An Investigation into the Relationship among Intermediate L2 Chinese Learners’ Foreign Language Anxiety, Foreign Language Listening Anxiety, and Listening Comprehension

Significance of the Study

Foreign language (FL) anxiety is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon. It refers to “the feeling of tension and apprehension specifically associated with second language (L2) context, including speaking, listening, and learning” (Mac-Intyre & Gardner, 1994). Qualitative studies have shown that anxiety affects FL/ L2 learning. Those students who are more anxious in their foreign language learning may not find their study enjoyable (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002), which will be led to a negative impact on their performance.

As the focus of research in foreign language anxiety has been shifted recently to receptive skills, e.g., listening and reading, few studies have tried to investigate foreign language listening anxiety among intermediate L2 Chinese learners.

The present study aimed to investigate foreign language listening anxiety levels of intermediate L2 Chinese learners at The University of XXX. It also attempted to explore the relationship among foreign language anxiety, foreign language listening anxiety, and listening comprehension.
Research Questions

1. Does intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL listening anxiety significantly impact listening comprehension?

2. Does intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL anxiety significantly impact listening comprehension?

3. Is intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL anxiety significantly related to FL listening anxiety?

Research Procedure

The research consisted of three phases, and therefore three instruments respectively were used to collect data in this study.

In the first phase (Week 4 of the Fall semester 2013), foreign language classroom anxiety was measured by the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLACS) (Horwitz et al, 1986). FLACS is a 33-item-questionnaire which investigates the degree of anxiety that learners experience in foreign language classrooms.

A revised version of Foreign Language Listening Anxiety Scale (FLLAS), originally developed by Kim (2000), was administered in the second phase (Week 4 of the Fall semester 2013). The survey consisted of 33 five-point scale items.

In the third phase, the listening portion of the mid-term exam was utilized as an index of listening comprehension (Week 8 of the Fall semester 2013).
Major Findings

We anticipate that intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL listening anxiety significantly impacts listening comprehension, intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL anxiety significantly impacts listening comprehension, and intermediate L2 Chinese learners’ FL anxiety is significantly related to FL listening anxiety.

References


