

The Relationships Among Affective Factors in Learning EFL: A Study of the Saudi Setting

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Abstract

Adopting a mixed-method design, the current study attempted to specify the relationships among four affective factors (i.e., motivation, attitudes, self-confidence, and anxiety) involved in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Seventy-three students – from Administration and Humanities College, Mustaqbal University and Jubail University College, KSA – responded to a questionnaire of two parts: Part I and Part II, which yielded quantitative data. Qualitative data were generated through the analysis of Part I results to prove that there was no relationship between Saudi students' EFL proficiency and their awareness of the affective factors involved in learning it. Findings of Part II confirmed the interrelatedness among the four affective factors in the learning process in general, except for self-confidence did not significantly correlate with anxiety; the former got the highest mean (48.79) while the latter got the lowest (34.93). Calculating Standard Multiple Regression for the four affective factors, the study concluded giving four arithmetic equations of the predictive relationships among these factors. In the Saudi setting, the current study confirmed that anxiety does not affect learners with high motivation and good attitudes to a great extent. Besides, it does not affect self-confident learners at all.

Keywords: affective factors, motivation, attitudes, self-confidence, anxiety, Saudi learners

1. Introduction

Learning languages facilitates access to a world that lies beyond the borders of the students' country. This is absolutely one of the outcomes of learning English as an international language which is most widely used in intercultural encounters. That is, learning English opens the possibility for interacting with more people and getting to know other cultures (Lasagabaster & Doiz, 2015; Uysal & Güven, 2018). Therefore, it is mandatory to consider the place of English in the world today as the starting point to increase students' efficiency in learning it (Henter, 2014). Unfortunately, EFL learners do not have the opportunity to practice it outside the classroom.

Consequently, much concern should be directed for improving the leaning of EFL which is a complex process, involving many factors such as cognitive, metacognitive, social, and affective. For their importance, recent studies in applied linguistics have directed much emphasis on the analysis of the role of affective factors and its implications in teaching and learning of English. Affective factors refer to learners' feelings and emotional reactions (e.g., attitudes, anxiety, motivation, inhibition, self-esteem, self-efficacy ... etc.) that are involved in the process of learning a language (Henter, 2014; Khaleghi, 2016). Brown (2005) believes that "purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity" (as quoted by Rashidi, Yamini, & Shafiei, 2011, p. 146). Ni (2012) considers affective factors to be the most important ones as they decide the input and output of language teaching. That is, they will surely help teachers improve their teaching quality and students to cultivate an all-round development.

Affective factors can have either a negative or a positive effect on learning EFL. In simple terms, while students' positive feelings towards the different components of the learning process can support it, their negative feelings can push them to erect barriers to block it. Thus, if properly stimulated, affective factors can greatly facilitate an optimal language learning process; otherwise, they can be one of the most important reasons of language learning failure (Farzana, 2015; Khaleghi, 2016, Uysal & Güven, 2018).

Thus, for the importance of affective factors in the learning process of EFL, all teachers must take them into

consideration. Besides, the study of the role of these factors must be included in teacher education programmes. That is, all EFL teachers should be aware of these factors and the mutual relationships among them in order to secure their students' positive feeling towards learning EFL.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this research was to measure Saudi students' affective factors and to find out how these factors interrelate in learning EFL. Students from two Saudi institutions –Mustaqbal University and Jubail University College – participated in the current study. All of them were English majors. That is, they had their personal interest to learn the language not to consider it as a part of their compulsory curriculum.

1.2 Significance of the Study

This study attempted to

- 1) fulfill the need for more research surrounding the important role of affective factors in learning EFL in the Arab setting generally and the Saudi Arabian specifically;
- 2) raise the awareness about the significance of affective factors to both learners and teachers of EFL;
- 3) recommend the integration of a course in teacher education programmes on the role of affective factors; and
- 4) pave the way for other researchers to investigate the role of affective factors in improving other instructional fields.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

English is one of the most significant languages for people to guarantee and maintain their existence in the modern world. Students, who learn English, must practice it inside and outside of the classroom. However, EFL students do not have the possibility of out-of-classroom practicing. Saudi Arabia is a typical setting of learning EFL where English is not spoken outside of the classroom. As a consequence, Saudi Arabia ranks very low on some international English proficiency measurements. For example, on English Proficiency Index (EPI), Saudi Arabia ranks 83rd out of 88 countries and the 8th in the Middle East (English First, 2018). Based upon the above-mentioned role of the affective factors in learning EFL, the present research attempted to answer the following main question:

- How do Saudi students' affective factors interrelate in learning EFL?

For achieving this, this study attempted to answer the following sub-questions:

- 1) What are the affective factors involved in learning EFL?
- 2) To what extent can EFL proficient Saudi students aware of the affective factors involved in learning it?
- 3) What are the levels of Saudi students' affective factors involved in learning EFL?
- 4) How does each affective factor interrelate with the other factors in learning EFL?

1.4 Hypotheses of the Study

- 1) There is no relationship between Saudi students' proficiency in EFL and their awareness of the affective factors involved in learning it.
- 2) There are no relationships among the Saudi students' affective factors involved in learning EFL.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous Studies

A considerable amount of research (e.g., Bialystok, 1997; Hashimoto, 2002; Midraj, Midraj, O'Neill, & Sellami, 2008; Du, 2009; Ho, 2009; Fazeli, 2011; Khan, 2011; Bashosh, Nejad, Rastegar, & Marzban, 2013; Rahim, & Chun, 2017; Mehmood, 2018) has focused on learners' affective factors involved in learning EFL. For example, Farzana (2015) investigated several affective factors (i.e., personality traits, learning style, previous accumulated knowledge, lack of confidence, high expectation about the course, frequent switching from target to native language, effect of learning plateau, classroom anxiety, autonomy of dominant speaker and motivation for real life learning and reward in job) involved in EFL classroom consisting of a group of adult professionals. This paper suggested some possible solutions for raising the confidence level of average participants, stimulating team spirit and building a good rapport between teacher and students.

Too often, when affective factors are researched in a given context, a specific language skill should be considered at a time. In the context of speaking, for instance, previous studies (e.g., Hamouda, 2013; Khaleghi,

2016; Hakim, 2019) pointed out that learners generally were motivated to speak. However, the researchers observed a high level of anxiety due to causes such as shyness, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and pressure to achieve native-like language skills, have led learners to stay silent until they were individually singled out and asked to speak.

Regarding the skill of reading, Al-Shboul, Ahmad, Nordin, and Rahman (2013) implemented their study at Al-Yarmouk University in Jordan. They investigated the factors contributing to six students' reading anxiety by conducting a series of semi-structured interviews and collecting diaries. The study suggested that the factors causing the anxiety were: first, personal factors, such as fear of making errors, second, text features such as unfamiliar topic or culture.

It is notable that previous research suggest that affective factors are significant to the point that they could enhance or inhibit the learning process in general, and that of learning a language in particular. For example, administering the Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) to 50 postgraduate students at Aligarh Muslim University in India, Al-Mekhlafi (2010) found out that motivation significantly correlated with achievement in language learning.

Yazigy's (1991) study administered a proficiency test and questionnaires to 164 university-level students. Although the study suggested that attitudes towards the English language and its speakers are central to language learning, it did not prove that there was a strong relationship between learners' attitudes and their achievement. Later, Henter (2014) confirmed this conclusion that attitudes towards language learning did not seem to be a significant factor, unlike anxiety and motivation. Nevertheless, Raghu Ram, Vemuri and Kota (2015) surveyed 150 students at RISE institutions in Andhra Pradesh on attitudinal challenges of English language learning using two questionnaires: one closed and another open. A significant positive relation between learners' attitudes and their performance in productive skills (i.e. writing and speaking) was established.

Besides, Tridinanti (2018) investigated whether a correlation existed between learners' anxiety, self-confidence, and their language achievement. Two questionnaires and an interview were administrated to 28 students enrolled at Tridinanti University, Indonesia. The study showed that there was no significant correlation between learners' anxiety and their achievement; however, there was a significant correlation between learners' self-confidence and their achievement.

Regarding gender variable, Khaleghi (2016) has been shown that there was no difference between males and females in the dimension of affective factors that influence learning EFL. However, Jabor, Ghani and Abdulhussain (2017) subjected 42 students enrolled in the English language program at Kufa University, Iraq to a self-confidence questionnaire. Interestingly, male students seemed to have higher self-confidence scores in comparison with their female peers. The researchers speculated that the gender difference was due to traditional differences in society.

Based upon the above analysis of some previous studies, it can be concluded that there is a focus on identifying how a certain factor affect overall achievement or the improvement of a specific language skill. However, there are few studies (e.g., Wei, 2007) which searched the interrelatedness of these factors; especially in the Arab context. In simpler terms, the evidence of how these factors affect and being affected by each other or that how a specific factor can be considered a predictor of the other. This point of research was the main concern of the current research.

2.2 Theoretical Background

Theoretically speaking, several famous linguists attempted to form models which could clarify the role of the affective factors and the mechanism of their relationships in learning a language. One of the most influential models was by Krashen (1982) in his theory of second language acquisition (SLA). He put five central hypotheses which are *the Acquisition-learning distinction*, *the Natural Order Hypothesis*, *the Monitor Hypothesis*, *the Input Hypothesis* and *the Affective Filter Hypothesis*. Regarding the latter, he argued that affective factors form a kind of filter which decreases the amount of language input a learner can understand which in turn specifies his language intake. In simple terms, as Ni (2012) explains that, "when language learners with high motivation, self-confidence and a low level of anxiety, they have low filters and so receive and take in plenty of input" (p. 1508).

Gardner and his colleagues conducted several studies on French learners in Canada. In 1985, they formed their socio-educational model of SLA. This model is based on five motivational/attitudinal variables: *integralization*, *attitude*, *motivation*, *integrative orientation* and *instrumental orientation*. These relationships can be verified by his Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The model shows that integralization and attitude are two

correlated variables that support the individual's motivation to learn a language. In other words, the effects of the integratization and attitudes towards the learning situation are indirect, acting through motivation. Besides, this model indicated that both monetary rewards and integrative desires were positively related to various aspects of SLA, such as length of learning, effectiveness of learning, behaviors in the classroom, and willingness to interact with members of the community.

Reviewing his theory, Gardner (1988) also admitted that it would be too simplistic to assume that the role of motivation is consistent and universal in different language learning settings. He and MacIntyre (1991) later emphasized that "the important point is that motivation itself is dynamic" p. 62. Therefore, the inclusion of contexts as a variable is essential to understanding the role of motivation in language learning. Gardner, Day and MacIntyre (1992) noticed that highly-motivated students are less anxious in second language contexts, assuming that anxiety and motivation are opposite ends of the same dimension.

Dörnyei (1994) was notably concerned about the distinction between SLA and foreign language acquisition (FLA), stating that the latter involves the target language being taught in school as an academic subject and "a great proportion of the variance in language attainment" (p. 49). His theoretical framework consists of four components: *integrative motivation*, *instrumental motivation*, *the need for achievement*, and *attritions about past failures*. One of his well-known formulations is the distinction between *intrinsic* and *extrinsic motivation*. Noels, Pelletier, Clément, and Vallerand (2000) who extended this model adding *amotivation*. They stated that "the more students feel amotivated, the less effort they will expend and the more anxiety they will feel" (p. 31).

Therefore, these theorists added several affective factors to their models giving their rationale for including each factor. For them, language learners are affected among other factors by their inner feelings and social conditions. The current study attempted to investigate this fact in the Saudi setting.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants of this study were 73 English majors from two Saudi institutions: Administration and Humanities College, Mustaqbal University and Jubail University College, KSA (16 males and 26 females from the former and 31 females from the latter). This research investigated these students' affective factors involved in learning EFL and how these factors interrelated among each other. The study participants have been learning English with full interest not to be a compulsory subject, and for some, it is already as a familiar as their mother tongue.

3.2 Instruments

A closed-ended questionnaire was designed to gather in-depth information about the participants' affective factors involved in learning EFL. It was administered online at the end of the second term of the academic year 2018/2019. Before administering the research questionnaire (RQ), the participants were informed that it was an inquiry about their experience and feelings towards learning EFL, so they should feel free to share them for the success of this investigation. The RQ consisted of:

3.2.1 Part I

It included 13 items for gathering personal information about each respondent's name, age, gender, nationality, university, college, department, year, level, years of studying English, opportunity to travel to an English-speaking country for more than 3 months, overall proficiency and awareness of the role of affective factors involved in learning EFL. For determining the students' level of proficiency, a brief description of three proficiency levels were adapted from a survey conducted by the School of English Studies at the University of Nottingham, UK (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009, Appendix B, p. 4). Then, for identifying the participants' awareness of the affective factors, definitions of *motivation*, *attitudes*, and *anxiety* were adapted from Fandiño Parra (2008, p. 210) while a definition of *self-confidence* was adapted from Brown (2001) and Ni (2012).

3.2.2 Part II

It aimed at measuring the participants' affective factors: motivation, attitudes, self-confidence and anxiety. It included 40 Farzana (2015, p. 21) built her theoretical contention upon the premise that *humanism* emphasizes the importance of the inner world of the human being and places the individual's thoughts, feelings and emotions at the forefront of all human developments. She considered *affect* not to be only of the basic needs of human beings, but the condition for the other physical and psychological activities.

statements; 10 statements for each factor were given. Students were asked to respond to the RQ statements choosing one answer from a six-point, ordinal Likert Scale. Responses ranged from 1: strongly disagree, 2:

disagree, 3: slightly disagree, 4: slightly agree, 5: agree to 6: strongly agree.

3.2.3 Validity and Reliability

For validating the RQ, it was designed to be administered online using Qualtrics^{XM} and its link (shorturl.at/fkzGR) was sent to 5 instructors from both institutions. They approved its validity asking for some modifications which were done consequently.

Piloting the RQ, it was sent via WhatsApp to 30 students from both institutions for making sure that all the items were clear, discovering unexpected problems, and measuring its reliability. Students reached a consensus that all items were clear. Using SPSS Statistics V25.0 in analyzing the results of the current study, the *Coefficient of Cronbach Alpha* was measured for all the RQ components as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Intrareliability coefficients of the RQ

Affective Factors	Intrareliability Coefficient
Motivation	0.877
Attitudes	0.846
Self-confidence	0.925
Anxiety	0.905
Total	0.949

All the coefficients were above 0.6 proving the *internal consistency* for the components and the RQ in general, which gave a lot of confidence in its reliability. Therefore, the RQ was applicable in its final form.

3.3 Design

Mixed-method design was employed in the current study. While quantitative data were collected through the RQ, qualitative data were generated through analysis and interpretation of the numerical data from Part I and Part II. The former helped to find out the relation between the respondents' proficiency in English and their awareness of the role of affective factors in learning it. The latter was used to deduce the interrelatedness among the factors.

3.4 Setting

At the very beginning of the second term of the academic year 2018/2019, a scientific collaboration was agreed upon between Mustaqbal University and Jubail University College. The current study on affective factors was one of the research topics included in this collaboration. The study was carried out administering the RQ to 73 students from both institutions. The link of the RQ was sent to the participants through WhatsApp. The RQ was available for the students for 5 days.

4. Results and Discussion

The results of investigating the problem of the present study can be shown in the following way:

4.1 For Answering the First Question: What Are the Different Affective Factors Involved in Learning EFL?

Based upon literature review, a list of nine affective factors (i.e., motivation, attitudes, inhibition, extroversion, introversion, self-confidence, ethnocentrism, anxiety, and social class) with their definitions was sent via e-mail to 12 instructors. These instructors (a lecturer, seven assistant professors, three associate professors and a professor) were from different Saudi universities. Given a brief outline of the current research, they were asked to choose the affective factors involved in learning EFL in the Saudi context. The mostly-agreed upon factors were *motivation, attitudes, self-confidence, and anxiety*; consequently, they were included in the study. They can be clarified as follows:

4.1.1 Motivation

For Wei (2007) and Henter (2014), motivation appears to be both a predictor and a determinant of performance in learning EFL. Brown (2000) defines motivation as "the extent to which someone makes choices about goals to pursue and the effort, he/she will devote to that pursuit" (p. 72). Thohir (2017) puts motivation in learning a foreign language into 3 different classifications which are such as *integrative and instrumental, intrinsic and extrinsic, global, situational and task*.

Specifying the RQ statements of motivation, the researchers reviewed several tools for measuring motivation.

Among them, a 20-item motivational survey designed by Wimolmas (2013) to examine the type and level of EFL learning motivation (instrumental or integrative) of 30 first-year undergraduate students at an international institute in Thailand. As this survey was suitable – in terms of its purpose and sample – to be used in the current study, statements 1, 4, 7, 9, 10 and statements 11, 16, 17, 19, 20 were adapted to be included in the RQ as statements 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 for *instrumental motivation* and statements 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 for *integrative motivation*.

According to Lasagabaster and Doiz (2015), an instrumentally-motivated student's reason for learning a language is utilitarian. That is, it is a part of the students' education, which will help them advance in their profession or career and to avoid possible negative consequences, such as the fear of failing an exam or to disappointing one's parents. Wei (2007, p. 3) quotes the definition of integrative motivation from (Gardner et al., 1992, p. 198) as it "stems from a desire to understand the language and culture of another group for the purpose of interaction". In simple words, it involves interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to go overseas to study or work, readiness to interact with different cultures.

4.1.2 Attitudes

As mentioned previously, learners of EFL should be interested in learning it for its role as an international language and the language of modern science and technology. As they are supposed to have high motivation for learning EFL, they have different perceptions of their class, teacher and curriculum; such perceptions are responsible for shaping their attitudes. Attitudes are usually interrelated in measurement with motivation, especially by AMTB. Yet, attitudes can be learned, hence taught, in addition to that they are situational and can be generalized; namely, if a situation generates an attitude, the context will determine the student's reaction whether it is positive or negative. Learners with positive attitudes towards EFL are more successful in learning it (Henter, 2014).

Fandiño Parra (2008) defines attitudes as, "the evaluative and socioaffective reactions, thoughts and predispositions that EFL students have towards language learners, English and its culture, the value of learning the target language, and the learning situation itself" p. 210. Related to this, Faitha, Bouhamidi, Bakader and Maameri (2014) divided attitudes into two categories: attitudes towards *language learning* and attitudes towards the *target language community*. Regarding the first category, attitudes are more highly related to achievement as they are related to how the learner will process the language input. For the second category, learners who have favorable attitudes towards the speakers of a language and their culture tend to be more successful in their learning than those who have negative attitudes.

To sum up, a learner's positive attitudes towards EFL can be for being able to communicate across cultures with people who speak that language, having a real sense of how everyday life is lived, conducting business, and eliminating misunderstandings and mistakes. Additionally, this type of learner will be able to consume the foreign art, literature, and information more easily. Therefore, statements 26 and 96 from AMTB and several statements from English Language Learning Survey, and English Learner Questionnaire – published on Zoltan Dörnyei's personal website: zoltandornyei.co.uk – were adapted for determining the RQ statements of attitudes.

4.1.3 Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is among the important affective factors which contribute to learning EFL. Different resources exchangeably use some terms for this factor as if they are synonyms such as of *self-esteem*, *self-image*, *self-respect*, *self-assurance*, *self-efficacy*, and *self-concept* (e.g., Brown, 2006; Nitta, 2006; Ni, 2011; Rashidi, Yamini, & Shafiei, 2011; Raghu Ram, Vemuri, & Kota, 2015; Moyer, 2018; Tridinanti, 2018; Uysal, & Güven, 2018). Laine (1987, p. 17), for example, views self-esteem as "the worth that persons place upon themselves and competence in handling things". Brown gave several definitions of "self-esteem" as follows:

- 1) "A personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes that the individual holds towards himself" (Brown, 1987 as quoted by Nitta, 2006, p. 23) and it is derived from a person's experiences with others and from their assessment.
- 2) "The eventual success that learners attain in a task is at least partially a factor of their belief that they indeed are fully capable of accomplishing the task" (Brown, 2001 as cited in Ni, 2012, p. 1509).

Students who lack self-confidence can be fearful, reluctant to express their opinions and even unable to utter a complete meaningful sentence in class in contrast to those who believe in their abilities to accomplish the task. Ni (2012) puts the importance of self-confidence in the following reasons:

- It encourages a person to try new learning and to take some risks in order to be successful.
- A confident person rarely gives up, which enables him to succeed in language learning.

The studies of self-confidence have meaningful implications for language teachers to help students strengthen it. That is, successful language learning only takes place in an environment where learners approach learning with confidence.

The RQ statements for measuring the EFL participants' self-confidence were adapted from Language Orientation Questionnaire, English Language Learning Survey, and English Learner Questionnaire. These questionnaires are published on Zoltan Dörnyei's personal website: zoltandornyei.co.uk.

4.1.4 Anxiety

Self-confidence has a direct relationship with anxiety (Laine, 1987). That is, students experience anxiety when they feel that their self-confidence is threatened (Nitta, 2006). Rashidi, Yamini and Shafiei (2011) put it the other way that EFL anxiety is assumed to have a threatening impact on self-confidence. In fact, those students who suffer from low self-confidence avoid taking risks to unlock their potential. Besides, they lack security, all of which hinder their success.

Wei (2007) and Henter (2014) agree that anxiety is a factor which is negatively correlated with performance in learning a language. Anxiety is seen as either a *trait*, a *state*, or a *situation-specific*. Anxiety in learning EFL can be of the third type as it can be aroused in learning situations such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation. It has the same clinical picture of anxiety such as difficult concentration, sweating, palpitations, worry, uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, limited facial activity, less eye contact, less active illustrative and regulatory gestures, apprehension, or even horror of a foreign language class. Krashen (1981) confirms this saying, "There appears to be a consistent relationship between various forms of anxiety and language proficiency in all situations, formal and informal. Anxiety level may thus be a very potent influence on the affective filter" p. 29.

In conclusion, EFL anxiety is caused by many personal, social, and circumstantial factors but the result in all situations could have a negative effect on the language learning process. In 1986, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) made a unique contribution to the identification of FL anxiety by developing a 33-item Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). The present study adapted this tool into 10 statements to be suitable for its sample. These statements focus upon anxious students' avoidance behaviour such as they can miss classes, do not do their homework, avoid difficult linguistic structures or personal messages, ... etc.

4.2 For Answering the Second Question: To What Extent Are EFL Proficient Saudi Students Aware of the Affective Factors Involved in Learning it?

For their influential role in learning EFL, the current study aimed to sharpen Saudi prospective teachers' awareness of the affective factors so that they could lower their students' affective filter towards the language in the future. Thus, Part I of the RQ attempted to find out the extent to which the study participants were aware of these factors – hypothesizing that proficient participants might be more aware than the others – asking them questions which could help picture their proficiency in EFL like years of studying English, opportunity to travel to an English-speaking country for more than three months (a suitable period to lower their affective filter towards the language). Besides, the researchers focused on administering the RQ to students of final levels in each college. Table 2 gives the descriptive statistics of some of these items.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of students' age, level, and years of English study

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Age	73	19	34	22.81	2.531
Level	73	2	8	5.96	2.071
Years of English Study	73	2	15	5.34	2.839

The RQ showed that only 21.9% (n=16) students out of 73 have had the experience of living abroad for three months or more in an English-speaking country. As this percentage is below average so living abroad cannot be considered as a contributing factor to the participants' proficiency. Then, the respondents were asked to rank their perceived proficiency in EFL. The rank options included three choices with their definitions: *advanced*, *intermediate*, *lower intermediate* in addition to an open text response where they could give *other perception* of their proficiency lower than the given ones. Table 3 shows the frequencies of students according to these choices. For the awareness of the affective factors, Part I came up with a pattern where motivation was the highest,

followed by self-confidence, and attitudes. Then, anxiety was the factor with the lowest level of awareness as in Table 4. Finally, these levels of proficiency were given marks (i.e., 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively). At the same time, awareness of each affective factor was given one mark, as follows:

- The highest level of proficiency = The total of the awareness of the four factors = 4 marks

Table 3. Frequencies of students according to their proficiency

Proficiency Levels	Number of Students (n)	Frequency	Equivalent Mark
Advanced	40	54.8%	4
Intermediate	23	31.5%	3
Lower-intermediate	6	8.2%	2
other	4	5.5%	1

Table 4. Frequencies of students to their awareness of the affective factors

Affective Factors	Number of Students (n)	Frequency	Equivalent Mark
Motivation	54	73.8%	1
Self-confidence	43	58.9%	1
Attitudes	33	45.2%	1
Anxiety	23	31.5%	1

For finding out the relationship between students' proficiency and awareness, *Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r)* was calculated as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Pearson correlation coefficient between students' proficiency and awareness

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	<i>r</i>	Sig.
Proficiency	73	3.4247	.76227	.155	.191
Awareness	73	2.1233	1.07942		

Table 5 shows that this relationship is weak ($r = .155$) and insignificant ($p = .191 > .05$) at the same time. That is, there was no apparent relationship between Saudi students' EFL proficiency and their awareness of the four affective factors specified to be involved in its learning process. Therefore, it is logical to accept the null hypothesis that "There is no relationship between Saudi students' proficiency in EFL and their awareness of the affective factors involved in learning it."

This result can be attributed to the fact that there is no current focus on raising English majors' awareness of the role of affective factors in teacher education programmes. This exclusion could lead to the inevitable result of neglecting a major aspect of learning the language. Aware teachers of the role of affective factors would do their best to nurture them in their students to lower their affective filter towards learning the language. As it was mentioned before, some of these factors could be taught to prospective teachers which would eventually lead to the improvement in language performance.

4.3 For Answering the Third Question: What Are the Levels of Saudi Students' Affective Factors Involved in Learning EFL?

It was mentioned earlier that *motivation*, *attitudes*, *self-confidence* and *anxiety* were among the nine affective factors that got unanimous agreement from 12 Saudi instructors asked to choose the most influential affective factors to be investigated in the current research. Designing Part II of the RQ, the researchers added 10 statements to measure each factor. For motivation statements, statements (1-5) represented *instrumental motivation* while statements (6-10) were for *integrative motivation*. Appendix A gives the result for each statement. Figure 1 shows the means of students' levels of each factor.

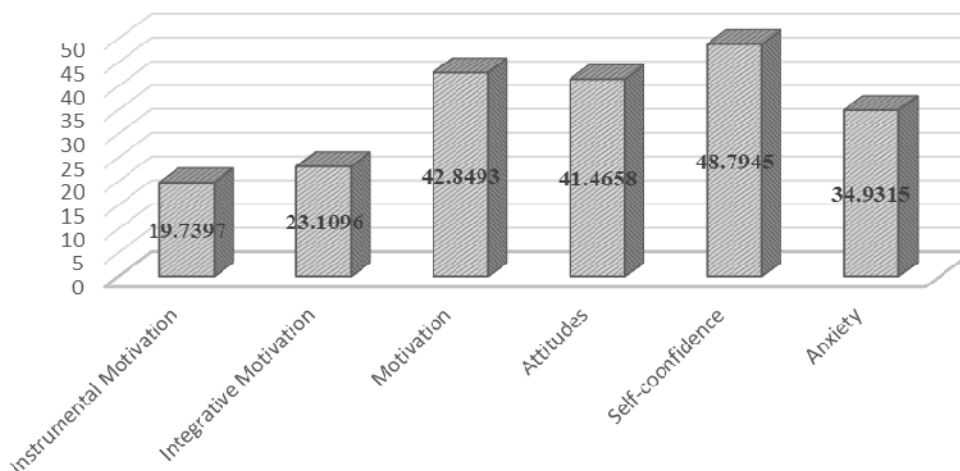


Figure 1. Means of students' levels of affective factors

For interpreting these means, weighted means were calculated as in Table 6. Table 7 was used to specify the levels of the weighted means according to their intervals. It is obvious that all the participants' affective factors – even if their anxiety was *the lowest* (3.4932) – fall in the *moderate* level except for their self-confidence was *the highest* (4.8795). This may be due to self-confidence is a pervasive common personal trait of Saudi people; this needs to be scientifically proven. Generally speaking, Saudi students had a *high* level of affective factors and a low affective filter towards learning English, and surprisingly, had both types of motivational orientation: instrumental and integrative.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for the affective factors

Affective Factors	Minimum	Maximum	Weighted Mean	Std Deviation	Interpretation
Instrumental Motivation	1.00	5.60	3.9479	1.02742	Moderate
Integrative Motivation	1.00	6.00	4.6219	1.09218	High
Motivation	1.00	5.50	4.2849	.94937	Moderate
Attitudes	1.00	5.50	4.1466	.84444	Moderate
Self-confidence	1.00	5.90	4.8795	.99540	High
Anxiety	1.00	5.50	3.4932	1.03727	Moderate
Total	1.00	5.50	4.2010	.74408	High

Table 7. 6-point likert scale

Likert-Scale	Intervals	Difference	Description	Interpretation
1	1.82-1.00	.82	Strongly disagree	Low
2	2.65-1.83	.82	Disagree	
3	3.48-2.66	.82	Slightly disagree	Moderate
4	4.31-3.49	.82	Slightly Agree	
5	5.14-4.32	.82	Agree	High
6	6.00-5.15	.85	Strongly agree	

Findings revealed an unbalanced pattern of the two types of motivation: instrumental and integrative; with a *moderate* level of the former and a *high* level of the latter. This proves that the Saudi participants' interest in learning EFL stems from their willingness to go overseas to study or work, and readiness to interact with different cultures than to be utilitarian for just earning a university degree and a good job.

4.4 For Answering the Fourth Question: How do Saudi Students' Affective Factors Interrelate in Learning EFL?

For finding out the direction and strength of the relationships among the four affective factors, *Pearson's Correlation Coefficient* was computed. The results of the correlational analyses among the factors showed that all of them were significantly ($p < .01$) associated with each other and with the total of the factors except for self-confidence did not correlate with anxiety. Generally, the coefficients among the factors and the total were significantly positive, which means that their associations are ascending even though the strength of these associations vary from *weak* between motivation and anxiety ($0.2 \leq r < 0.39$), to be *moderate* between attitudes and anxiety ($0.40 \leq r < 0.59$) and to be *strong* among motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence ($0.6 \leq r < 0.79$). It can be concluded that all the affective factors are interrelated in the learning process of EFL in the Saudi setting where the associations are *very strong* among motivation, attitudes and the total ($0.8 \leq r < 1$) and no association between self-confidence and anxiety, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Correlation coefficients among the affective factors

<i>Affective Factors</i>	<i>Motivation</i>	<i>Attitudes</i>	<i>Self-confidence</i>	<i>Anxiety</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Motivation</i>		.729**	.670**	.327**	.864**
<i>Attitude</i>	.729**		.646**	.402**	.872**
<i>Self-confidence</i>	.670**	.646**		.149	.783**
<i>Anxiety</i>	.327**	.402**	.149		.617**

The results of the current study are the opposite to what was proven by Rashidi et al. (2011) that EFL anxiety has a threatening impact on self-confidence. That is, in the case of Saudi students, anxiety does not have any effect on their self-confidence. Therefore, these analyses can be concluded by only accepting the null hypothesis in the case of *self-confidence* and *anxiety* that "There is no relationship among the Saudi students' self-confidence and anxiety involved in learning EFL" while rejecting the null hypothesis for the other factors.

Formulating the arithmetic associations among the affective factors, *Standard Multiple Regression* was calculated for all the factors, Appendix B. The slope constant α and the Y-intercept b should be substituted in the following linear regression equation:

$$Y = b + \alpha X$$

Where Y (Dependent Variable) and X is its predictor (Independent Variable)

The four regression equations for the affective factors can be as follows:

- 1) Motivation = 1.87 + (.46) Attitudes + (.36) Self-confidence
- 2) Attitudes = 5.475 + (.450) Motivation + (.207) Anxiety + (.313) Self-confidence
- 3) Self-confidence = 15.178 + (.436) Motivation + (.388) Attitudes
- 4) Anxiety = 17.246 + (.430) Attitudes

These equations show that Saudi students' motivation, attitudes, and self-confidence do a good job in predicting the value of each other. Above all, anxiety disappears in predicting the values of both motivation and self-confidence. That is, highly-motivated and confident students seem not to be affected by their anxiety. It is only their attitudes which contribute to predicting their anxiety. This may be in contrast to the findings of previous studies (e.g., Laine, 1987; Nitta, 2006 & Henter, 2014) which proved the existence of negative relationships between anxiety and motivation and self-confidence.

To sum up, educators should be sensitive to their students' feelings and emotions to direct their positive feelings and emotions to support their learning of the language. Farzana (2015) went further to consider *affect* not to be only of the basic needs of human beings, but the condition for the other physical and psychological activities. Consequently, in the effort of promoting a greater commitment to language learning, affective factors can be tapped in such a way that teachers should encourage less anxious, more motivated, and confident learners with good attitudes towards the language and its speakers. Besides, EFL curricula should be designed in a way that enhances both types of motivation; in particular, more culturally-related materials need to be incorporated.

5. Conclusion

The current study has some pedagogic implications targeting to incorporate raising the awareness of the role of

affective factors into teacher education programmes and in-service teacher training programmes. Thus, it is possible to replace negative factors with positive ones. Motivation, for example, must be raised in order to obtain good results in EFL. As changing attitudes is a time-consuming process, it is better to raise teachers' awareness to help their students form positive attitudes towards learning EFL as early in life as possible. Learners' self-confidence will increase when they perceive themselves becoming more proficient, and therefore able to compete. In addition, teachers should do their best to overcome those situational factors, which may cause students' anxiety providing a favorable and engaging environment. Future studies may include the effect of other affective factors not included in this study such as inhibition, extroversion, introversion, ethnocentrism and many others.

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Appendix A

Results of Part II

No.	Statements	Frequencies	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std Deviation	Results
A. Motivation (Items 1-5: Instrumental Motivation & Items 6-10: Integrative Motivation)											
1.	I mainly focus on using English for class assignment and the exams.	Frequency	15	7	4	9	28	10	3.79	1.78	Slightly agree
		Percentage	20.55%	9.59%	5.48%	12.33%	38.36%	13.70%			
2.	I am more interested in earning a university degree and a good job than learning English language itself.	Frequency	17	20	9	10	12	5	2.93	1.62	Slightly disagree
		Percentage	23.29%	27.40%	12.33%	13.70%	16.44%	6.85%			
3.	Learning English is important for making me a knowledgeable and skillful person.	Frequency	8	2	1	7	20	35	4.84	1.61	Agree
		Percentage	10.96%	2.74%	1.37%	9.59%	27.40%	47.95%			

No.	Statements	Frequencies	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std Deviation	Results
4.	Being proficient in English can lead to more success and achievements in life.	Frequency	7	2	0	7	25	32	4.88	1.52	Agree
		Percentage	9.59%	2.74%	0.00%	9.59%	34.25%	43.84%			
5.	Being proficient in English makes other people respect me.	Frequency	12	11	10	24	14	2	3.32	1.43	Slightly disagree
		Percentage	16.44%	15.07%	13.70%	32.88%	19.18%	2.74%			
6.	I am determined to study English as best as I can to achieve maximum proficiency.	Frequency	5	2	2	8	28	28	4.86	1.39	Agree
		Percentage	6.85%	2.74%	2.74%	10.96%	38.36%	38.36%			
7.	Studying English enables me to understand English books, movies, pop music etc.	Frequency	5	0	2	9	18	39	5.08	1.36	Agree
		Percentage	6.85%	0.00%	2.74%	12.33%	24.66%	53.42%			
8.	Studying English enables me to participate freely in academic, social, and professional activities among other cultural groups.	Frequency	6	0	5	9	26	27	4.78	1.43	Agree
		Percentage	8.22%	0.00%	6.85%	12.33%	35.62%	36.99%			
9.	Studying English enables me to behave like native English speakers: (e.g., accent, using English expressions).	Frequency	7	4	5	16	26	15	4.30	1.50	Agree
		Percentage	9.59%	5.48%	6.85%	21.92%	35.62%	20.55%			
10.	Studying English helps me to be an open-minded, and sociable person like English-speaking people.	Frequency	8	10	4	15	19	17	4.07	1.67	Slightly agree
		Percentage	10.96%	13.70%	5.48%	20.55%	26.03%	23.29%			
B. Attitudes											
11.	I really enjoy learning English and feel excited when hearing English spoken.	Frequency	4	3	2	12	30	22	4.74	1.32	Agree
		Percentage	5.48%	4.11%	2.74%	16.44%	41.10%	30.14%			
12.	I have to study English, otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.	Frequency	11	14	8	16	13	11	3.53	1.67	Slightly agree
		Percentage	15.07%	19.18%	10.96%	21.92%	17.81%	15.07%			
13.	If my teacher wanted someone to do an extra English assignment, I would certainly volunteer.	Frequency	3	15	8	19	20	8	3.85	1.41	Slightly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	20.55%	10.96%	26.03%	27.40%	10.96%			
14.	When I am studying English, I ignore distractions and pay attention to my task.	Frequency	3	6	10	21	23	10	4.16	1.29	Slightly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	8.22%	13.70%	28.77%	31.51%	13.70%			
15.	I like to become similar to the people who speak English.	Frequency	8	9	6	9	26	15	4.11	1.65	Slightly agree
		Percentage	10.96%	12.33%	8.22%	12.33%	35.62%	20.55%			
16.	I like English very much because without it one cannot be successful in life.	Frequency	11	15	18	11	10	8	3.25	1.56	Slightly disagree
		Percentage	15.07%	20.55%	24.66%	15.07%	13.70%	10.96%			
17.	I like TV programmes, songs, and films made in English-speaking countries.	Frequency	5	3	4	13	23	25	4.66	1.45	Agree
		Percentage	6.85%	4.11%	5.48%	17.81%	31.51%	34.25%			
18.	The British are kind, open-minded, modern, and friendly people.	Frequency	3	9	15	20	21	5	3.85	1.27	Slightly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	12.33%	20.55%	27.40%	28.77%	6.85%			
19.	The Americans are sociable, hospitable, kind and cheerful people.	Frequency	2	6	7	18	31	9	4.33	1.22	Agree
		Percentage	2.74%	8.22%	9.59%	24.66%	42.47%	12.33%			
20.	I respect the values, cultures, and customs of English-speaking countries.	Frequency	3	2	2	8	36	22	4.89	1.19	Agree
		Percentage	4.11%	2.74%	2.74%	10.96%	49.32%	30.14%			
C. Self-confidence											
21.	I imagine myself as someone who is able to speak English.	Frequency	2	4	1	9	30	27	4.95	1.22	Agree
		Percentage	2.74%	5.48%	1.37%	12.33%	41.10%	36.99%			
22.	I am sure I will be able to write in English comfortably if I continue studying.	Frequency	3	3	1	5	22	39	5.15	1.29	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	4.11%	1.37%	6.85%	30.14%	53.42%			
23.	I can imagine myself writing English e-mails/letters fluently.	Frequency	3	3	1	8	23	35	5.05	1.29	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	4.11%	1.37%	10.96%	31.51%	47.95%			
24.	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.	Frequency	4	2	4	17	26	20	4.63	1.31	Agree
		Percentage	5.48%	2.74%	5.48%	23.29%	35.62%	27.40%			
25.	I can imagine myself in the future giving an English speech successfully to the public.	Frequency	3	3	4	3	28	32	5.00	1.31	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	4.11%	5.48%	4.11%	38.36%	43.84%			
26.	I think that I am doing my best to learn English.	Frequency	3	5	6	13	29	17	4.52	1.34	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	6.85%	8.22%	17.81%	39.73%	23.29%			
27.	Compared to my classmates, I think I study	Frequency	4	10	10	24	16	9	3.89	1.37	Slightly

No.	Statements	Frequencies	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Std Deviation	Results
	English relatively hard.	Percentage	5.48%	13.70%	13.70%	32.88%	21.92%	12.33%			agree
28.	Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English.	Frequency	2	4	0	10	26	31	5.01	1.22	Strongly agree
		Percentage	2.74%	5.48%	0.00%	13.70%	35.62%	42.47%			
29.	If I make more effort, I am sure I will be able to master English.	Frequency	3	0	3	3	25	39	5.25	1.16	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	0.00%	4.11%	4.11%	34.25%	53.42%			
30.	I believe that I will be capable of reading and understanding most texts in English if I keep studying it.	Frequency	3	1	3	4	19	43	5.25	1.24	Strongly agree
		Percentage	4.11%	1.37%	4.11%	5.48%	26.03%	58.90%			
D. Anxiety											
31.	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English.	Frequency	9	16	12	16	14	6	3.38	1.51	Slightly agree
		Percentage	12.33%	21.92%	16.44%	21.92%	19.18%	8.22%			
32.	I am anxious about making mistakes in English.	Frequency	6	11	5	23	17	11	3.92	1.50	Slightly agree
		Percentage	8.22%	15.07%	6.85%	31.51%	23.29%	15.07%			
33.	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.	Frequency	7	14	6	18	22	6	3.71	1.50	Slightly agree
		Percentage	9.59%	19.18%	8.22%	24.66%	30.14%	8.22%			
34.	I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than I am.	Frequency	14	19	10	13	12	5	3.07	1.57	Slightly disagree
		Percentage	19.18%	26.03%	13.70%	17.81%	16.44%	6.85%			
35.	I start to panic when I have to speak in English without preparation.	Frequency	8	14	5	21	17	8	3.67	1.54	Slightly agree
		Percentage	10.96%	19.18%	6.85%	28.77%	23.29%	10.96%			
36.	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in class.	Frequency	18	17	7	14	13	4	2.99	1.62	Strongly disagree
		Percentage	24.66%	23.29%	9.59%	19.18%	17.81%	5.48%			
37.	I can get so nervous when I forget things I know.	Frequency	5	10	9	12	25	12	4.07	1.51	Agree
		Percentage	6.85%	13.70%	12.33%	16.44%	34.25%	16.44%			
38.	I would be nervous speaking English with native speakers.	Frequency	10	21	11	12	12	7	3.22	1.57	Strongly disagree
		Percentage	13.70%	28.77%	15.07%	16.44%	16.44%	9.59%			
39.	I avoid using complex structures in speaking or writing English sentences.	Frequency	6	14	13	13	18	9	3.68	1.52	Slightly agree
		Percentage	8.22%	19.18%	17.81%	17.81%	24.66%	12.33%			
40.	I get nervous when my teacher asks question: which I haven't prepared in advance.	Frequency	7	19	13	17	12	5	3.22	1.43	Strongly disagree
		Percentage	4.11%	2.74%	2.74%	10.96%	49.32%	30.14%			

Appendix B

Tables of Regression

Table B1. Coefficients of motivation as a dependent variable

Independent Variable (X)	Dependent Variable (Y)	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	β	Slope Constant a	Y-Intercept b	Sig.
	Attitude				.462		.519	.000
Motivation	Self-confidence	.778	.606	.588	.358	1.813	.342	.001
	Anxiety				.088		.081	.295

a. Dependent Variable: motivation.

b. Predictors: (Constant), anxiety, self-confidence, attitudes.

Table B2. ANOVA for the regression of motivation and the other affective factors

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	3930.731	3	1310.244	35.334	.000 ^b
Residuals	2558.611	69	37.081		
Total	6489.342	72			

$$\text{Motivation} = 1.87 + (0.46) \text{Attitudes} + (0.36) \text{Self-confidence} \tag{1}$$

Table B3. Coefficients of attitudes as a dependent variable

Independent Variable (X)	Dependent Variable (Y)	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	β	Slope Constant a	Y-Intercept b	Sig.
	Motivation				.402		.452	.000
Attitudes	Self-confidence	.784 ^a	.614	.597	.265	5.432	.312	.003
	Anxiety				.168		.207	.011

Table B4. ANOVA for the regression of attitudes and the other affective factors

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	3153.223	3	1051.074	36.611	.000 ^b
Residuals	1980.941	69	28.709		
Total	5134.164	72			

$$\text{Attitudes} = 5.475 + (0.450) \text{Motivation} + (0.207) \text{anxiety} + (0.313) \text{self-confidence} \quad (2)$$

Table B5. Coefficients of self-confident as a dependent variable

Independent Variable (X)	Dependent Variable (Y)	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	β	Slope Constant a	Y-Intercept b	Sig.
	Motivation				.457		.436	.001
Self-confidence	Attitudes	.721 ^a	.520	.500	.457	15.239	.388	.003
	Anxiety				-.143		-.149	.107

a. Dependent Variable: Self-confidence.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Anxiety, Motivation, Attitudes.

Table B6. ANOVA for the regression of self-confidence and the other affective factors

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	p
Regression	3712.730	3	1237.577	24.960	.000 ^b
Residuals	3421.188	69	49.582		
Total	7133.918	72			

$$\text{Self-confidence} = 15.178 + (0.436) \text{Motivation} + (0.388) \text{attitude} \quad (3)$$

Table B7. Coefficients of anxiety as a dependent variable

Independent Variable (X)	Dependent Variable (Y)	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	β	Slope Constant a	Y-Intercept b	Sig.
	Motivation				.197		.180	.295
Anxiety	Attitudes	.442 ^a	.195	.160	.530	17.224	.432	.011
	Self-confidence				-.261		-.250	.107

a. Dependent Variable: Anxiety.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-confidence, Attitudes, Motivation.

Table B8. ANOVA for the regression of anxiety and the other affective factors

<i>Source of Variance</i>	<i>Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Degree of Freedom</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Regression	1510.241	3	503.414	5.570	.002
Residuals	6236.417	69	90.383		
Total	7746.658	72			

Anxiety = 17.246 + (0.430) Attitudes (4)

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