

## MASTER'S THESIS

### **A comparative study of the language learning anxiety and occupational aspiration of high proficiency students and low proficiency students studying at the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE)**

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A comparative study of the language learning anxiety and occupational  
aspiration of high proficiency students and low proficiency students  
studying at the Institute of Vocational Education (IVE)

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## Abstract

Anxiety has a detrimental effect on language learning or performance. Also it is regarded as an important affective component in L2. Some people believe that anxiety is a minor inconvenience for a language learner, perhaps an excuse for not participating in class or a guise to hide a lack of study. Others seem to feel that anxiety may facilitate the entire language learning process and that, as soon as language learners feel anxious, they will override it. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship among anxiety including Communication Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety, students' Occupational Aspirations and English language attainment among 129 students studying in the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (IVE) in Hong Kong. Two high proficiency and two low proficiency students were interviewed. The results indicated that only Communication Apprehension related highly with Occupational Aspiration, while there were weak positive relationships among Occupational Aspiration, Test Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation. These were supported by the interviewees. The results imply that a certain degree of anxiety in fact enhances facilitating effects on language learning among IVE students, and teachers' pedagogical strategies and non-threatening classroom environment as well as workplace English can help students relieve or reduce anxiety and perform better in second language learning.

## 摘要

焦慮對語言學習或表現有負面影響。它亦被視為語言學習中重要的原素。有人認為焦慮只為語言學習者帶來不便，又或者是不參與課堂和沒有溫習的藉口。亦有人認為焦慮促進語言學習過程。語言學習者會克服焦慮達致成功。本文旨在以一百二十九名就讀香港專業教育學院學生為研究對象來分析三個焦慮因素(恐懼交際、擔憂負面評價及測驗恐懼)、學生之職業抱負和英語成績的關係。結果顯示，在三個焦慮因素中，只有恐懼交際和學生之職業抱負有正相關的關係，而其餘兩者則關係較為微弱。四名被訪者亦支持及解釋以上結果。這些結果亦提示，某種程度的焦慮其實對香港專業教育學院學生有著促進作用。老師的教學技巧、非緊張的學習環境以及職業英語等亦能幫助學生消除或減輕焦慮，使其在第二語言學習中發揮得更理想。