Are they two sides of a coin? : Redefining the relationship of anxiety and self-efficacy in the Japanese EFL context

Michiko UEKI, Osamu TAKEUCHI
Kansai University, Japan

In this presentation, we report on an exploratory study of the relationships among learner factors, such as anxiety, self-efficacy (SE), motivation, and procrastination in the Japanese EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context. It has often been said that anxiety and SE are two sides of a coin, and that they are closely related to motivated learning behavior (e.g., Ueki & Takeuchi, 2015; Woodrow, 2011). However, our observation in the Japanese EFL context suggests that higher SE does not necessarily mean lower anxiety, and that lower anxiety does not always indicate higher SE. The observation also suggests that these two individual characteristics are closely related to not only motivation but also procrastination, and that they can be good predictors for L2 proficiency. To better illustrate their relationships, we conducted a questionnaire survey on a total of 800 Japanese college EFL students. Our study assessed anxiety, SE, and procrastination (active and passive; Chu & Choi, 2005), together with motivation and L2 proficiency. Our results confirmed that: a) anxiety and SE were NOT necessarily two sides of a coin in this specific language learning context; b) four categories of students, i.e., high anxiety-high SE, high anxiety-low SE, low anxiety-high SE, and low anxiety-low SE, were found; and c) each category was differently connected to procrastination, motivation and L2 proficiency. These results render the data that could re-define the relationships among these learner characteristics, thereby providing us with implications for better educational interventions.

References


Keywords: Anxiety, Self-efficacy, Procrastination.