

A Study of Online Chinese Language Learning Anxiety among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

E-learning has been adopted globally as the alternative learning strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic to fill the academic gap that has been created by the existing reality of the pandemic due to nationwide closures. Learning a foreign language is one of the most challenging tasks. The transition from a face-to-face to an online learning environment makes it even more challenging. This paper intends to examine the anxiety in the Chinese language online learning experienced by Sri Lankan students at the University of Kelaniya. For this study, 50 Chinese majoring undergraduates from level-1 and level-2 were purposely chosen as the targeted group who were forced to stay at home and fully adhere to online learning. This seems unusual and unexpected for most of them, especially for those who are lacking experience of online learning and its required facilities. Using a socio-demographic questionnaire and focus-group discussion technique, this study aimed to investigate the factors behind language anxiety among the students in the online classroom. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze samples. The students experienced different sources of online language learning anxiety such as hesitation of communication, the anxiety of online lessons, fear of negative evaluation, and anticipatory anxiety. The findings suggested that language anxiety can originate from learners' self-related cognition, Chinese language learning difficulties, the personality of learners, Chinese language culture, and the fear of losing self-identity. These pertinent findings may guide online learners to achieve academic success through online learning and cope with online learning by mitigating sources of anxiety.

Keywords: Academic performance, Chinese language learning, COVID-19, Language anxiety, Online learning

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