

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ANXIETY AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

In the present study an attempt has been made to find out the relationship between English Language Anxiety and their level of achievement in English for adolescents. Out of 200 adolescents, 100 from urban and 100 from rural locality of Bathinda and Mansa Districts were taken. The sample was selected through Multi-stage random sampling technique. The English Language Anxiety was measured by using Foreign Language Anxiety Scale of Horwitz, E.K., Horwitz, M.B., & Cope, J.(1986) and scores of adolescents in their English subject for their final examination of the previous class was taken to indicate their achievement in English. The results reveal that a significant negative correlation was found between the English Language Anxiety and level of achievement in English of adolescents.

Key Words: English Language Anxiety, Achievement, Adolescents.

English is lingua franca of world. In this jet set era, the use of English language is increasing by leaps and bounds. The English language is the predominantly used language worldwide and a pre requisite to the acquisition of a wealth of knowledge has become an important subject in the educational system of countries across the globe. The knowledge of English, therefore, will enable us to establish intellectual, cultural, economic, commercial and political relations with the rest of the world. In almost all branches of learning, its knowledge is essential. It is also necessary for those writers who wish to reach a bigger audience, for editors, lawyers, diplomats, politicians in fact almost everyone. Moreover, if anyone wants to take a full advantage of internet and World Wide Web, it is possible only by learning English because most of the browsers are still unable to handle multilingual data presentation. So, it is the need of hour to learn English in this global village. At present, in India, English serves as a second language; it works as one of the tools that unify the Indian people to different languages, cultures and religions. In our education system, English is made a compulsory subject to all students. But still there are so many problems for

acquiring such a foreign language for the Indian students. Teaching of English language in India faces many problems. There are many good teachers of this subject in the schools, but it is sad to note that there is something wrong with the teaching of English language in Indian schools. Pupils are taught English language by teachers with full efforts but they hardly have the ability to speak and write in English with minimum errors. They do not know how to use the most common structures of English language. To learn English for students like a mountain to climb. So, they feel uncomfortable in the English classroom because English is a foreign language for them.

The child thinks and dream in the language through which he acquires the earliest first hand experiences of life i.e Mother Tongue. This naturally happens to be the mother tongue. And for this reason the mother tongue becomes the first condition of schooling for the intellectual development of the child."As too much importance is given to mother tongue, students face serious problems to learn the new language .Thus, almost every student feels nervous when he learns a foreign language. Particularly, the students are more

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anxious while learning English language.

Anxiety is the most crucial factor which affects the English language achievement. English Language Anxiety refers to a complex and sometimes chronic emotional state generally characterized by fear, apprehension or tension in English. It is also associated with the feeling of inferiority and inadequacy. Anxiety is part of the human condition and it has a broad definition. Anxiety in general can be defined as “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system (Horwitz, 1986). Anxiety in itself is not a bad thing since a certain amount of anxiety can motivate a learner to learn and acquire a language.

English Language anxiety plays an important role in the achievement of the language learning because it can be positive or negative according to how greatly it is felt by the learner. Many of researchers agree that English Language Anxiety affects students' attitudes and their achievement in language learning. Although anxiety may sometimes be facilitating in most cases, it negatively affects learners' achievement and leaves its debilitating effects on students' learning. Zheng (2008) asserts that language learning experience could become a traumatic experience and may deeply disturb one's self-esteem or self-confidence as a learner. Anxiety has negatively affect achievement in English language learning. Gardner and MacIntyre called language anxiety “the best single correlate of achievement”. Various studies revealed the multiplicity of factors; their interrelationships with achievement but the study on the cause of language anxiety i.e. English language anxiety and its relationship with achievement in English needs to explore for working out a practical solution to this important problem. Piappamihel (2002) observes English language anxiety in ESL and mainstream classrooms. He observed the relationship of anxiety with academic achievement. His results showed several related but different types of English language anxiety and a significant gender difference. The relationship between English language anxiety and achievement has been found significantly negative. Adepoju (2002) studied locale factors, private cost and academic performance of secondary school

students and found that significant difference existed in the academic performance of students in urban and rural secondary schools particularly in English language; the locale factors did not contribute significantly to the academic performance in English language and Mathematics. Chen (2007) ascertained the relationship between foreign language anxiety and English achievement of bilingual elementary school students. The researcher studied the relationship between foreign language anxiety and English achievement. The correlation analysis revealed a slight variation between language anxiety and achievement in the diverse groups where fifth grader had greater significant negative correlation ($r = -.392$, $P = .01$, $N = 105$) than sixth grade students ($r = .294$, $p = .01$, $n = 120$), significant negative correlation between foreign language anxiety and English achievement. Hemamalini (2010) conducted a study to find the relationship between English Language Anxiety and the English Achievement of High School students of Ramanagaram city. A significant negative relationship was found between the English Language Anxiety and English achievement of high school students. Lan (2010) studied the seventh grade students to investigate the level of foreign language anxiety and the relationship between foreign language anxiety and English learning achievement. Results of correlation analysis showed a significant inverse relationship between foreign language anxiety and English learning achievement ($r = 0.57$, $p = .01$, $n = 212$). Katemba, C.V (2013) conducted a research to find the relationship between anxiety in English, the achievement in English and the factors that cause anxiety of the university students of Universities Advent Indonesia. Results showed that males and females were anxious in English. Also both students coming from urban and rural students manifested closer level of anxiety and there is no significance difference between the achievement level of urban and rural students. Shahnaz (2014) conducted a study to explore the relationship between the English language anxiety, English language interest and English language achievement. The study reveals that the performance of the students of in English language is influenced by the English language anxiety.

Researchers have shown that anxiety in English makes effect on the achievement in English. Most of the studies concluded that anxiety put negative effect on the achievement. English Language Anxiety makes its effect on achievement at different levels such as on speaking, listening, reading and writing.

OBJECTIVES

- To know the extent of English Language anxiety among adolescents.
- To study the relationship between English Language anxiety of adolescents with their achievement in English.
- To find out the relationship between English Language anxiety and the level of achievement in English of rural and urban adolescents.
- To compare the extent of English Language anxiety between rural and urban adolescents.
- To compare the level of achievement in English between rural and urban adolescents.

METHOD

Descriptive survey method was used by the investigator for the present study.

SAMPLE

In the present study, the population was very large scattered over various Secondary and Senior Secondary School students studying in 22 districts of three regions i.e. Majha, Malwa & Doaba regions of Punjab. The investigator, therefore, employed the random sampling technique in order

to select a representative sample of the Malwa Region of Punjab. Out of the total 10 districts existing in Malwa Region of Punjab 2 i.e. Bathinda & Mansa were randomly selected for investigation. Again from each of two districts, a sample of 200 adolescents studying in 9th and 10th class was selected from various schools situated in rural and urban areas of Bathinda and Mansa.

Measures

1. Horwitz, E.K. Horwitz, M.B., & Cope, J. (1986) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety scale.
2. Marks obtained in English by the subjects in their previous annual examination were taken as an Index of their level of English Achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The value of product moment coefficient of correlation $r_{(1, 2)} = -.467$ (df = 198, N=200) (Table 4.1) found to be significant at .05 level and 0.01 level of confidence depicting that there is significant relationship between the English achievement and English language anxiety level of adolescents. The value of product moment coefficient of correlation $r_{(2,3)} = -.582$ (df=98, N=100) and $r_{(3,4)} = -.362$ (df=98, N=100) (Table 4.1) found to be significant negative relationship between the English achievement and English language anxiety level of Rural and Urban adolescents respectively. The negative correlation between the two variables shows that any increase in the value in the variable of English anxiety score, there is corresponding decrease in the level of English achievement or vice versa.

Table 1: The Results of t-test of significance of Means applied to the difference in the Mean English Language Anxiety Scores of Rural and Urban Adolescents

Sr. No.	Sample Size	English Language Anxiety Score		t-value	Table value at .05 level df=198
		Rural N=100	Urban N=100		
1	N=200	M=100.08 SD=15.84	M=97.22 SD=14.48	0.184 NS	1.97

Table 1 presents the results of t-test applied to Rural and Urban adolescents on the basis of mean English Language Anxiety scores. It clearly indicates that there is no significant difference in the English language Anxiety level belonging to Rural and Urban

adolescents as the obtained t-value (t= 0.184) is found to be non-significant at .05 level of confidence. However, the mean English Language Anxiety scores of Rural adolescents (M=100.08) is higher than Urban adolescents (M= 97.22).

Table 2 : The Results of t-test of significance of Means applied to the difference in the Mean Achievement Scores of Rural and Urban Adolescents

Sr. No.	Sample Size	Mean Scores of Achievement		t-value	Table value at .05 level df=198
		Rural N=100	Urban N=100		
1	N=200	M=63.56 SD=16.79	M=63.59 SD=18.53	0.99 NS	1.97

NS-Non-significant at 0.05 level

Table 2 presents the results of t-test applied to urban and rural adolescents on the basis of mean English achievement scores. It clearly indicates that there is no significant difference in the English achievement of rural and urban adolescents as the obtained t-value ($t= 0.99$) is found to be non-significant at .05 level of confidence. However, the mean English achievement scores of rural ($M=63.56$) and urban are almost same ($M=63.59$) are almost same.

MAIN FINDINGS

Following findings have been drawn by investigator:

1. There is significant & negative relationship between the extent of English language anxiety and the level of achievement in English for Rural, Urban and the Total sample of Adolescents.
2. Achievement in English of Urban ($M=63.59$) and Rural ($M=63.56$) Adolescents is almost same.
3. Adolescents belonging to Urban area have low level of English Language anxiety ($M=97.22$) as compared to Rural Adolescents ($M=100.08$).

CONCLUSIONS

Following conclusions were drawn by the investigator:

1. There existed a significant & negative relationship between the extent of English language anxiety and the level of achievement in English for Rural and Urban and the Total sample of Adolescents.
2. Achievement level in English was almost same for both Urban and Rural adolescents.
3. Adolescents belonging to urban area had low level of English Language anxiety as compared to Adolescents belonging to Urban.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major Educational implications of the study are:

1. As the negative correlation between English language anxiety level and achievement in English denotes that students with high anxiety are low achievers. If their anxiety is reduced, achievement could be increased. So, the Teacher's uses of affective strategies such as humor, friendly relationship, supportive, and relaxed classroom atmosphere that encourage risk-taking are effective in decreasing English language anxiety and facilitating achievement.
2. Language Teacher has to realize that their learners are experiencing language anxiety in their classes. Teachers have to understand that learning of English language is a major struggle for the students. It is confirmed that it is the responsibility of the teacher to create a healthy environment in the language classroom so as to alleviate the level of anxiety, the learners may experience. Turula (2002) sums up the role the teacher performs in three tasks; first, diagnosing the reasons of feeling anxious, uncomfortable, and loss of self-confidence in the classrooms so as to decrease them; second, understanding the features of the good classroom dynamics; and third, creating classroom environments in which such dynamics may work well.
3. Findings of the present study are applicable to the classroom practices. Teachers must be able to understand the nature of their students' language anxieties. It may vary from student to student as in the present study. So, teachers should be made aware of what language anxieties their students

suffer from. As such, they may be able to design lessons and prepare activities and learning materials that will best address the strategies that can be effectively utilized by these types of learners to cope with their respective language anxieties.

4. Teachers should assume the role of the researcher in their own classroom which brings together theory with practice. Before employing strategies to help students overcome English language anxiety, foster motivation, and increase English language performance in classroom.
5. Bridge courses should be taken in schools to make students learn the English language effectively.

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