The relationship between language learning anxiety and language learning motivation among Iranian intermediate EFL learners

Elaheh Tahernezhad, Fatemeh Behjat, Ali Asghar Kargar

English Department, Abadeh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadeh, Iran

Email address:

fb_304@yahoo.com (F. Behjat), Kargar928@gmail.com (A. A. Kargar)

Abstract: The present study was an attempt to investigate the degree of anxiety among Iranian intermediate EFL learners and its relation to their motivation. To this end, a total number of 80 EFL learners (35 males and 45 females) were selected through cluster random sampling from two language classes at Islamic Azad University, Sardasht Branch, Hormozgan Province, Iran as the participants in this study. The instruments used to collect the data from the participants were the Foreign Language Learning Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The results indicated that the majority of the participants experienced a mid to high level of language learning anxiety. Besides, it was found that the participants with lower levels of the language learning anxiety were more motivated to learn English while those with higher levels of the language learning anxiety were less motivated to learn English. However, there was no significant difference between the anxiety level of male and female participants. Similarly, there was no significant difference between the motivation level of male and female participants in this study. Finally, the findings indicated that there was no significant difference between the male and female participants concerning their language learning anxiety and motivation to learn English, indicating that gender did not play a determining role in these two variables.

Keywords: Language Learning Anxiety, Language Learning Motivation, EFL Learners

1. Introduction

It is well established that second/foreign language learning is often associated with affective factors, among which the constructs of anxiety and motivation have been recognized as important predictors of second/foreign language performance. Anxiety is defined as a state of uneasiness and apprehension or fear caused by the anticipation of something threatening (Chastain, 1988).

Many researchers believe language anxiety influences language learning. Whereas facilitating anxiety exerts positive effects on learners' performance, too much anxiety may cause a poor performance (Scovels, 1991). Some of symptoms of anxiety are shown physically as we may feel our heart beating faster and psychologically as we may feel frightened or panicky. We start to have anxious thoughts about the very real possibility of making a complete fool of ourselves and the consequent loss of face as a consequence of this type of anxiety. Nobody likes to be thought of as a failure.

But the real problem with anxiety is that in order to avoid feelings of discomfort, feeling frightened or a sense of failure, we may choose to avoid situations which have the potential to make us discomfort. But the result of avoidance is the gradual loss of our self-esteem (Horwitz, Horwitz& Cope, 1986). Anxiety has been regarded as one of the most important affective factors that can influence second language acquisition. Much research has been conducted to find the relationship between anxiety and achievement in the learning of different foreign languages. Such research has revealed that anxiety can impede foreign language production and achievement (e.g., Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986; MacIntyre& Gardner, 1994). Language anxiety is experienced by learners of both foreign and second language and causes potential problems as it can interfere with the acquisition, retention, and production of the new language (MacIntyre& Gardner, 1991).

Another important factor as a strong predictor of second/foreign language learning is motivation. According to Gardner, motivation is concerned with the question, "Why does an organism behave as it does?" (Gardner, 1988, p.101). The social psychological perspective on motivation defines motivation as a composite of intensity and orientation which along with attitudes sustain students' motivation to learn a second language (Belmechri& Hummel, 1998).

Chastain (1988) defines motivation as some incentive that causes the individual to participate in activity leading toward a goal and to preserve it until the goal is reached. Brown (2007) reviewed the definition of motivation based on the three schools of thought: In *Behaviorism*, motivation is seen as the anticipation of reward. Driven to acquire positive reinforcement and based on our prior experience we repeat a given action to get rewards. On the other hand, *Cognitivism* sees motivation as choices people make. The forces behind our decisions are the needs or drives. Finally, according to *Constructivism*; each person is motivated differently and the emphasis is on social context and individual personal choices.

A point that must be emphasized here is the relationship between language learners' motivation and their foreign language anxiety. For instance, Tanveer (2007) suggested it is intrinsic motivation that usually results in anxiety-breeding situations. Accordingly, learners' beliefs, perceptions, and poor command of language may lead to a higher level of anxiety. Furthermore, some other extrinsic factors such as social and cultural environments may be the reasons for stressful situations. Other factors such as speaking in front of others were rated as the possible sources of anxiety followed by worries about grammatical mistakes, pronunciation, and being unable to talk spontaneously (Awan, Anwar, &Naz 2010). Accordingly, the present study aims to examine foreign language anxiety of Iranian EFL learners to find out how their anxiety is related to their motivation to learn English.

The present study aims to answer the following questions:
1 To what extent do Iranian intermediate EFL learners experience anxiety in language classrooms?
2 Is there any relationship between Iranian intermediate EFL learners' level of anxiety and motivation?

1.1. Review of Literature

This section presents the results of previous research on language learning anxiety, language learning anxiety and gender, motivation and language learning, and Anxiety and Foreign Language Motivation

1.2. Language Learning Anxiety

Second/foreign language learning can sometimes be a terrible experience for many learners. The number of students who suffer from language learning anxiety is numorous. According to Worde (1998), one third to one half of learners have reported they experience detrimental levels of language anxiety. Various aspects of language learning have been focused on by studies of anxiety such as language outcomes,

rate of second language acquisition, performance in language classrooms, and performance in high-stakes language testing (Zheng, 2008).

Language anxiety can be refered to as the fear or apprehension that happens when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993) or the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning or using a second language (MacIntyre, 1999). In the same way, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) defined foreign language anxiety as a "distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p. 31). Language anxiety has been seen as a negative psychological factor in the language learning process by many of the researchers who have considered its impact on language learners.

Somtimes language anxiety has been defined as "possibly the affective factor that most pervasively obstructs the learning process" (Arnold and Brown, 1999, p. 8), a negative energy that affects the brain, our short-term memory, and hence our ability to hold words and ideas long enough on this creative table so to speak in order to mould them into suitably communicative sentences or utterances. Besides, in some cases, we may be unable to find the words. One of effects of anxiety is to lessen our ability to produce and, therefore, create linguistically. Perhaps the most well-known metaphor used to show learners' negative reactions to language learning is Stephen Krashen's (1987) 'affective filter', an imaginary barrier which is operates when learners feel threatened by, disinclined to engage with or emotionally unreceptive to the language input available to them. On the other hand, if learners are relaxed and motivated, this barrier will be lowered and the language input would more likely to be attended to and acquired.

An important question is whether language anxiety is always negative or not. Some researchers have challenged the idea that anxiety is always a negative factor. Indeed, some have pointed to the potential benefits of anxiety (Mathews, 1996). For instance, an experience that most of us may have is to write under pressure. Sometimes it seems we are capable of writing more effectively and creatively when we have to complete a deadline and have little time in which to complete it. On the other hand, the more time we have at our disposal, the more ineffective and uninspiring our writing seems to be. Besides, more often we may leave things until another day until tension and anxiety to reach to the necessary levels in order to force us into action. When it comes to speaking, anxiety may actually push us on to greater effort and fluency. And many of us may have experienced a feeling of being nervous and tense before speaking and this nervousness has reflected in stuttering, false starts, and inaccurate pronunciation. These two types of anxiety, one a negative force, the other a positive one, have been referred to as 'debilitating' and 'facilitating' anxiety in the literature. The positive anxiety pushes one forward, motivates, and helps while the negative anxiety weakens one

to resolve, creates doubts, and encourages one to run away and debilitates.

Different learners may experiences variuos levels of anxiety. For instance, introverts are more likely to experience anxiety than extraverts (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001). Introverts usually prefer individual work more than group work so they may easily become anxious if they are put in more communication-oriented classroom settings. In contrast, extraverts may feel anxious if they have to work on their own all the time. In addition, According to McCroskey (1984), even at higher levels of proficiency, many students may experience some level of fear and anxiety when asked to communicate, especially in public.

Language learning anxiety may be demonstrated by langue learners in various ways. Generealy, foreign language anxiety has three varieties: *communication apprehension*, *test anxiety*, and *fear of negative evaluation*. Communication apprehension is a feeling of discomfort when communicating. More specifically, such apprehension occureswhere learners lack mature communication skills although they have mature ideas and thoughts. In fact, it refers to a fear of getting into real communication with others. Communication apprehension occurs in a variety of settings in both native language and second language and results in negative outcomes for both speakers and listeners. As such, communication apprehension must be addressed by language teachers, especially teachers who are teaching second or foreign languages because learners who already experience some level of communication apprehension in their native language will face more anxiety when speaking a foreign or second language, such as English (Schlenker & Leary, 1982).Test anxiety, on the other hand, is an apprehension towards academic evaluation. It could be defined as a fear of failing in tests and an unpleasant feeling experienced either consciously or unconsciously by learners in many situations. This type of anxiety relates to apprehension towards academic evaluation which is based on a fear of failure. Finally,fear of negative evaluation happens when foreign language learners feel incapable of making the proper social impression and it is an apprehension towards evaluations by others and avoidance of evaluative situations (Horwitz and Young, 1991).

2. Language Learning Anxiety and Gender

Gender is a significant variable in language learning process and has important theoretical and pedagogical implications in second and foreign language learning. Besides, research results on language anxiety and gender provide further insights about individualized instruction based on the gender differences in language learning settings. The significance of language learning anxiety has made researchers perform many studies in terms of different variables, especially gender. Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado, and García (1988) focused on foreign language anxiety and gender and observed that female learners are more concerned about language complications than male learners and that they are more anxious and worried than male students.

Campbell and Shaw (1994) showed a significant interaction between gender and foreign language anxiety in the sense that male students were more anxiety-ridden in using a foreign language in the classroom than their female counterparts after a certain amount of instruction in that foreign language. Kitano (2001) investigated students from two U.S. universities who were enrolled in Japanese courses. The results indicated that male students' anxiety levels were negatively correlated with their self-perceived ability to perform various tasks in spoken Japanese, whereas female students did not show this tendency.

In addition, in a study performed by AyashEzzi (2012) about gender impact on the foreign language anxiety among Yemeni University Students , it was found that both male and female students had a high level of foreign language anxiety but female-students' anxiety was higher than that of male students. On the contrary, Awan et al., (2010) found that female students are less anxious in learning English as a foreign language than male students.

Mesri (2012) investigated the relationship between EFL learners' Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) and gender. The data were gathered through the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) from 52 students studying English at Salmas University. The findings indicted that there was a significant relationship between FLCA and gender. It was also noted that Iranian female EFL learners have scored higher mean in all anxiety categories than male learners so Iranian EFL context male had less anxiety to learn English. Based on this finding, it was recommended that foreign language teachers should be aware of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (FLCA) level, its causes and results. Similarly, Murlidharan and Sharma (1971) found that females were more anxious than males when it comes to reading comprehension in the sense those male students with lower levels of anxiety had better reading ability while female students with higher levels of anxiety had lower reading ability.

Nahavandi and Mukundan (2013) explored the level of anxiety of 548 Iranian EFL students towards English as a foreign language to find out whether anxiety domains differed across different first languages, proficiency levels, and gender. The results indicated that students experienced anxiety in all four scales of communication apprehension, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation, and fear of English classes. In addition, communication anxiety was found to be the predominant anxiety component in the students, as compared to other three scales. The results also suggested that gender and first language did not affect their anxiety significantly. However, level of proficiency affected the participants' anxiety in all four domains significantly.

2.1. Motivation and Language Learning

Motivation has also been defined as "some kind of internal drive which pushes someone to do things in order to achieve

something" (Harmer, 2001, p. 51). As stated by Brown (1994, p. 152), motivation is a term that is used to define the success or the failure of any complex task. Steers and Porter (1991, p. 6) considers three matters while discussing motivation:

- What energizes human behavior;
- What directs or channels such behavior, and
- how this behavior is maintained or sustained.

Motivation is thought to be responsible for "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 8). Ryan and Deci (2000, p. 54) state that "to be motivated means to be moved to do something". Unlike unmotivated people who have lost impetus and inspiration to act, motivated people are energized and activated to the end of a task. "Interest, curiosity, or a desire to achieve" (Williams and Burden, 1997, p. 111) are the key factors that compose motivated people. However, they argue that arousing interest is not enough to be motivated but the interest should be sustained. In addition, time and energy should be invested, and the effect which is required needs to be maintained so as to reach a desired goal. According to Steers and Porter (1991, p 6), motivation can be characterized as follows: needs or expectations, behavior, goals, andsome form of feedback.

According to Oxford and Shearin (1996), foreign/second language motivation is active and personal involvement in foreign or second language learning. They suggest that as unmotivated students are insufficiently involved, they are unable to develop their language skills to the full potential. Besides, Gardner and Lambert (1959) maintain that motivation is of the instrumental or integrative nature. Integrative motivation is seen as a desire to communicate and become similar to members of the L2 community. On the other hand, instrumental motivation is the desire to learn the L2 for pragmatic gains such as getting a better job. They also found thatthose students who were integratively motivated benefited more from practice opportunities, provided more answers in the classroom voluntarily, were more precise in responses, and were generally more successful language learners.

The importance of motivation in enhancing second/foreign language learning is undeniable. Lifrieri (2005, p. 4) points out that "when asked about the factors which influence individual levels of success in any activity – such as language learning –, most people would certainly mention motivation among them". According to Brown (2000), language learners with the proper motivationwill be successful in learning a second language. Similarly, Gardner (2006, p. 241) states that "students with higher levels of motivation will do better than students with lower levels". He also believes that if a person is motivated, he/she has reasons for engaging in the relevant activities, makes more effort, persists in the activities, focus on the tasks, shows desire to achieve the goal, and enjoys the activities.

The results of empirical studies point to benefits of motivation in language learning contexts. Arani (2004) investigated language learning needs of EFL students at Kashan University of Medical Sciences to identify the students' attitudes towards learning English as a school subject prior entering the university. The research sample consisted of 45 medical students who enrolled in the first and second year of study. To collect the data, different types of questionnaires were administered to the sample at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the English for Medical Purposes (EMP) courses. The results showed that most of the participants had positive attitudes towards both learning English and the English language teacher.

Karahan (2007) conducted as study in the Turkish EFL context to examine the complaints raised by learners, teachers, administrators, and parents about why most of Turkish EFL students cannot attain the desired level of proficiency in English and to find out the relation between language attitudes and language learning. The sample included 190 (94 females and 96 males) eighth grade students of a private primary school in Adana, Turkey, where English was intensively taught. The findings indicated that although the students were exposed to English in a school environment more frequently than other students at public schools, they had only mildly positive attitudes; especially female students had higher rates. In addition, the students recognized the importance of the English language but interestingly did not reveal high level orientation towards learning the language. On the other hand, the results indicated that the participants had mildly positive attitudes towards the English based culture but they were not tolerant to Turkish people speaking English among themselves.

In addition, Qashoa (2006) conducted a study among secondary school students in Dubai. The study aimed at examining the students' instrumental and integrative motivation for learning English and recognizing the factors affecting learners' motivation. Two instruments used to collect the data were questionnaire and interviews. The sample, for the questionnaire, consisted of 100 students. For the interviews, on the other hand, the sample included 20 students, 10 Arab English teachers and 3 supervisors. The results suggested that students had a higher degree of instrumentality than integrativeness. In addition, the findings indicated that difficulties with the subject (English) aspects such as vocabulary, structures and spelling were found to be the most demotivating factors for the students.

Based on Gardner's (1958) studies, language learning motivation includes three major components as follows: motivational intensity, desire to learn the language, and attitudes toward learning the language. Motivational intensity refers to the extent of students' motivation to learn the language regarding work down for classroom assignments, future plans in language learning, and language study. The desire to learn the language is related to how strong the desire that student really want to study the language. In addition, students' attitudes toward learning the language estimate students' opinions about the language learning context, students' evaluations of language teachers, and language courses.

Some researchers have tried to examine motivational orientation and attitudes of the learners towards learning

English and have come up with different results. In a study, Sadighi and Maghsudi (2000) examined the effect of the two types of motivation namely as integrative and instrumental motivation on the English proficiency of the EFL senior students. The results of their study showed a significant difference between the means of English proficiency scores for the instrumentally motivated students and the integratively motivated ones.

In another study, Moiinvaziri (2008) observed that Iranian students were both instrumentally and integrativaly motivated to learn English. Vaezi (2008) pointed out that Iranian learners are highly motivated and have positive attitudes towards learning English, and that they are more instrumentally motivated. Besides, Chalak and Kassaian (2010) stated that Iranian learners learn the language for both 'instrumental' and 'integrative' reasons and they have positive attitudes towards the target language community and its members. Shirbagi (2010) observed that students showed favorable attitudes towards learning English and that Iranian students learn a foreign language mainly for its utilitarian value rather than integrative motivation.

Lepper, Iyengar, and Corpus (2005) examined motivational orientations in classrooms and their relationship to age differences and academic correlates. They found intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to be only moderately correlated, suggesting that they may be largely orthogonal dimensions of motivation in school. Intrinsic motivation showed a significant linear decrease from 3rd grade through 8th grade and proved positively correlated with children's grades and standardized test scores at all grade levels. Extrinsic motivation showed few differences across grade levels, and it was negatively correlated with academic outcomes. Surprisingly, few differences in children's sex or ethnicity were found.

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 also remained negatively related to foreign language anxiety and served as a significant predictor of learner anxiety.

Chalak and Kassaian (2010) investigated various socio-psychological orientations of Iranian undergraduates towards learning English. the study focused on the motivation orientations of the students and their attitudes towards the target language and its community. To do so, a group of 108 students majoring in English translation at Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch in Isfahan, Iran was surveyed using the AMTB (Attitude, Motivation Test Battery).The results indicated that these Iranian Non-native speakers of English learn the language for both 'instrumental' and 'integrative' reasons and their attitudes towards the target language community and its members were generally were highly positive.

In a more recent study, Mahdavi Zafarghandi and Jodai (2012) noted that Iranian students were less motivated and their attitudes toward English and English learning are relatively neutral. Finally, Mahdinejad, Hasanzadeh, Mirzaian and Ebrahimi (2012) studied motivational orientations of 306 female students. The results of their study indicated that there was a statistically significant and positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and students' English language learning. However, there was no significant relationship between extrinsic motivation and students' English language learning.

3. Anxiety and Foreign Language Motivation

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; 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 leaner autonomy was simultaneously included as a predictor variable. This result can be due to the high degree of correlation between leaner autonomy and motivation.

An overview of the previous studies indicates that foreign language anxiety negatively affects the learners' performance (Soupon, 2004; Andrade &William, 2009). In addition, Gardner (1985) and Gardner et al., (1997) observed high correlation between language anxiety and language proficiency. El-Banna (1989) fond 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& Gardener, 1991). However, there are some confusion in the literature about the relationship between gender and foreign language anxiety. For example, Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado and García (1988) focused on FL anxiety and gender and observed that female learners are more concerned about language complications than male learner and that they are more anxious and worried than male students. In contrast, Campbell and Shaw (1994) showed a significant interaction between gender and foreign language anxiety in the sense that male students were more anxiety-ridden in using a foreign language in the classroom than their female counterparts after a certain amount of instruction in that foreign language. Similarly, Awan et al., (2010) found that female students were less anxious in learning English as a foreign language than male students. However, AyashEzzi (2012) found that both male and female students had a high level of FL anxiety but female-students' anxiety was higher than male-students. Given these contradictory results, the present study aims to examine the degree of anxiety among Iranian EFL learners and its relation to their motivation.

4. Method

4.1. Participants

The population of the study included all Iranian learners who were studying English as a foreign language. The sample group included both male and female participants, of whom a total number of 80 EFL learners (35 males and 45 females) were selected through cluster random sampling from two language classes at Islamic Azad University, Sardasht Branch Hormozgan Province, Iran. The participants' age was 20 to 30 and their native language was Persian. The selected EFL learners were considered as the sample to determine the degree of anxiety among them and how it is related to their motivation. They were attending general English language classes two sessions per week for 17 consecutive weeks in the spring semester of the 2013-2014 Academic Year.

4.2. Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study. The first instrument was the Foreign Language Learning Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), developed by Horwitz, Horowitz, and Cope (1986) which includes 33 statements, each to be rated by the respondents on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly disagree) Likert scale (See Appendix I). The statements describe language learning situations in which the degree of anxiety that respondents experience is rated.

The second instrument used to measure learner motivation was a 26-item version of Gardner's (1985) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The AMTB was originally designed to assess various individual difference variables of Canadian students learning French as a second language. This questionnaire contained 26 items each with

six responses: *Strongly Disagree* (SD), *Moderately Disagree* (MD), *Slightly Disagree* (SD), *Slightly Agree* (SA), *Moderately Agree* (MA), and, *Strongly Agree* (SA). In case the items were positive in the light of learning English for communication, the responses were marked respectively as 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and1, and vice versa (See Appendix II).

Since the instruments used in this study were well-known standard questionnaires and tests, they were assumed to possess a high level of validity and reliability. However, three EFL teachers were asked to review the instruments in order to ensure the validity. According to the teachers, the three instruments had an acceptable level of validity.

A pilot study was also conducted to measure the reliability of the instruments. To do so, 30 students were randomly selected from the target population. The reliability coefficient test was run by SPSS (Version 19) to measure the reliability of the Foreign Language Learning Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The values of Chronbach Alpha were 0.977 and 0.940 for the instruments, respectively. Accordingly, it can be said the reliability of the instruments were high.

5. Data Collection Procedures

In order to measure the participants' language anxiety, the Foreign Language Learning Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was administered to the participants. The questionnaire consisted of 733 items. The participants were asked to fill out the questionnaire in 25 minutes. Then, the participants' responses to the items were given a score of 1 to 5 using a 5-piont Likert scale in which 1 showed *no anxiety* and 5 indicated *high anxiety level*. Afterward, the collected data were codified and analyzed by SPSS Software Package (Version 19) to find out the extent to which the participants were experiencing language anxiety.

In addition, another questionnaire, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB, Gardner, 2004) was administered to the participants to measure their motivation. It consisted of 26 items with a 6-point scale (strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree), and the participants were required to provide their answers to the items in 20 minutes. The participants' responses to each item were scored 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, respectively. The collected data through the questionnaires were codified and entered into SPSS to test the research hypotheses.

6. Results

As mentioned earlier, the aim of the present study was to determine the language anxiety level experienced by Iranian EFL learners, to determine the relationship between the participants' anxiety and their motivation.

6.1. Participants' Anxiety Level in Language Classrooms

This section presents the results of the study with regard to the participants' level of anxiety in language classrooms.

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics concerning the participants' level of anxiety:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Level of Anxiety

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev.
Anxiety	80	53	113	84.60	11.02

As shown in the above table, the mean score of the participants' level of anxiety is 84.60. Besides, given that the mean scores of the minimum and the maximum levels of the anxiety experienced by the participants are 55 and 112, respectively, it can be said that the participants in this study had relatively a high level of language learning anxiety. On the other hand, if the minimum and the maximum levels of the participants' anxiety are seen as the two extremes of their language learning anxiety continuum, it is possible to divide this continuum into three parts: low-anxiety, mid-anxiety, and high-anxiety. Accordingly, the participants whose scores fall into one of these parts are divided into low-anxiety group, mid-anxiety group, and high-anxiety group as shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Anxiety Groups

Groups	Anxiety score range
Low-anxiety	53-72
Mid-anxiety	73-94
High-anxiety	95-113

In this table, the participants whose anxiety mean score is 53 to 72 are placed in the low-anxiety group, the participants with an anxiety mean score of 73 to 94 are put in the mid-anxiety group, and the participants whose anxiety mean score range 95 to 113 are placed in the high-anxiety group. Table 3 shows the number and the percentage of the participants' in each group:

Table 3. Participants' Distribution in Anxiety Groups

Groups	Frequency	Percent
Low-anxiety	15	18.8%
Mid-anxiety	42	52.5%
High-anxiety	23	28.8%
Total	80	100.0

As can be seen in the above table, the percentages of the participants in low-anxiety, mid-anxiety, and high-anxiety groups are 18.8%, 52.5%, and 28.8%, respectively. Therefore, the majority of the participants were in the mid-anxiety group. The high-anxiety group occupied the second position. In contrast, the lowest number of the participants was found in the low anxiety group. Taken the mid- and high-anxiety groups as a whole, it can be said that nearly 81% of the participants experienced a mid to high level of language learning anxiety while the remaining 18.8% experienced a low level of anxiety.

To see if the above classification based on the participants' mean, minimum, and maximum anxiety scores was valid or not, the One-Way ANOVA test was run as shown in Table 4. As can be seen, there is a significant difference between the groups' mean scores of anxiety ($P < 0.001$), so the

participants were correctly classified into the three anxiety groups.

Table 4. ANOVA Results for Group Differences

Anxiety	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11613.049	2	5806.525	197.645	.000
Within Groups	2262.151	77	29.379		
Total	13875.200	79			

Consequently, in response to the first research question that deals with the extent to which Iranian intermediate EFL learners experience anxiety in language classrooms, it can be said that most of the Iranian intermediate EFL learners in this study experienced a mid to high level of language learning anxiety.

6.2. Relationship between the Participants' Level of Anxiety and Motivation

The second research question addresses the possible relationship between participants' level of anxiety and their willingness and desire to learn English. More precisely, we want to find out if there is any relationship between Iranian EFL learners' level of anxiety and their motivation. Table 5 shows the participants' motivation for learning English. As is evident in the table, the mean score of participants' motivation to learn English is 94.10, their maximum level of motivation is 127, and their minimum level of motivation is 67.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Participants' Motivation

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	80	67	127	94.10	13.192
Valid N (listwise)	80				

Table 6 shows the participants' motivation level in the three anxiety groups. As evident in this table, the mean score of the participants' motivation in the low-anxiety group is 102.80, the mean score of the participants' motivation in the mid-anxiety group is 94.98, and the mean score of the participants' motivation in the high-anxiety group is 86.83, respectively. Accordingly, the low-anxiety group had the highest motivation to learn English. The mid-anxiety group occupied the second position in terms of the motivation learn English while the lowest level language learning motivation was found among the participants in the high-anxiety group.

Table 6. Participants' Motivation in the Anxiety Groups

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Low-anxiety	15	102.80	13.176
Mid-anxiety	42	94.98	12.811
High-anxiety	23	86.83	10.012
Total	80	94.10	13.192

Accordingly, it appears that the participants with lower levels of the language learning anxiety were more motivated to learn English. In contrast, those participants with higher

levels of the language learning anxiety were less motivated to learn English. In other words, there is an indirect relationship between language learning anxiety and language learning motivation. That is the higher the language learning anxiety, the less motivation to learn English and vice versa. To test this assumption; the correlation between the participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English was calculated and shown in Table 7:

Table 7. *Correlation between Language Learning Anxiety and Motivation*

		Anxiety	Motivation
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.382**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	80	80

As can be seen in the above table, the value of the correlation between the participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English is -0.382, so there is a moderately negative correlation between the two variables. Besides, the value of the significance level suggests that this correlation is significant ($P < 0.01$). Therefore, it can be said that there was a negative significant relationship between theparticipants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English.

In short, the participants with lower levels of the language learning anxiety were more motivated to learn English. By comparison, those participants with higher levels of the language learning anxiety were less motivated to learn English. This is due to the fact that there was a negative significant relationship between the participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English.

6.3. Gender Differences Concerning Anxiety and Motivation Level of Iranian Intermediate EFL Learners

This section deals with differences between male and female participants' in terms of the relationship between language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English. Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics for the male and female participants' level of anxiety:

Table 8. *Males' and Females' Level of Anxiety*

Gender	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Males	83.89	35	13.741
Females	85.16	45	12.989
Total	84.60	80	13.253

As can be seen in the above table, the mean score of the anxiety level for male participants is 83.89 and the mean score of the anxiety level for female participants is 85.16, so the female participants experienced a slightly higher level of the anxiety than the male participants. However, as the results of the t-test in Table 9 indicate, there were no significant differences between the anxiety level of male and female participants in this study ($P > 0.05$). Therefore, participants of both genders had the same level of language learning anxiety.

Table 9. *Independent Samples t-test for Differences in Males and Females' Level of Anxiety*

Anxiety		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Anxiety	Equal variances assumed	.136	.714	-.423	78	.674	-1.270	3.002	-7.247	4.708
	Equal variances not assumed			-.420	71.134	.676	-1.270	3.024	-7.299	4.759

Table 10 shows the distribution of the male and female participants in the mid-anxiety, low-anxiety, and high-anxiety groups:

Table 10. *Distribution of Males and Females in Anxiety Groups*

Gender	Groups						Total	
	Low		Mid		High			
Males	6	17.14%	19	54.28%	10	28.57%	35	100%
Females	9	20%	23	51.11%	13	28.88%	45	100%

In this table, 17.14% of the male participants are in the low-anxiety group, 54.28% are in the mid-anxiety group, and 28.57% are in the high-anxiety group. Therefore, the percentage of the male participants in the mid-anxiety group is higher than their percentages in two other groups. Besides, the percentage of the male participants in the high-anxiety group is greater than their percentage in the low-anxiety group.

Concerning the distribution of the female participants, it can be seen that 20% of the female participants are in the low-anxiety group, 51.11% are in the mid-anxiety group, and 28.88% are in the high-anxiety group. Accordingly, as was the case for the male participants, the percentage of the female participants in the mid-anxiety group is higher than their percentages in two other groups. In addition, the male participants are more frequent in the high-anxiety group than in the low-anxiety group. A comparison of the males' and females' distribution indicates that the percentage of the male participants in the mid-anxiety group is higher than that of the female participants in the same group. In contrast, the percentage of the female participants in the low and high anxiety group is higher than the percentage of the male participants in these two groups. Table 11 shows the level of

the male and female participants' motivation to learn English:

Table 11. Males' and Females' Motivation

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Males	35	91.09	11.556	1.953
Females	45	96.44	14.016	2.089

As shown in the above table, the mean score of motivation for male participants is 91.09 and the mean score of

motivation for female participants is 96.44. Accordingly, the female participants were slightly were motivated to learn English than the male participants were. However, as the results of the *t*-test in Table 12 shows there was no significant difference between the motivation level of male and female participants in this study (P > 0.05). Therefore, it can be said that both male and female participants were similarly motivated to learn English.

Table 12. Independent Samples t-test for Differences in Males and Females' Level of Motivation

Motivation		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		T-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Motivation	Equal variances assumed	.864	.356	-1.829	78	.071	-5.359	2.930	-11.192	.475
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.874	77.706	.065	-5.359	2.860	-11.053	.336

Table 13 shows the distribution of the male and female participants in three motivational groups:

Table 13. Distribution of Males and Females in Motivational Groups

Gender	Groups							
	Low-motivation		Mid-motivation		High-motivation		Total	
Males	11	31.42%	21	60%	3	8.57%	35	100%
Females	10	22.22%	25	55.55%	10	22.22%	45	100%

As can be seen in the table, 31.42% of the male participants are in the low-motivation group, 60% are in the mid- motivation group, and 8.57% are in the high-anxiety group. Therefore, the percentage of the male participants in the mid-motivation group is higher than their percentages in two other groups. Besides, the percentage of the male participants in the low- motivation group is greater than their percentage in the high-motivation group. This suggests that the majority of male participants in this study had a low to middle level of motivation to learn English.

In addition, 22.22% of the female participants are in the low-motivation group, 55.55% are in the mid-motivation group, and 22.22% are in the high-motivation group. Accordingly, like the distribution of the male participants, the number of the female participants in the mid-motivation group is higher than their number in two other groups. However, the female participants are equally distributed in both low and high motivation groups. In addition, as can be seen in the table; the percentage of the male participants in the low-motivation and mid-motivation groups is higher than that of the female participants in the same groups, suggesting that the female participants were slightly more motivated to learn English than the male participants. However, as mentioned earlier, there was no significant difference between the motivation level of male and female participants.

6.4. Relationship between Male and Female Participants' Language Learning Anxiety and their Motivation to Learn English

Table 14 shows the results of the Pearson correlation test concerning the relationship between the male participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English:

Table 14. Correlation Between Males' Anxiety and Motivation

		Anxiety	Motivation
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.385
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.024
	N	34	34

As shown in the above table, the value of the correlation between the male participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English is -0.385. Accordingly, there was a negative correlation between the male participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation. Furthermore, the values of the significance level suggest that there was a negative significant correlation between the male participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation (P < 0.5). Table 15 shows the results of the Pearson correlation test concerning the relationship between the female participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English:

Table 15. Correlation Between Females' Anxiety and Motivation

		Anxiety	Motivation
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	1	-.432[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	44	44

As can be seen in the above table, the value of the correlation between the female participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English is -0.432. Accordingly, there was a negative correlation between the female participants' language learning anxiety and their

motivation. Additionally, the values of the significance level suggest that there was a negative significant correlation between the female participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation (P < 0.5).

A comparison of the relationships between males' and females' anxiety, and their motivational level indicated that there was a negative significant correlation between the male and female participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation.

7. Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the study indicated that the majority of the Iranian EFL learners experienced a mid to high level of language learning anxiety. This is typically supported by the results of previous research in this regard (Horwitz, 1987; Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986). With regard to the relationship between the participants' anxiety and motivation, it was found that the low-anxiety group had the highest motivation to learn English. The mid-anxiety group occupied the second position in terms of the motivation to learn English while the lowest level language learning motivation was found among the participants in the high-anxiety group. In other words, the participants with lower levels of the language learning anxiety were more motivated to learn English. By comparison, those participants with higher levels of the language learning anxiety were less motivated to learn English as shown by other researchers (e.g., Gardner &Lalonde, 1987; Hashimoto, 2002). This is due to the fact that there was a negative significant relationship between the participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation to learn English.

The findings of this study concerning the male and female participants' language learning anxiety, motivation to learn English, and their English proficiency indicated that there was no significant difference between the anxiety level of male and female participants. However, female learners reported to be slightly more anxious than the male learners. This is consistent with the results observed by Padilla, Cervantes, Maldonado and García (1988) who observed that female learners were more concerned about language complications than male learner, and they are more anxious and worried than male students. Similarly, AyashEzzi (2012)

found that both male and female students had a high level of FL anxiety, but female-students' anxiety was higher than male-students but Awan et al. (2010) found that female students were less anxious in learning English as a foreign language than male students.

In contrary to the findings of the present study, Campbell and Shaw (1994) showed a significant interaction between gender and foreign language anxiety in the sense that male students were more anxiety-ridden in using a foreign language in the classroom than their female counterparts.

Concerning the participants' level of motivation, it was noted that the female participants were slightly were more motivated to learn English than the male participants were, as confirmed by Karahan (2007). However, there was no significant difference between the motivation level of male and female participants in this study. In addition, the percentage of the male and female participants in the mid-motivation group was higher than their percentages in low and high motivation groups.

On the whole, the findings indicate that there was no significant difference between the male and female participants concerning their language learning anxiety and motivation to learn English, suggesting that gender did not play a determining role in these two variables. This finding does not correspond with the results by Campbell and Shaw (1994) who showed a significant interaction between gender and foreign language anxiety. Finally, a comparison of the relationship between males' and females' anxiety and motivation indicate that there was a negative significant correlation between the male and female participants' language learning anxiety and their motivation.

Appendices

Appendix I: Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986).Foreign language classroom anxiety. The

Modern Language Journal, 70(2), 125-132.

Direction: Will you please circle the one closest answer to the following questions according to your true cases. Thank you very much for your help and patience!

(1. Strongly agree, 2. Agree, 3. Neither agree nor disagree, 4. Disagree, 5. Strongly disagree)

No.	Item	Responses
1	I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	1 2 3 4 5
2	I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.	1 2 3 4 5
3	I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	1 2 3 4 5
4	It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	1 2 3 4 5
5	It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	1 2 3 4 5
6	During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	1 2 3 4 5
7	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	1 2 3 4 5
8	I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	1 2 3 4 5
9	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	1 2 3 4 5
10	I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	1 2 3 4 5
11	I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	1 2 3 4 5
12	In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	1 2 3 4 5
13	It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	1 2 3 4 5
14	I would not be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	1 2 3 4 5

No.	Item	Responses
15	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	1 2 3 4 5
16	Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	1 2 3 4 5
17	I often feel like not going to my language class.	1 2 3 4 5
18	I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	1 2 3 4 5
19	I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	1 2 3 4 5
20	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	1 2 3 4 5
21	The more I study for a language test, the more con- fused I get.	1 2 3 4 5
22	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	1 2 3 4 5
23	I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	1 2 3 4 5
24	I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	1 2 3 4 5
25	Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	1 2 3 4 5
26	I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	1 2 3 4 5
27	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	1 2 3 4 5
28	When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	1 2 3 4 5
29	I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	1 2 3 4 5
30	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	1 2 3 4 5
31	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	1 2 3 4 5
32	I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	1 2 3 4 5
33	I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix II: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery

In answering these questions, you should have circled one alternative. Which one you choose would indicate your own feeling based on everything you know and have heard. Note: there is no right or wrong answer.

1. I don't get anxious when I have to answer a question in my English class.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
2. Learning English is really great.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
3. My parents try to help me to learn English.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
4. My English class is really a waste of time.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
5. Knowing English isn't really an important goal in my life.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
6. I hate English.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree

7. I would rather spend more time in my English class and less in other classes.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
8. My English teacher is better than any of my other teachers
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
9. I really enjoy learning English.
   Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
   Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
   Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
   AgreeAgree
10. I think my English class is boring.
    Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
    Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
    Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
    AgreeAgree
11. I enjoy the activities of our English class much more than those of my other classes.
    Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
    Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
    Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
    AgreeAgree
12. I am calm whenever I have to speak in my English class.
    Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
    Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
    Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
    AgreeAgree
13. My English teacher has a dynamic and interesting teaching style.
    Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
    Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
    Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree

AgreeAgree

14. Studying English is important because it will be useful in getting a good job.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

15. To be honest, I don't like my English class.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

16. I love learning English.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

17. My parents think I should devote more time to studying English.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

18. My English teacher doesn't present materials in an interesting way.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

19. Studying English is important because other people will respect me more if I know English.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

20. I would feel uncomfortable speaking English anywhere outside the classroom.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

21. When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always my teacher for help.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

22. I feel confident when asked to speak in my English class.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

23. I have a strong desire to know all aspect of English.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree

AgreeAgree

24. English is a very important part of the school program me.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

25. It worries me that other students in my class seem to speak English better than I do.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

26. I really work hard to learn English.
Strongly   Moderately   Slightly
Slightly   Moderately   Strongly
Disagree   DisagreeDisagree   Agree
AgreeAgree

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