The Manifestation of English Learning Anxiety in Kuwaiti ESL Classrooms and Its Effective Reduction

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Abstract

This study investigates students' English learning anxiety within the context of Kuwaiti ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms in a private university. The aim of this study is to find out the manifestation of the anxiety in the ESL classroom and suggest some teaching strategies in order to effectively reduce language anxiety in the learners. A questionnaire adapted from Gardner's AMTSB (2004) version was used to assess the attributes of interest. The results reported having moderate to high level of anxiety in English classrooms, and possible teaching strategies suggested by ESL instructors which may reduce anxiety in the students.

Keywords: Anxiety, teaching strategies, second language acquisition, English

Introduction

Anxiety and motivation have long been considered two of the most important variables affecting the language learning process, a topic that has not always received adequate attention. Dörnyei (2005) stated that motivation "provides the primary impetus to initiate Foreign Language/ Second Languge learning and later the driving force to sustain language and often tedious learning process" (p. 65), whereas MacIntyre (1999) defined foreign language anxiety as "worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language" (p.27). Many researchers (Chastain, 1988; Gass and Selinker, 2008; Ortega, 2009) have investigated

the effects of these variables on language performance and have suggested strategies for increasing motivation and reducing anxiety in the second/ foreign language classroom. Language anxiety has been investigated from several different points of view. Some researchers (Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997) consider it to represent a tension within the general personality of the subject, inherent in their way of behaving in various situations, whereas others identify the anxiety as being caused by a specific situation. Following the recognition of language anxiety as situation-specific anxiety (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) experienced by learners, numerous studies have been conducted in this field.

A research study conducted by Ohata (2005) revealed that situation-specific anxiety in Japanese learners of English studying in the US is caused by their interaction with others. According to the author, the characteristics of the anxiety are influenced by the Japanese cultural norms. Another study related to language anxiety was conducted by Williams and Andrade (2008) with 243 Japanese students in 31 English conversation classes at four universities in Japan. The results of this study indicated that students' situation-specific anxiety in the classroom were caused by their teachers and classmates. Research studying the role of motivation and anxiety in second language learning has reported that the interaction among these variables short-circuits the process of learning.

Numerous research studies contributed to the development of the socio-educational model, which consists of four variables: intelligence, language aptitude, motivation and situational anxiety. The findings indicate that the interaction of these variables with one another demonstrates the level of students' performance during second language learning.

Based on many empirical studies, MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) developed the socio-educational model of second language acquisition using the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). The AMTB was created to measure the attitude and motivation of second/foreign language learners, and it integrated the role of anxiety in terms of English class anxiety and language use anxiety. MacIntyre and Gardner (1991a) remarked that second language anxiety was characterized by a fear of negative instructional evaluation, communication apprehension and the difficulty of making positive social impressions when speaking a new language. Although motivation has been defined in various ways, in this study, it is used to refer to effective strategies that could help learners reduce their anxiety during the second language learning process.

By using the AMTB, Gardner et al (2004: 7) conducted a study to measure language attitudes, motivation, and anxiety that appear over the academic year. The results of the study showed that students' learning achievements were influenced by the teacher and the classroom environment. The findings suggested that language educators should use explicit strategies to reduce language anxiety and increase motivation to learn the language. A research study conducted by Brown, Robson, and Rosenkjar (2001) showed that

learners' motivation and anxiety were negatively correlated and that a lack of motivation could cause anxious behaviors. Wentzel and Wigfield (2009: 301-307) claimed that developing close relationships with students and showing them that they are expected to succeed in their studies is helpful in keeping them motivated to continue learning. The teacher's enthusiasm, both for guiding students in managing their work and supporting them emotionally during stressful times, is also greatly beneficial when it comes to inspiring motivation. In a learning environment where learners can learn without pressure and stress, they may display positive motivation and low anxiety in the classroom. There are some effective suggestions for the affective learning atmosphere in the second/foreign language classroom: encouraging students by using positive feedback instead of negative comments, being patient and enthusiastic with students' learning and improvement, and creating a relaxed and cooperative learning environment.

In this framework, the present study captured undergraduate Arab students' experiences learning English as a second language. Furthermore, the study examined instructors' personal beliefs and motivational strategies that are effective in an ESL classroom. Therefore, to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Based on the AMTB instrument, what is the overall anxiety level of the students learning English in the writing program?
2. How do the English instructors motivate their students to learn English and which strategies do they use to reduce students' anxiety in the ESL classroom?

Objective of the Study

Utilizing an education-friendly approach, this study examined the manifestation of anxiety in the ESL classroom and explored motivation strategies used by English instructors. It aimed to promote a teacher-friendly classroom environment agenda by providing empirical evidence supporting the importance and use of motivational strategies for reducing student anxiety in the learning process.

Method

Participants

Two hundred thirty-three undergraduate students (107 males and 126 females) from five different majors at a private university participated in this study. The study targeted students of the College of Business Administration (CBA), Mass Communication and Media (MCM), Computer Science, Management Information Systems (MIS), and English. They were mostly freshmen (56.2%) and sophomores (34.8%), with the remaining students being juniors (6.4%) and seniors (2.6%). The participants were ethnically homogeneous and identified themselves as Arabs (89.7% Kuwaiti and 10.3% other Arab nationalities). Most of the students were female (54.1%) with an average age of 17-26 (77.7%). All participants were currently enrolled in one

of three mandatory English courses (ENGL 100 Academic English, ENGL 110 Freshman Composition I, and ENGL 112 Freshman Composition II). Apart from the AMTB, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six ESL instructors to obtain qualitative data.

Materials

For data collection, Gardner's AMTB (2004) was used. The questionnaire consists of 104 statements representing 12 subscales that assess the participants' reactions to concepts associated with second language learning. Participants rate each statement on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Each interview was conducted at a private university in Kuwait and lasted from 25 to 30 minutes. In addition, the semi-structured interview was a conversational-style interview involving the questions designed for this study. The instructors were asked to share their experience with motivating students. Instructors' responses were recorded, transcribed and analyzed by the researchers.

Design and Analyses

(This study reports on a part of a larger research project concerning the role of attitudes and motivation in English as second language learning and the existing challenges to English learning and teaching among Arab students in Kuwait. The previous part explored the impact of motivation and parental encouragement on English Language Learning from the Arab students' perspective (Daniel, Halimi and AlShammari, 2018).

The analyses addressed the construct and scales of the Gardner's AMTB self-assessment test. A questionnaire adapted from Gardner's AMTB (2004) version was used to assess the attributes of interest. Students responded to a series of items and, based on their responses, it was possible to infer their goal or orientation in terms of English language learning. The questionnaire consists of six components, assessed through 104 statements representing 12 subscales that assess the participants' reactions to concepts associated with English language learning (see Appendix A). Participants rate each statement on a six-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). The respondents were presented with the item followed

| Strongly Disagree | Moderately Disagree | Slightly Disagree | Slightly Agree | Moderately Agere | Strongly Agree |

by the Likert's six alternative response format:

Language anxiety has been identified as a negative factor in the process of learning English, and as such was excluded from the previous study (Daniel, Halimi and AlShammari, 2018) and has been investigated in the present study. The constructs such as: integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, and instrumentality, were also excluded from the further analysis in the study because they did not show a significant impact on the overall results.

To illustrate our approach, a sample of the constituent scales of the anxiety followed by examples are shown below:

English Class Anxiety (ten items)

E.g., *"I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in our English class."*
"I get nervous when the teacher asks questions in English class."

English use anxiety (ten items)

E.g., *"I am sometimes anxious that the other students in the class will laugh at me when I speak English."*
"I become nervous when the teacher asks me unexpected question and I have to answer them verbally."

A mixed method design, both quantitative and qualitative, was used to answer the research questions in this study. The analysis of the data was carried out in accordance with research questions, in two steps. First, in order to analyze the first research question, which aimed to find out the overall anxiety level of the students learning English in the writing program, descriptive statistics were computed. In order to answer the second research question, which aimed to find out the way English instructors motivate their students and the strategies they use to reduce the anxiety in the ESL classroom, a series of interviews were conducted.

The data were collected over a four-day period to be used in an experimental 3 x 2 mixed model ANOVA. English composition courses (ENGL 100, ENGL 110, and ENGL 112), students' major and students' year in college served as the between-group factors, and students' English anxiety English use anxiety, were the two within-subjects factors studied.

Results and Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, participants were divided into three groups as low-anxiety, moderate - anxiety, and high-anxiety by a median spilt procedure based upon his or her total score on the AMTB. For each participant an anxiety score was derived by summing his or her rating of the AMTB anxiety items. When statements of the AMTB were negatively worded, responses were reversed and recorded, so that students having a total score of less than 2, were thought of low- anxiety students, and those who scored less than 3 were thought to be moderate-anxiety students. Those with a score above 3 showed a high level of anxiety. In this study, the mean values were hardly ever below 2. 30, and several groups of students obtained scores higher than 3. However, no students were found to be a low-anxiety student.

Following the Likert's six alternative response format, when a student strongly disagreed with the statement *"I become nervous when the teacher*

asks me unexpected question and I have to answer them verbally," her/his choice was automatically scored as '0' i.e. her/his attitude was in fact positive. Considering that this study focuses on the language learning anxiety, the alternative responses of disagreement were excluded from further analyses. In this regard, all three alternative responses of disagreement (strongly, moderately and slightly disagree) were scored as '0'. However, when a student slightly agreed with the statement, her/his choice was automatically scored as '1'; the moderate agreement was scored as '2' and the strong agreement was scored as '3'.

When the results of the anxiety were analyzed separately, it was found that students studying Computer Sciences had the highest mean score (M=3.05) of anxiety in the English classes while the smallest mean value (M=2.09) was found for students studying English. In addition, the highest score of the moderate–anxiety group was M=2.98, while the highest score of the high-anxiety students was M=3.05 indicating that the difference between the groups is very small (M=0.07). Therefore, it can be concluded that the students in this study reported having moderate to high level of anxiety in terms of English classes and English use in the classroom.

In account to the results of this study, ANOVA was performed to compare and identify significant differences within the groups. The researchers used (1) English composition courses, (2) students' major and (3) year in college as *nominal variables*, and, (1) students' English class anxiety and (2) English use anxiety as *dependent variables*. The measurements display the results based on the number of students with descriptive statistics for the mean scores, the standard deviation (S.D.), the resulting F-test and the two-tailed significance test results as corresponding difference levels, which serve as the basis for further interpretation.

Measuring Classroom Anxiety (CA)

This part presents details regarding the classroom anxiety (CA) results identifying the differences between the nominal variables: (1) English composition courses, (2) students' major and (3) year in college.

Classroom Anxiety According to the English Courses. The following table indicates the results for classroom anxiety according to the English courses (100; 110; 112), the number of participants, and their resulting mean scores. The results show differences with respect to anxiety based on the English courses within the moderate-anxiety group of students. The score of ENG 112 students' anxiety was the highest on average (M=2.95, SD=0.867), indicating that they experience a higher level of anxiety in comparison to students from ENG 100 (2.87, SD=0.804) and ENG 110 (2.84, SD=860).

It was striking that the anxiety in ENG 110 (2.84, SD=860) is lower than ENG 100 (2.87, SD=0.804). This may result from students' sense of self-efficacy in academic writing process and better transition from one level to the other. However, the students in ENG 112 reported to be more anxious than other students, which lead to the assumption that the nature

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Teacher-Child Interaction by Interaction Type

ANOVA according to the English Courses					
Course	N	Mean	SD	F	Sig. (2-T)
ENG 100	82	2.87	0.804		
ENG 110	94	2.84	0.860		
CA ENG 112	57	2.95	0.867	0.313	0.73
Total	233	2.88	0.840		

and difficulty of the language learning tasks in ENG 112 and may likely lead to frustration and ineffective learning practice. This finding, suggest that instructors may need to pay attention to students' anxiety and use different motivational strategies to support their learning and reduce the anxiety they experience.

Classroom Anxiety According to the Students' Major

The table below illustrates the results for English class anxiety by type of study program.

In terms of the mean scores of the anxiety according to students' major, the results reported two groups of students, those with moderate and those with high anxiety from the English classes. The comparisons reveal the mean differences within the moderate-anxiety and the high-anxiety groups of students based on their major. The MIS students did not seem to be very anxious English learners in the classroom, showing to have the lowest scores (M=2.80, SD=0.852). Next, the CBA students with a mean score 2.84 (SD=0.855) were slightly more anxious than the MIS. An unexpected finding in this study was the high anxiety score of the students majoring in English (M=2.93, SD=0.849). The MCM students, were the most anxious students (M=2.98, SD=0.805) from the moderate- anxiety group of students. In the other hand, the only study program that was categorized in the high-anxiety group of students were the Computer Science students with the highest mean score (M=3.05, SD=0.742). However, the ANOVA test

Table 2
English Class Anxiety Results According to Students' Major

ANOVA according to the English Courses					
Program	Program	Mean	SD	F	Sig. (2-T)
CBA	CBA	2.84	0.855		
MCM	MCM	2.98	0.805		
Comp	Comp	3.05	0.742		
CA MIS	MIS	2.80	0.852	0.290	0.88
ENG	ENG	2.93	0.849		
Total	Total	2.88	0.840		

Table 3

English Class Results According to the Year in University

			ANOVA according to Year in University			
	Year	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**F**	**Sig. (2-T)**
	Fresh	131	2.78	0.854		
	Soph.	81	3.02	0.823		
CA	Jun.	15	2.89	0.769	1.359	0.26
	Sen.	6	2.93	0.843		
	Total	233	2.88	0.840		

for mean differences of the anxiety in the English classroom among study programs is not significant (F=0.290, p=.088), which means that students in various departments are not significantly different from each other.

Classroom Anxiety According to the Year in University

In order to investigate whether there was a difference between the groups across various years at the university, the participants' anxiety level in the English classroom was analyzed. Table 3 above presents the overall results.

As indicated in table 3, the results report that sophomore students were the most anxious (M=3.02, SD=0.823), followed by senior students (M=2.93, SD=0.843), and juniors (M=2.89, SD=0.769). The freshmen students (M=2.78, SD=0.854) were, on average, the least anxious students in the English classes. It can be assumed that the freshmen students in this study have entered the university with a strong motivation to learn English.

Measuring Language Use Anxiety (LUA)

This part presents the overall results for students' language use anxiety identifying the differences between the *nominal variables*: (1) English composition courses, (2) students' major and (3) year in college.

Language Use Anxiety According to the English Course. Table 4 on the next page shows the descriptive statistics related to language use anxiety in different English courses.

Of the three English courses, the highest overall mean score in language use anxiety was for students in ENG 112 (M=2.66, SD=0.839), followed by those in ENG 100 (M=2.50, SD=0.871) and ENG 110 (M=2.38, SD=0.920). It seems that students in ENG 112 were the most anxious than students in ENG 110 and ENG 100 when they have to use English.

Language Use Anxiety According to the Students' Major. Table 5 above shows the results for the students' language use anxiety to their study program.

In comparisons between the scores for the students' major, the highest mean value recorded is M=2.81 (SD=0.832) in the MCM program, indicating the highest level of English use anxiety. Among the four majors, of the moderate-anxiety group, students majoring in English were least anxious in terms of using English (M=2.09, SD=0.883) followed by CBA (M=2.51, SD=0.862),

Table 4

Language Use Anxiety (LUA) Results According to the English Course

ANOVA according to Course						
	Course	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**F**	**Sig. (2-T)**
LUA	ENG 100	82	2.50	0.871		
	ENG 110	94	2.38	0.920	1.781	0.17
	ENG 112	57	2.66	0.839		
	Total	233	2.49	0.887		

Table 5

Language Use Anxiety (LUA) Results According to the Study Program

ANOVA according to Course						
	Program	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**F**	**Sig. (2-T)**
LUA	CBA	152	2.51	0.862		
	MCM	31	2.81	0.832		
	Comp	6	2.75	0.969	3.068	0.02
	MIS	8	2.56	1.078		
	ENG	36	2.09	0.883		
	Total	233	2.49	0.887		

Table 6

Language Use Anxiety (LUA) Results According to Year in University

ANOVA according to Course						
	Year	**N**	**Mean**	**SD**	**F**	**Sig. (2-T)**
LUA	Fresh.	131	2.32	0.855		
	Soph.	81	2.80	0.864		
	Jun.	15	2.43	0.922	5.152	0.00
	Sen.	6	2.32	0.913		
	Total	233	2.49	0.887		

MIS (M=2.56, SD=1.078), and Computer Sciences (M=2.75, SD=0.969). Based on these results, it can be concluded that English students' language confidence is stronger and it certainly motivates them to use English. It, in return, helped students become less anxious when speaking English in class.

Language Use Anxiety According to the Students' Year in University. The table below presents the results of the language use anxiety according to the students' year in university. The calculated mean values of the answers given for language use anxiety by years at the university according to ANOVA for mean differences between the year in university is not significant (p= 0.00). The results indicate that the ranges and averages for the four variables were nearly identical, and therefore, a slight difference of anxiety between the groups was found. The highest registered scores recorded were for the sophomore students (M=2.80, SD=0.864).

Table 7

The Relationship Between Classroom Anxiety and Language Use Anxiety

Correlations	
English Class Anxiety	-.179**
English Use Anxiety	-.313**
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).	

Correlational Analysis

In this study, the possible relationship between the English class anxiety and language use anxiety was examined. To understand whether there was a relationship or not, the Pearson's correlation analysis was used and shown in Table 7.

From the 2-tailed correlation analysis the results indicate that the correlation between English class anxiety (-.179) and English use anxiety (-313) was negative at the 0.01 level. That is, if the students' English use anxiety level increases, their English class anxiety decreases. As is clear in Table 7, the students were significantly more anxious about English use in the classroom when compared to the level of anxiety about the English class. In other words, the more anxious students were about their English use, the less anxious they reported being in their English classes.

This confirms results from the earlier studies (MacIntyre, 1999; Dörnyei, 2005) showing that when having to use the language, students often become upset, nervous, and even panicked because they have little practice in using English.

Instructor Perspectives as Reflected in Interviews on Motivation within the English

Semi-structured interviews were used to elicit ESL instructors' use of motivational strategies to reduce students' anxiety in the classroom. All interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees, transcribed and analyzed. Therefore, the study results provide a spectrum of the instructors' experiences. All interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the interviewees, transcribed and analyzed. Therefore, the study results provide a spectrum of the instructors' experiences.

The six English instructors who participated in the interviews were teaching in the English Writing Program. The main purposes were to consider motivational strategies that increase student motivation and reduce anxiety and to gather beneficial informational data that can be implemented in a classroom. The questions in both the survey and interview were focused on motivation—specifically, how instructors integrate this concept into students' way of thinking and bring it with them to the classroom. Generally, the results of semi-structured interviews were positive.

Based on their responses to the interviews, English instructors had understood their role in motivating their students; minimizing their anxiety was highly important. One question in the interview was *"How do you see the teacher's role in motivating his/her students?"* Instructors' answers to this question were highly positive; the teacher has a fundamental role in

motivating his or her students. A noticeable answer included the following: "The teacher is a friend and must help the student on his/her journey".

The analysis of the second question "What strategies do you use that motivate students? Which ones are the most effective?" indicated that instructors use different strategies to motivate their students. One respondent offered an interesting answer to this question:

> "I have served as an English instructor for more than 30 years for different age groups, yet I still try to find the most effective ways to motivate my students. I have already implemented some creative motivational techniques that help students engage in learning, and that also increases my expectations for students' outcomes. However, by examining the lack of motivation—when students are not eager to do something—it's clear that we as instructors must attempt to use assorted procedures to stimulate students' motivation for academic achievement. By applying those strategies, there will definitely be progression in time."

Another interesting answer to this question related to the instructor's beliefs about student motivation:

> "I believe that an instructor's role in motivating students is very significant—more than 80%. However, the rest must come from the student. Motivation cannot be spoon-fed. Motivation to learn something is not necessarily a fixed state of mind. The first is communication; the second is that of being an ideal, respectful, and humble role model. If you use these combined strategies, you will be able to see the motivation of students through their performance. Many different factors can either help or obstruct motivation for a student. If the teacher seems uninspired and bored, the students will have a similar reaction."

Moreover, the importance of motivation among the English students was considered highly important. Another distinct answer was found to this question: "Motivation in English classes is particularly important because most of the students are not English majors and so automatically show less motivation and interest in English courses than their priority major courses". The instructor emphasized that it is vital to constantly remind the students that by sorting out and improving their English, they will consequently improve in their major courses as well. The analysis of the second question demonstrated that all teachers seem to agree that motivation is a very important factor for making English learners more motivated and less anxious; this is critical in English classes.

In the third question (How do you know when a student is motivated?) instructors responded that a good indicator of a highly motivated student is whether they actively produce work, including writing essays, reading the required material, and consistently meeting deadlines. Another indicator of a motivated student is "the look on their face, and showing up to class shows their desire to learn."

Moreover, in the fourth question (How are you an effective motivator? What do you do to reduce the anxiety in the classroom?), teachers affirmed that their students feel anxious during lectures. The analysis revealed that the best way to keep students motivated is to always keep them busy with productive tasks and ongoing dialogue in varying tones of voice rather than with basic, mundane lectures and presentations. Emphasis was placed on the use of visual aids, audio materials, interactive computer programs, and other methods of stimulation in the classroom to avoid losing the attention of students and to encourage their learning. In addition, helpful templates and guidelines assist students in writing an excellent paper; blogs provide daily class procedures, objectives, and tasks that will allow students to keep up with the class. In other words, if a student misses a class and does not know what is needed for the upcoming class, the student himself will be motivated to identify the missed material by reading the class blog and searching for any important assignments and due dates. Most of the respondents agreed that for enhancing self-motivation and reducing anxiety, learners should be encouraged not to worry about making grammatical errors while communicating in a second language. Positive feedback also seemed to be effective in raising the students' motivation. Some instructors responded that they encouraged the learners through activities and promoted learners' ability by making the learning process easier and aligned with their English level.

Finally, analysis of responses to the question "What are some problems associated with motivating your students?" indicated that one main source of the problems associated with motivating students is the class size, according to instructors. Instructors stated that if the class contains many students, the teacher is unable to give the same amount of time to everyone; the teacher spends the majority of his/her time with stronger students and leaves weaker ones behind. The students left behind may lose motivation, a situation that can be frustrating and difficult for the teacher to repair.

All things considered, it seems reasonable to assume that instructors' answers were very positive. Analysis of the responses to the interview questions support the aims of this study with respect to the instructors' role in motivating students, supporting successful learning, and developing a learner-friendly classroom climate, thus contributing to anxiety reduction.

The Importance of Using of Motivational Strategies to Reduce Anxiety

Follow up interviews were conducted after the first round interviews. The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to elicit more detailed information about instructors' use of motivational strategies that were specifically related to anxiety reduction in the learning process. The above procedure of data collection and analysis were applied to the follow up interviews, in which four ESL instructors participated. The follow up questions that were set out to explore were 'What are the sources of anxiety that the students experience in your classroom?' and 'What specific strategies do you use to reduce students' anxiety in learning English?'. The results of the follow up

interviews reports on the signs of anxious students and the explanations and actions that the instructors use to reduce anxiety in the process of learning English. From the analysis of the interview three major sources of anxiety were found and related to the research (Ohata, 2005; Williams and Andrade, 2008) about anxiety. Also, six motivational strategies emerged, each of which is different in reasons as they presume distinct understanding of the relationship between motivational strategies and anxiety reduction in the English learning process. Thus, each action represents a type of motivational strategy that the instructors take considering the sources of the students' anxiety.

The three major sources of anxiety identified in this study were:
- The students as English learners and their communication
- The instructional practice in terms of classroom procedure and language testing
- Fear of negative evaluation

Six Identified Motivational Strategies to Control Students' Anxiety

1. Build a community of learners. This strategy enables the instructors to get to know their students by learning their names and help them know each other. This strategy would help in building a community of learners within the classroom. Also, creating a friendly, and learning-supportive classroom environment may reduce the anxiety in the classroom.
2. Find out about students' individual learning goals for English. Using this strategy, teachers will find a way to link students' learning goals with the curricula and do their best to achieve students' learning goals.
3. Find out students' learning preferences. This strategy was linked to the instructors' belief that by finding out students' learning preferences and accommodate them in the classroom would definitely make the students comfortable and anxious free classroom. In addition, identifying students with poor language proficiency and accommodating them at the beginning of the semester is a very important strategy.
4. Avoid involving students in competition. This strategy referred to avoiding students work against each other. Instead, instructors helped students work in groups or pairs to support each other.
5. Give a pat on the back. With this strategy the instructors inspired students to communicate by using phrases such as "I liked your argument." or "Great job. You have been very creative." Inspiring students will always will allow the students that the instructor wants them to learn and improve themselves.
6. Encouraging students by using positive feedback. Here the instructors shared their experiences on how to motivate students in the writing process through positive feedback. Instructors use first and final draft of the student's paper and used encouraging and positive feedback to show them

that everyone of is doing something well by giving them opportunities to improve. If they focused on the mistakes only, the students would get discouraged and most probably produce a poor paper.

Discussion

Based on the results of this study, we can conclude that the factors of motivation and anxiety influence learners in the ESL classroom. According to Brown et al. (2001), high motivation and low anxiety are two crucial factors related to success in language learning and provide strong arguments for the results of this study. Much of the scholarship has focused on this evidence. However, not everyone agrees that this is the most important aspect of the situation.

Returning to the first research question, *What is the overall anxiety level of the students learning English in the writing program based on the AMTB instrument?*, the results reported having moderate to high level of anxiety in terms of English classes and English use in the classroom. In addition, the study has found that students were significantly more anxious about English use in the classroom when compared to the level of anxiety about the English class.

Regarding the second research question, *How do the English instructors motivate their students to learn English and which strategies do they use to reduce students' anxiety in the ESL classroom?*, this study reveals that all of the strategies investigated in this study were relied upon by the instructors to motivate the learners and reduce their anxiety in the ESL classroom. Factors such as lack of effort, lack of motivation, poor language learning habits and low ability in language learning seem to cause anxiety (Schwarz, 1997). It should be noted that a teacher plays an important role in student learning choices and experiences and in making learning meaningful to students. Also, his study revealed that motivational strategies may vary according to the students' approaches to learning, instructors' strategies used in the classroom and the instructional environment. Communication, respect, and activities that make learning and comprehension easier for the students' English level highlight the importance of teachers' motivational strategies and their effective use in reducing or eliminating the anxiety that the students experience in the English classroom.

Finally, this study is limited only to the identification, comparison, and analyses of the English language anxiety of Arab students in Kuwait, and the results of this study are based upon the AMTB instrument and series of semi-structured interviews with ESL instructors. Further research on controlling student anxiety and motivational strategies used by the instructor to contribute to student achievement could provide the basis for a more comprehensive picture. From another perspective, it would also be interesting to explore the relationship between language anxiety and teaching strategies through

direct observation of student and teacher behavior in the classroom. In the light of the findings and discussions, the following recommendations can be made: (i) Develop a teacher-friendly agenda viewing ESL motivation as an important factor in the ESL environment; (ii) Teachers may want to consider providing students with low-anxiety learning contexts and a more accommodating and friendly atmosphere; (iii) Identify optimal motivational strategies from the students' perspective; (iv) Delve further into the factors contributing to increased students' anxiety; (v) Explore and identify factors in the classroom environment, types of tasks or assignments, and instructors' behaviors that contribute to student anxiety. ∎

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APPENDIX A

Construct	Scale
Integrativeness	Integrative orientation (four items) Attitudes toward the target group (eight items) Interest in foreign languages (ten items)
Attitudes toward the learning situation	English course evaluation (ten items) English teacher evaluation (ten items)
Motivation	Motivation intensity (ten items) The desire to learn English (ten items) Attitudes toward learning English (ten items)
Language anxiety	English class anxiety (ten items) English use anxiety (ten items)
Instrumentality	Instrumental orientation (four items)
Parental encouragement	Parental encouragement (ten items)