

**THE COMPARISON OF THE AFFECTIVE
STRATEGIES USED BY TURKISH AND
INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN
PREPARATORY CLASSES IN TURKEY IN
SPEAKING ENGLISH¹**

Merve TEMEL² & Yonca ÖZKAN³

Abstract

Language learning and teaching has always been a crucial issue due to newly emerging circumstances and rapidly increasing requirements of the globalizing world. There are many researches in this field to help learners and teachers overcome difficulties and have achievements in language. Compared to other skills, speaking in a different language is the most challenging one for learners. Besides cognitive, personal, social factors, etc., affective ones like motivation, confidence and anxiety also have an important role in performing speaking. Individuals learn a language well if they have an intelligible input and their affective filters are low enough to let it in. In studies on this area, learners report that their speaking performances are obstructed because a mental block prevents them realizing a good speaking when they feel unmotivated, anxious or insecure. It is therefore important to find strategies so as to handle negative emotions in learners and teachers in helping them. The target of this study is to find affective variables domestic (Turkish) and international students in preparatory classes of two state universities in Turkey might have in speaking English and to explore different strategies that are used to lower affective filter and its correlation with their achievement through speaking grades. The study, which was carried upon 11 Turkish and 11 international students, shows that international students have higher values in affective factors like self-confidence, motivation in, and attitude towards speaking English than Turkish students. Also, their speaking scores and affective strategy use are ahead of those of Turkish students.

Keywords: *Speaking a foreign language, affective strategies.*

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² Master Stud., Çukurova University, e-mail: temel.merve@hotmail.com

³ Assoc. Prof., Çukurova University, e-mail: yoncaca@cu.edu.tr

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning and teaching another language is a critical area, that's why there exist so various methods, approaches, ways, or techniques to attain further developments and have desirable and optimal levels in it. It is apparent that each method has somehow come up with better, newer or more original ideas to focus on different perspectives of foreign language learning and teaching and to unlock the difficulties that are seen to still prevail on this field.

The rationale behind the importance of this area is it is a channel for many reasons like communication, reconciliation, help, empathy, expression of ideas, living together in peace, searching for solutions to world problems, trade, etc. among the people across the countries of the world. In this regard, natural ways to acquire a foreign language rather than simply learning it is a good source for experts, teachers and learners. The aim is to find similar ways as the acquisition of the first language for foreign language learning.

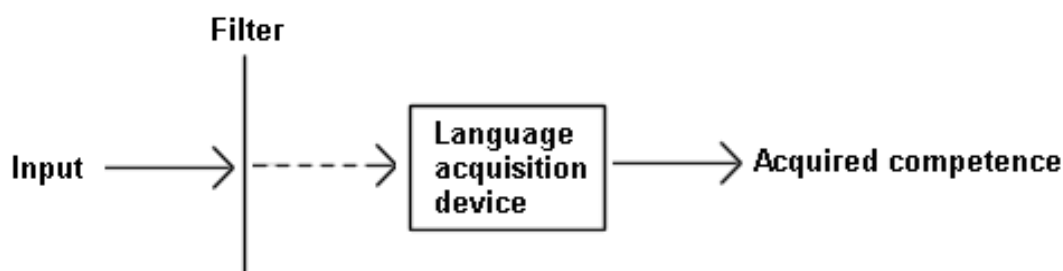
Stephen Krashen (1982) is known for his contributions to the field with some hypotheses like 'Input Hypothesis' and 'The Affective Filter Hypothesis'. For him, language learning can be achieved by two ways: 'learning' or 'acquisition'. 'Learning' is the usual way to improve in a language, namely, learning grammar items and rules, and practicing them in given situations, so it realizes consciously. However, 'acquisition' is helps us 'pick up the language' subconsciously. By reading passages, watching films, listening to people or speaking in the target language, we may find ourselves exposed to an expansive web of inputs that may possibly lead into acquisition of language just as in the situation of a baby. As they occur a natural setting, it, certainly, aids 'getting a language' better than 'learning' (Krashen, 2013). In one of his articles about motivation, Krashen (2015) states:

Instead of trying to motivate our students by urging them to work hard and reminding them how important it is to know English, let's take advantage of the natural process, and make sure they have access to input that they find compelling, in class and outside of class. (p.2)

'Input Hypothesis' refers to the comprehensible input for foreign language acquirers, the structure of which is composed of a little beyond what he already knows and can utilize it for further progress in language. The meaning of the message is processed by the acquirers here but not its structure. It is realized by using the context, immediate environment, knowledge of the world or extra-linguistic information like body language, etc.

'Affective filter hypothesis' is in a close relation with 'input hypothesis'. Affective factors like 'anxiety', 'self-confidence', 'attitude' and 'motivation' can affect language acquisition and production, indirectly. They can prevent comprehensible input from reaching 'language acquisition device', which is labeled as 'LAD' by Noam Chomsky. The student may understand the input, but his affective filter is up or strong enough, it may not get access to language acquisition device and he can't use the input to produce output (Krashen, 1982). Here is how Krashen (1982) notes the importance of input and affective filter in language acquisition:

A variety of factors that have been thought to be related to second language acquisition success, including instruction, different measures of exposure to the second language, and the age of the acquirer..... are not really causative factors. While they seem to relate to success or failure to acquire second languages, the true causative variables in second language acquisition derive from the input hypothesis and the affective filter--the amount of comprehensible input the acquirer receives and understands, and the strength of the affective filter, or the degree to which the acquirer is "open" to the input. (p.9)



*Fig. 1. The relationship between affective factors and language acquisition
Krashen (1982) (p.32)*

1.1. Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the factors that affect language learners much in speaking English. Some amount of anxiety would be helpful in activating student in learning/acquiring English, but the excess amount of it can be a hindering factor, so it has a negative correlation with success in English. Fear of making grammatical mistakes, shyness in speaking English in public, worry about getting bad comments by the teacher, feeling insecure in English speaking and staring eyes of classmates, the possibility of being laughed at or mocked by friends are just some examples of anxiety.

1.2. Self-confidence

Self-confident language learners generally become more successful in fulfilling tasks. They can think more freely, initiate things more easily, like taking risks, start conversations with people in another language or try to practice speaking English at every opportunity, etc. Students, though, who feel incompetent in English, see themselves inferior to others in using or speaking English or feel hopeless may have more negative results in English speaking.

1.3. Motivation

It is a fact that the more a student is motivated for language learning/acquisition, the more he becomes proficient in that language. Motivation has two types: 'integrative motivation' and 'instrumental motivation'. The first one refers to motivation when people want to learn or do something because they have a personal curiosity or desire to do so. Instrumental motivation can be incited due to some external factors like getting credit, having a good job, status or obligatory reasons.

1.4. Attitude

The way a student attributes meaning to language learning/acquisition can affect his proficiency in that language. Negative attitudes towards learning English could be differentiated like thinking that using English is not useful or important, or it is difficult and boring to learn it.

These affective variables can increase or decrease proficiency in English regardless of how hard it is studied. The presence of the affective filter explains how two students can receive the same (comprehensible) input, yet one makes progress while the other does not. One is 'open' to the input while the other is not.' says Krashen (2013). (p.5)

2. METHODOLOGY

The present research was conducted using a quantitative analysis. An inventory and 4 different questionnaires were used to get relevant data on this subject.

2.1. Instruments

The students were given 'Affective Strategy Inventory' and questionnaires to test their anxiety, motivation, self-confidence and attitude levels in speaking English within and across groups. It helped us to make reasonable comparisons about the extent of feelings and attitudes they have and their use of affective strategies on this English language skill. Also their speaking grades were correlated with their English study levels and affective strategy use to find out the impact levels of these two agents on speaking proficiency.

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 20.0 was utilized to analyze the quantitative values.

2.2. Participants

22 English language intermediate learners in preparatory classes of two state universities in Turkey took part in this study. 11 students are domestic, Turkish, students, and the rest are 11 international students, who were born, raised and educated in their home countries and have come to Turkey to study at university.

The domestic students are from different cities in Turkey, and the international students' hometowns are Syria, Iraq, Mali, Turkmenistan, Tatarstan, Afghanistan, Togo and Bangladesh. The students' ages are between 18 and 21. 7 students are female and the rest 15 are male students.

All the students' departments are different from each other, ranging as Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, Business, Engineering, Chemistry, Economics, Press, Journalism, Architecture and Law.

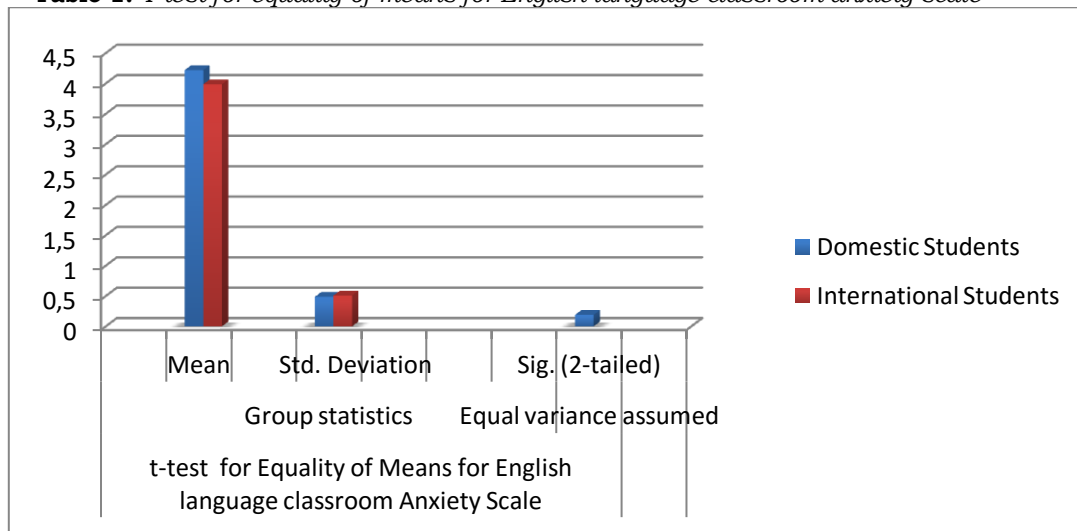
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To find out the levels and the comparisons between domestic students and international students for English language speaking in classroom, the answers which the students gave to the questionnaires of anxiety, motivation, self-confidence and attitude scales, and

the affective strategy inventory were tested and analyzed through SPSS. The results for each type of scale present the variations that occur between two groups of students.

3.1. Comparisons of Values across Domestic and International Students

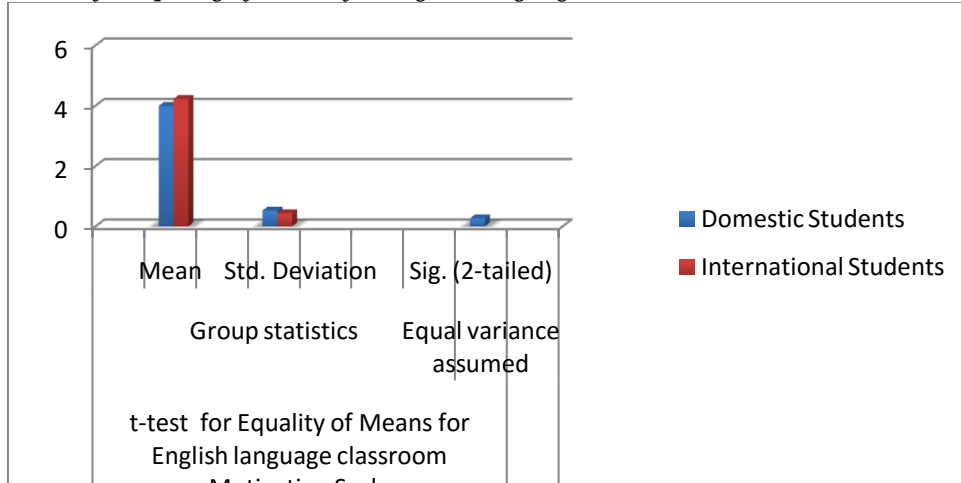
Table 1. *T-test for equality of means for English language classroom anxiety scale*



The statistics demonstrate that there is a slight difference between groups of students in terms of the comparison of their anxiety levels. The international students feel more comfortable or unworried while speaking in English in classroom when compared to their domestic classmates. Domestic students may feel the fear of making mistake, panic when they are asked to speak without preparation, embarrassment of speaking in front of class, nervousness or confusion about what to say a little more in speaking English than international students. However, it is minor as the statistics show above, with *the significance p value, 0, 19*. It means that there is not an important difference between two groups in term of their anxiety levels.

Henter (2013) conducted a similar research about the contribution of affective factors to English proficiency in Romania. He studied first year university students. Motivation and anxiety were found to be closely related to students' English performance.

Nevertheless, the study by Aydın (2012) shows opposite results with the present paper. On her study, Aydın (2012) investigated the role of English proficiency level, personal and affective factors predicting students' academic success at the preparatory school of a university in Turkey. She found there is strong relation between students' English self-concept and their academic success. However, motivation and anxiety weren't significant predictors of students' English exam scores. She remarked that preparatory school is not alternative but compulsory for students, so it may be the reason behind the values of students' motivation. English proficiency exam of students doesn't include speaking part. Not having such an experience in their exams, students may not see speaking English as a factor to be anxious for.

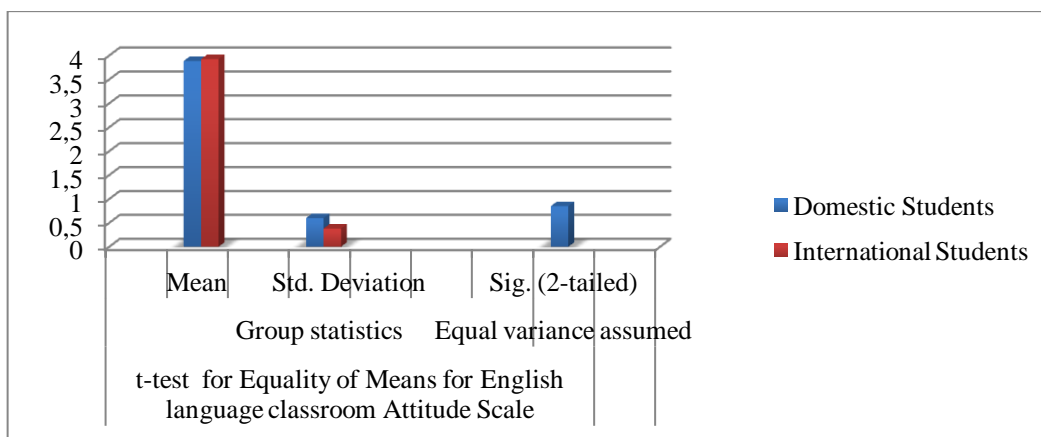
Table 2. *T-test for equality of means for English language classroom motivation scale*

The motivation values reveal that there is not much difference between domestic and international groups. Both groups think that learning English is a must either for work, study, status, access to practical benefits in the world or communication with people all over the world. They note they are enthusiastic to learn and speak it due to either external or internal reasons. The significance p value, 0,265 and group statistics point it clearly, with the higher values of international students.

The relationship between students' motivation level and proficiency scores are positively paralleled. International students have got higher speaking grades in comparison to domestic students. This chart shows the results verify it. The findings are consistent with that of Gardner (1960) (Krashen, 1981) (p.26). He studied eighty-three tenth-grade students of French to find out whether 'integrative motivation' has an impact on students' success in French. He found integrative motivation is a strong predictor and was especially important for improvement in French.

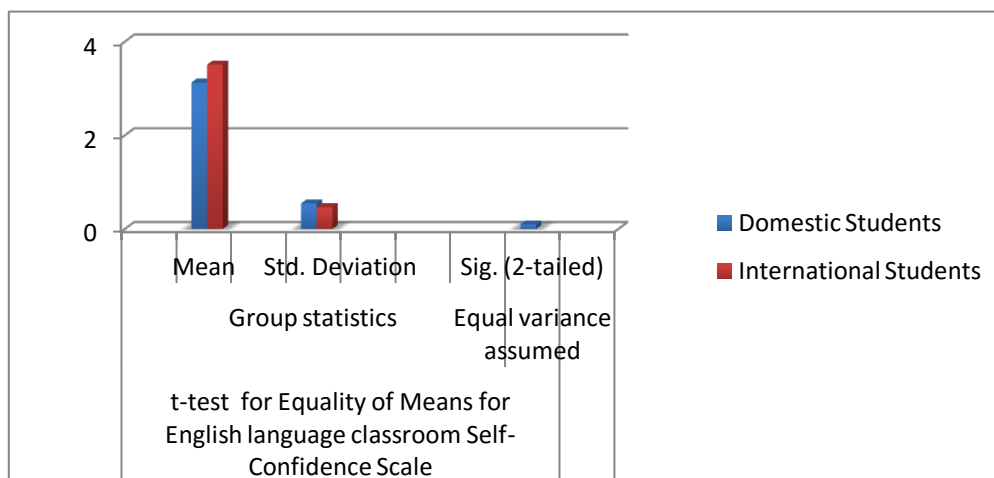
Table 3. *T-test for equality of means for English language classroom attitude scale*

The Comparison of The Affective Strategies Used by Turkish and International University Students in Preparatory Classes in Turkey in Speaking English



Attitude levels of both groups show similar values. The values even give the minimal numbers in showing the difference between the groups in comparison to the other scales' values. The students believe that learning and speaking another language, English, helps them broaden their worldview and take considerable steps in their careers. Moreover, they generally find learning and speaking enjoyable and give importance to the role of teachers in helping them in class, too.

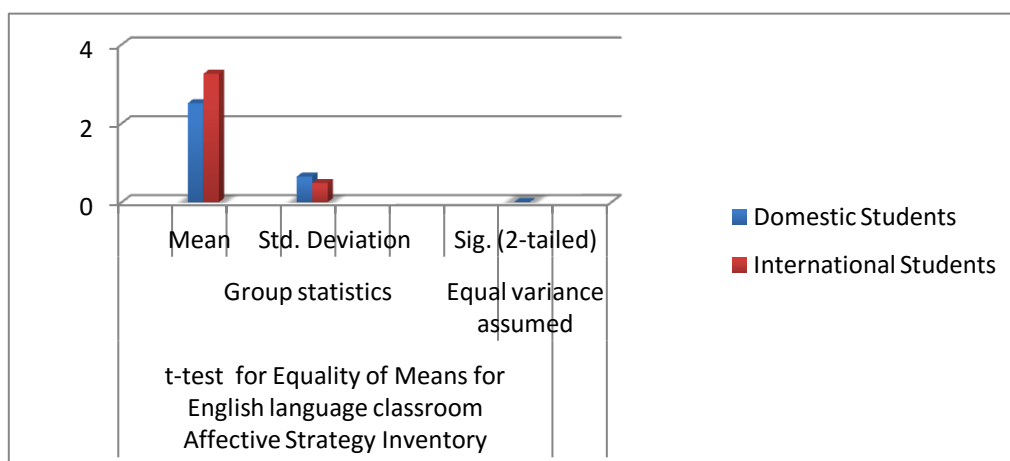
Table 4. *T-test for equality of means for English language classroom self-confidence scale*



Though not having much variation, the statistics demonstrate that the international students feel more self-confident and more autonomous in speaking, creating a good self-image as a language learner or considering themselves successful in English. While the domestic students often think that their peers speak English better than them, the international group doesn't state it much. Nevertheless, there are individuals from both groups who consider themselves as almost equal to their peers. In this sense, feeling oneself self-confident in using a second or foreign language may almost equal to considering oneself one of the parts of a unity of speakers of a language. Krashen (2014) indicates that it is important for acquirers of a language see themselves as 'a member of

the club' of people who speak the language. The club membership is seen to have a positive effect on proficiency in language.

Table 5. T-test for equality of means for English language classroom affective strategy inventory



As the statistics about the use of affective strategy to overcome negative feelings the students may have in speaking English show, there exists a notable variation between the groups. With the significance *p* value 0,006, the international students get benefit from more strategies to have a good speaking, but contrary to our expectations, the students from both groups did not mention any extra different affective strategy for speaking in the interview. It points that either the students are not aware of using them, or they do not think that some common reactions like trying to relax, encouraging himself or thinking positively in speaking are strategies. Besides the common strategies, they give no information about the possible various strategy types that can be used in speaking a foreign language as I mentioned above. After the items of encouraging, relaxing and saying positive things to himself, such items like setting goals, using checklists, trying to stay cool in speaking are also used mostly by students. The affective strategy that the students use least is the item "I write down my feelings in a language-learning diary". It may be because writing isn't a common pastime for students.

Many studies are available in literature both within country or abroad that studies the relationship between using language learning strategies (LLS) including affective ones and language proficiency, too, along with the ones that investigate the effect of training in affective strategies on improvement in a language, or the tie between achievement in learning or acquiring a language with only one, or two parts of affective variables.

Kato (2005) studied how language-learning strategies affect English proficiency of students in three different Japanese universities. It was carried on 195 1st to 4th year university students. The study showed that ‘metacognitive, affective strategy’ use was the biggest factor in predicting students’ proficiency. The more students use metacognitive, affective strategies, the more they are successful in learning English. ‘Cognitive strategy’ use was in the second place in contributing to success. They were followed by ‘social strategy’ and ‘memory-compensation strategy’ use respectively.

In another study by Deneme (2010), Jordanian, Spanish and Turkish university students were compared in terms of their language learning strategy choices. The results indicated that Jordanian and Turkish students use memory strategies and affective strategies much more than Spanish students. Jordanian students come first in using social strategies. It shows that Jordanian students are more active in starting a conversation or practicing speaking in English. Overall speaking, Jordanian students were found to use strategies more than Turkish and Spanish students and Spanish students are the last ones in strategy use.

3.2. Correlations of Values within Groups

As well as making comparisons between domestic and international students in feeling various affective factors in speaking English, we also correlated the values of speaking grades, level of study and mean of affective strategy use of both groups.

- a) Speaking grades
- b) Level of study
- c) The mean of affective strategy use

Both international and domestic students’ speaking grades were obtained from responsible instructors at these 2 state universities through petition. Students were given points from 1 to 5, depending on the grades they got. Scores ranged as follows:

0-40: 1 41-60: 2 61-72: 3 73-85: 4 86-100: 5

In order to find out the levels of English studies of students, they were asked to number themselves from 1, never, to 5, always in studying English in the questionnaire and tell more about it on a separate document consisting of questions relating English study. The questions were prepared as to cover all the areas and skills of English. International students come first in the level of study (3,7) compared to domestic students (3) and they are better affective strategy users.

After analyzing each value, they were correlated within each group using SPSS program. Below, it shows the results for international and domestic students, respectively.

Table 6. *Correlations between grades, level of study and mean of affective strategy use of international students*

		Speaking grades	Level of study	Mean of affective strategy use
Speaking grades	Pearson Correlation	1	.329	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.324	.907
	N	11	11	11
Level of study	Pearson Correlation	.329	1	.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.324		.920
	N	11	11	11
Mean of affective strategy use	Pearson Correlation	.040	.035	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.907	.920	
	N	11	11	11

The findings indicate that studying English has much more effect on the speaking scores of international students (0,329) than affective strategy use. However, the contribution of affective strategy use in speaking proficiency isn't deniable. It can be said that affective strategy use works in blocking negative feelings and discouraging speaking more in English for the part of international students.

Table 7. Correlations between grades, level of study and mean of affective strategy use of domestic students

		Speaking grades	Level of study	Mean of affective strategy use
Speaking grades	Pearson Correlation	1	.132	-.018
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.700	.958
	N	11	11	11
Level of study	Pearson Correlation	.132	1	.670*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.700		.024
	N	11	11	11
Mean of affective strategy use	Pearson Correlation	-.018	.670*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.958	.024	
	N	11	11	11

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Domestic students, all of whom are Turkish students, exhibit lower speaking scores and use affective strategies less than international students. Table 7 show that the level of study of domestic students have an impact on their speaking grades with a positive correlation between them. However, affective strategy use correlates negatively with speaking scores (-.018). Though Turkish students are reported to use some affective strategies, it concludes they can't make use of them efficiently or productively enough in helping to lower their affective filter.

As a result, while study levels of international students make more contribution to proficiency in speaking English, the effect of affective strategies are of importance too. However, domestic students have low scores, accompanied with less study and negatively correlated affective strategy use, which suggests non-yielding efforts of students.

4. CONCLUSION and SUGGESTIONS

The present paper aims to find out affective variables domestic (Turkish) and international students in preparatory classes of two state universities in Turkey might face in speaking English and in exploring different strategies that are used to lower affective filter and its correlation with their speaking grades. The study was conducted on 11 domestic, Turkish and 11 international students, whose departments are different from English language. It indicated that international students have higher values in affective factors like self-confidence, motivation in, and attitude towards speaking English than Turkish students. Likewise, their speaking scores and affective strategy use are ahead of those of Turkish students. There is also a positive correlation among the speaking scores, study levels and affective strategy use of international students. Turkish students, on the other hand, have more anxiety, less study habits and affective strategy use for English study.

This study has consistent results with what Krashen (1981) puts forward for the acquisition of a second or foreign language by students in the optimum level. It also has parallels with many researches in the literature. It, however, differs from others since it tries to shed light on both Turkish and international learners studying in Turkish universities side by side at the same time. Although they may have different educational backgrounds, it focuses on finding the differences between them on the investigated issues, taking also account of the period, the same educational setting and life they have had together in Turkey.

However, it lacks in the number of participants and countries. Some other researches could be conducted on this topic with more participants from more countries to build on what we have had so far.

5. IMPLICATIONS

It is a fact that learning and teaching another language has many hardships, but it brings about new study and working areas, job opportunities or prosperity in the effective communication of people all over the world. It is therefore a focused area that is to be improved to get optimum favorable results. Turkey, especially, confronts the difficulties of teaching, learning and using English in practice much. English is not used for communication in daily life besides Turkish in Turkey, so there is not enough exposure to input from English. Also the general attitudes of Turkish people towards it are not much positive. Along with the inefficient usages of the ways, methods or techniques in learning and teaching English, too, it proves the current situation of English use in Turkey.

This study could positively contribute to the possible solutions to the problems in speaking English in terms of affective variables for learners because it tries to benefit from international and cross-cultural ties and individual differences. By considering the varieties of affective strategies and opinions of domestic and international students, some affective strategies could be developed or the present ones may be combined or improved agreeing upon their weaknesses and strengths for the benefits of students. With the aim of raising awareness and shedding light upon how affective variables and strategies relate to speaking English, this paper could act as a potential agent for the encouragement of learners and teachers in this field.

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FIGURES AND TABLES

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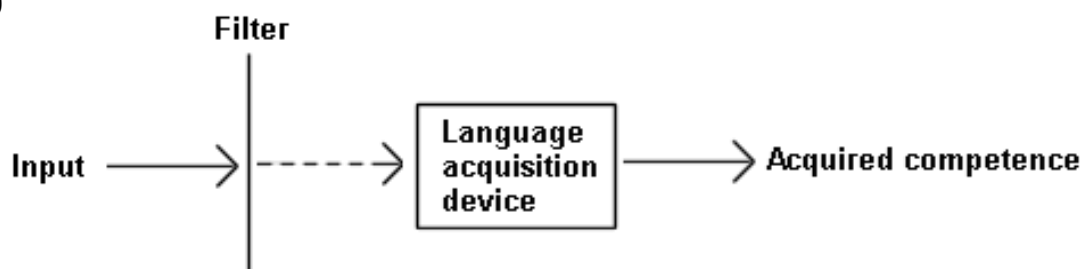


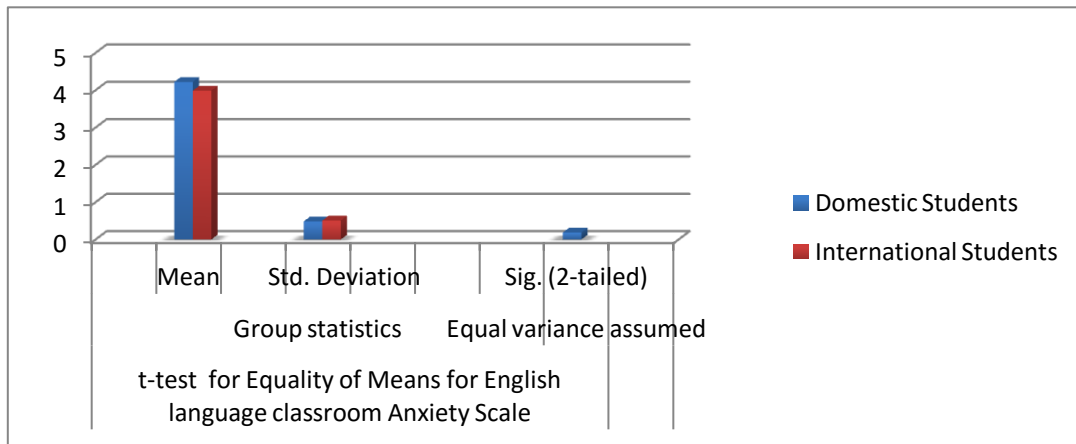
Fig. 1. The relationship between affective factors and language acquisition Krashen (1982) (p.32)

(p.4)

2) Table 1. T-test for equality of means for English language classroom anxiety scale

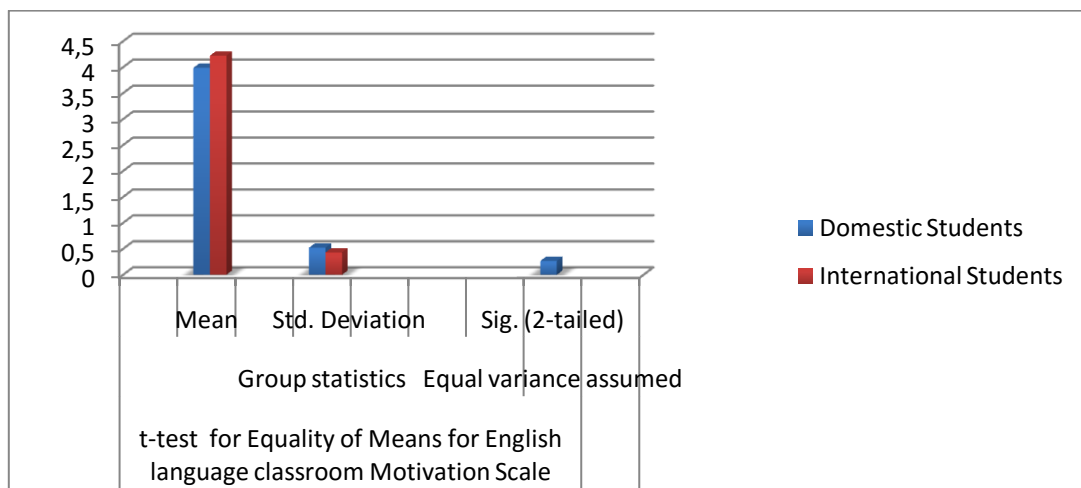
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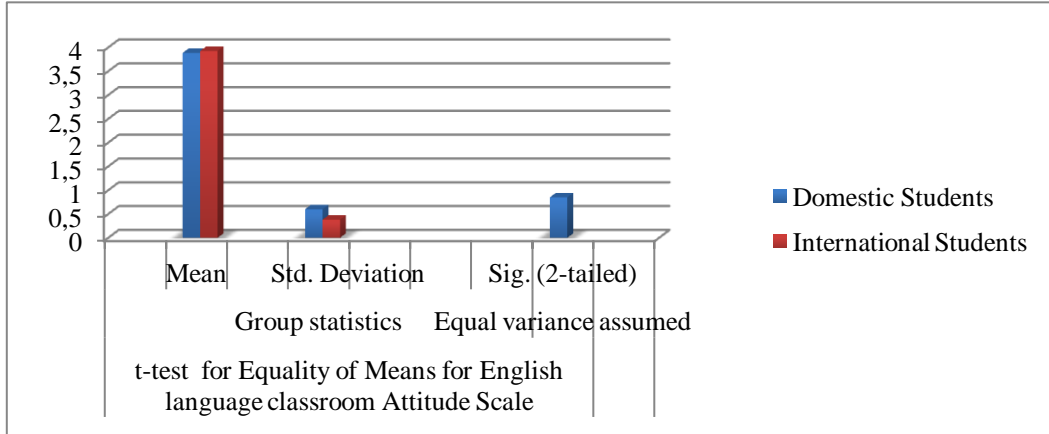
(p.

3) Table 2. T-test for equality of means for English language classroom motivation scale



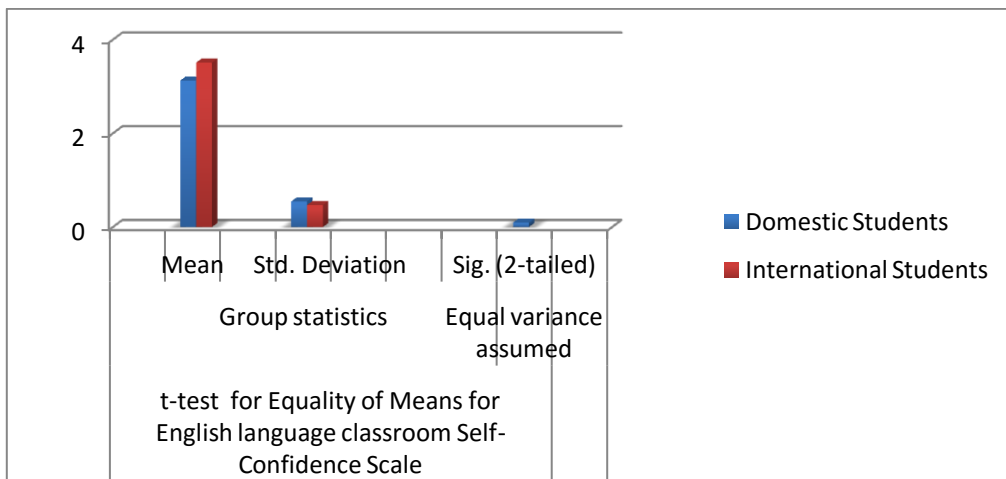
(p.7)

4) Table 3. T-test for equality of means for English language classroom attitude scale



(p.8)

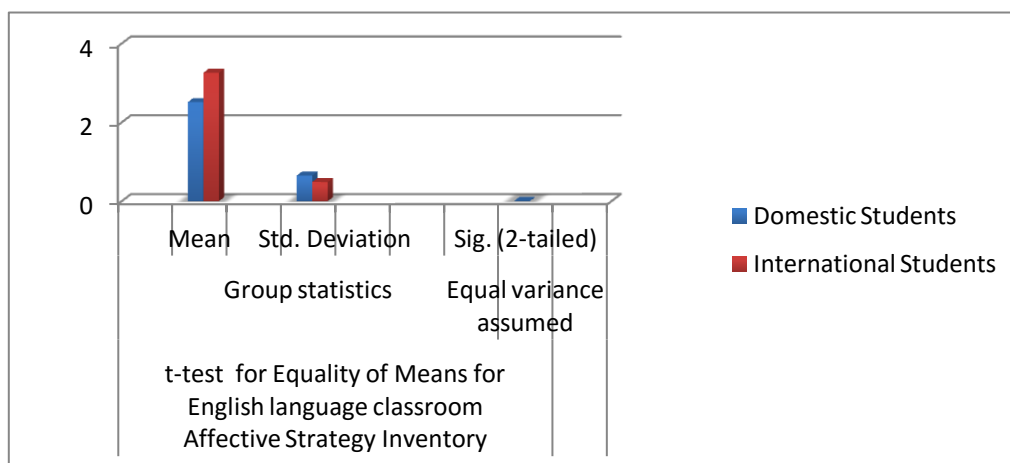
5) Table 4. T-test for equality of means for English language classroom self-confidence scale



(p.8)

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