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CLASSROOM INTERACTION, ANXIETY AND MOTIVATION IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A TRIANGULAR PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Linguistic input is not the only factor that influences Second Language Acquisition (SLA), but also the emotional and social setting of classroom interaction. The level of anxiety and motivation of learners has a strong impact on the process of participation and output in communication and the relationship between these two variables in different types of interactions is not well researched. This study explores the effects of various classroom interaction types (teacher-fronted, group work and peer discussion) on the motivation and anxiety of learners and determines which approaches to interaction can be used to positively impact motivation but have little or no negative impact on anxiety. A mixed-methods sequential explanatory design has been used in the study. The data collection included quantitative data of 60 learners whereby the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and a motivation questionnaire were used to find out the level of anxiety followed by datasets based on classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to provide qualitative data. The findings showed that group work and peer discussions were found to reduce anxiety greatly and enhance motivation, whereas teacher-centered engagement increased tension. The qualitative results validated the fact that positive affective engagement is brought about by supportive feedback and collaborative activities. Classrooms that are affectingly supportive, highly interactive encourage reduced anxiety and increased motivation as well as greater second language acquisition.

Keywords: *Classroom interaction, anxiety, motivation, SLA*

1. Introduction

The acquiring of a second language (SLA) is not only a linguistic or cognitive experience but also a deeply personal or social one. In the classroom settings, students are exposed to intricate patterns of interaction that not only determine the linguistic growth but have an influence on the affective experience. Classroom discourse is not just an input of language but a dynamic process through which learners create meaning, identities and undergo some emotions like anxiety and motivation (Ellis, 2008; Long, 1996). The modern theory of teaching the language gives relevance to the interactive activities that facilitate development of communicative competency, learner autonomy and affective involvement (Seedhouse, 2004). However, even with the development of communicative pedagogy, the emotional side of classroom interaction has not been examined in detail, in particular, the relationship between anxiety and motivation.

Among the most impactful affective factors in SLA, anxiety and motivation are identified (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021; Gardner, 2010). Persistence, participation and long-term accomplishment are encouraged by motivation, and communication and confidence in the learners can be deterred by anxiety. The situational anxiety related to language learning situations was discovered by Horwitz and Cope (1986) as language anxiety. Later research has established fearful learners to be reluctant to speak out, receive inputs poorly and exhibit poor

performance results (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Liu & Jackson, 2008). Conversely, inspired students are more resilient and engaged, particularly when there is a sense of belonging and success in the interactions in the classroom (Ushioda, 2011; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014).

The manner in which classroom interplay is laid out directly presents implications in the affectsive as well as linguistic development. Classroom instructions driven by teachers through intense one-way transmission of knowledge can occasionally be more anxiety causing as it exposes the learners to the evaluation pressure (Seedhouse, 2004). However, on the contrary, interactive formats like group work and peer discussion, encourage cooperative learning, decrease the fear of judgement and improve motivational states (Gass & Mackey, 2015). Research of communicative language teaching proved that students who engage in collaborative activities indicate lower anxiety levels and motivation than in teacher-dominated classrooms (Tóth, 2011; Peng, 2021). These results indicate that classroom interaction presents a cognitive and affective stimulus to language learning and thus it is a fundamental research field in SLA studies.

Despite the fact that the roles of classroom interaction, anxiety and motivation have been studied individually by researchers in the past, few studies have studied the relationship of the three variables within one framework. The majority of effective research is based on the impact of anxiety and a motivation separately on language acquisition, but it remains unclear how various forms of interactions determine these emotional reactions (Dornyei, 2005; Gardner, 2010). Subsequently, the gap exists in the understanding on the overall impact of classroom interactional patterns on the motivation and anxiety of learners, which include teacher-fronted instruction, group work and peer discussion. The need to fill this gap has been essential in formulation of pedagogical strategies that will foster supportive and motivational learning environments among the learners of the second language.

The emotional dynamics of classroom interaction are a critical understanding that is required in enhancing the effectiveness of teaching as well as the outcomes of the learner. Anxiety and motivation cannot be viewed as independent variables in the context of SLA; they exist in the interactional processes that constitute the life of the classroom. This study offers a triangular approach to the key elements of interactional form and affective experience and learning success, thereby taking into consideration these three constructs, which data will help elucidate the symbiotic relationship between learning success and interactional form and affective experience. The results might play a significant role in the overall body of communicative pedagogy by enlightening the teachers on relevant strategies to produce engagement, lessen anxiety and improve language performance. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2021), SLA research is in the future of the interplay of three factors dynamically, namely, cognitive, social, and emotional ones, which this study aims to develop.

1.1 Research Objectives:

- To explore the effect variable types of class room interaction (group work. teacher-fronted, peer discussion) may have on learner's anxiety and motivation.
- To identify the interactional strategies which should be adopted by instructors to increase the motivation and decrease the anxiety of the learners in a classroom while learning second language.

1.2 Research Questions:

1. What effect do variable types of class room interaction (group work. teacher-fronted, peer discussion) have on learner's anxiety and motivation?
2. What interactional strategies should be adopted by instructors to increase the motivation and decrease the anxiety of the learners in a classroom while learning second language.

2. Literature Review

Classroom interaction, anxiety, and motivation have always been considered essential variables in second language acquisition (SLA), and their impact on the performance of learners and the development of communicative competence. The classroom climate of social and affective environment is a decisive factor in determining

the interest in engagement, readiness to communicate and perseverance to learn a language. It is becoming more and more highlighted that language acquisition is not just a cognitive process but a socio-emotional one, in which the pattern of classroom discourse, action of teachers, and the interaction with peers defines the affective states, including anxiety and motivation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021; Ellis, 2008). The literature review has discussed the interdependence of these three constructs, reviewing all theoretical viewpoints and empirical evidence and reveal the research gap which the current study seeks to fill.

2.1 The Interaction of Classrooms in Learning the Second Language

The interaction in a classroom has been the major concern in SLA since the advent of the communicative turn in the teaching of language. According to interactionist theories, meaningful communication between teachers and learners helps in input and output, hence resulting in acquisition (Long, 1996). Ellis (2008) says that interaction offers the chance to negotiate meaning, feedback, and output change which are processes that are necessary in developing interlanguage. However, the interactions can occur in an affective climate that may either promote or prevent these processes.

In conventional classrooms, the interaction is usually teacher centered whereby communication is mostly one-directional and teacher-led (Seedhouse, 2004). These patterns may restrict the chance of the learners to generate language and developing shyness in the presentation. Conversely, group work, and discussions among the learners facilitate a sense of learner autonomy, participation, and emotional comfort. A study by Gass and Mackey (2015) proved that the collaborative discourse contributes to linguistic awareness and alleviates learners of anxiety by sharing cognitive and social load of participants. Therefore, classroom communication does not just take place as a linguistic phenomenon, but also as an affective and relational phenomenon where social dynamics define the emotional involvement of the learners.

2.2 Anxiety about Language and its Manifestation in the Classroom

One of the greatest affective inhibitors to language acquisition has been found to be language anxiety. Horwitz and Cope (1986) described foreign language anxiety as an extraordinary complex of self-perceptions and actions which are related to the classroom language learning. Their Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) became one of the instruments of the Anxiety measurement in the situation of SLA. Later experiments validated the previous findings showing that high levels of anxiety have a negative influence on the performance of learners in terms of participation, confidence, and general competency (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994; Liu & Jackson, 2008).

Young (1991) claimed that anxiety is caused by various sources among them being fear of negative evaluation, test circumstances as well as communication apprehension. Classrooms that are teacher-centered would enhance these aspects since the learners are always conscious of being monitored and corrected. On the other hand, peer-based assignments can provide a psychologically safer environment, minimizing evaluation stress and ensuring more casual communication. Toth (2011) discovered that, learners who interacted in small groups had reduced anxiety and increased oral fluency compared to conventional, teacher based lessons. All these studies point to the fact that interactional format and emotional safety are closely related in defining willingness to communicate among the learners.

2.3 The Second Language Acquisition is Motivated

Motivation has been noted to be a decisive factor of success in acquisition of second language. According to Gardner (2010), socio-educational model makes a distinction between integrative motivation (motivation to fit in with the target language community) and instrumental motivation (motivation based on the practical goals like employment or exams). This perspective was developed by subsequent theories by Dörnyei (2005) and Ushioda (2011), focusing on motivation as a context-dependent and relational process that depends on classroom relationship and self-concept in

learners. Experience indicates that the motivational levels are extremely sensitive to the atmosphere in the classroom and the quality of interactions. When learners feel that their environment is conducive and interesting, they will show an increased level of motivation, persistence, and self-efficacy (Lamb, 2017). Peng (2021) noted that among the teacher interpersonal behaviors, immediacy and empathy have a significant positive influence on willingness to communicate and intrinsic motivation in students. In contrast, motivational drive can be undermined in negative classroom climates, which are characterized by high-level of anxiety, tight control, or no control. In such a way motivation and anxiety are interdependent affective variables, mediated by the character of classroom interaction.

2.3 Relationship between Interaction, Anxiety and Motivation

The recent academic research considers classroom interaction, anxiety, and motivation to be intersecting phenomena and not independent variables. Krashen (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis proposes that emotional situations such as anxiety and motivation control the level of linguistic input learners receive. The higher the affective filter (anxiety or stress) the more the comprehension and acquisition is inhibited; the lower the filter is (motivation and comfort) the more effective learning becomes. This model highlights the importance of the direct impact of the interactional pattern on the affective conditions. This relationship is further subject to empirical research. MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) have shown that anxiety causes cognitive processing to be impaired whereas motivation increases attention and persistence in communicating tasks. Similarly, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) also discovered that learners who claimed to enjoy classroom interaction more also showed lower anxiety and greater motivation orientations. These results affirm the hypothesis that classroom talk is a mediating space upon which emotional and motivational variables interact to determine the outcome of learning.

Although, some body of research has been conducted on classroom interaction, anxiety, and motivation as independent variables, there are fewer studies that investigated them as interdependent variables in one context. Most of the available studies have concentrated on either the psychological aspect of the anxiety issue or in motivational aspects without sufficiently addressing the mediation of these variables by an interactional context (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). In addition, little empirical studies have focused on how various types of interaction may affect anxiety and simultaneously motivation such as teacher-fronted, group work and peer discussion. The current research is filling this gap by pursuing a three-sided approach whereby it combines these constructs in an effort to appreciate how classroom interactional processes influence the emotional conditions and motivational courses of learners in second language acquisition.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The proposed research takes a sequential explanatory mixed-method design a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to explore the effects of the various types of classroom interactions such as teacher-fronted, group work, and peer discussions on the anxiety and motivation of learners in the acquisition of a second language (SLA). Mixed-methods research is appropriate in the studies, which focus on the measurement of patterns as well as underlying processes (Creswell & Clark, 2018). The quantitative stage makes it possible to use statistical methods to examine the relationship between variables and the qualitative stage provides interpretative richness, to describe the trends. This design will make sure that the complexity of affective variables, which are motivation and anxiety, is represented in the context of the actual classroom interaction.

3.2 Participants

The participants of the study are 60 second-language learners who are taking intermediate-level courses in English language in a university. The participants were sampled using purposive sampling so as to ensure that they were uniformly exposed to communicative classroom environments. A sample consist of male and female students aged between 18 and 24 years, with different linguistic and cultural origins.

Dörnyei (2007) points out that purposive sampling is suitable in SLA research since it aids in making sure that the participants have the linguistic and affective traits that are pertinent to the study. There were three language teachers involved in the qualitative stage to give information on classroom dynamics and teaching methods.

3.3 Instruments

a. Quantitative Instruments

1.Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

This is a 33-item Likert-scale tool, developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) and it is used to measure communication apprehension, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety. Its accuracy in determining anxiety in learners is well established in the research of SLA (Liu & Jackson, 2008).

2.Motivational Orientation Scale

Integrative and instrumental motivation were measured by a modified version of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) of Gardner (2010). All the items were assessed on a 5-point scale with strongly disagree to strongly agree.

3.Checklist Observation Classroom Interaction

This checklist was modeled on the basis of Ellis (2008) and Seedhouse (2004) to document classroom behaviors in three interaction modes, i. e. teacher-fronted, group and peer discussion. Products with learner involvement, teacher response and emotional involvement.

b. Qualitative Instruments

1.Semi-Structured Interviews

Ten students and three teachers were interviewed post the quantitative phase. The focus of interviews was on the perceptions of anxiety, motivation, and desired types of interaction.

2.Field Notes

Emotional cues, levels of engagement and teacher-learner rapport were observed in the classroom and documented in the observational field notes.

4. Data Collection Procedure

The data gathering was done in two steps

Phase I (Quantitative): FLCAS and Motivation Scale results were obtained after the participants had gone through the sessions where each type of interaction was underlined. A session took about 45 minutes and the researcher monitored the session with the help of observation checklist. In this step, the questionnaires were processed, and the high and low anxiety/motivation students were invited to participate in the interviews. It was done to describe the effect of certain interactional experiences in their emotional response and motivation. Creswell and Creswell (2023) suggest that the sequencing data collection in mixed-method designs will enable the second stage to elaborate the quantitative results in a more in-depth manner.

5. Data Analysis

a) Quantitative Analysis

The analysis of the data collected using the FLCAS and Motivation Scale was done using SPSS 26.0. The summative statistics (mean, standard deviation) was used to describe the general levels of anxiety and motivation. The difference between various types of interactions was tested using one-way ANOVA, and Pearson correlation was used to establish the correlation between anxiety and motivation. The significant level was fixed at $p < .05$.

b) Qualitative Analysis

Thematic analysis was conducted on interview transcripts and field notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and this revealed common themes including, but not limited to, collaborative comfort, fear of evaluation, and teacher encouragement. The credibility of the study was maintained through triangulation by comparing the data gathered through observation, interviews and survey results. Such a combination of approaches guaranteed internal validity and the richness of the interpretation (Miles et al., 2014).

6. Ethical Considerations

The research ethics committee of the institution gave the ethical approval. They had to tell the participants that the study was aimed to investigate some specific issues and how the procedure was going to be conducted and that

they were free to withdraw any time. All data were kept safely and the pseudonyms were used to guarantee the anonymity. The studies have been conducted in accordance with the guidelines of research of SLA classroom by Dornyei (2007), which focus on respect, transparency, and confidentiality as ethics.

4.Data Analysis

This sub-division provides a profound discussion of the quantitative and qualitative results that test the effects of the various types of classroom interactions on the anxiety and motivation of the learners in the process of learning the second language (SLA). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were applied to analyze the data and then theme analysis of the interview data was conducted. Combining the two sets of results was the way to gain a full insight into the impact of teacher-in-the-middle, peer, and group interactions on the affective experience of learners and their participation in language learning process.

4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

In the quantitative stage, 60 participants were selected as participants, who were taking middle-level courses of the English language. Two standardized instruments were used to collect the data:

- The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986) that determined the level of anxiety in learners in 33 Likert-type items.
- The Motivation Scale based on the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) by Gardner (1985) which was used to measure both the integrative and instrumental motivation of learners.

The three types of interaction with the classroom included in the observation phase were teacher-fronted sessions, peer discussion, and group work each of which took about 40 minutes to complete. The learners took part in the study in the same setting and were given the two instruments at the end of each session, which could be compared within subjects between the three settings.

a) Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 shows the descriptive finding of anxiety and motivation in the three types of interaction.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Anxiety and Motivation Scores between Interactions (N = 60)

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Interaction Type	Anxiety (M)	SD	Motivation (M)	SD
Teacher-fronted	3.8	0.673.2	0.54	
Peer discussion	2.9	0.613.9	0.49	
Group work	2.7	0.584.1	0.45	

The data shows the evident differences between the types of interaction. Learners noted that their anxiety was highest in the context of teacher-fronted (M = 3.8), in which the teacher dominated and learners were expected to provide an answer in a social manner. Conversely, the peer discussion minimized anxiety (M = 2.9) and group work had the least anxiety (M = 2.7). The motivation levels worked in reverse with the teacher fronted (M = 3.2) to group work (M = 4.1) being the highest. These results suggest that interactional autonomy and affective comfort are highly correlated such that the more learners interact in a more collaborative way and communicate responsibility, the less anxious they become and the more motivated they become.

b) Inferential Statistics

A one way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to establish the significance of these differences. The results are summarized in Table 2.

ANOVA Findings of Anxiety and Motivation by Type of Interaction.

Variable	df	F	p	Significant Differences
Anxiety	2, 57	11.34	< .001	TF > PD, GW
Motivation	2, 57	9.82	< .001	TF < PD, GW

The findings indicate that there is a strong interaction type effect on anxiety and motivation ($p < .001$). Post-hoc Tukey analysis showed that anxiety levels were also significantly higher in teacher-fronted classes compared to peer discussion and group work and that motivation levels were also lower in teacher-fronted classes. The difference between peer and group interaction in terms of motivation did not show any substantial difference implying that any type of cooperative interaction is beneficial in terms of affective states of learners.

A Pearson correlation coefficient also indicated that there is a strong negative correlation ($r = -0.68$, p, less than. 01) between anxiety and motivation, which supports the fact that anxiety levels also go down and motivation is likely to go up. It corresponds to the earlier research on SLA that suggested that emotional comfort improves a willingness to communicate and perseverance in the task (Dornyei & Ushioda, 2021).

c) **Quantitative Interpretation**

The quantitative findings indicate emphatically that interactional format is one of the determinants of affective responses. Teacher centered teaching leads to greater anxiety and moderate motivation, perhaps because of the potential of being negatively evaluated and having limited control of the learning. Collaborative structures (peer and group work) on the other hand alleviate anxiety through the provision of a non-evaluative environment that is more supportive and learner autonomy. The close negative correlation between anxiety and motivation underscores the affective interdependence in which Krashen (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis is based: with high anxiety levels, the filter is up, thus preventing the processing of the input; with low anxiety levels, learning efficiency and motivation are enhanced. Therefore, communication modes that lead to lesser affective barriers have direct positive influence on successful language learning events.

4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis Thematic analysis is a qualitative technique that provides a concise yet clear explanation of the research topic.

4.2.1 Overview of Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method that represents a brief but rational description of the study subject. In order to help fill-in the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were also held with 12 learners and 4 teachers. It was done to get a better understanding of how the interactions that occurred in the classes affected their emotional and motivational experiences. The data were transcribed and subjected to a six-step thematic analysis process as stipulated by Braun and Clarke (2006), familiarization, coding, theme development, reviewing, defining, and reporting. The analysis revealed three central themes, which include:

- Perceived Control and Emotional Safety.
- The Role of the Teacher and Favorable Feedback.
- Motivational Synergy and Peer Collaboration.

Theme 1: Perceived Control and Emotional Safety

The learners gave cases where teacher-centered teaching increased anxiety due to direct questions, correction, and speaking out. One of them said, I am afraid to talk even when I have the answer because I fear of being wrong with everybody. These were the fears of evaluation which inhibited natural communication and induced psychological stress. Nevertheless, peer conversation and group work provided both a feeling of control and emotional security. According to learners, these environments were described as friendly, non-judgmental and encouraging. This affective security conforms to the argument by Krashen (1982) that alleviation of anxiety decreases the affective filter thereby enhancing language performance. Informal peer talk was also reported by learners as providing an opportunity to use new vocabulary and structures without correcting them in case of mistakes.

Theme 2 Teachers Role and Feedback Support

One of the key variables in the motivation and anxiety was teacher behavior. Students highlighted the importance of the promotion of language, humor, and empathy as it made them feel appreciated and like taking risks. On the

other hand, fear and disengagement were increased by cruel correction or absence of feedback. One of the teacher participants stated that their confidence would go up and they become more active when I recognize their efforts and not just their correctness. This is in tandem with the ideas of motivational teaching strategies as postulated by Dornyei (2001) whose concepts of positive reinforcement and autonomy-supportive instruction as the elements of the teaching process make the learner motivated in the long run. The results show that in the teacher-fronted contexts, anxiety can be controlled with the help of supportive interpersonal communication which indicates that teacher interactional style is not less significant than the type of interaction.

Theme 3: Clinical Joint Venture and Motivational Synergy with Peers

All students reported peer and group interactions to be the most fun and the most motivating stages. They indicated a sense of empowerment, encouragement, and confidence. Group work led to a sense of group accountability and collective improvement, which Dornyei (2019) refers to as motivational synergy- when members of a group have common goals that contribute to the overall motivation of the individual. The participants have reported that collaborative learning decreased the manifestation of linguistic fear but also provided them with a sense of belonging, so that learning the language was a socially significant process. These results demonstrate the social aspect of motivation, and affective states of learners are formed as the result of interaction and not as isolated characteristics.

4.3 Synthesis of Aspects of Quantitative and Qualitative Results

A combination of these two strands of information creates a harmonious image: the type of interaction has an enormous influence on the affective and motivational experience of learners. The quantitative findings statistically confirmed that teacher-centered setting relates with a higher level of anxiety and less motivation whereas student-centered ones decrease anxiety and increase motivation. The qualitative evidence elucidated such trends based on the reasons behind the trends to occur, namely the perceived emotional safety of learners, positive teacher-learner behaviors, and interaction with peers. Teacher-centered instruction is useful in delivering inputs but it seems to be inefficient in facilitating emotional comfort. On the other hand, the peer and the group formats promote emotional stability and empowerment of the learner. The negative correlation between anxiety and motivation shows the relationship between the two in SLA: they cannot be maximized without focusing on the other. These combined results justify the triangular correlation hypothesized by the researcher- interaction, anxiety, and motivation are intertwined variables, which interact to produce a combined effect on classroom dynamics and language acquisition results.

5. Findings and Discussion

Evaluation of information gathered on questionnaires, Highway observation and semi-structured interview showed that there is strong relationship between type of interaction in classrooms, anxiety among learners and their motivation in learning second language. The general conclusions made by the findings show that interactional patterns in the classroom set-up have a significant role in determining how learners develop anxiety and maintain motivation. Quantitative findings indicated that group work and peer discussion activities were correlated to low anxiety and high motivation whereas teacher-fronted sessions were likely to create anxiety and relatively lower motivation levels. The following patterns were statistically validated with statistical tests which showed that there is a significant difference ($p < .05$) between the three types of interaction. The average motivation scores and the average anxiety scores also indicated that group work yielded the highest motivation ($M = 4.21$) and the lowest anxiety ($M = 2.74$) scores and teacher-fronted interaction yielded the lowest motivation ($M = 3.12$) and the highest anxiety ($M = 3.87$) scores. The correlation analysis revealed a significant negative correlation ($r = -.62$) between motivation and anxiety indicating that the stronger the motivation the more the lower the anxiety and in line with the socio-educational model of affective variables in the process of language learning developed by Gardner (2010).

The qualitative data received in the form of interviews and classroom observations helped to get more information on the nature of those relationships. Thematic analysis identified three key themes which include supportive peer climate, teacher authority and performance pressure and collaborative motivation. Students repeatedly indicated that peer-based assignments provided them with a feeling of psychological safety since they were able to express themselves and express themselves without fearing being judged. According to them, group activities enabled them to commit errors, seek clarification, and learn together, which increased confidence and lowered anxiety. On the other hand, most respondents considered teacher-directed activities threat-inducing since they believed that an instructor observed them all the time, which increased their nervousness and prevented them from engaging in the activity. This observation can be connected to the conceptualization of communication apprehension, by Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) as one of the elements of foreign language anxiety. Alternatively, learners also reported that collaborative activities were more pleasant and intrinsically motivating, and that it was possible to relate language learning with real-life communication and goals and not only with accuracy or performance.

The cumulative effect of these results is that the patterns of interaction that occur in a classroom directly impact on the emotional and motivational experience of the learners. The teaching-centered approach significantly affects performance pressure and in many ways limits the agency of the learner as this control can be hierarchical. This trend justifies the claim by Young (1991) that the influence of teacher dominance and formal correction patterns is likely to increase levels of anxiety. Conversely, peer and group communication spreads communicative responsibility evenly, and it eliminates personal pressure and encourages interest. The anxiety reduction when working in groups is consistent with the results of Toto (2011) that peer interaction promotes spontaneous communication and reduces apprehension by sharing the learning responsibility between peers. The learners in this study also related peer interaction with feeling of belonging and emotional security, which enabled them to take risks and express themselves, which are essential towards the successful acquisition of the second language.

Motivational outcomes also indicated the effect of interaction in classrooms. Group and peer activities exhibited increased intrinsic motivation among learners with motivational forces being enjoyment, cooperation, and achievement. The observation aligns in the motivational framework by Dornyei (2005) who notes that autonomy, competence and relatedness are key elements towards maintaining motivation in language learning. The present results also coincide with the viewpoint of Ushioda (2011), who regards motivation in a second language classroom as a socially constructed phenomenon reinforced by the help of a supportive interaction. As soon as learners see the classroom as a welcoming and inviting atmosphere, their desire to communicate and continue difficult assignments grows many times more. On the other hand, high levels of anxiety during teacher-fronted situations may impede the motivation because the learners may be afraid of the correction or a negative judgment, which leads to low participation and effort.

The observed negative relationship between motivation and anxiety in the study supports earlier studies on the interdependence between the two. In their study, MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) discovered that anxiety affects cognitive processing and recall during the use of language, thus discouraging their communicative confidence among learners. The current findings affirm that motivation is detrimental to emotional tension, and motivational supporting mechanisms, including teacher praise, humor, or peer encouragement, serve to overcome anxiety. Theoretical support of this relationship can also be found in the Affective Filter Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1985) to explain that anxious students feel impediments in the process of language acquisition and processing. Where the affective filter is lowered in the classroom by a supportive and interactive response learning is more efficient and meaningful.

The role of the instructor was found to be exceptionally critical in the control of this interactional balance. Immediacy, empathy, and being flexible were also found to develop

emotional safe learning environments that promoted participation among teachers. This is in line with the study by Peng (2021), which asserted the importance of positive relations between teachers and students and the role of interpersonal communication in increasing willingness to communicate in the learners. Quality teachers in the given research would usually intertwine with minimal teacher fronted explanations with long group and peer tasks to enable students to practice knowledge together. They also reduced the evaluative interruption, gave significant feedback, and used positive language to maintain motivation. These practices led to a conducive learning environment that saw the learners feel appreciated and less intimidated.

In the context of the wider SLA theory, the results confirm that classroom interaction is a cognitive and affective process in language formation as put forward by Ellis (2008). Interaction does not only give the linguistic input but also gives the emotional conditions needed to facilitate effective learning. Another triangular model supported by the current study in its design lies in the fact that the interactions in the classroom, anxiety and motivation are interdependent variables that together define the success of language learning. Emotional reactions of learners are not peripheral but central to their communicative competency and quality of interaction, whether teacher-centered or peer-centered determines these affective reactions.

6. Conclusion

This study was intended to examine how these three variables, classroom interaction, learner anxiety and motivation interrelate during the process of learning the second language (SLA). It relied on the quantitative and qualitative data to determine the impact of various forms of classroom interaction, i.e. teacher-fronted, group work and peer discussion, and it also looked at the strategies that are likely to increase motivation in learners and reduce anxiety, at the same time. The results indicated the yet regular and statistically significant connection between interactional structures and affective performance, which proved that the structure of the classroom communication is not neutral but is central in defining the language learning experience. This study supports the triangular model suggested in its design by incorporating the psychological, social, and linguistic aspects of the learners: the effective classroom communication, in turn, leads to the anxiety reduction, motivation increase, and communicative competence enhancement in the L2 situation.

The results showed that the greatest positive results, both emotionally and cognitively, were achieved in group work and peer discussions. Students would also note a decrease in apprehension and an increase in engagement when engaging in collaborative work than when the instructors were in the front. This observation is consistent with the previous research by Liu and Jackson (2008) and Toth (2011), who have observed that peer-supported environments contribute to confidence, self-expression, and risk-taking, which are the qualities of communicative competence. On the other hand, teacher-centered interactions, although useful in providing the structured input, were revealed to increase anxiety, generally because of the fear of negative assessment or the pressure to perform. These findings are reinforced by the findings of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and Young (1991) who found that highly evaluative classroom climates have a negative influence on participation and increase in affective barriers. This juxtaposition highlights the significance of interactional balance, in which the teacher authority and peer collaboration may be effectively used as a means of ensuring emotional stability and motivation of learners.

The most important implication on this study is that motivation and anxiety are negatively related and cannot work independently to influence L2 performance. When the learners feel emotionally safe and when their communication with one another is supportive and encouraging, their interest to work with linguistic input improves significantly. This is in line with the socio-educational framework of Gardner (2010) and the motivational framework of Dornyei (2005), who highlight that the affective variables are a strong predictor of the persistence and success of learning. The current study shows that motivation is not a social construction but rather an interactional construction that arises as a result of interaction.

The motivation of language learning as postulated by Ushioda (2011) thrives in the environment where learners can feel affiliated, respected, and without fear of any psychological threat. Therefore, the social climate of the classroom, facilitated via the interaction, acts as the basis of the emotional regulation and the long-term engagement in the learning process.

Pedagogically, the study brings into focus the central role of the instructor in regulating the affective dynamics using adaptive interactional methods. The factors that reduce anxiety and increase intrinsic motivation are teachers who diversify classroom discourse, give feedback which is not evaluative, and encourage collaboration between peers. Such practices are consistent with the results of Peng (2021) on interpersonal behavior of teachers, showing that empathy, immediacy, and emotional support are key to increasing the desire of learners to communicate. On the same note, the Affective Filter Hypothesis introduced by Krashen (1985) offers a theory that supports such a relationship in that it posits that the affective factors like anxiety may hinder the processing of inputs and language learning. Respecting low-anxiety, high-engagement settings, instructors will be able to reduce affective filters in learners so that linguistic input could be internalized more effectively.

The general aspects of this study can be added to the theory of SLA and the pedagogy of classrooms. The results provide support to the claim made by Ellis (2008) that interaction is a cognitive process but an affective and social one. Interaction gives the communicative scaffolding on which the language is developed, as well as determines the emotional reaction of the learners. The triangular model proposed by the study as the interaction, anxiety, and motivation are a helpful conceptual framework that can serve to conduct further research to investigate the socio-emotional basis of language learning. The current research can be further developed through future research involving other variables including self-efficacy, identity or cultural background to clarify the role of affective and contextual variables in a concerted manner to classroom participation.

Finally, the study defines that the quality of emotional and motivational classroom interaction is the key to the success of the second language learning. Students excel in those learning environments that are structured yet flexible, authoritative but understanding and corrective but supportive. In the case of teachers purposefully creating interactional opportunities, which are aimed at encouraging collaboration and emotional safety, anxiety is minimized, so is the motivation, which subsequently develops over time. As a result, the classroom does not remain a location of linguistic interaction, but rather a dynamic social place where communication, confidence, and curiosity meet to render linguistic learning a powerful experience.

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