

Skype Videoconferencing for Less Commonly Taught Languages: Examining the Effects on Students' Foreign Language Anxiety

Joe Terantino

Kennesaw State University

Abstract

This study compared students' foreign language anxiety levels while completing oral assessments administered face-to-face (F2F) and via Skype videoconferencing for university courses delivered under the self-instructional language program (SILP) model (Dunkel, Brill, & Kohl, 2002). Data were gathered by administering a modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) survey (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and conducting subsequent interviews with the students. Results indicate that there was not a significant difference in anxiety levels or changes in anxiety between the two delivery methods. These findings suggest that Skype videoconferencing may be a viable alternative to F2F interviews, because it did not negatively impact the learners' anxiety levels.

Introduction

For many colleges and universities that offer courses for less commonly taught languages under the SILP model (Dunkel, Brill, & Kohl, 2002), a constant concern is providing an effective means of evaluating the students' oral proficiency. According to the SILP model, often without the presence of an official instructor, external examiners are brought in from outside institutions to conduct oral exams, which are intended to assess the students' oral proficiency. In some cases, for logistical reasons, programs have administered this type of oral exam via videoconferencing software.

Although it has become more commonplace to use videoconferencing software to administer such exams, there is no body of research that examines the effects of doing so on the students' levels of anxiety. Several researchers have investigated issues related to anxiety and the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Baralt & Gurzynski-Weiss, 2011; Satar & Ozdener, 2008); however, the effect of the videoconferencing format on foreign language learners' anxiety is relatively unresearched. As Poza indicates, tools such as videoconferencing have "the potential of breaking yet another barrier of the classroom environment: the high level of anxiety that students experience when participating in oral interaction in the L2" (2011, p. 34). Thus, as foreign language educators continue to implement innovative uses of such tools, it is imperative that studies document their effectiveness and impact on the language learning process, including the effects on students' levels of foreign language anxiety during oral assessments.

This study examines the impact of using a Skype interview oral testing format on students' foreign language anxiety levels. Adhering to a mixed method study design (Creswell, 2013), data are presented from the FLCAS survey (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and subsequent interviews with the students. More specifically, the study compared the foreign language anxiety levels of students completing oral assessments administered F2F with anxiety levels of students completing the assessments via Skype videoconferencing. Additionally, comparisons were made between changes in anxiety levels across the semester and between beginning and intermediate language levels. The research questions addressed by the study were the following:

1. Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester and the end of the semester, as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?
 - 1.a. Is there a significant difference between Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester and the end of the semester, as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?
2. Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels and Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester?
 - 2.a. Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels and Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the end of the semester as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?
3. Is there a significant difference in foreign language anxiety levels between students completing oral exams F2F and students completing oral exams via Skype videoconferencing?
4. Is there a significant difference in the changes in foreign language anxiety levels between students completing oral exams F2F and students completing oral exams via Skype videoconferencing?

Literature Review

According to some researchers, anxiety is one of the most important variables related to the language learning process. In fact, Horwitz (2001) believes foreign language anxiety to be the most influential affective factor impacting the language learning process. Broadly defined, foreign language anxiety is an uneasy state resulting when a non-native speaker attempts to learn or use a second language (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994). For a comprehensive review of foreign language anxiety research see Young (2014). This form of *situation specific anxiety* (Horwitz, 2001, 2010), which learners experience when asked to complete a specific task, often occurs when learners attempt to speak the language. Thus, as Horwitz (2010) points out, it is common for foreign language anxiety to invoke negative interference with the language learning process that impairs speaking performance. Ellis (1994)

documents a negative correlation between students' oral proficiency and their anxiety levels that reinforces the need for innovative approaches to alleviate this type of negative interference.

Many educators and researchers have turned to technology as a possible solution to reduce students' foreign language anxiety levels; however, the results of these studies have been mixed. Most have focused on text-based, CMC and voice conferencing. For example, while implementing a computer-mediated, information-gap task with intermediate Spanish students, Baralt and Gurzynski-Weiss (2011) found that anxiety was comparable during the computer-mediated task and the F2F task. In addition, the students did not express a strong preference for one medium over the other. Another study compared learners' anxiety as they completed language courses via distance learning or F2F (Pichette, 2009). In this study no significant differences were found in anxiety between classroom learners and distance learners. Thus, these two studies do not indicate that anxiety levels are reduced by the use of technologies.

On the other hand, a series of studies investigating the impact of Wimba voice boards on students' oral proficiency and anxiety has demonstrated reductions in learners' anxiety. Cho and Carey (2001) found that using Wimba reduced the pressure Korean students experienced when completing oral interviews F2F with an examiner. Additionally, they documented a reduction in overall anxiety. Other research has supported the anxiety-reduction effect of Wimba voice boards in administering oral proficiency tasks (McIntosh, Braul, & Chao, 2003). More recently, Poza (2011) indicated that there is a "strong potential for reduction of anxiety in the Wimba environment," which she attributes to the elimination of the time pressure frequently associated with F2F or synchronous tasks.

This body of literature illustrates the capability of technology to alleviate factors contributing to students' anxiety in text-based CMC and voice boards. However, to date, researchers have not addressed the role videoconferencing may play in reducing students' foreign language anxiety during oral assessments. As Godwin-Jones (2005) indicates, such "technologies offer intriguing opportunities for language professionals and learners, as they provide additional channels for oral communication" (p. 9). Tools such as Adobe Connect, Cisco WebEx, Google Hangouts, GoToMeeting, and Skype have the potential to connect learners with other learners, native speakers, and examiners. In addition, they provide access to audio and video feeds, which allow learners to process visual clues as they attempt to communicate. This capability is extremely important, especially for less commonly taught languages, where resources are scarce (LeLoup & Ponterio, 1998).

The Study

This study investigated the use of Skype videoconferencing for completing oral exams in a university Russian course to determine if there was a significant difference in the foreign language anxiety levels of students completing oral interviews conducted F2F and students completing oral interviews conducted via Skype videoconferencing. The study extended over four years and included six sections of Level I (1001 & 1002) and six sections of Level II (2001 & 2002) Russian courses. Adhering to Creswell's (2013) description of a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design, the study was implemented in two phases. In the quantitative phase, the FLCAS sur-

vey was administered to gauge the students' anxiety levels. This was followed by the qualitative phase, consisting of follow-up interviews with the students to verify and explain the findings of the FLCAS.

Context and Participants

The Russian courses under study were offered via a critical languages program employing the SILP model to administer language courses not offered under the regular curriculum of the department. Thus, the students completed a self-directed study of the language with guidance from an international student tutor and an external faculty examiner who provided suggestions for the curriculum and administered the final oral exam. In these courses the oral exam served as the primary evaluation for determining students' overall course grades. Traditionally, these oral exams had been administered F2F; however, beginning in the fall of 2010 the option for a Skype-based videoconferencing oral exam was presented.

Each semester the director of the critical languages program, the external examiner, and the student tutors for the courses suggested topics and co-constructed oral exam guidelines to ensure that the material tested in the interview was appropriate and had been covered throughout the semester. Appendix A is an example of the oral exam guidelines for RUSS 1001. Within each broader topic there were several follow-up questions designed to maintain the conversation-style interview. For the F2F and Skype-based interview assessments, the students conversed with the external examiner who holds a doctorate in Russian and regularly teaches undergraduate Russian courses at another institution. F2F interviews were conducted in an office space on campus; students completed the videoconferencing sessions while sitting at an individual computer station located in the department's lab space and utilizing a webcam and headset. Overall, the interviews lasted approximately 15 minutes, and the students were evaluated with a focus on communicability (listening comprehension and ability to form a response) and grammatical correctness (see Appendix B). The exam guidelines and the grading rubrics remained the same for the F2F and the videoconferencing exams.

More specifically, the participants of this study ($N = 81$) were university students enrolled in 12 sections of Level I and Level II Russian courses over a period of four years, 2010-2013. All of the students enrolled in the Russian courses were invited to take part in the study; however, only responses from native English speakers were included in analysis. Thus, data collected from heritage Russian speakers were discarded from the data set. Most of the participants were true beginners to studying Russian. Only four had studied Russian previously, either independently or at the high school level. Table 1 shows the demographics for the participants by course level, average age, and sex.

Table 1*Student demographic data by course level.*

	Students completing F2F interviews				Students completing Skype interviews				Total		
	n	Mean Age	Female	Male	n	Mean Age	Female	Male	n	Female	Male
RUSS 1001	15	22	9	6	21	24	15	6	36	24	12
RUSS 1002	6	24	3	3	9	21	5	4	15	8	7
RUSS 2001	8	21	5	3	10	22	8	2	18	13	5
RUSS 1002	5	23	2	3	7	21	4	3	12	6	6
Total	34	22	19	15	47	22	32	15	81	51	30

Instruments

Within this mixed-method study the researcher utilized the FLCAS and a follow-up interview with selected student participants. First, the FLCAS (Horwitz, et al., 1986) was used to measure the participants' foreign language anxiety related to listening comprehension and speaking skills. Similar to other studies (Pichette, 2009; Poza, 2011), several of the survey items were removed from the instrument if they did not relate directly to speaking and listening skills (see Appendix C) and the wording of the items was adjusted to accommodate Skype videoconferencing. The FLCAS uses a 5-point Likert scale for its responses, ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5). Survey results were tabulated as total scores with a minimum score of 17 and a maximum score of 85 (see Appendix D). The survey was administered to all student participants at the midterm of the semester of the respective courses to establish a base point for the individual students. Then, the FLCAS was administered again after the oral interviews were completed at the end of the semester.

In addition, interviews were conducted with eight students, roughly 10 percent of the total participants. As Adler and Adler (2012) describe, "a small number of cases, or subjects, may be extremely valuable," especially if they provide access to unique populations, which arguably may be the case when dealing with smaller student populations such as those from critical language programs (p. 8). The interview questions were based heavily on the previous work of Poza (2011). These interviews were used to verify and explain the findings from the FLCAS. Specifically, the students' perceptions of the oral interviews were collected to assist in further defining the potential role of videoconferencing for oral assessments. The questions were designed to elicit responses related to the students' perceptions of using Skype videoconferencing for the oral interview process and its effect on students' anxiety (see Appendix E). Last, the participants were selected based on willingness and availability.

Data Analysis

To begin data analysis, the participants' FLCAS scores were tabulated as totals. The quantitative analysis for these data involved descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency, variability, and percentages. In addition, *t-tests* were performed for statistical comparison between groups. The qualitative analysis comprised three recursive processes: category construction, data verification, and testing and confirming (Merriam, 2009). As such, the transcriptions of the follow-up interviews were systematically coded according to the a priori themes and categories established by the interview prompts: comfort with using Skype, speaking the target language, perceived level of anxiety, and the physical presence of the examiner. Other emerging themes were identified where appropriate using the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The primary intent of this qualitative stage of data analysis was to verify, refute, or explain the statistical findings resulting from the students' FLCAS scores through triangulation Creswell (2013).

Findings

The data contained 81 observations of a study on the anxiety levels of Russian students during an oral exam, as reported on the FLCAS. The observations were further classified into two different course levels (Level I and Level II) as well as two different ways the oral exam was administered, F2F and via Skype videoconferencing. Appendix D contains the students' FLCAS scores tabulated as totals, including the course level, delivery mode of the oral interview, the pre- and post-administration of the FLCAS, and the resulting changes in FLCAS scores. The following sections highlight the pertinent findings of the study as they relate to the research questions.

Findings for Research Question One.

1. *Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester and the end of the semester as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?*
 - 1a. *Is there a significant difference between Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester and the end of the semester, as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?*

The mean anxiety scores for Level I students were 47.21 at the midterm and 60.09 at the end of the semester. A paired *t-test* was performed to determine the difference in anxiety levels between the midterm and end of term administration of the FLCAS for the Level I students and then again for Level II students, regardless of delivery method. The results shown in Table 2 indicate that there was a significant difference between the anxiety levels reported at the midterm versus the end of term during the oral exam for Level I students. This finding indicates that there was a statistically significant increase in the students' foreign language anxiety levels, an average increase of 12.88 points. Thus, the students reported higher anxiety levels after completing the oral exam.

Table 2*Question 1 t-test results.*

Course Level	Test	M	SD	95% Lower Confidence Level	95% Upper Confidence Level	T	df	p
1	Pre-test	47.21	13.86	-	-	-	-	-
	Posttest	60.09	12.18	-	-	-	-	-
	Comparison	12.88	7.41	-14.97	-10.80	-12.42	50	<.0001
2	Pre-test	39.93	7.94	-	-	-	-	-
	Posttest	50.00	8.81	-	-	-	-	-
	Comparison	10.06	5.55	-12.14	-7.99	-9.92	29	<.0001

With regard to the Level II students in RUSS 2001 or 2002, the mean anxiety scores were 39.33 at the midterm and 50.00 at the end of the semester. The results shown in Table 2 indicate that there was also a significant difference between the anxiety levels reported at the midterm versus the end of term during the oral exam for Level II students. The Level II students' anxiety levels also increased at the end of the semester; however, the mean change (10.06) was slightly lower than the Level I students reported change in anxiety (12.88).

Several students, from both Level I and Level II, noted the increased pressure related to completing the oral exam because it accounted for the majority of the course grade. When asked, "What is your overall opinion of the oral interview?" the students indicated:

The class itself is not too bad, but everything comes down to the oral exam. I was feeling very anxious about doing the exam. Honestly, now I feel uptight wondering how I did. It's just a lot of pressure at the end of the semester and it counts so much.

I am not a fan of the oral exam counting so much towards the final grade. I would rather have a mix of grades so that if you do poorly on one thing, you have a chance to make it up in other assignments.

In addition to the pressure associated with a high-stakes exam, another theme that emerged in relation to the oral exams was that of having to speak the target language. The Level I students described this aversion to speaking Russian during the oral exam:

The oral exam was tough. I know we practiced all semester to be able to speak the language, but it still made me nervous to speak to the examiner completely in Russian. I wish we had a written exam like most other classes. I couldn't help being so nervous during the exam.

Of course I was more nervous during the interview. It was the first time I had to speak entirely in Russian for such a long time, with no dictionary, no English.

Corroborated by these testimonies, the follow-up interviews further evidenced the increases in anxiety at the end of the semester that were initially documented by the students' responses to the FLCAS survey.

Findings for Research Question Two.

2. *Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels and Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the midterm of the semester (regardless of delivery method)?*
 - 2a. *Is there a significant difference between Level I students' foreign language anxiety levels and Level II students' foreign language anxiety levels at the end of the semester as they complete the oral exam (regardless of delivery method)?*

Referring to Tables 2 and 3, it is important to note again that the mean anxiety scores for Level I and Level II students at the midterm were 47.21 and 39.93, respectively. At the end of the semester the mean anxiety scores were 60.09 and 50.00. An independent t-test was performed to see if there was a significant difference between the anxiety levels of Level I and Level II students at the semester midterm and then again at the end of the semester. The results shown in Table 3 indicate that there was a significant difference between the anxiety levels of Level I and Level II students at the midterm and at the end of the semester. Thus, at both points in the semester Level I students reported higher anxiety levels than the Level II students.

Table 3

<i>Question 2 t-test results.</i>								
Course Level	Test	M	SD	95% Lower Confidence Level	95% Upper Confidence Level	T	df	p
1	Pre-test	47.21	13.86	-	-	-	-	-
	Posttest	39.93	7.94	-	-	-	-	-
	Comparison	7.29	12.01	2.47	12.10	3.01	79	<.01
2	Pre-test	60.10	12.18	-	-	-	-	-
	Posttest	50.00	8.81	-	-	-	-	-
	Comparison	10.10	11.07	5.03	15.17	3.97	79	<.001

In this case, the follow-up interviews revealed some underlying reasons for the difference in anxiety between the two levels. The Level II students described their language learning experience and increased opportunities for speaking as factors, which contributed to their lower anxiety at both points in the semester. Consider the following statements from Level II students:

At this level we already know what we have to do, and we have had more experience and practice. If you do something for one semester or you do it for two years, there is a big difference. I remember when I first took Russian. I was very nervous about speaking, but now after doing it so much I don't think about it like that.

I used to worry more about talking in class, but not as much now. I try to talk in Russian as much as I can, in class and outside of class, and it's probably easier because I do it all the time.

After doing this for a few semesters, I really don't think about having to talk in Russian, I think more about what I want to say and if I can do it without help.

Thus, the Level II students participating in this study attributed their lower anxiety to “*experience and practice.*”

Findings for Research Question Three

3. *Is there a significant difference in foreign language anxiety levels between students completing oral exams F2F and students completing oral exams via Skype videoconferencing?*

The mean anxiety score for students completing the oral exams F2F was 57.47, and the mean for students utilizing Skype was 55.55. Results of the independent t-test indicated that there was not a significant difference between the two delivery methods. Thus, the students' anxiety levels did not differ significantly whether they completed the oral exam F2F or via Skype videoconferencing.

Drawing from the follow-up interviews, several explanations were offered to explain the lack of a significant difference in anxiety levels between the students completing F2F interviews and those completing Skype-based interviews. For example, the majority of the students completing Skype-based interviews indicated they had experience with using Skype prior to the oral interview and they felt comfortable “*talking online.*” When asked, “How would you describe your level of anxiety when speaking in Skype?” the students replied:

It was the oral exam that made me feel anxious, not using Skype.

I use Skype all of the time. It didn't bother me at all. It may have been less intimidating, because the examiner wasn't really there next to me.

Talking online is not a big deal. Maybe it used to be, but any more I do it all time.

Thus, the students' familiarity with Skype appeared to have helped maintain their anxiety levels similar to the F2F group. In addition, several students referenced feeling “*less intimidated,*” because the examiner was not physically present during the oral interview.

Findings for Question Four

4. *Is there a significant difference in the changes in foreign language anxiety levels between students completing oral exams F2F and via Skype videoconferencing?*

The mean change in anxiety scores for students completing the oral exams F2F was 11.82, and the mean change for students utilizing Skype was 11.85, a .03-point difference. To answer question four, an independent t-test was performed to see if there is a significant difference in the changes of anxiety levels for the two delivery methods. Results indicated that there was not a significant difference between the

changes in anxiety levels for the students utilizing the two delivery methods.

When asked specifically about changes in anxiety throughout the semester, two students responded with the following:

Of course I felt more anxious at the oral interview. Earlier in the semester I only had to worry about participating in class. At the oral exam I had to worry about my grade. If I did poorly, it means I would get a bad grade. It really had nothing to do with Skype, but I know I was more anxious at the end of the semester.

Using Skype didn't bother me, but the end of this course was extremely nerve-racking. You only get one shot with the final exam and everything depends on this one shot and the opinion of the examiner.

Thus, the statistical data and the follow-up interviews support the idea that the use of Skype videoconferencing did not negatively or positively affect the students' anxiety as they completed the oral interviews in the context of this study.

Discussion

With regard to the first research question about differences in anxiety levels between the midterm and the end of the semester, results from this study indicate that anxiety levels increased significantly near the oral interviews for Level I and II students, regardless of exam delivery mode. Respectively, the students experienced 12.88- and 10.06-point increases in anxiety. One would expect such an increase in anxiety based on the nature of the SILP model, which emphasizes the end-of-term oral exam. In addition, previous research has documented that many students experience anxiety in response to having their speaking skills evaluated (Chen, Horwitz, & Schaller, 1999; Horwitz, 2010). Qualitative data gathered from the interviews support this finding as well.

Results from data collected to address the second research question, on differences in anxiety levels between Level I and Level II students at the midterm and the end of the semester, indicate that Level II students experienced lower anxiety than the Level I students at the midterm and the end of the semester as they completed the oral exam, regardless of delivery mode. The difference in the FLCAS scores at the midterm was 7.28 points, and the difference after completing the oral exam was 10.09 points. Although these differences are not drastic, they do yield statistically significant results. To explain these differences, it is informative to review previous research (Frantz & Magnan, 2005; Kitano, 2001; Liu, 2006; Marcos-Llinás & Garau, 2009), which reveals that foreign language anxiety is typically higher for beginners. Another plausible explanation is that students who experience high anxiety in lower level courses may not continue to the intermediate level. Thus, by default the Level II students may begin with a lower mean score on anxiety. Similarly, students who performed well in the beginning courses may have experienced an increase in confidence of their speaking skills by the time they are at the intermediate level, which contributes to decreasing their anxiety.

Perhaps the most significant finding of this study lies in the results for question three, which examines the differences in levels of anxiety between students

completing the oral assessment F2F and students completing the assessment via Skype videoconferencing. These results indicate no significant difference in foreign language anxiety levels. This finding is not consistent with the body of previous research related to CMC and anxiety that has shown the ability of technology to reduce foreign language learners' anxiety (Cho & Carey, 2001; McIntosh, Brault, & Chao, 2003; Poza, 2011). Rather, it substantiates other studies that found no significant differences in anxiety levels between F2F students and students completing CMC tasks (Baralt & Gurzynski-Weiss, 2011) and between F2F students and distance language learning students (Pichette, 2009). Although this study did not determine that Skype videoconferencing reduces students' foreign language anxiety when compared with F2F interviews, an absence of increased anxiety may warrant the use of Skype videoconferencing for similar assessments when F2F exchanges are not possible. In addition, the interviews revealed that students felt comfortable completing the oral exams via Skype, because most students had prior experience with the format.

Results for question four, which addresses changes in anxiety levels between students conducting the oral assessments F2F and students using Skype videoconferencing, highlight that there was not a significant difference for the changes in anxiety between the two delivery modes. In fact, as Table 3 indicates, the difference in the mean anxiety scores for the control and experimental groups was only .03 points. Thus, the reported changes in foreign language anxiety were consistent regardless of exam delivery mode. As noted previously, this finding could be attributed to the students' familiarity with Skype or their increased concern with being formally evaluated (Chen, Horwitz, & Schaller, 1999; Horwitz, 2010).

Limitations of the Study

There are several noteworthy limitations to this study. First and foremost, the data collected was self-reported. Thus, the student participants of this study may have provided responses they felt the researcher would want or expect, similar to the Hawthorne effect (Franke & Kaul, 1978). In this manner, a lack of self-awareness on behalf of the students may have also affected the data. Second, the research was conducted with a relatively small sample size. To bolster the potential of the generalizability of the findings, larger samples should be studied. Third, the study focused on the use of Skype videoconferencing to conduct oral exams for a self-instructional Russian university course. Therefore, the results may not apply to other settings or technologies. Last, only a few of the students were willing to participate in follow-up interviews with the researcher. With a limited number of participant interviews, it is difficult to establish whether their perceptions were unique within the group or to be considered representative of the entire group. Similarly, this limits the generalizability of the findings.

Implications

Overall, with regard to oral assessments, the findings of this study offer mixed support for Poza's statement that new tools, such as videoconferencing, have potential to lower "the high level of anxiety that students experience when participating in oral interaction in the L2" (2011, p. 34). While the results demonstrate that utiliz-

ing Skype videoconferencing to complete the oral exams did not negatively affect the students' foreign language anxiety while completing oral assessments, Skype did not assist with lowering the students' anxiety. As stated previously, a result of no significant difference may be enough to support further use of videoconferencing in limited contexts.

After implementing the Skype videoconferencing tool as a means of conducting the oral exams for the Russian courses, there are also several practical implications that can be drawn from the experience. First, it was useful to provide a short demonstration of how to use the Skype application to all those involved. Although it is simple to operate and many people have used Skype previously, there is always the possibility that an individual may not know how to access or use the software. Second, it is also important to consider implementing the videoconferencing sessions in a controlled environment such as a computer lab or office. In this case, doing so afforded the students privacy and access to immediate technical support if needed. Third, it was advantageous to conduct test Skype calls with the examiner prior to administering the official oral exams. This enabled troubleshooting without the pressure of completing the exam.

In closing, this study demonstrates in part how technology has the potential to facilitate course offerings in less commonly taught languages delivered by the SILP model by providing an easy-to-use solution for oral assessments, which in this context did not negatively impact students' anxiety levels. Future research should be conducted to investigate how the use of videoconferencing may impact the results of such oral interviews in comparison with F2F interviews. Additionally, researchers may want to explore the impact of videoconferencing for interpersonal oral exchanges without the context of a high-stakes exam.

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Appendix A

Russian Oral Exam Guidelines 1001 level:

Name: _____ Grade: _____ / 80

On the day of the oral exam, you will receive 4 or 5 of these topics and their follow-up questions in the target language. You will have 2-3 minutes for each topic. In your responses be sure to use various verbs, vocabulary words, and verb tenses where appropriate. Remember, your grade will reflect communicability and grammatical correctness.

You are expected to be able to understand and use the expressions and vocabulary listed in each chapter of your textbook. During the interview, do your best to communicate with me. It is okay to ask for a repetition, to speak more slowly and so on, but you should do so in the target language not English. You will get some points when you make yourself understood even with grammatical errors. Do your best to use complete sentences. Try to avoid one or two word responses. The exam time is roughly 15 minutes per student.

1. Basic conversation pieces:
 - a. Greetings
 - b. How are you?
 - c. What is your name?
 - d. Nice to meet you
 - e. Goodbyes
2. Daily conversation pieces:
 - a. What time is it?
 - b. What day is it?
 - c. What month is it?
 - d. What is the date?
3. Describe your typical daily activities:
 - a. What do you do?
 - b. Where do you go?
 - c. Do you study, work, etc.?
4. Naming classroom objects and describing them:
 - a. Be prepared to describe a picture or an item in class
 - b. Describe colors, size, etc.
5. Talk about university life:

- a. What classes are you taking?
 - b. How many classes do you have?
 - c. What is your major?
 - d. What are you studying?
 - e. Who are your professors?
 - f. What classes do you like?
6. Talking about languages
- a. What is your nationality?
 - b. What language do you know or study?
7. Talking about clothing
- a. What do you wear?
 - b. What color is it?
 - c. Indicate what you have
 - d. Name clothing items

Appendix B

Rubric for the oral exam:

Question #1:

Grammar -	5	4	3	2	1
Communicability -	5	4	3	2	1

Question #2

Grammar -	5	4	3	2	1
Communicability -	5	4	3	2	1

Question #3:

Grammar -	5	4	3	2	1
Communicability -	5	4	3	2	1

Question #4

Grammar -	5	4	3	2	1
Communicability -	5	4	3	2	1

Question #5 – This question can be provided in the event that there is some trouble or disconnect with one of the previous questions. The grade recorded for this question may be substituted for one of the previous questions at the examiner’s discretion.

Grammar -	5	4	3	2	1
Communicability -	5	4	3	2	1

Total:

Grammar Total Score _____ /40

Communicability Total Score _____ /40

Final Grade = _____ /80

Appendix C

Modified Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale.

- A. Midterm Instructions: Think about your experience in language classes and indicate how you feel about the following statements. Select the appropriate option after each question.
- B. End of Term Instructions: You have just completed the oral interview with the outside examiner. Think about this experience and indicate how you feel about the following statements. Select the appropriate option after each question ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Agree
1. I didn't feel quite sure of myself when I was speaking Russian during the Skype interview.
 2. I didn't worry about making mistakes in Russian during the Skype interview.
 3. I trembled when I had to speak Russian during the Skype interview.
 4. It frightened me when I didn't understand what the examiner said in Russian during the Skype interview.
 5. I think the other students completed the interview better in Russian during the Skype interview.
 6. During the Skype interview I was so nervous I forgot things I know about Russian.
 7. It embarrassed me to answer in Russian to the examiner during the Skype interview.
 8. I was not nervous speaking Russian with the examiner during the Skype interview.
 9. I felt confident when I spoke Russian during the Skype interview.
 10. I was afraid that the examiner was going to correct every mistake I made in Russian during the Skype interview.
 11. I felt my heart pounding when I was going to speak Russian during the Skype interview.
 12. I feel that the other students did better in Russian than I did during the Skype interview.
 13. I didn't feel very self-conscious about speaking Russian during the Skype interview because the examiner was not present physically.
 14. I felt more tense and nervous speaking Russian in the Skype interview.
 15. I was nervous and confused when I was speaking Russian during the Skype interview.
 16. I was nervous when I didn't understand every word the examiner said in Russian during the Skype interview.

17. I was afraid that the examiner would laugh at me when listening to my Russian.

Appendix D

FLCAS Tabulated Scores by Student

Course level	Delivery mode	Midterm FLCAS Score	End of Term FLCAS Score	Change in Anxiety
1	F2F	46	61	15
1	F2F	56	62	6
1	F2F	33	36	3
1	F2F	72	71	-1
1	F2F	43	66	23
1	F2F	67	77	10
1	F2F	38	65	27
1	F2F	47	68	21
1	F2F	58	66	8
1	F2F	41	48	7
1	F2F	52	69	17
1	F2F	75	72	-3
1	F2F	21	43	22
1	F2F	32	41	9
1	F2F	37	58	21
1	Skype	39	57	18
1	Skype	52	62	10
1	Skype	29	45	16
1	Skype	72	72	0
1	Skype	47	63	16
1	Skype	59	75	16
1	Skype	45	66	21
1	Skype	47	66	19
1	Skype	48	61	13
1	Skype	41	48	7
1	Skype	52	67	15
1	Skype	69	72	3
1	Skype	33	42	9
1	Skype	32	41	9

1	Skype	44	55	11
1	Skype	44	52	8
1	Skype	34	43	9
1	Skype	31	45	14
1	Skype	62	70	8
1	Skype	58	74	16
1	Skype	34	53	19
1	F2F	46	65	19
1	F2F	56	62	6
1	F2F	33	46	13
1	F2F	66	77	11
1	F2F	43	66	23
1	F2F	67	77	10
1	Skype	38	65	27
1	Skype	47	66	19
1	Skype	58	69	11
1	Skype	45	57	12
1	Skype	54	79	25
1	Skype	75	72	-3
1	Skype	21	33	12
1	Skype	32	41	9
1	Skype	37	58	21
2	F2F	33	44	11
2	F2F	40	55	15
2	F2F	23	29	6
2	F2F	44	52	8
2	F2F	27	35	8
2	F2F	34	41	7
2	F2F	45	57	12
2	F2F	43	58	15
2	Skype	32	49	17
2	Skype	40	48	8
2	Skype	43	49	6
2	Skype	32	42	10
2	Skype	25	41	16
2	Skype	43	41	-2

2	Skype	39	56	17
2	Skype	44	61	17
2	Skype	51	53	2
2	Skype	41	36	-5
2	F2F	47	56	9
2	F2F	41	49	8
2	F2F	49	62	13
2	F2F	52	61	9
2	F2F	45	59	14
2	Skype	55	59	4
2	Skype	33	48	15
2	Skype	36	47	11
2	Skype	42	58	16
2	Skype	36	43	7
2	Skype	34	49	15
2	Skype	49	62	13

Appendix E

Interview Questions (adapted from Poza, 2011)

1. Describe your experience with using Skype prior to the oral interview.
2. Describe your experience with using Skype to complete the oral interview.
3. What was the best thing about using Skype?
4. What was the worst thing about using Skype?
5. What is your overall opinion about the oral interview?
6. What is your overall opinion about the having to use Skype to complete the oral interview?
7. What is your opinion of the Skype software?
8. In your opinion, what aspects of this technology are positive and negative for language learning?
9. How did you feel when speaking through Skype?
10. How did you feel about speaking in general during the oral interview?
11. How did you feel about making mistakes during the oral interview?
12. How did you feel about understanding or not understanding what the examiner said?
13. How would you describe your level of anxiety when speaking in Skype?

14. How did Skype affect your ability to speak during the oral interview?
15. How did you feel about the fact that the examiner was not physical present during the oral interview?