

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY, ENGLISH  
LEARNING MOTIVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT  
OF AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT STUDENTS  
OF SAMARINDA STATE POLYTECHNIC OF  
AGRICULTURE**

**Budi Rachmadani, Dyah Sunggingwati, Iwan Setiawan**  
Politeknik Pertanian Negeri Samarinda, Universitas Mulawarman  
E-mail: budi.rdani@gmail.com

**Abstract**

Language anxiety and language motivation have been an important area for empirical research and theoretical work within the context of second and foreign language. Thus, exploring the relationship between language motivation and language anxiety and their combined effects on the EFL achievement will help language teachers and researchers to clarify the role of these two variables in language pedagogy. The present study aims at finding out the broad profiles of the students' foreign language anxiety and learning motivation and the relationship between foreign language anxiety and learning motivation. The correlational study was used to find out the relationship between variables. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and English Learning Motivation Scale (ELMS) were used to collect the required data. The students' achievement was represented by using the mid-test score. The result indicated that the participants have high level of English achievement (62.26) despite their low English learning motivation (40.08) and medium level of foreign language anxiety (47.25). The Pearson Product Moment Correlation shows that results from the correlation-based analysis demonstrated significant relationships among all variables.

*Keywords: foreign language anxiety, learning motivation, achievement*

## A. BACKGROUND

The implementation of English to be taught as a compulsory subject in Samarinda state polytechnic of agriculture is to ensure that the polytechnic graduates will be able to use and communicate in English once they start working. In attempt to enable students to master English, the institution offers English course in the first and second semester for both Diploma III (D3) and Diploma IV (D4) students. Each English course involves both theory and practice which lasts for 4-5 hours per week. The current situation reveals that during English course session, there were students who did not pay attention to teacher's explanation as well as engaged in the activities designed by the teacher. From this condition, it can be assumed that the students felt not interested in the lesson or have less motivation to learn. Many students struggle to express themselves in the language because outside the classroom, they have essentially little or no contact with the language. Then, students in majority find it is difficult to express themselves in grammatically correct English. In a separate occasion, several polytechnic graduates admitted that they had low self esteem due to poor communication skills and not being well versed in English while they joint job interview. Poor language proficiency was one of the causes that made the polytechnic graduates failed their job interview. In addition, poor language proficiency may also result in low achievement in English.

Regarding to crucial role of motivation and anxiety in second and foreign language acquisition and they are closely related to each other, studies were conducted to explore how these two factors interrelated. Liu and Huang (2011) did a study which involved 980 first-year-non-English majors from three universities in China. The data revealed that foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation were significantly negatively correlated and both variables correlated with students' performance in English. Similar study was conducted by Tsai and Chang (2013) in Taiwan and participated by 857 freshmen from a technical university. Results from the structural equation modeling indicated that English learning anxiety impacted English learning motivation in different ways depending on genders and majors. It is interesting to note that

English learning anxiety had little effect on English learning motivation for the different levels of language proficiency groups. The findings from previous studies show that language anxiety and language motivation have been an important area for empirical research and theoretical work within the context of second and foreign language. Both of these constructs have been found to be highly correlated to FL achievement. However, the results from previous studies are still inconclusive means that the results of the previous studies are not certain in one particular condition. Exploring the relationship between language motivation and language anxiety and their combined effects on the EFL achievement will help language teachers and researchers to clarify the role of these two variables in language pedagogy. The purpose of the present study is to accomplish such a task and examine the relationship between language anxiety and language motivation, and their effects on language achievement within a foreign context.

## **B. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The relationship between language motivation and language anxiety has been explored by many studies. Some researchers have found language anxiety is negatively associated with foreign language motivation (Gardner, Lalonde, Moorcroft, & Evers 1987; Hashimoto, 2002). However, anxiety as a secondary factor of foreign language self-confidence was related to self-confidence gained as a result of perceived communicative competence. Therefore, lack of anxiety is seen as a predictor of FL self-confidence found among motivated language learners.

Motivation has also been found to be a significant predictor of foreign language anxiety (Huang, 2005; Liu, 2010). Liu (2010) found that Taiwanese university freshmen in the advanced English proficiency level classes had significantly higher motivation than the other groups of students with lower proficiency levels over an entire academic year. Motivation was also shown to be negatively related to foreign language anxiety and served as a significant predictor of learner anxiety.

Liu (2012) examined the relationships between foreign language anxiety, learning motivation, autonomy, and language proficiency among first-year non-English major undergraduates, who were separated into various levels of English language classes based on their English proficiency. The findings indicated that more than half of the subjects' responses reflected different degrees of learner anxiety. In addition, it was noted that learning motivation, followed by listening proficiency, reading proficiency, and learner autonomy, had the highest correlation with foreign language anxiety; all the correlations were highly significant and negative. The results also indicated that both learner anxiety and autonomy contributed were significant predictors of language proficiency. On the other hand, motivation failed to contribute significantly in the regression model when learner autonomy was simultaneously included as a predictor variable. This result can be due to the high degree of correlation between learner autonomy and motivation.

An overview of the previous studies indicates that foreign language anxiety negatively affects the learners' performance (Soupon, 2004). In addition, Gardner (1985) observed high correlation between language anxiety and language proficiency. El-Banna (1989) found that there was a negative correlation between language anxiety and English proficiency and anxiety has been shown to negatively affect achievement in the second language learning (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

### **C. RESEARCH METHOD**

The total number of students from the two study programs was 157 students; the researcher took 26 students to participate in the try out and 131 students as the sample in this study.

The correlational design which was applied in this study is aimed at revealing the relationship between foreign language anxiety, motivation and English achievement. In order to reveal the relationship, there were two different set questionnaires that were used to gather the necessary data. The first was Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale designed by Horwitz and Cope (1986). This questionnaire was used to gather data related to students'

foreign language anxiety. The other set of questionnaire was the English Learning Motivation Scale (ELMS) developed by Li, Chuang and Fu (2006). With regards to the English achievement, the researcher used result from the mid-test. Having the appropriate design and instruments to gather the data, the researcher assumed that this study was conducted in order to answer the research questions.

The questionnaire administration was adopted to gather data related to students' foreign language anxiety and learning motivation. It was administered to D IV students Samarinda State Polytechnic of Agriculture at the scheduled time by the researcher and the sample. For each questionnaire, the sample was given 40 minutes to complete each of them. The next step was the researcher gave directions to the sample how to complete the FLCAS and ELMS questionnaires. The researcher also explained the parts of the questionnaires, the information background which consists of name, contact number, study program and class.

Data related to the mid-test score was gathered from the English lecturers who are in charge of teaching each class in Agricultural Management and Informatics Management study programs.

Data collected from FLCAS, ELMS and students' mid-test score was computed using SPSS version 20 to explore the broad profile of the students' foreign language anxiety and learning motivation.

The correlational analysis was applied to answer the second research question which aims at revealing the relationship between the students' foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation.

## **D. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. The Description of Students' Foreign Language Anxiety, English learning Motivation and English Achievement.**

For the purpose of statistical analyses and since the instruments use different scales therefore the results from students' responses on

FLCAS and ELMS questionnaire were converted in order to make interpretation of the results easier. In addition, students in this study were classified as having one of five levels of classifications. The level of classification is used for classifying the students' foreign language anxiety (FLA), English learning motivation (ELM) and English achievement (EM). Students with overall score between 0 – 20 were classified as *Very Low*. Students who got score between 21– 40 fell in the *Low* category. The next classification is *Medium* which classified the students' score from 41 – 60. Students whose score between 61 – 80 were assigned in *High* level and the last level is *Very High* for those who got score between 81 – 100.

**Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics of students' FLA, ELM and EA**

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev.
FLA	131	20.45	78.03	47.25	12.39
ELM	131	7.41	91.67	40.08	16.19
EA	131	28	96	62.26	13.95

As shown in table 4.1 above, the mean score of students' FLA is 47.25 (Medium) while the mean score for students' ELM is 40.08 (Low) and the students' EA is 62.26 (High). From this result, it can be assumed that the students have high level of English achievement despite their low English learning motivation and medium level of foreign language anxiety. Looking at the minimum and maximum scores of the students on each variable, it seems that those scores are seen as the two extremes (very low and very high). In order to have clearer description of the results on each variable, the following tables will present the percentage of the students' score based on the classifications mentioned above.

**Table 4.2 The Description of Students' Foreign Language Anxiety**

<i>FLA</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Interval</i>	<i>Category</i>		
80 < X ≤ 100	Very High-anxiety	0	0.00%

$60 < X \leq 80$	High-anxiety	18	13.74%
$40 < X \leq 60$	Medium-anxiety	73	55.73%
$20 < X \leq 40$	Low-anxiety	40	30.53%
$0 < X \leq 20$	Very Low-anxiety	0	0.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Foreign language anxiety becomes one of the extensively explored subjects in the area of language learning and teaching (Horwitz, 2001) as foreign language anxiety is viewed as a negative factor which should be avoided in all cost (Brown, 2000). For years, predominant discussion has been on whether anxiety affects language learning. In this regard, many have found a strong link between anxiety and foreign language learning (i.e., Bless and Fiedler, 2006; Horwitz, 2001; Yule, 2006).

In this study, it was found that majority of the students experienced a low to medium level of language learning anxiety. Around 40 students (30.53%) was in Low-anxiety category and 73 students (55.73%) was in Medium-anxiety category. Meanwhile, only 18 students was categorized in High-anxiety but no students were in the category very low and very high-anxiety (See Table 4.2). It can be assumed that eventhough English achievement was in high level, students of Samarinda State Polytechnics of Agriculture, feel slightly anxious while learning English,. These results support prior studies. As Kitano (2001) and Saito and Samimy (1996) argued, Japanese learners' level of anxiety increased as they gained proficiency whereas learners' of Spanish and French anxiety decreased as their language proficiency decreased (Frantzen & Magnan, 2005). According Horwitz and Young (1991) anxiety itself may occur slightly different from one context to another.

**Table 4.3 The Description of Students' English Learning Motivation**

<i>ELM</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Interval</i>	<i>Category</i>		
$80 < X \leq 100$	Very High-motivation	4	3.05%

$60 < X \leq 80$	High-motivation	13	9.92%
$40 < X \leq 60$	Medium-motivation	33	25.19%
$20 < X \leq 40$	Low-motivation	76	58.02%
$0 < X \leq 20$	Very Low-motivation	5	3.82%
<b>Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Motivation has been considered to be one of the most important factors of successful second and foreign language acquisition (Dornyei, 1994; Ho, 1998, Noels, Clement, & Pelletier, 1999; Noels, Pelletier, & Vallerand, 2000; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Lacking adequate motivation, students may not be able to pay attention to the teacher's instruction during the lesson, expend effort to finish assignments, regularly check their level of understanding, ask for help when needed, and keep in accomplishing their goals during the long and oftentimes difficult language learning process.

The descriptive results on the distribution of students' learning motivation based on the classifications confirms that more than half of the students in this study experienced low level of English learning motivation (61.84%) and only a small number of the students were motivated to learn English (12.97%). It can be assumed that the students of Samarinda State Polytechnics of Agriculture do not feel motivated in learning English ( See Table 4.3). According to the previous literature on learning motivation, a positive connections between motivation and academic performance such as Pintrich and Schunk (1996), there is a reciprocal relation between motivation and learning performance. Motivation can play a key role in influencing students' learning outcomes, while the students' learning outcomes may affect their subsequent motivation.

As an essential factor in teaching and learning process, students' achievement was used to measure the amount of academic content a student learns in a determined amount of time. Achievement refers to a process of acquiring knowledge or skills that are developed by subject matter and usually indicated by test scores or numerical value that is assigned by teachers (Chien, 1987 cited in Feng, Fan and Yang, 2013). Achievement projects the students' success in learning the subject matter, in this case it refers to the

successfulness of students majoring agricultural management at Samarinda state polytechnic of agriculture in learning English.

**Table 4.4 The Description of Students' English achievement**

<i>EA</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Interval</i>	<i>Category</i>		
$80 < X \leq 100$	Very High	5	3.82%
$60 < X \leq 80$	High	74	56.49%
$40 < X \leq 60$	Medium	38	29.01%
$20 < X \leq 40$	Low	14	10.69%
$0 < X \leq 20$	Very Low	0	0.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>131</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The students' English achievement of Samarinda State Polytechnics of Agriculture under the study describes that only 5 students (3.82%) were classified in very high level of English achievement. Around 14 students (10.69%) were in low-achievement level while 38 students (29.01%) in the medium level. More than half of the students, 74 of 131 (56.49%) were classified in high level of English achievement (See Table 4.4). It can be concluded that even the majority of the students have good scores of English learning but there were still a significant number of students were in medium to low level of achievement. Concerning this condition, the researcher assumes that the process of learning a foreign language is also affected by anxiety and motivation which more or less effects students' academic achievement. This assumption is lined up by numerous researchers who have shown that both motivation (Clement et al. 1994; Dornyei, 2001; Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993; Mehrpour and Vojdani, 2012) and anxiety (Horwitz et al, 1986; Liu, 2006; Liu and Jackson, 2008; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989) are significant factors in second and foreign language acquisition and affectivity. To sum up, It is believed that both motivation and anxiety play a vital part in English learning outcomes. As a result, various levels of foreign language learners' achievements might be influenced by motivation and anxiety in the process of learning foreign language.

## 2. The Relationship between Foreign Language Anxiety, Learning Motivation and English achievement of the Agricultural Management Students.

In order to gain fuller understanding of the relationships between foreign language anxiety, English learning motivation and English achievement Pearson correlations between the variables were calculated and the findings are reported in the next table

**Table 4.5. Pearson Correlations Between Foreign Language Anxiety, English Learning Motivation and English Achievement**

Variable	FLA	ELM	EA
FLA	-		
ELM	-0.258**	-	
EA	-0.534**	0.474**	-

*Note.* \*\*  $p < 0.01$

In order to acquire more comprehensive understanding, referring to one of the aims of this study that is shed more light on the link between foreign language anxiety, English learning motivation and English achievement, Pearson correlation between variables were analyzed and the findings of this study revealed significant relationship among all variables (See Table 4.5). English learning motivation had a significantly very weak negative association with English foreign language anxiety (-0.258) than English achievement did (-0.534). The degree of association between anxiety and language performance in the present study was similar to that (-0.38) obtained by Aida (1994) and (-0.400) obtained by Liu and Cheng (2014).

It is important that the correlation between anxiety and motivation (-0.258) was weaker than between achievement and motivation (0.474), conversely, the two correlation were in different direction, one negative and the other positive. It is in line with the theory of some researchers (Gardner et al., 1992; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Masgoret, Bernaus & Gardner, 2001; Schmidt et al., 1996; Yan & Horwitz, 2008) these two variables were showed to have significant impact on foreign language learning though their correlation were in opposite directions.

## E. CONCLUSION

The result of the study indicated that the majority of the Agricultural Management students experienced a mid to low level of language learning anxiety, the majority of the participants were in low level of English learning motivation and the results from the correlation-based analysis demonstrated significant relationships among all variables. Foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation were significantly negatively correlated with each other. For example, a more anxious participants tended to be less motivated but more motivated by language requirement. Both foreign language anxiety and English learning motivation were significantly correlated with students' performance in English.

Concerning the result of the research above, several suggestions can be recommended to both teachers and students in order to decrease learners' anxiety and increase their learning motivation, as follows: teachers should be aware of students' language proficiency levels when they adopt the learning materials and activities, encourage students by using positive feedback instead of negative comments, create a relaxed and cooperative learning environment, where students will be more freely participating themselves actively, while students are expected to decrease their anxiety, increase their motivation and self-confidence while learning English by involving themselves actively in the class.

Finally, since the investigation on foreign language anxiety and learning motivation in this present research may still lacks of information, the researcher suggests for future research to develop the investigation on foreign language anxiety and learning motivation could be developed by involving the interview of the participants to know deeper understanding about their perspectives and their strategies to cope with the problems.

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