

MASTER'S THESIS

A study of language anxiety and motivational intensity in learning English as a second language in Hong Kong secondary school

Lau, Foon Kwan

Date of Award:
2004

[Link to publication](#)

General rights

Copyright and intellectual property rights for the publications made accessible in HKBU Scholars are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners. In addition to the restrictions prescribed by the Copyright Ordinance of Hong Kong, all users and readers must also observe the following terms of use:

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from HKBU Scholars for the purpose of private study or research
- Users cannot further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- To share publications in HKBU Scholars with others, users are welcome to freely distribute the permanent URL assigned to the publication

**A STUDY OF LANGUAGE ANXIETY AND MOTIVATIONAL
INTENSITY IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND
LANGUAGE IN HONG KONG SECONDARY SCHOOL**

**LAU FOON KWAN
STUDENT NO.02404362**

A Dissertation Submitted In Partial Fulfilment of The

MASTER OF ARTS IN LANGUAGE STUDIES

HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

MAY 2004

ABSTRACT

Language anxiety and motivation of learning are regarded as two important affective factors in determining the achievement of second language learning. High level of language anxiety has been recognized as an obstacle to a person's success in second language learning and has been found to correlate negatively with a person's low level of motivation to learn. This study aims at examining the relationship between the sources of language anxiety (communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation and general anxiety towards English) and the motivational intensity of English learning among 117 secondary schools students studying in two band two CMI secondary schools. The levels of sources of language anxiety are measured and compared with the level of motivational intensity of English learning. The results indicate that students have moderate levels of language anxiety and motivational intensity of English learning. Language anxiety and motivational intensity of English learning are moderately and negatively correlated. The results imply that language anxiety in fact weaken the motivational level of second language learners slightly. To deal with the learners' language anxiety, effective teaching strategies have to be adopted and non-threatening learning environment has to be provided to enhance effective learning of second language

摘要

語言學習焦慮及學習動機強度是影響第二語言學習成就的兩個重要的情感性因素。語言學習焦慮已被發現會對個體成功習得第二語言造成障礙，及與一個人的學習動機呈負向相關。本研究的目的是以 117 名就讀香港兩間以中文為教學媒介的第二組別中學學生為對象，探討語言學習焦慮(包括溝通恐懼、害怕負面評價、英語學習焦慮)及英語學習動機強度兩者的關係。各項語言學習焦慮及英語學習動機強度的水平都被加以量度，然後用作互相比較。研究結果顯示，學生有著中等程度的語言學習焦慮及英語學習動機強度；而語言學習焦慮及英語學習動機強度兩者則呈中等程度負向的關係。本研究的結果顯示語言學習焦慮可削弱第二語言學習者的動機強度水平，縱使其程度還算輕微。為了處理學習者的語言學習焦慮，我們實應該透過採用有效的教學策略及提供一個無威脅性的學習環境，以促進有效的第二語言學習。

Contents

Chapters

	Pages
1 Introduction	
1.1 Aims of the Study	1
1.2 Rationale of the Study	2
1.3 Hong Kong Context of the Research	5
1.4 Research Questions	7
2 Literature Review	
2.1 Language Anxiety	8
2.1.1 Conceptions of Anxiety and Language Anxiety	8
2.1.1.1 Anxiety	8
2.1.1.2 Language Anxiety	9
2.1.2 Measurements of Anxiety	10
2.1.3 Perspectives of Anxiety	11
2.1.4 Current Studies Related to Language Anxiety	12
2.1.4.1 Instruments of Measuring Language Anxiety	12
2.1.4.2 Language Anxiety and Language Proficiency	13
2.1.4.3 Language Anxiety and Attitude	14
2.1.5 The Development of Language Anxiety	15
2.1.6 Effects of Language Anxiety	16
2.1.6.1 Facilitating Anxiety and Debilitating Anxiety	16
2.1.6.2 Effects Related to Clinical Experience	18
2.1.7 Sources of Language Anxiety	19

2.1.7.1	Communication Apprehension	20
2.1.7.2	Test Anxiety	20
2.1.7.3	Fear of Negative Evaluation	21
2.2	Motivation of Second Language Learning	21
2.2.1	Definition	21
2.2.2	Different Orientations of Motivation in Second Language Learning	22
2.2.2.1	Intrinsic Motivation	22
2.2.2.2	Extrinsic Motivation	23
2.2.2.3	Integrative Orientation	23
2.2.2.4	Instrumental Orientation	24
2.2.2.5	Other Motivations	25
2.2.3	Motivational Intensity	26
2.2.4	Motivation and Second Language Proficiency	27
2.2.5	Current Studies of Motivation of Hong Kong Students	28
2.3	Interrelationship between Language Anxiety and Motivational Intensity	30
2.3.1	The Socio-educational Model of Second-language Learning	31
2.3.2	Concept of Self-Confidence of Clement's Model	31
3	Methodology	
3.1	Subjects	33
3.2	Instruments	34
3.2.1	Part A: Measuring Motivational Intensity	34
3.2.2	Part B: Measuring Language Anxiety	35
3.3	Procedure	36
3.4	Data Analysis	37

4	Result	
4.1	Response Rate	38
4.2	Overall Level of Language Anxiety	39
4.3	Language Anxiety in Different Areas	40
4.3.1	Communication Apprehension	40
4.3.2	Fear of Negative Evaluation	42
4.3.3	General Feeling of Anxiety toward English	44
4.4	Motivational Intensity	46
4.4.1	Student's Response on Motivational Intensity	47
4.5	Relationship between Language Anxiety and Motivational Intensity	50
5	Discussion and pedagogical implication	
5.1	Discussion of the result	55
5.1.1	Communication Apprehension	55
5.1.2	Fear of Negative Evaluation	58
5.1.3	General Feeling of Anxiety towards English	60
5.1.4	Motivational Intensity	62
5.1.5	Relationship between Language Anxiety and Motivational Intensity	63
5.2	Pedagogical Implication	67
6	Conclusion	75
	Reference	77
	Appendix -Questionnaire	81