

The Level of Anxiety on the Achievement of the Saudi EFL Learners

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Abstract

The relationship between the level of anxiety on the achievement of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners has long been a key issue in the second language learning literature (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Chan, & Wu, 2004; Cheng, 2005; Mills, Pajares & Herron, 2006; Nahavandi & Mukundan, 2013). The purpose of this study is to investigate whether Saudi students' foreign language anxiety (FLA) affects their achievement in English classes. It also aims to identify the extent to which gender-based anxiety affects FLA in language classes. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) was used as a key research instrument. Seventy-five (24 male and 51 female) Saudi tertiary students studying English as a foreign language (EFL) at King Khalid University (KKU) in Southern Saudi Arabia participated in this study. Based on the *t*-test performed on this study, the findings revealed that gender has no significant effect on students' FLA and English competence. Moreover, the study recommends transforming Saudi English language classrooms into friendlier environments by employing a variety of practical means designed to control learners' FLA and improve their EFL achievement.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Foreign Language anxiety (FLA), Second Language Learning (L2), L2 achievement, gender.

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