

Flipped Classroom and Psycholinguistic Factors: An Evaluation

ABDULLAH AHMAD M ALFAIFI

*Department of English,
College of Science and Arts,
King Abdulaziz University, Rabigh, Saudi Arabia*

MOHAMMAD SALEEM

*Department of English,
King Abdulaziz University,
Rabigh, Saudi Arabia
msshareef@kau.edu.sa*

ABSTRACT

Psycholinguistic factors, i.e., motivation, foreign language anxiety, and self-confidence, affect adult EFL learners' learning process in a major way, positively or negatively. Research studies show that in a conventional classroom setup psycholinguistic factors affect the learning process of a large number of adult EFL learners negatively because their motivation and self-confidence are low while their foreign language anxiety is high. In the present research study, a survey was conducted with pre-university students in Saudi Arabia who were taught English as a foreign language using Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) as a pedagogy approach. The objective of this investigation was to measure the degree of impact of psycholinguistic factors on the language learning process of students learning English through an unconventional pedagogic approach, that is, Flipped Classroom Model. The results indicate that the teaching approach, even if being highly learner-centred, hardly makes any significant difference to learners' anxiety, motivation, or self-confidence as regards learning English as a foreign language. However, in comparison to the conventional classroom environment, a slightly less number of learners reported the influence of affective factors on their English learning process under the FCM approach.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety; motivation; self-confidence; Flipped Classroom; conventional classroom

INTRODUCTION

Psycholinguistic factors, i.e., motivation, foreign language anxiety, and self-confidence, affect foreign language acquisition positively as well as negatively. These factors acquire the proportions of 'barriers' to language learning if they affect the learning process negatively. The sources and origin points of psycholinguistic barriers can be traced to multiple factors, and accordingly, they fall into numerous categories and affect learners in varying degrees, but the three factors that were chosen for investigation in the present study, i.e., anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence, are of most common occurrence, and negatively affecting a large number of foreign/second language learners (Dewaele, 2005; Horwitz et al., 1986; Krashen, 1982), although it is also interesting to note that learning a foreign language does not lead to anxiety in senior citizens, rather, it helps them in their psychological well-being (Klimova & Pikhart, 2020). The effects of psycholinguistic factors on the performance of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners have been studied so widely and in such a wide variety of contexts in conventional, teacher-dominated language classrooms that it would be impractical to cite only a few references in this regard, and it would suffice to mention that almost all of those studies have reported a negative impact of psycholinguistic factors on EFL learners' language acquisition and proficiency development

(Hakim, 2019; Manipuspika, 2018). But, of late, owing to technological interventions in the class, there have been tremendous transformations in pedagogic practices. Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) as an approach to teaching, a learner-centered approach that relies heavily on information technology, multimedia, cyber gadgets, and virtual reality, has come into vogue in foreign language teaching classroom too and has largely proved successful in enhancing EFL learners' learning experience in theory as well as praxis (Berrett, 2012; Lockwood, 2014). Language pedagogy based on FCM provides sufficient autonomy to learners so that they have a choice with regard to the pace, time, location, and materials for their learning, enabling them to sidestep some of the features of conventional class that are the sources of psychological barriers towards foreign language learning for some learners. However, a directly proportional relationship between learner autonomy and a potential drop in learners' psycholinguistic barriers is only an assumption and needs testing in an empirical research study. A preliminary review of existing literature on the subject shows that at present there are no existing studies on a potential relationship between FCM as an approach to foreign language teaching and EFL learners' psycholinguistic barriers. The existing studies on the implementation of FCM in EFL classroom are commonly centred on learners' linguistic achievement, learner outcomes, and the overall positive impact of Flipped Classroom on English language pedagogy (e.g. Kim et al., 2017; Koponen, 2019).

RESEARCH PROBLEM

FCM is the future of pedagogy in every field of knowledge (Berrett, 2012; Lockwood, 2014; McNally et al. 2017). In [foreign] language teaching, too, the model has been in practice for more than a decade now, and researchers, as well as practitioners, report good outcomes of the implementation of the model in language classrooms. However, in conventional, teacher-centred classrooms the English language learning process of some learners gets affected negatively by factors, such as lack of motivation, high foreign language anxiety, and low self-confidence to learn English, as reported in research studies (Krashen, 1982; Roberts, 2020). However, psycholinguistic factors have been identified to be process-related (arising from classroom set-up) as well as learner-related (pertaining to the psychological make-up of EFL learners) (Krashen, 1982). It may be assumed that the negative impact of process-related factors should be minimised, or the impact may even be positive on learners if they enjoy autonomy (Alrabai, 2021). Based on its features, the researcher's opinion is that FCM is an ideal model of pedagogy to provide full autonomy to learners since in FCM the entire learning process shifts towards learners while language instructors assume the role of language facilitators in the class. The assumption made in a significant number of studies that FCM as an approach to language teaching largely helps students have better academic achievements, most notably by providing them autonomy in the pace, time, place, and material contents for their learning, needs testing through research. The issue, especially the potential of FCM induced autonomy helping some students shed their inhibitions, otherwise hindering their learning in conventional classes, has not yet been explored in empirical research, and thus, there exists a research gap in this area. The issue is prominent in language learning scenarios and needs to be probed in an empirical study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It must be pointed out at the outset that no existing literature is available for review or comparison on the effects of psycholinguistic factors selected for investigation in the present study, that is, motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence, on the process and outcomes of EFL learners' language learning who are taught English employing FCM as a pedagogic approach since the issue has not been explored in research studies yet. In the following subsections, literature on the selected psycholinguistic barriers and FCM as an English language pedagogy approach has been reviewed.

PSYCHOLINGUISTIC BARRIERS: THE THEORY

The current research draws insights from Krashen's (1982) "Affective Filter Hypothesis" which states that affective factors play a crucial role in second language acquisition. The factors stated by Krashen are motivation, self-confidence, foreign language anxiety, and learners' personality traits. Krashen (1982) says, "There appears to be a consistent relationship between various forms of anxiety and language proficiency in all situations, formal and informal. Anxiety level may thus be a very potent influence on the affective filter" (p. 29). The idea is that under the negative influence of affective states, some foreign language learners tend to filter out the input provided by the teacher in class. Thus, adult EFL learners are prone to get affected by their mental make-up and approach towards the target language (Dewaele, 2005). The effect of this affectation may be positive or negative on their learning process. Since the affecting factors commonly relate to the mental state of the learner, they are termed as psycholinguistic factors. The most common factors, selected for investigation in the present study, are motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence (Bai & Yuan, 2018). If learners' motivation and self-confidence to acquire language skills are low, while their anxiety towards learning is high, the learners will perform poorly in the language, whereas, if their motivation and self-confidence levels are high and anxiety is low, they perform better in mastering the language skills. The factors are regarded as 'barriers' in this section since the studies referred to have studied only the negative effect of the factors on EFL learners' learning process, i.e., the focus of all the research works was on investigating how adult EFL learners' lack of motivation and self-confidence and high anxiety towards English affect their learning progress.

Psychological barriers are dispositional barriers since they arise from the mental disposition of learners. That is to say, if the mental state of learners predisposes them towards some task negatively, and thus prevents them from approaching the task with a positive frame of mind, the situation gives rise to psychological barriers. In language learning, a psychological barrier is the state of learners' minds preventing them from learning a language properly, and so, it is termed as 'psycholinguistic barrier.' Language learners facing psycholinguistic barriers may find language learning so challenging that they might give up all efforts to learn it. Researchers recognize four main psycholinguistic barriers to language learning, namely, low self-image, anxiety, lack of motivation, and wrong attitude towards the language (Cohen & Norst, 1989; Roberts, 2020).

Psycholinguistic barriers may be caused or affected by several factors. For instance, anxiety may be caused by fear of ridicule, peer-group influence or performance phobia, etc. Anxiety may aggravate because of the alien syntax, sounds, morphological elements, and semantic structure of the target language. Self-confidence may be low because of a low grasp of the fundamentals of the language. Motivation (intrinsic/extrinsic) may be lacking for learners' visualisation of the target language not of much use in the immediate contexts, and so on. Learners'

age and health are related to barriers to learning. Besides, mother-tongue influence, too, plays a big role in psychological barriers.

MOTIVATION

Motivation has been studied in detail as a factor affecting foreign language learning (Dörnyei, 1998; Dörnyei & Clément, 2001), though some researchers, such as Dörnyei (1998), say that the concept is least satisfactorily defined in literature but the term is used very frequently. Commonly, a link is established between motivation and human behaviour-positive behaviour, if motivation is sufficient, while behaviour turns negative, if the individual is demotivated. To Dörnyei (1998), motivation to learn a foreign language is a complex phenomenon owing to the “multifaceted nature and roles of language itself” (p. 118). Motivation can be ‘intrinsic,’ i.e., present just for the sake of a particular behaviour, or ‘extrinsic,’ present for a social reward, or as defence from punishment. Gardner (1985) notes in this regard that the sign of motivation in an individual is some goal-directed activity and the individual exerting efforts to achieve that goal. In the current research, motivation refers to the learners’ mental make-up to initiate the process of learning English and sustaining the action till the objectives are accomplished. A number of research works (e.g. Khan, 2011; Ni, 2012) find a positive correlation between psycholinguistic barriers and learner's performance in English.

SELF-CONFIDENCE

Self-confidence (also termed as ‘self-esteem’ or ‘self-efficacy’) plays a significant role in foreign language learning, especially at the oral production stage. So many EFL learners lose confidence when faced with a sudden demand to converse with a fluent or native-like speaker of English. Self-confidence has been studied as a debilitating barrier (e.g., Brown & Marshall, 2006) in research studies. Some other researchers focused on the influence of self-confidence on students’ performance in English (such as Chen & Chang, 2004; Shinge, 2005).

ANXIETY

Anxiety is associated with the feeling of stress, tension, and worry. For example, Cook (2006) presents a cogent analysis of foreign language anxiety and shame, on issues such as anxiety and cognitive interference, facilitative and debilitating anxiety, situational anxiety, a distinct foreign language anxiety, and L2 anxiety research, and so on (pp. 14-43). Anxiety may generate bodily changes, such as increased blood pressure and muscular tension. An ever-present anxiety is diagnosed as a personality disorder. Someone suffering from the disorder avoids situations causing anxiety. For example, a foreign language learner may develop a high level of foreign language anxiety, and as a result, would avoid using the language with others (see von Worde, 2003). Such a situation needs attention. Roberts (2020), for instance, draws language testers’ attention to the foreign language anxiety issues faced by displaced healthcare professionals in the UK. A number of studies have explored learner anxiety concerning various skills in English, such as reading anxiety, or speaking anxiety (Al-Khotaba, et al., 2019; Bailey et al., 2000; Horwitz et al., 1986; Krashen, 1982). Foreign language anxiety has been predominantly studied from these perspectives (Horwitz et al., 1986; Macintyre & Gardner, 1989): test anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative social evaluation.

FLIPPED CLASSROOM MODEL AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

Flipped Classroom Model of teaching has been in vogue for quite a long time now, and researchers believe that the model is successful as an improvement upon the traditional lecture (see, for example, Berrett, 2012; Lockwood, 2014). According to Sharma (2010), blended learning proved successful in the corporate world, as the model allowed workers to customise their learning timing and study while continuing in the workplace. Berrett (2012) favours FCM since in the new model the teacher has enough time free in the class for higher order activities, such as enquiry-based learning, while Lockwood (2014) presents the model in detail to apply to flip various courses. Implementation of the model in foreign language teaching, reported in research studies from all over the world, brings good results in enhancing learners' linguistic achievement and proficiency in English (Elmaadaway, 2018; Kim et al., 2017; Koponen, 2019; McNally et al., 2017; Suranakkharin, 2017). Kim et al. (2017), for instance, state that the flipped classroom effectively promotes higher-order thinking. Their findings have been supported by other studies as well. McCormick et al. (2013) emphasise the role of student engagement in the learning process brought about by FCM. However, researchers also cast doubts on the anecdotal success of the model in language classrooms, questioning the efficacy of the model in all types of situations (see Lyddon, 2015). The major reasons cited for dissatisfaction with the model include learners' dislike for being quizzed at the beginning of class (McNally et al., 2017), personalised learning climate working negatively for some learners (Zhai et al., 2017), learners getting addicted to the Internet leading to attention deficit (Cheng et al., 2016), some students finding collaborative learning stressful (Jung et al., 2012), and FCM increasing workload on students leading to exhaustion and burn out (Law, 2007).

However, there still exists a gap in literature on how psycholinguistic factors, especially motivation, self-confidence, and foreign language anxiety, may affect the learning of English when FCM is employed as a pedagogy approach to teach the language to adults.

HYPOTHESIS

FCM is a strongly learner-centred approach providing learners sufficient autonomy to choose their own time, pace, place, and supporting materials for the learning content. Keeping in view the positive impact of learner autonomy, it was hypothesised that the autonomy gained by adult EFL learners, who are taught English using FCM as an approach, will have a positive impact on factors affecting their learning, such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the effect of the Flipped Classroom Model (FCM) employed as an English teaching approach on adult EFL learners' motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the current research was to investigate the effect of FCM implemented as an approach to teach English to adult EFL learners in Saudi Arabia on the major psycholinguistic factors, such as foreign language anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence and. These affective factors are commonly reported to affect EFL learners negatively.

METHODOLOGY

The Mixed Methods research methodology was adopted to conduct the current study. Quantitative method was used to collect numerical data from research participants, while qualitative method was employed to interpret the obtained results in a narrative format. At some overlapping junctures, the methods have been mixed too. The study was conducted when the students were given online classes using a fully-flipped classroom approach. Teaching was conducted online in a virtual classroom environment since actual classes were rescheduled to be held online due to Covid-19 pandemic. The data were collected through a survey questionnaire. The data collected thus were analysed to answer the stated research question, that is, to check what impact learner autonomy enjoyed by adult EFL learners in FCM model of teaching may have on the selected psycholinguistic factors, such as foreign language anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence, as commonly felt by learners in their English learning process.

RESEARCH SETTING AND THE PARTICIPANTS

The current research was conducted with Preparatory Year Program (PYP) male and female students studying English at a university in Saudi Arabia. Many Saudi universities enrol students in the PYP of which a big portion is dedicated to English. Students study intensive English, among other courses for a year before they continue their major subjects of study. In Saudi Arabia there is no co-education, but both male and female participants were selected to participate in this study, and help was sought from a female colleague in the female section of the department to collect data. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 22 years. The participants had studied English for at least six years before they were admitted to the university; therefore, they were capable of understanding the intent of the questionnaire statements. After defining the population (that is, PYP students) and deciding the sample size, the questionnaires were randomly distributed to students enrolled in different sections. This was done for two reasons. First, the procedure avoids bias in data collection. Second, random selection was easier to carry out since a uniform system of education is followed in Saudi Arabia. 100 participants (50 male and 50 female) participated in the study.

THE INSTRUMENT

The survey questionnaire was comprised of 20 statements on issues pertaining to the selected psychological barriers in foreign language learning, intended to elicit responses on the degree of motivation participants felt to learn English, the level of self-confidence they displayed when they were faced with an occasion to speak English, or anxiety when confronted English in written and spoken form. Statements 1-7 were motivation-based, 8-13 self-confidence-based, while 14-20 were anxiety-based statements. The statements measured the responses of learners on a 5-point Likert scale. Every statement comprised five options starting with (1) as Strongly disagree, and ending with (5) as Strongly agree. The options in between were (2) Disagree, (3) Neutral, and (4) Agree. Allotment of credit on attitude was taken from two directions; allotment for a *positive direction* statement was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, whereas for a *negative direction* statement, it was 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. Only statement number 7 carried a negative direction. Positive direction statements agreed with/confirmed the meaning of the stated hypothesis, that is, motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety will affect adult EFL learners positively if FCM is employed to teach them English.

Negative direction statement went against the stated hypothesis encouraging the participants to say that they were affected by psychological factors, and so, they raised a psychological barrier against the linguistic input in the class, and also they hesitated to use English. Participants' responses were analysed in terms of their agreement or disagreements with the questionnaire statements.

The questionnaire was checked for validity, reliability, accuracy, and clarity. For the 20-statement questionnaire pilot-tested with 10 participants, the test obtained a satisfactory value for Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = .633$).

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through the survey questionnaire were tabulated and put to statistical analysis to calculate the Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance in the raw scores obtained from the questionnaires. The analysis method was found suitable since the purpose of numerical analysis was to find the exact number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with the questionnaire statements. Further analysis was oriented at finding out the number of participants who voluntarily ascribed their difficulties in learning English, such as syntax errors, hesitation in language use or reading and writing difficulties, to affective factors. To this end, the number of participants agreeing or disagreeing with the questionnaire statements were taken into consideration. Responses for 'Strongly Disagree' (A) and 'Disagree' (B) were pooled together to mean 'disagreement,' while responses for 'Agree' (D) and 'Strongly Agree' (E) were clubbed together to mean 'agreement.' The number of participants staying neutral was also counted. Participants' Agreement, Disagreement, or Neutrality were calculated for all the three study variables, i.e., motivation, self-confidence, and foreign language anxiety. A summary of questionnaire survey results obtained from the students is presented in Table 1, below, where A, B, C, D, and E denote 'Strongly Disagree,' 'Disagree,' 'Neutral,' 'Agree,' and 'Strongly Agree,' respectively.

TABLE 1. Summary of Questionnaire Survey Results obtained from Students

No.	Statements	A	B	C	D	E
1.	English is not a difficult language, and I do not commit errors in its use.	14	22	29	25	10
2.	I can understand English easily; therefore, I have an interest in learning English.	23	35	22	8	12
3.	Generally, I am interested in reading English books.	17	16	27	26	14
4.	I need to learn English because it is so much useful in life.	42	23	15	11	9
5.	I cannot manage my university study without English, so I'm interested in learning it.	27	30	14	17	12
6.	I feel I should learn English now if I require it in future.	19	32	25	14	10
7.	I am not motivated to have an informal conversation in English.	10	14	26	31	19
8.	I feel confident to use English because I have started thinking in English.	26	28	20	15	11
9.	I do not lose confidence using English as I have knowledge of its basic grammar.	10	30	23	28	9
10.	I do not feel nervous to use English since I know I won't commit errors.	13	24	27	28	8
11.	I am not afraid of making errors in English, and I do not make errors out of fear.	12	23	22	31	12
12.	I have sufficient knowledge of English grammar and pronunciation.	14	26	26	21	13
13.	It is easy for me to understand the rules of sentence construction in English.	15	25	23	24	13
14.	I am not afraid that people laugh at me if I use English with them.	18	25	24	19	14

15. I do not feel nervous, so I do not commit errors in English.	12	27	23	27	11
16. I may commit errors but I know committing errors in English is common.	13	31	28	18	10
17. English is easy and I feel I can learn it very soon.	30	27	26	10	7
18. If I feel something is difficult, I make attempts to learn it.	20	27	27	18	8
19. It is possible for me to learn English at an adult age too.	33	23	14	20	10
20. I can learn English any time, so I am learning it now.	23	11	19	21	26

Statements. Motivation: 1-7; Self-confidence: 8-13; Anxiety: 14-20

Table 2, given below, presents the percentage of respondents for the study variables.

TABLE 2. Percentage of Student-Respondents in Agreement or Disagreement with the Questionnaire Statements

No.	Statement / Question	Agreement (E + D) %	Total %	Neutral %	Disagreement (B + A) %	Total %
1.	English is not a difficult language, and I do not commit errors in its use.	10 +25	35	29	22+14	36
2.	I can understand English easily; therefore, I have an interest in learning English.	12+8	20	22	35+23	58
3.	Generally, I am interested in reading English books.	14+26	40	27	16+17	33
4.	I need to learn English because it is so much useful in life.	19+29	48	20	13+19	32
5.	I cannot manage my university study without English, so I'm interested in learning it.	9+11	20	15	23+42	65
6.	I feel I should learn English now if I require it in future.	12+17	29	14	30+27	57
7.	I am not motivated to have an informal conversation in English.	10+14	24	25	32+19	51
8.	I feel confident to use English because I have started thinking in English.	19+31	50	26	14+10	24
9.	I do not lose confidence using English as I have knowledge of its basic grammar.	11+15	26	20	28+26	54
10.	I do not feel nervous to use English since I know I won't commit errors.	9+28	37	23	30+10	40
11.	I am not afraid of making errors in English, and I do not make errors out of fear.	11+18	29	36	24+11	35
12.	I have sufficient knowledge of English grammar and pronunciation.	14+22	36	17	31+16	47
13.	It is easy for me to understand the rules of sentence construction in English.	8+28	36	27	24+13	37
14.	I am not afraid people may laugh at me if I use English to talk with them.	12+31	43	22	23+12	35
15.	I do not feel nervous, so I do not commit errors in English.	13+21	34	26	26+14	40
16.	I may commit errors but I know committing errors in English is common.	13+24	37	23	25+15	40
17.	English is easy and I feel I can learn it very soon.	13+20	33	24	31+12	43
18.	If I feel something is difficult, I make attempts to learn it.	14+19	33	24	25+18	43
19.	It is possible for me to learn English at an adult age too.	11+27	38	23	27+12	39
20.	I can learn English any time, so I am learning it now.	10+18	28	28	31+13	44

RESULTS

The results obtained from data analysis are presented in Table 3, given below.

TABLE 3. Mean, Standard Deviation and Variance

S. No		General			Motivation			Self-Confidence			Anxiety		
		Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Disagree	Neutral
1.													
2.	Mean	33.8	42.65	23.55	30.85	47.42	21.71	35.66	39.5	24.83	35.14	40.57	24.28
3.	S.D.	8.12	10.11	5.03	10.65	13.55	5.76	8.31	10.32	6.61	4.74	3.10	2.05
4.	Variance	62.76	97.12	24.04	97.26	157.38	28.48	57.55	88.91	36.47	19.26	8.24	3.63

N = 100

A cursory glance at Table 3 reveals the following points:

- (i) In general, on an average, one third of the participants (33.8%) agree that to them English is not a difficult language and they are motivated to learn it when the teaching approach is guided by FCM. A larger percentage of participants (42.65%) disagrees with such statements. This disagreement means, they are affected by psycholinguistic barriers in learning English.
- (ii) Less than a third of the participants (only 30.85%) agree that their motivation is high when English is taught to them using FCM as a pedagogy approach. Roughly half of the participants surveyed disagree with such statements, meaning their motivation is not affected by the teaching approach, whether Flipped or conventional.
- (iii) A little more than a third of the participants (35.66%) agree that FCM as an approach to teaching English boosted their self-confidence to use English, whereas nearly 40 percent of the participants disagree to this, meaning their self-confidence remains low even when they enjoy autonomy in learning English.
- (iv) Similarly, roughly a third of the participants (35.14%) agree that their foreign language anxiety is low if the teaching approach is guided by FCM, whereas a larger number (40.57%) of the participants disagree with these statements leading to the interpretation that FCM as approach to teaching English has failed to lower their anxiety towards English language.
- (v) More than 20 percent of the participants remained neutral to the questionnaire statements direction, which is interpreted as their indecision to ascribe their difficulties to psycholinguistic factors.

DISCUSSION

The obtained results indicate that in every case (in general as well as in particular cases related to motivation, self-confidence and foreign language anxiety) it is roughly one third of the student population that identifies itself free from psycholinguistic barriers. The number is small compared to roughly 42 percent of the selected students identifying their language learning issues emanating from affective factors. Although a sizable number (roughly 23 percent) of the students remain undecided on the issue, yet the population of the affected is still large. The results are self-

explanatory on the issue of students' general failure to cope with the stress of learning English and, as a result, performing poorly in English competence building activities. Findings from the study do not support the hypothesis that if FCM is employed to teach English to EFL learners, they will display high motivation, high self-confidence, and low anxiety towards the target language. However, if we go by the findings reported by Al-Khotaba et al. (2019) from a study conducted with participants taught English in a conventional classroom, the findings from the current study may be considered as supporting the hypothesis since Al-Khotaba et al. (2019) report that roughly 80% of their student population identified their English learning difficulties arising from affective factors. Findings from the present study also compare well with Manipuspika's (2018) findings which reports a strong correlation between EFL learners' foreign language anxiety and their unwillingness to speak in English, though Manipuspika's study was also conducted in a conventional, teacher-centred classroom environment.

On the other hand, the findings from the present study contradict the conclusive results obtained by a significant number of research works (e.g., Berrett, 2012; Elmaadaway, 2018; Koponen, 2019; McCormick et al., 2013; Suranakkharin, 2017) on the effectiveness of FCM or Blended learning to enhance English learners' linguistic achievements. The results bear significant implications for the University administration since the policymakers need to take the point into consideration that FCM as a teaching approach is to be implemented universally, if at all, only after enough research and preparation of supportive literature.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the present study was taken up to investigate whether learner autonomy attained in FCM guided approach to teach English generates a positive impact on adult EFL learners' affective factors, such as motivation, self-confidence, and foreign language anxiety, commonly reported affecting EFL learners' learning process negatively. The results obtained from the analysis of data collected from Prep-Year students at the selected university in Saudi Arabia revealed that student autonomy brought about by the change in teaching approach did not make much of a difference to the influence of the selected affective factors on the English learning process of the participants, although compared to the findings reported in a few studies conducted in conventional teaching classroom environment, the results obtained display a slight improvement on the number of learners impacted by affective factors.

The current study is the first of its kind as the study has investigated whether the major psycholinguistic factors, i.e., motivation, self-confidence, and foreign language anxiety, influence adult EFL learners negatively or positively if they are taught English using FCM as an approach. A corollary to the findings from the current study is that FCM employed as foreign language pedagogy has a positive impact on adult EFL learners, however slight the impact may be. The findings of the study have significant pedagogical implications. First, the findings suggest that FCM should be employed as a language teaching approach with enough precautions to the point that students do not feel unnecessary burden the autonomy may put on them. Second, the findings suggest that teachers of English using FCM should bear in mind that psycholinguistic barriers affect some learners even with a change in approach, and therefore, they need to adopt appropriate pedagogical techniques to ensure inclusiveness so that no students are left behind.

However, the present study had its own limitations, which further studies on the topic may take into consideration. The Cronbach's alpha value for the questionnaire was a bit low. Perhaps

a bit more variation in the statements would have brought more internal consistency in the questionnaire. Second, for the constraints of time and resources, the population sample was kept low. A similar study with a larger population may come up with differing results.

REFERENCES

- Al-Khotaba, H. A., Alkhataba, E. A., Abdul-Hamid, S., & Bashir, I. (2019). Foreign language speaking anxiety: A psycholinguistic barrier affecting speaking achievement of Saudi EFL learners. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(4), 313-329. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no4.23>
- Alrabai, F. (2021). The influence of autonomy-supportive teaching on EFL students' classroom autonomy: An experimental intervention. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.728657>
- Bai, B., & Yuan, R. (2018). EFL teachers' beliefs and practices about pronunciation teaching. *ELT Journal*, 73(2), 134-143. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy040>
- Bailey, P., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Daley, C. E. (2000). Correlates of anxiety at three stages of the foreign language learning process. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 19(4), 474-490. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X00019004005>
- Berrett, D. (2012, February 19). *How 'flipping' the classroom can improve the traditional lecture*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <http://chronicle.com/article/How-Flipping-the-Classroom/130857/>
- Brown, J. D., & Marshall, M. A. (2006). The three faces of self-esteem. In M. H. Kernis (Ed.), *Self-esteem issues and answers: A sourcebook of current perspectives* (pp. 4-9). Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203759745>
- Chen, T.-Y., & Chang, G. B. Y. (2004). The relationship between foreign language anxiety and learning difficulties. *Foreign Language Annals*, 37(2), 279-289. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2004.tb02200.x>
- Cheng, S. H., Lee, C.-T., Chi, M. H., Sun, Z.-J., Chen, P. S., Chang, Y.-F., Yeh, C.-B., Yang, Y. K., & Yang, Y.-C. (2016). Factors related to self-reported attention deficit among incoming university students. *Journal of Attention Disorders*, 20(9), 754-762. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054714550335>
- Cohen, Y., & Norst, M. J. (1989). Fear, dependence and loss of self-esteem: Affective barriers in second language learning among adults. *RELC Journal*, 20(2), 61-77. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003368828902000206>
- Cook, T. (2006). *An investigation of shame and anxiety in learning English as a second language* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California]. <http://digitalibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll16/id/578455>
- Dewaele, J.-M. (2005). Investigating the psychological and emotional dimensions in instructed language learning: Obstacles and possibilities. *The Modern Language Journal*, 89, 367-380. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2005.00311.x>
- Dörnyei, Z. (1998). Motivation in second and foreign language learning. *Language Teaching*, 31(3), 117-135. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144480001315X>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Clément, R. (2001). Motivational characteristics of learning different target languages: Results of a nationwide survey. In Z. Dörnyei & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Motivation and second language acquisition* (pp. 399-432). University of Hawaii, Second Language Teaching & Curriculum Center.
- Elmaadaway, M. A. N. (2018). The effects of a flipped classroom approach on class engagement and skill performance in a blackboard course. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 49(3), 479-491. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.12553>
- Gardner, R. C. (1985). *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. Edward Arnold.
- Hakim, B. M. (2019). A study of language anxiety among English language learners in Saudi Arabia. *Arab World English Journal*, 10(1), 64-72. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol10no1.6>
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1986.tb05256.x>
- Jung, I., Kudo, M., & Choi, S.-K. (2012). Stress in Japanese learners engaged in online collaborative learning in English. *British Journal of Education Technology*, 43(6), 1016-1029. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8535.2011.01271.x>
- Khan, I. A. (2011). An analysis of learning barriers: The Saudi Arabian context. *International Education Studies*, 4(1), 242-247. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v4n1p242>
- Kim, J.-e., Park, H., Jang, M., & Nam, H. (2017). Exploring flipped classroom effects on second language learners' cognitive processing. *Foreign Language Annals*, 50(2), 260-284. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12260>

- Klimova, B., & Pikhart, M. (2020). Current research on the impact of foreign language learning among healthy seniors on their cognitive functions from a positive psychological perspective – A systematic review. *Frontiers in Psychology, 11*, 765. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00765>
- Koponen, J. (2019). The flipped classroom approach teaching for cross-cultural communication to millennials. *Journal of Teaching in International Business, 30*(2), 102-124. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08975930.2019.1663776>
- Krashen, S. D. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. Pergamon Press.
- Law, D. W. (2007). Exhaustion in university students and the effect of coursework involvement. *Journal of American College Health, 55*(4), 239-245. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JACH.55.4.239-245>
- Lockwood, R. B. (2014). *Flip it! Strategies for the ESL classroom*. University of Michigan Press.
- Lyddon, P. A. (2015). The flip side of flipped language teaching. In F. Helm, L. Bradley, M. Guarda, & S. Thouësny (Eds.), *Critical CALL – Proceedings of the 2015 EUROCALL Conference, Padova, Italy* (pp. 381-385). Dublin: Research-publishing.net. <https://doi.org/10.14705/rpnet.2015.000362>
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1989). Anxiety and second-language learning: Toward a theoretical clarification. *Language Learning 39*(2), 251-275. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1989.tb00423.x>
- Manipuspika, Y. S. (2018). Correlation between anxiety and willingness to communicate in the Indonesian EFL context. *Arab World English Journal, 9* (2), 200-217. <https://dx.doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.14>
- McCormick, A. C., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. M. (2013). Student engagement: Bridging research and practice to improve the quality of undergraduate education. In M. B. Paulsen (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (Vol. XXVIII) (pp. 47-92). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5836-0_2
- McNally, B., Chipperfield, J., Dorsett, P., Fabbro, L. D., Frommolt, V., Goetz, S., Lewohl, J., Molineux, M., Pearson, A., Reddan, G., Roiko, A., & Rung, A. (2017). Flipped classroom experiences: Student preferences and flip strategy in a higher education context. *Higher Education, 73*(2), 281-298. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-016-0014-z>
- Ni, H. (2012). The effects of affective factors in SLA and pedagogical implications. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(7), 1508-1513. <https://doi.org/10.4304/tpls.2.7.1508-1513>
- Roberts, G. J. (2020). Tall trees; weak roots? A model of barriers to English language proficiency confronting displaced medical healthcare professionals. *Language Teaching Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820968366>
- Sharma, P. (2010). Key concepts in ELT: Blended learning. *ELT Journal, 64*(4), 456-458. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccq043>
- Shinge, M. (2005). Interplay among anxiety, motivation, and autonomy in second language learners of French: A quantitative and qualitative study [Doctoral dissertation, University of Florida]. https://ufdcimages.uflib.ufl.edu/uf/e0/01/16/20/00001/shinge_m.pdf
- Suranakkharin, T. (2017). Using the flipped model to foster Thai learners' second language collocation knowledge. *3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies, 23*(3), 1-20. <http://doi.org/10.17576/3L-2017-2303-01>
- Zhai, X., Gu, J., Liu, H., Liang, J.-C., & Tsai, C.-C. (2017). An experiential learning perspective on students' satisfaction model in a flipped classroom context. *Educational Technology & Society, 20*(1), 198-210. https://www.ds.unipi.gr/et&s/journals/20_1/18.pdf

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please rate your agreement /disagreement with the statements given below regarding your learning of English online and your use of it in writing and speech. As your response, put a tick [√] mark in the appropriate column.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. English is not a difficult language, and I do not commit errors in its use.					
2. I can understand English easily; therefore, I have an interest in learning English.					
3. Generally, I am interested in reading English books.					
4. I need to learn English because it is so much useful in life.					
5. I cannot manage my university study without English, so I'm interested in learning it.					
6. I feel I should learn English now if I require it in future.					
7. I am not motivated to have an informal conversation in English.					
8. I feel confident to use English because I have started thinking in English.					
9. I do not lose confidence using English as I have knowledge of its basic grammar.					
10. I do not feel nervous to use English since I know I won't commit errors.					
11. I am not afraid of making errors in English, and I do not make errors out of fear.					
12. I have sufficient knowledge of English grammar and pronunciation.					
13. It is easy for me to understand the rules of sentence construction in English.					
14. I am not afraid that people laugh at me if I use English with them.					
15. I do not feel nervous, so I do not commit errors in English.					
16. I may commit errors but I know committing errors in English is common.					
17. English is easy and I feel I can learn it very soon.					
18. If I feel something is difficult, I make attempts to learn it.					
19. It is possible for me to learn English at an adult age too.					
20. I can learn English any time, so I am learning it now.					