

Language Anxiety and Motivation as Predictors of English as a Foreign Language Achievement

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Abstract : The present study examines the predictive power of foreign language anxiety and motivation, as two significant affective variables, in English as a foreign language (EFL) achievement. It also explores the causal relationship between these two factors (i.e. which variable causes the other); and which one of them best predicts other affective factors including learner attitude, self-esteem, and autonomy. The study utilized experimental treatments among 210 Saudi EFL learners divided into four groups. Group 1 was exposed to anxiety-controlling moments, group 2 was exposed to motivational moments, group 3 was exposed to anxiety-controlling and motivational moments together, and group 4 was exposed to no specific anxiety or motivation strategies. The influence of the treatment on the study variables was evaluated using a triangulation of measurements including questionnaires, classroom observations, and achievement tests. Descriptive analysis, ANOVA, ANCOVA, and regression analyses have been deployed to figure out the study findings. While both motivation and anxiety significantly predicted learners EFL achievement, motivation has been found to be the best predictor of learners' achievement; and therefore, operates as the mediator of EFL achievement.

Keywords : motivation, anxiety, achievement, autonomy

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