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EFL Teachers' Effective Classroom Management and Learners' Anxiety and Learning Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' effective classroom management and EFL learners' anxiety and learning strategies. Accordingly, two questionnaires and a checklist were used: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), and Murdoch's checklist. A total of 750 male and female learners and their 30 teachers participated in this study. Once the questionnaires were administered and the checklist was filled, the researchers conducted the relevant descriptive and inferential statistical analyses and the results supported the notion that teachers' classroom management was positively correlated with language learners' learning strategies while it was negatively correlated with their anxiety. Hence, the major implication of this study is that EFL teachers can engage in employing more effective classroom management techniques in order to encourage EFL learners to use more strategies in the process of their learning and at the same time reduce their anxiety.

Keywords: teacher variables; learner variables; effective classroom management; learners' anxiety; learning strategies

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Introduction

The field of second/foreign language teaching has undergone different shifts of focus ever since its emergence as a scientific discipline around a century ago. One such change of perspective in recent decades was a growing awareness of the role of the teacher in the language classroom in that, in the words of Wright, Hom, and Sanders (1997, as cited in Akbari & Tavassoli, 2011, p. 32), "More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor". Accordingly, teachers' professional variables and effectiveness has been and continues to be a significant avenue of query in ELT (e.g., Baker, 2005; Dunbar, 2004; Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Jones, 2006; Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016; Marashi & Zaferanchi, 2010; Marashi & Azizi-Nassab, 2018; Sadeghi & Sa'adatpourvahid, 2016; Tajeddin & Adeh, 2016).

At the same time, more and more research is being conducted on the stance of the learners' affective factors in the process of language learning, with anxiety in the language classroom being one such factor (e.g., Bailey, Onwuegbzie, & Daley, 2000; Burden, 2004; Horwitz, 2001, 2010; Marashi & Dakhili, 2015; William & Andrade, 2008). "Foreign language anxiety or *xenoglossophobia* is the feeling of unease, worry, and apprehension that individuals experience when learning L2" (MacIntyre & Gardener, 1994, p. 284). A very quick glance at the ELT literature hence demonstrates the significance of anxiety in second/foreign language learning.

Alongside anxiety as one of the affective factors that hinder learning, the role of learners also bears a significant impact on the learning process. Learners employ different strategies as ways of achieving goals and numerous researchers identify learning strategies as being relevant or even crucial (e.g., Cotteral, 1995; Griffiths & Par, 2001; Little, 2000; Littlewood, 1996; Khabiri & Azaminejad, 2009; Wenden, 2002; Wharton, 2000).

Inspired by their readings on the three aforesaid constructs and also their experience of teaching, the researchers were interested to investigate whether a significant relationship exists among EFL teachers' effective classroom management and EFL learners' learning strategies and anxiety. Furthermore, in their review of the literature, the researchers were not able to find any studies on the possible interaction of these three constructs. Accordingly, the following research questions were raised to address the aforementioned gap:

- Is there any significant relationship between EFL teachers' effective classroom management and EFL learners' anxiety?
- Is there any significant relationship between EFL teachers' effective classroom management and EFL learners' learning strategies?
- Is there any significant difference between the predictability of EFL learners' anxiety and learning strategies by EFL teachers' effective classroom management?

Review of the Related Literature

Anxiety

Language learners may experience a myriad of difficulties in their learning process at various stages and for different purposes. One such issue has to do with the affective factor of anxiety. Albeit discussed and studied extensively by psychologists in earlier times, anxiety gained attention in ELT circles only in the 1980s. Among the pioneers who shed light on anxiety in language learning were Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986); they defined the construct by stating that it

"makes the individual unreceptive to language input; thus, the learner fails to take in the available target language messages and language acquisition does not process" (p. 127). Building on the work of Horwitz et al., MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) argued that foreign language anxiety occurs at the three interdependent stages of input, processing, and output.

Anxiety is a common psychological pressure among foreign language learners. Horwitz et al. (1986) maintain that foreign language anxiety can be related to communication apprehension (the fear of communication with other people) and test anxiety (fear of exams, quizzes, and other activities used to evaluate one's competence and fear of negative evaluation). Accordingly, MacIntyre (1998, as cited in Zheng, 2008, p. 27) conceived language anxiety as "the worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language" while Burden (2004) holds that, "Highly anxious students often have relatively negative self-concept and understanding of the quality of their speaking ability when compared with others" (p. 5)

There are different perspectives to foreign language anxiety: state, trait, and situation specific anxiety. Trait anxiety is linked with personality, state anxiety emerges in a given context in response to a particular situation (Spielberger, 1989), and situation specific anxiety is related to the apprehension unique to specific situations and events (Ellis, 1994, as cited in Shabani, 2012). Horwitz et al. (1986) proposed that a situation-specific anxiety which they called *Foreign Language Anxiety* was responsible for students' negative emotional reactions to language learning. Horwitz (2001) further asserts that, "The potential of anxiety to interfere with learning and performance is one of the most accepted phenomena in psychology and education" (p. 125). Sparks and Ganschow (1991)argued that anxiety could very well serve as either the underlying factor behind poor language learning or an outcome of such learning. An example of the former case is when a learner fails to study commensurately for a test and thus undergoes test anxiety. In this context, anxiety is indeed an outcome. In contrast, anxiety may become a cause of poor language learning when as a result of anxiety a learner is unable to adequately learn the L2.

Extensive research has been done in the past few decades in L2 classrooms with learners from different L1 backgrounds and pretexts demonstrating the negative impact of anxiety on learners (e.g., Andrade & Williams, 2009; Cheng, Horwitz, & Shallert, 1999; Horwitz, 2001; Kleinmann, 1977; Liu & Jackson, 2008; Riasati, 2011; Saito, Horwitz, & Garza, 1999). Excluding a minority stance which argues that anxiety may have a facilitating role in language learning if harnessed advantageously (e.g., Oxford, 1999; Scovel, 1978; Young, 1990), the predominant position is that anxiety as a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon is a debilitating agent.

Language Learning Strategies

While there appears to be "a welter of overlapping material and conflicting opinion" (Griffiths, 2006, p. 6) over the concept of language learning strategies, many have endeavored to establish widely acceptable definitions. Oxford (1990), a pioneer researcher in this regard, defined these strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferrable to new situation" (p. 8). Two other pioneer researchers in the field O'Malley and Chamot (1990, p. 1) argue that learning strategies are "special thoughts or behaviors the individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information".

Chamot (2004) further maintains that most language learning strategies are unobservable and only some are associated with an observable behavior. He continues to explain this by providing an example, "A learner could use *selective attention* (unobservable) to focus on the main ideas while

listening to a newscast and could then decide to *take notes* (observable) in order to remember the information" (p. 15).

Research into language learning strategies commenced in the 1970s originally under the title of the *Good Language Learner* (GLL) studies with the seminal works of Rubin (1975) and Stern (1975) who both suggested that a model of the successful L2 learner could be constructed by looking at the special strategies used by such learners (Chamot, 2005). Rubin originally dichotomized language learning strategies into direct and indirect categories within the classroom context. Later works in the 1980s and 90s, however, (very much propelled by the Vygotskyan turn and the communicative approach) moved more towards sociocultural influences and individual differences (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Accordingly, social strategies are those activities that endow learners with the opportunities to be exposed to and practice their knowledge. These strategies provide exposure to the target language and thus contribute indirectly to learning (Rao, 2016). As for approaches towards learning strategies which emphasize individual differences and learner autonomy, Griffiths (2008) maintains that they are "activities consciously chosen by learners for the purpose of regulating their own language learning" (p. 87).

A more comprehensive classification was presented by O'Malley and Chamlot (1990). They classified language learning strategies into the three main categories of *metacognitive strategies*, i.e., conscious directing of one's own efforts into the learning task, *cognitive strategies*, i.e., the learning steps that learners take to transform new material, and *socio-affective strategies*, i.e., interaction with another person or taking control of one's own feelings on language learning. The above classification albeit presented around three decades ago remains very much in place to this date (Griffiths & Incecay, 2016; Oxford, 2016; Shawer, 2016)

It may well be somewhat of a solid fact that there is no one model of a good language learner and that good learners apply different types of strategies in different ways (Griffiths & Oxford, 2014; Wong & Nunan, 2011). Nevertheless, there is arguably little controversy – if any – regarding the importance of employing language learning strategies in paving the grounds towards better performance or achievement in the target language as reported by a multiplicity of studies around the globe in the last three decades or so (e.g., Abhakorn, 2008; Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Griffiths, 2004, 2010; Khabiri & Jazebi, 2010; Khaliliaqdam & Rezvani, 2013; Lucas, 2011; Oxford, 1999; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

Effective Classroom Management

Regardless of the decisiveness of the role and stance of the learner in the learning process, the impact of the teacher on that process remains of paramount significance. In the words of Oliver and Reschly (2007), "The ability of teachers to organize classroom and manage the behavior of students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes" (p. 13).Furthermore, Marzano and Marzano (2003) argue that, "Teachers play various roles in a typical classroom, but surely one of the most important roles is that of classroom manager. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom" (p. 6).

The elements comprising effective classroom management manifest their significance in different ways; for instance, adopting a prevention-oriented approach in lieu of a reaction-oriented one facilitates establishing a positive classroom environment (Oliver, Wehby, & Reschly, 2011). "Effective classroom management requires teachers to be adapted at employing multiple strategies and to be skilled at recognizing when current strategies are ineffective and modifications are necessary" (Oliver & Reschly, 2007, p. 8).

There is understandably considerable emphasis on having plans a priori since "without a carefully constructed classroom management plan, teachers may develop defensive reactions to disruptive students and this will most certainly seriously compromise their effectiveness as teacher" (Campbell, 1999, p. 46). Nonetheless, classroom management involves as much spontaneity as planning too as the effective teacher needs to react to the classroom dynamics or students' needs on the spot (Baker, 2005).This is perhaps why and how teacher *empowerment* may become prioritized to teacher *education* since mere textbook education as a sole resource for teaching would not go a long way in empowering the teacher to resort to his/her discretion in facing the unknown challenges of every single classroom environment.

Traditionally, classroom management was perhaps fundamentally architected upon order and discipline – or assertive discipline (Canter& Canter, 1970) – with certain scholars maintaining that their cruciality in the classroom is such that it could make or break teachers (Charles, 1981). This trend of discourse has undergone change over the past few decades with management being "the ability to keep students constructively involved in learning" (MacDonald & Healy, 1999, p. 205) or the potential to cooperatively manage time, space, resources, and student roles and behaviors to provide a climate that encourages learning (Alberto& Troutman, 1986). To this end, Sayeski and Brown (2011) propose that, "Classroom management includes developing a set of rules, specifying procedures for daily tasks, or developing a consequential hierarchy" (p.8).

The extensive existing literature on effective classroom management and the sizeable body of research on the subject (e.g., Baker, 2007; Burden & Cooper, 2004; Dunbar, 2004; Jeffrey, 2009; Marzano & Marzano, 2003; Oliver, 2011; Smith & Laslett, 2002) indicate that highly effective teachers are those who succeed in creating a positive classroom climate where students respect and trust the teacher and themselves while feeling that they are being supported.

Method

Participants

A total of 30 male and female EFL teachers with the age range of 21-51 from three branches of Kish Way Language School in Karaj participated in this study. The selection of the teachers was done through convenient nonrandom sampling as the researchers could include only those teachers who agreed to participate in the study. Furthermore, a total of 750 EFL learners including 176 males and 574 females aged 13-34 studying at the three proficiency levels of intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced took part in this study. As the original English versions of the questionnaires were used, the researchers had to select students from these levels so that they could respond to the items.

It should be mentioned that in order to observe the classes of the teachers and fill the classroom effective management checklist, a female ELT teacher and supervisor at the language school who had seven years of teaching experience took part in this study alongside one of the researchers.

Instrumentation

Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

The SILL was developed by Oxford (1990) who designed it as an instrument for assessing the frequency of learning strategies used by learners. It is a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire with 50 questions covering six types of learning strategies, namely memory, cognitive, compensatory, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. The SILL is comprised of Likert-scale items (1-5, always or almost true of me = 5, usually true of me = 4, somewhat true of me = 3, usually not true of me = 2, and never or almost never true of me = 1), with each item expressing a learning strategy. A score is thus assigned to each answer and the total score is calculated. The range of the scores for the SILL is between 50 and 250; The higher the score, the more efficient the strategy user and the lower the score, the less efficient the strategy user. According to Ehrman and Oxford (1990), the SILL has consistently scored above 0.90 using the Cronbach alpha which indicates high internal reliability. Oxford (1996) reported a Cronbach Alpha of 0.96 for the SILL. The reliability of the scores in this administration was 0.92 using Cronbach Alpha.

Murdoch's Checklist

Murdoch's checklist (1997) was used for evaluating teachers' effective classroom management in this research. The checklist contains three parts: ELT competences (24 questions), general teaching competences (10 questions), and teaching competences (20 questions). The complete checklist contains 54 items, each followed by four values from 1 to 4 (4 = excellent, 3 = above average, 2 = average, and 1 = unsatisfactory). The 30 questions which are related to classroom management strategies in this checklist were extracted. Hence, the maximum and minimum scores would be 120 and 30, respectively. The scores were calculated based on the mean of the values given to the teachers by the two raters. The reliability of the scores has been reported to stand at 0.82 using Cronbach Alpha (Murdoch, 1997). The reliability of the scores in this administration was 0.82 using Cronbach Alpha.

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

In order to measure the overall anxiety of learners, the FLCAS developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was used. This scale consists of 33 questions and it is used to explore students' feelings associated with the foreign language learning experience. Each of the 33 items is scored on a five-point Likert scale. The scoring of the FLCAS was done based on the following: (a) "strongly disagree" was equated with a numerical value of one; (b) "disagree" with two ; (c) "neither agree nor disagree" with three; (d) "agree" with four; and (e) "strongly agree" with five. For each participant, an anxiety score was derived by adding up his/her ratings of the 33 items. It should be mentioned that Horwitz et al. have conducted numerous validity and reliability studies on the instrument that have shown the scale to be both reliable and valid, with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.93. The reliability of the scores in this administration stood at 0.94 using Cronbach Alpha.

Procedure

To conduct this study, the researchers arranged a session in order to elaborate the different aspects and the purpose of the research for the manager of the language school. This study extended over approximately three months in three branches of Kish Way Language School in Karaj. One of the researchers and one of the supervisors of the establishment observed the 30 teachers in class and rated together the Murdoch Checklist and their mean scores were considered as the final scores.

Then, the SILL and FLCAS were given to 25 students of each teacher, thus a total of 750 students. These learners were asked to answer the questionnaires in 30 minutes. Regarding the FLCAS, when statements were negatively worded, responses were reversed and recorded so that in all instances, a high score represented high anxiety in the English classroom. Therefore, some of the items are key-reversed so that the possible total scores ranged from 30 to 120 with high scores indicating high levels of foreign language anxiety. Students whose scores are more than one SD above the sample mean (i.e., 100) are judged to have high levels of anxiety; those whose scores fall within the range of one SD below and one SD above the mean (i.e., 60-100) are judged to have average levels of anxiety while those whose scores are one or more SDs below the sample mean (i.e., 60) are judged to have low levels of anxiety. The questionnaires were thence collected by the researchers and the data analyzed statistically.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

In this part, the descriptive statistics of the participants' scores on the three instruments are presented.

Murdoch's Checklist

As discussed earlier, this checklist was administered to the 30 EFL teachers who participated in this study. the descriptive statistics of this administration appears below in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of the EFL Teachers on Murdoch's Checklist

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. error
Murdoch's Checklist	30	53	111	90.70	15.853	-.651	.427
Valid (listwise)	30						

As displayed in the above table, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores stood at 90.70 and 15.85, respectively. Furthermore, the scores represented normalcy with the skewness ratio falling within the acceptable range of ±1.96 (-0.651 / 0.427 = -1.52).

SILL

As discussed earlier, the 750 EFL learners who were the students of the 30 teachers took the SILL. The mean scores of each group of students in the classes of the 30 teachers were calculated as presented below in Table 2 with the other relevant descriptive statistics. As displayed, the scores represented normalcy with the skewness ratio falling within the acceptable range of ±1.96 in every case.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of the Mean Scores of the 750 Participants on the SILL

	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. error
Classes of Teacher 1	25	109	213	160.56	28.051	-.044	.464
Classes of Teacher 2	25	122	206	164.08	20.416	.356	.464
Classes of Teacher 3	25	103	198	161.12	24.304	-.405	.464
Classes of Teacher 4	25	133	198	159.84	20.576	.591	.464
Classes of Teacher 5	25	119	221	164.20	21.504	.859	.464
Classes of Teacher 6	25	88	207	162.56	28.544	-.725	.464
Classes of Teacher 7	25	95	188	148.44	22.864	-.456	.464
Classes of Teacher 8	25	132	205	167.00	20.075	.540	.464
Classes of Teacher 9	26	125	238	186.50	30.570	-.222	.456
Classes of Teacher 10	25	113	207	171.04	20.784	-.002	.464
Classes of Teacher 11	25	117	198	160.44	21.095	-.123	.464
Classes of Teacher 12	25	121	208	169.12	21.518	-.092	.464
Classes of Teacher 13	25	91	220	174.88	29.510	-.132	.464
Classes of Teacher 14	25	123	250	166.96	28.425	.187	.464
Classes of Teacher 15	25	103	203	151.32	26.767	.006	.464
Classes of Teacher 16	25	118	185	155.24	14.791	-.721	.464
Classes of Teacher 17	25	126	200	161.80	19.401	.144	.464
Classes of Teacher 18	25	139	222	167.96	20.987	.850	.464
Classes of Teacher 19	25	141	202	167.48	16.596	.160	.464
Classes of Teacher 20	25	125	228	165.56	20.714	.688	.464
Classes of Teacher 21	25	126	208	164.80	19.538	.222	.464
Classes of Teacher 22	25	128	224	163.36	24.569	.753	.464
Classes of Teacher 23	25	110	218	167.04	23.230	-.097	.464
Classes of Teacher 24	25	132	192	163.60	15.740	-.360	.464
Classes of Teacher 25	25	127	207	163.44	25.715	.218	.464
Classes of Teacher 26	25	116	221	167.68	25.656	.099	.464
Classes of Teacher 27	25	119	214	164.04	20.157	.259	.464
Classes of Teacher 28	25	108	211	171.08	29.918	-.418	.464
Classes of Teacher 29	25	134	221	177.68	22.422	.074	.464
Classes of Teacher 30	25	144	209	181.28	20.086	-.438	.464
Valid (listwise)	25						

FLCAS

Finally, the 750 EFL learners sat for the FLCAS. The descriptive statistics of each group of students in the classes of the 30 teachers were calculated as presented below in Table 3. Again, the mean scores represented normalcy.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of the Mean Scores of the 750 Participants on the FLCAS

	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. error
Classes of Teacher 1	25	64	114	91.00	10.267	.015	.464
Classes of Teacher 2	25	59	110	94.24	11.508	-.070	.464
Classes of Teacher 3	25	70	119	94.68	11.187	-.218	.464
Classes of Teacher 4	25	78	107	93.64	6.933	-.280	.464
Classes of Teacher 5	25	67	113	92.80	11.158	-.579	.464
Classes of Teacher 6	25	67	113	91.44	13.830	-.100	.464
Classes of Teacher 7	25	81	119	101.00	9.018	-.069	.464
Classes of Teacher 8	25	74	120	96.60	11.038	.271	.464
Classes of Teacher 9	25	75	110	93.28	8.787	.019	.464
Classes of Teacher 10	25	67	120	96.12	16.290	.174	.464
Classes of Teacher 11	25	57	107	84.84	10.991	-.435	.464
Classes of Teacher 12	25	61	112	85.44	12.510	.019	.464
Classes of Teacher 13	25	63	107	85.80	12.845	-.135	.464
Classes of Teacher 14	25	66	112	90.32	13.218	-.185	.464
Classes of Teacher 15	25	46	120	88.00	17.015	-.167	.464
Classes of Teacher 16	25	76	117	103.24	9.243	-.606	.464
Classes of Teacher 17	25	65	115	92.12	13.878	-.290	.464
Classes of Teacher 18	25	65	111	92.72	10.884	-.468	.464
Classes of Teacher 19	25	73	118	91.20	11.878	.469	.464
Classes of Teacher 20	25	77	108	94.12	7.373	-.048	.464
Classes of Teacher 21	25	74	100	83.36	7.325	.491	.464
Classes of Teacher 22	25	66	122	89.80	11.740	.088	.464
Classes of Teacher 23	25	74	114	95.88	9.968	-.512	.464
Classes of Teacher 24	25	68	115	93.00	11.124	-.628	.464
Classes of Teacher 25	25	72	114	89.52	11.199	.364	.464
Classes of Teacher 26	25	76	124	92.28	12.164	.141	.464
Classes of Teacher 27	25	65	123	88.96	12.621	.384	.464
Classes of Teacher 28	25	76	119	96.88	10.321	-.144	.464
Classes of Teacher 29	25	69	109	94.88	10.313	-.769	.464
Classes of Teacher 30	25	76	105	92.64	6.897	-.348	.464
Valid (listwise)	25						

Responding to the Research Questions

Following the above calculation and with the skewness ratios of all sets of scores representing normalcy, the researchers were able to employ the parametric tests required which included the Pearson moment correlation and multiple regression. To respond to the first research question, the Pearson correlation test was run. The result is displayed in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Correlation of the Teachers' Scores on Murdoch's Checklist and the Students' Mean Scores on the FLCAS

		Murdoch's Checklist	FLCAS
Murdoch's Checklist	Correlation	1	-.219**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.005
	N	165	165
FLCAS	Correlation	-.219**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	
	N	165	165

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As is evident in the above table, there is a significant negative correlation at the 0.01 level among the teachers' scores on Murdoch's Checklist and the students' mean scores on the FLCAS ($r = -0.219$, $p = 0.005 < 0.05$) meaning that there was a significant relationship between teachers'

effective classroom management and learners' anxiety. As the correlation value was negative, the conclusion of course would be that the more effective the teachers' effective classroom management, the lower the learners' anxiety level. Furthermore, the R^2 (or common variance) which is the effect size for correlation was 0.48; this of course is a strong effect size (Cohen, 1988; Larson-Hall, 2010).Table 5 below reports the result of the Pearson correlation test regarding the second research question.

Table 5
Correlation of the Teachers' Scores on Murdoch's Checklist and the Students' Mean Scores on the SILL

		Murdoch's Checklist	SILL
Murdoch's Checklist	Correlation	1	.521**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	165	165
SILL	Correlation	.521**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	165	165

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is a significant correlation at the 0.01 level among the teachers' scores on the Murdoch's Checklist and the students' mean scores on the SILL ($r = 0.478$, $p = 0.003 < 0.05$) meaning that there was a significant relationship between teachers' effective classroom management and learners' use of language learning use. Furthermore, the R^2 was 0.204; this of course is a large effect size (Cohen, 1992; Larson-Hall, 2010).

As a significant correlation existed among the three constructs, running a multiple regression was justified in order to respond to the third research question. The remaining assumptions of multicollinearity (the tolerance value for the predictor variable is 0.778 above the cut-off point of 0.10 while the VIF value is 3.692 which is lower than the cut-off point of 10) and homoscedasticity were also checked and verified. The information in Table 6 below is used. The multiple R in the population equals 0.001 which means that indeed there was a significant difference in the predictability of EFL learners' learning strategies and anxiety by their teachers' effective classroom management and; thus, there was a significant difference between the predictability of EFL learners' anxiety and learning strategies by EFL teachers' effective classroom management.

Table 6
ANOVA[b]

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2520.185	2	1260.092	27.517	.001[a]
Residual	7555.809	748	45.793		
Total	10075.994	750			

a. Predictor: (Constant), effective classroom management
b. Dependent Variables: Anxiety and learning strategies

The case wise diagnostics was also checked. The result was that no cases had a standardized residual value outside ±3.00.

Discussion

The findings of this study revealed a significantly negative correlation between EFL teachers' effective classroom management and EFL learners' anxiety and this indicated that the higher the

level of teachers' classroom management techniques, the less anxious the learners. First and foremost, it may well be assumed that a class which is managed by an effective teacher provides the ground for the learners to learn the foreign language more enjoyably and enhance their learning opportunity while the level of their anxiety is decreased as has been noted in certain previous studies (e.g., Abhakorn, 2008; Belvel, 2010; Chan & Wu, 2004; Hashemi & Abbasi, 2013; Huang, Eslami, & Hu, 2010; Hussain, Shahid, & Zaman, 2011; Nishitani & Matsuda, 2011; Noormohamadi, 2009; Oliver & Reschly, 2007; Smith & Laslett, 2002; Trang, 2012; Tum, 2012; Zhang & Zhong, 2012).

A second probable factor for this result may be the fact that research demonstrates that "teachers' perception of students' language anxiety may sometimes be incongruent with students' own perception" (Zheng, 2008, p. 7). Perhaps this is where effective classroom management comes into action again in that teachers with a higher degree of such managerial skills are presumably better equipped in correctly recognizing learners' anxiety and thereby cope with it more supportively in order to diminish the negative effects of this phenomenon.

Furthermore, it may well happen that learners' anxiety may be the outcome of the conflict between their stylistic preferences and those of the teacher. Oxford (1999) sheds light through her case studies on how teachers' classroom styles which are discordant with learners' mannerisms could exacerbate anxiety in class. These incompatibilities could manifest themselves in the form of conflicts of personality (e.g., introversion vs. extraversion) and teaching/learning style (e.g., global and intuitive-random learning style vs. analytic and concrete-sequential teaching style). Here again, the teacher who is well-versed in the practice of effective classroom management can perhaps fulfill a stronger role in reducing the anxiety generated by such conflicts through being professionally flexible when it comes to his/her own personal style and indeed be more accommodating towards the learners.

Yet another reason for the negative correlation of effective class management and anxiety is probably linked with the well established concept of *defense mechanism*: the process through which an individual protects his/her emotional equilibrium and self-esteem using different tactics (Ehrman, 1996). A noticeable array of such tactics may be employed by certain learners in the classroom which are in effect anxious manifestations or outbursts, including reluctance to take part in class activities and adopting a negative attitude. It is the teacher who has successfully internalized effective classroom management that could stand ahead of his/her peers in simply lowering the learners' defense mechanism. Teachers who opt for tactful support and understanding of such learners rather than authoritatively confronting them encourage these individuals to engage actively in the class activities and thus overcome the aforementioned anxious manifestations.

The correlation between teachers' effective classroom management techniques and EFL learners' learning strategies turned out to be significant too. Hence, it may again well be assumed that teachers who employ effective classroom management techniques enable and encourage the learners to use strategies which, in the process of L2 learning, make learning easier for them.

In line with the argumentation provided above on how effective classroom management decreases learners' anxiety, it may well be justified to note that teachers who are more skilful when it comes to classroom management are primarily more attentive to learners' individualities. Consequently, the concept of learners' learning strategies, which are "broadly conceived intentional directions" (Stern, 1992, p. 261) or "operations employed by the learner to aid the acquisition, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (Oxford, 1990, p.8), are not at all an alien phenomenon to such teachers. A resourceful teacher knows all too well that the power of the learner's motivation and engagement in the learning process is the major driving force for his/her

learning to take place; accordingly, such a teacher cognizantly encourages the learners to employ their individual strategies to both facilitate and internalize their learning.

In addition, contrary to what may appear at first sight, effective classroom management is perhaps not restricted to what happens only inside the classroom. Indeed, it may arguably extend to outside the classroom with the tasks and/or assignments that the teacher might encourage the learners to pursue. Such assignments can not only motivate the learners to apply their own strategies independently but also allow them to express their shortcomings in using these strategies. One example of the latter has been reported by Usuki (2000) who assigned the learners to discuss their psychological barriers in the journals they wrote and received feedback from the teacher on ways to surmount those barriers and thus strengthen their utilization of language learning strategies.

Conclusion

Generally, this study concluded yet again with the results of certain previous studies (noted above) which reaffirmed the position that the crucial role of a teacher's effective classroom management in the classroom has an effectively positive impact on EFL learners' facilitated language learning. This study has pedagogical implications for both EFL teachers and syllabus designers. As there is a significantly negative relationship between EFL teachers' effectiveness in managing the classroom and EFL learners' anxiety, teachers can improve their ability to manage the classroom more effectively in order to expect a reduction in the level of learners' anxiety as teachers bear a crucial role in enhancing a positive feeling towards learners thereby reducing their anxiety. Furthermore, there was a positive correlation between teachers' effective classroom management and learners' use of learning strategies. Hence, it appears essential that teachers be informed about effective classroom management and how this construct may contribute to learners' use of learning strategies.

With respect to the findings of this research concerning the negative and positive correlation of EFL teachers' effective classroom management with anxiety and use of learning strategies, it may be imperative to consider incorporating techniques of enhancing classroom management in the curriculum of teacher training courses and also in-service programs. Accordingly, a thorough revisiting of the above curriculum would be part of the agenda in order to develop a syllabus which encourages and boosts effective classroom management. Alongside designing such a syllabus for teacher training programs, syllabus designers could provide also a conducive context for learners to articulate and refine their understanding of learning strategies.

This research was of course conducted with certain limitations just as all studies are. Firstly, the researchers did not have access to an equal number of male and female participants, so gender may be an intervening factor in this study. Hence, it is suggested that a study be conducted in which gender would be controlled. Furthermore, in order to obtain more generalizable results, this research can be replicated among different samples of teachers with not necessarily the same demographic features as the participants of this study. Perhaps a comparative study among different age groups may provide useful information too. One can even do a comparison among females and males. And finally, the study also can be done in different language schools to see whether curriculum has any effect on the equational interaction of the three constructs or not.

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