

Studying Foreign Language Anxiety with its Causes and Effects: A case of King Khalid University EFL Learners

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Abstract.

The primary focus of the present study is to investigate the anxiety level of Saudi undergraduate students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). An attempt has been made to find out various possible causes, sources, and effects of foreign language anxiety on Saudi EFL learners. The study aims to answer the main question; if this anxiety affects the learning process of Saudi EFL learners positively or adversely. The study demonstrates some models and strategies related to causes and effects of anxiety. These models and strategies can be applied as potential management tools and strategies for reducing the level of anxiety encountered by Saudi EFL learners. The researchers employed quantitative and qualitative approaches to collecting and analyzing the data. A 33-item questionnaire adapted from Horwitz et al (1986) distributed among 271 subjects has been used as the main tool for the data collection. All the four basic language skills were tested to elicit the data for measuring the level of anxiety in Saudi students learning English as a foreign language. In addition to the above quantitative approach, some semi-structured interviews were conducted with both EFL learners and teachers. The outcome of the present study can significantly contribute to the development of the quality of learning English as a Foreign Language. It can also serve as an effective mechanism to solve problematic issues among EFL learners in general and Saudi EFL learners in particular. The study offers to introduce researchers and teachers with certain reliable scales for the evaluation of Saudi EFL learners' progress in their learning process. Five-point (5-point) Likert scale is one of these major scales used in the present study.

Keywords: affective domain, anxiety variable, English as a foreign language, foreign language anxiety (FLA), foreign language learning

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