



A Mixed Methods Research on Anxiety of Arab Students Learning Persian as a Second Language

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Abstract

Despite the importance of culture in affecting second/foreign language (L₂) anxiety, few, if any, studies have previously dealt with anxiety from Arabic culture's point of view. So the present study is an attempt to add to our knowledge in the field of L₂ education regarding anxiety by studying Arab students learning Persian as a second language in Iran. The participants were 50 Arab students who were studying Persian as a second language at the language center of the Non-Persian Students' Office at the Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Northeastern Iran. The present study used a special mixed methods design called sequential explanatory strategy to gain a richer understanding of the participants' anxiety. The questionnaire survey was the first part of this strategy which allowed an extensive analysis of data but also acted as a kind of filter through which a smaller sample of participants was identified for the subsequent interview phase of the study. It was found that in addition to experiencing anxiety due to pressures related to teacher feedback, students may also experience second language anxiety because of their perceptions of their instructors. The results also showed that language anxiety is a concern of face.

Keywords: second/foreign language anxiety, Arabic culture, Arab students, L₂ education, Persian as a second language, mixed methods design.