
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ANXIETY IN RELATION TO ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH AMONG VII GRADE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study aims to seek the relationship between English Language Anxiety and Academic Achievement in English. The present study was conducted on a sample of 100 students of Class VII selected randomly from two CBSE affiliated English medium private schools of Fazilka district of Punjab state of India, affiliated to central board of secondary education. Two instruments were employed to collect the data. The first one was Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) by Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope (1986) and secondly the students were given an Achievement Test in English. The obtained scores were analyzed by using Pearson Product Moment co- relation. It has been found that English language anxiety and Achievement in English are negatively correlated. It has also been found that most of the students fall in the categories of slightly anxious to very high anxiety.

Keywords- *English Language Anxiety, Academic Achievement, Relationship, English Language.*

Introduction

In our country every parent wants their children to get the best education. They aspire to send their children to the schools where the medium of instructions is English as English language has become the master key to acquire a good job. In this era of competition; at every step the academic record speaks for the individual. So Academic Achievement is the most important factor to judge the students' progress. Academic Achievement means the attainment level at which the students' functioning in school tasks is measured through examination. "Academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college, and university" (Academic Achievement - Education - Oxford Bibliographies - obo. , 2018). Different researchers have studied the

Academic Achievement of different subjects and studied many factors which affect students' achievement. In this research we are concerned of academic achievement of students in the English language. It has been seen that language learners sometimes feel anxiety or nervousness while learning second language. So it is important to study English language Anxiety. The anxiety phenomena can be explained by first understanding the concept of anxiety arousal. Anxiety arousal is associated with "self-related cognition: thoughts of failure, worry over how one is performing in the situation, and self deprecating thoughts" (Macintyre, 1999). In order to understand language anxiety, the definitions of anxiety have to be examined. "Distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning is called Language Anxiety" (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986). Macintyre and Gardner (1994) stated language anxiety as "the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language contexts, including speaking, listening, and learning". Then, McIntyre (1999) defines it again as "the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language". Horwitz et. al. (1986) has also described the components of language anxiety which are as follows:

1. Communication apprehension
2. Fear of negative evaluation
3. Test anxiety

Review of the Related Literature

Razak et. al. (2017) in their study concluded that there exist no significant relation between language anxiety and achievement in English. Senel (2016) in his study "Foreign language anxiety of students studying English Language and Literature: A Sample from Turkey". He has found the moderate level of anxiety among the students in preparatory class and slightly higher anxiety level in fourth grade. However, foreign language anxiety among males was found higher than females. Lababidi(2016) has conducted a case study in a higher education institution in the United Arab Emirates. The findings indicate that some of the student participants in this case study experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety in the second language classrooms Amiri and Ghonsooly(2015) investigated the relationship between English language anxiety and the students' achievement in their examinations. The results showed that high anxiety affected the students' achievement. Noreen, Ahmed and Esmail (2015) conducted a research study .he studied the role of three variables i.e. attitude, motivation and classroom anxiety towards English language learning at Intermediate level in Pakistan. The findings of the research show that the females have higher level of motivation and attitude towards English language while males have higher level of anxiety as compared to the females. Liu and Huang (2011) in their study concluded that both foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation were significantly correlated with students' performance in English. Awan et. al. (2010) concluded that

language anxiety and achievement are negatively related to each other. It is also found that female students are less anxious in learning English as a foreign language than male students. Zhao (2007) in her study found that anxiety affects the achievement and highly anxious students get less marks and their low achievement causes them to be more anxious in the process of language learning. Results also indicate that boys experienced more anxiety of English classes than girls did. The above cited literature reveals that the results of the different researchers vary at different levels. Present study was conducted to study these variables in Indian context because English language is still struggling to touch the rural areas of our country. So the present study is taken.

Delimitations

1. The study was delimited to English medium Private schools of Fazilka district of Punjab state of India only.
2. The study was delimited to a sample of 100 students studying in VIIth grade only.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the level of English Language Anxiety of VIIth grade students
2. To study the co relation between English Language Anxiety and Academic Achievement in English among VIIth grade students.

Hypothesis

1. There exists no significant relationship between English Language Anxiety and Academic Achievement in English of VII grade students.

Methodology

Design of the study

For the present study Descriptive survey method was used to collect data from VII grade students.

Sample

A sample is a small portion of population selection for observation and analysis. For the present study, 100 students were selected by using random sampling technique from two English medium private schools of Fazilka district of Punjab state of India.

Tools of the Study

Following tools were used in this study

1. Achievement test in English- constructed by the researchers.
2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale - Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986)

Statistical techniques

Pearson product moment was used to study the relationship between the two variables.

Result and Discussion

First of all the level of English Language Anxiety was found using FLCAS among students of VIIth grade. The result is categorized in the below mentioned table.

Table 1 Distribution of the scores of participants across four levels of English Language Anxiety

Levels	Total scores	Percentage (approx)
Non anxious	33-66	11
Slightly anxious	67-99	71
Moderately anxious	100-132	15
Very anxious	133-165	3

The data in table no 1 shows that only 11 per cent cases fall in the first category i.e. Non anxious. It is clear from the results that mostly students feel some anxiety in the English Language i.e.71 per cent cases. 15 per cent cases feel Moderate anxiety and 3 per cent cases fall in Very anxious group. On the basis of the data, it can be clearly stated that most of the student participants experienced slight to moderate levels of anxiety in English language classroom. The result was correspondent with that in the previous studies (Senel, 2016 & Lababidi,2016)

Table 2 Relationship between English Language Anxiety and Achievement in English using Pearson Product Correlation

Source of Correlation N Pearson correlation sig*. (2-tailed)
English Language Anxiety scores
X 100 -0.87 0.254(table value)
Achievement in English scores

*Significant at 0.01 level

Table no 2 shows the value of correlation between English Language Anxiety and Achievement in English i.e. -0.87, thus it can be said that variables are negatively correlated. Hence the hypothesis "There exists no significant relationship between English Language Anxiety and Academic Achievement in English of VII grade students" is rejected which means if the level of anxiety increases, achievement level will decrease. The result is supported by the earlier research studies conducted by Amiri and Ghonsooly (2015), Awan et al. (2010), and Zhao (2008). So in other words we can say that language anxiety affects the achievement of the students.

Conclusion

After analyzing the data, it has been found that most of the students of English medium private schools also feel an anxiety in their English language classroom and it is clear from the analyzed data that this anxiety affects their achievement in English also. So the English language teachers should take proper measures in the classroom. English language should not be treated as the other subjects. This language being the second

language for our country needs special attention, so the teachers should use different activities, games etc. to enhance the interest of the students in this language.

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