

Foreign Language Anxiety: Perceptions and Attitudes in the Egyptian ESL Classroom

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Abstract : This study investigated foreign language anxiety (FLA) and teachers' awareness of its presence in the Egyptian ESL classrooms and how FLA correlates with different variables such as four language skills, students' sex, and activities used in class. A combination of quantitative and qualitative instruments was used in order to investigate the previously mentioned variables, which included five interviews with teachers, six classroom observations, a survey for teachers, and a questionnaire for students. The findings of the study revealed that some teachers were aware of the presence of FLA, with some of them believing that other teachers, however, are not aware of this phenomenon, and even when they notice anxiety, they do not always relate it to learning a foreign language. The results also showed that FLA was affected by students' sex, different language skills, and affective anxieties; however, teachers were unaware of the effect of these variables. The results demonstrated that both teachers and students preferred group and pair work to individual activities as they were more relaxing and less anxiety-provoking. These findings contribute to raising teachers' awareness of FLA in ESL classrooms and how it is affected by different variables.

Keywords : foreign language anxiety, situation specific anxiety, skill-specific anxiety, teachers' perceptions

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