678

According to Table 2, the arithmetic mean found as per scores of the scale used is 2.14. This value suggests that Music teacher candidates possess low level speech anxiety.

### Findings Concerning Speech Anxieties of Turkish Language Teacher Candidates

Table 3 below exhibits findings relating to speech anxiety levels of Turkish Language Teacher candidates.

Table 3: Turkish Language Teacher Candidates' Speech Anxieties

Field	N	$\bar{X}$	s
Turkish	90	2,6322	1,0977

According to Table 3, the arithmetic mean found as per scores of the scale used is 2.63. This value, when assessed according to the score intervals, suggests that Turkish Language teacher candidates possess occasional speech anxiety. When the scores of both groups are compared, it can be stated that Turkish Language teacher candidates are more prone to speech anxieties.

### Findings Concerning Whether Music and Turkish Language Teacher Candidates' Anxieties Exhibit Difference According to the Field Variable

Table 4 presents the findings concerning whether anxieties of both subject groups manifest any meaningful differences.

Table 4: t-Test Findings of Music and Turkish Language Teacher Candidates' Exhibited Speech Anxieties According to the Field Variable

Field	N	$\bar{X}$	s	t	p
Music	88	42,85	13,639	-4,769	0,00
Turkish	90	52,64	13,751		

When Table 4 findings are examined, it can be seen that teacher candidates exhibit meaningful difference on the basis of field variable ( $p \leq 0,05$ ). Findings suggest that higher arithmetic mean of Turkish Language teacher candidates (52.64) is indicative of significantly more speech anxiety as compared to Music teacher candidates (42.85).

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

According to the research findings obtained Turkish Language teacher candidates are more prone to speech anxiety. As stated previously, three major categories of anxiety types based on personality, situational and event are known to exist. Situational anxiety is defined as reaction to a certain situation within a certain time (Ellis, 1994; Aydın and Zeng et. al., 2008:84). Personality and situational anxieties may be alleviated by the removal of causes. When considered from the perspective of speech skill, in order for the individual to overcome embarrassment and excitement in presence of public, or to be able to control them, sufficient levels of practice must be preapplied. Lesser level of anxiety seen among Music Teacher candidates may be due to previous participatory experience in concert stage or as audience. Public performances taken part in may have reductive influence on their personality or situational anxieties, or the experiences may possibly be contributing to better control. Previously cited study of Ünal Topçuoğlu and Değec (2012) has also suggested potential positive contribution of verbal chorus and dramatization techniques in resolving self-confidence issues among students.

For development of speech skills, the student must not be passive in the classroom but rather active. In addition to this, theatre, verbal chorus, poetry séances, debate, poetry reading competitions, etc. is also expected to be helpful outside of the classroom and contribute positively to student's body language, mimics, jests outside of non-verbal features, assist in the development of physical characteristics such as voice and articulation, awareness of textually apart from minimizing or taking under control functionally impeding psychological conditions such as embarrassment, excitement and anxiety.



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