Summary

For a long time, it was generally considered that the knowledge of the language, including voice, vocabulary, grammar and language skills is the key to success in foreign language teaching. Now, with the application of linguistics and the development of psycholinguistics, it has been acknowledged that non-linguistic knowledge like, cultural differences, emotional factors, learning strategies and background of learners affect foreign language learning.

It is generally claimed by teachers that learners are ‘not willing to learn’, ‘dull’, ‘can’t do anything’ etc. But before a teacher puts a label and accuses a student of not wanting to learn, perhaps it would be better to evaluate the teaching approach (Koul:1992). There are many factors that affect the learning of the language as listed above. These include cognitive, developmental, affective factors socio-economic status and family environment. Out of these, most are out of the range of the teacher except the affective factors that include attitude, motivation, anxiety, empathy, belief, emotion and learning style of the learner. Teachers usually have firsthand experience of the affective factors of the learner. And most important, the affective factors can be modified more easily than the any other factors like cognitive or developmental or socio-economic factors.

English has been variously viewed as ‘a window to world’, the language of the superior white race, the language of the elite, the language of status, the language of science and technology, the link language, the lingua franca etc. Keeping in mind the importance of the language, the state government of Punjab made English a compulsory subject in primary education in 1999. Realizing the global significance of English as a link language, the Punjab Chief Minister asked the British Council to set up an English Training Institute in the state to impart quality training to the Master English Trainers in June 2009. Despite such efforts to raise the standard of English in Punjab, the status could be judged by a statement of the regional newspaper The Tribune, that stated:

“Even three years after the subject was introduced in the primary schools, most students are unable to write their names in English.....most students at their best write the alphabet but were unable to identify any alphabet.”(Cited in Judge:2001).

Also in the present days in the state of Punjab, the English language teaching process is far from satisfactory in higher classes as well. The condition is worse in rural Punjab where even after studying English as a compulsory subject for several years, the learner is unable to make simple meaningful sentences. The overall result is that even some qualified graduates and even post graduates feel seriously handicapped when the situation demands the use of English in the
spoken or written form. Maximum number of students in Punjab face re-appear in English subject rather than any other subject in arts stream during their graduation.

Reducing the cognitive-centeredness of previous language learning research, foreign and second language educators are currently beginning to recognize the importance of the cognitive and affective domain in the language learning process. Consequently, there has been a greater understanding and appreciation of affective variables and - as Hilgard (1963:267 cited in Arnold 1999) noted long ago - “purely cognitive theories of learning will be rejected unless a role is assigned to affectivity”. Moreover, Schumann’s (1998) neurobiological model derives from an examination of second language acquisition from a neurobiological perspective. A recent book, ‘The Neurobiology of Affect in Language’ offers a summary of the author’s theory. According to Schumann, affect is seen as central to the understanding of L2 attainment/achievement and the author argues that second language acquisition is emotionally driven and emotion underlies most, if not all cognition. In a similar vein, Damasio (1994) has articulated that even on the neurobiological level emotions are part of reason, and Oatley & Jenkins (1996:122) affirm that “emotions are not extras – they are the very centre of human life”.

English is the most powerful tool for knowledge in the present world. But the present handling of English in Punjab, more specifically in districts like Ferozepur is not satisfactory. So the present study is an attempt to estimate such conditions and to study the place of English in Punjab keeping in mind the affective factors of the learner so that proper care can be taken by the teachers and the parents to cultivate the desirable output.

The main motivation for the present study came from the personal experience of English teaching and a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the current state of the English teaching and learning process with the conviction that even within the prevailing constraints this research can suggest steps towards a positive change in English teaching and make it truly effective.

The subjects selected for the research are Tenth class passed students because the final examination of the class is conducted through the Punjab school Education Board, so there is more uniformity in the evaluation of the examination. And their marks in English will be noted to compare with their score in the affective factor questionnaire.

The area selected for research is the rural-urban schools of Ferozepur district because the researcher has the first hand experience of teaching in the area. It is believed that the understanding gained of various factors during teaching English will be an added advantage in conducting the study. So the researcher has framed the issue to be investigated as
“Role of Affective Factors in Second Language Acquisition: A Comparative Study of the Urban-Rural Schools of Ferozepur District”

Significance of the study

An average student with the right approach will have an achievement level much higher than an intelligent student with the wrong approach in relation to language acquisition. It is therefore also necessary to stress the affective aspects of the language learners consciously so as to provide them with the right approach to language acquisition. In the presence of negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, stress, anger or depression, our optimal learning potential may be compromised. The most innovative techniques and the most attractive materials may be rendered inadequate, if not useless, by negative affective reactions involved in the language learning process. Hence, when dealing with the affective side of language learners, attention is to be paid to overcoming problems created by negative emotions and fostering and encouraging facilitative emotions. The teaching schedule must progress slowly, keeping pace with the child’s psychological and mental development. An ideal teaching syllabus is one which is closely matched with the developmental timetable of the child. A child must be given what he can take and only as much as he can take (Koul: 1992). For providing this kind of ‘teaching schedule’ and ‘teaching syllabus’ the present research will be quite helpful.

A teacher’s target is to “prepare” the students for the examination and not just to make pupils competent in the use of the language they are learning (Bala Subramanian, 1985, P. 56). But the system cares more for degrees and diplomas than for knowledge.

More importantly, the significance of the study lies in the fact that like Orientalism where much study has been done by the people who themselves have no firsthand experience of the subjugated position of the Occidents, the study of second language acquisition has been mostly researched in the West where the firsthand experience of the social and psychological factors of second language learners is not available.

Although teachers can do a lot at the class room level to stimulate students’ involvement in the teaching learning process, their efforts will not yield results if they lack a framework for guidance in selecting activities that will foster long term and high quality involvement in learning. Some students seem naturally enthusiastic about learning, but many need or expect their instructors to inspire, challenge and stimulate them. (Bayat 157-58)

Emotional climate, one of the most important factors in any type of classroom learning, is largely overlooked in the schools of Punjab. Teachers can reduce negative factors and develop positive ones by doing activities to build a positive group dynamic, by including students in
deciding aspects of the course and choosing activities that are motivating for the age and interests of the learners.

The quantitative data collected through the administration of various tools on selected samples will be raw so it will be processed and analyzed according to the aims of the study by applying the appropriate statistics. In order to solve the research problem and sub problems, descriptive statistic, t-tests, simple and multiple linear regressions analysis and variance analysis will be applied according to the study. The null hypothesis will be evaluated with the help of the interpretation of the data. It will be tabulated, organized, analyzed and interpreted for drawing conclusions and valid generalizations. The data will be studied from as many angles as possible to explore all factors.

**Chapter I: Introduction**

The first chapter of the thesis introduced the topic and briefly introduced both the variables of the project i.e. the affective factors and second language acquisition. It then presented the relationship between them. The chapter illustrated the importance of affective factors in comparison with other factors such as social, economic, cognitive, developmental etc in second language acquisition. The chapter then described the need for the research in the selected area. The first chapter is concluded by providing the further design of the thesis.

**Chapter II: The Review of the Related Literature**

This chapter presented a review of the research done in the field of affective factors in second language acquisition. It also included a brief study of the role of other factors such as social, economic, cognitive, developmental etc in second language acquisition.

The survey of literature for the present study includes the following viewpoints from various linguists:

Gardner and his associates (1977) conclude that language proficiency is the result of motivation, language aptitude and language learning strategies.

Rod Ellis (1986) asserted that the effect of motivation and attitude appears to be much more than just that of aptitude. The most successful learners will be those who have both a talent and a high level of motivation for learning.

Krashen (1987) believes that a learner who has high anxiety, low motivation and low self-confidence has a high affective filter which is an obstacle to L2 learning.

Dalip Singh (2006) opined that it is often said that cognitive learning may assure one a ‘top position’ but alone it is unable to make one a ‘top person’. It is not possible to feel comfortable at any workplace if one is not comfortable in one’s skin. He further stated that language learning
strategies are also affected by emotional factors that in turn play a determining role in the process of second language acquisition. He further added, "the latest research in neurobiology has shown that human beings operate from two minds: emotional mind and rational mind. The harmony between the two minds is what constitute emotional intelligence and is key to a richer and more fulfilled life.

Samita Sinha (2009) concluded that urban students are better achievers than rural students because the former are more emotionally adjusted than the rural ones.

David A. Lieberman (2012) explains the relationship between emotion and memory in second language acquisition. He says “two variables currently seem to play an important role, the intensity of emotion and the way in memory is assessed. Midler forms of emotions seem to enhance memory....” He further concluded that the effectiveness of studying depends not only on the amount of time spent in study but on how this studying is spread over time, on thinking actively and deeply about the material while studying it.

Thus the review of related literature shows that the role of affective factors is of immense importance in comparison to the social, biological, developmental and cognitive domain. The researcher will try to make a comparative evaluation of the role of affective factors in second language acquisition in the rural-urban schools in Ferozepur District.

Chapter III: The Statement of the Problem

This chapter provided the conceptual framework of the study. It included the definition of affective factors and the concept of second language acquisition. It also pinpointed the relation of affective factors and second language acquisition in the rural-urban schools of Ferozepur district.

The title of the research work was “Role of Affective Factors in Second Language Acquisition: A Comparative Study Of The Urban-Rural Schools Of Ferozepur District.”

In the present study, after selecting the students randomly, the data is collected from them by administering Attitude/Motivation Test Battery originally developed by R. C. Gardner and also the marks in English language in the 10th Board class were collected from the students. Subsequently, the data was scored and statistical treatment is given. The following hypothesis were evaluated with the applications of the analysed data:

1. There exists no significant relationship between affective factors and English language acquisition of boys and girls.

2. There exists no significant difference between the affective factors and English language acquisition of rural and urban students.
3. There exists no significant difference in the achievement in English language and affective factors of rural and urban boy students.
4. There exists no significant difference in the achievement in English language and affective factors of rural and urban girl students.
5. There exists no significant difference in the English language achievement and affective factors of urban boys and girls.
6. There exists no significant difference in the English language achievement and affective factors of rural boys and girls.

**Chapter IV: Research Methodology**

This chapter presented the methodology of the study. It began with the description of the subjects, focusing on their category, selection procedure and background. It further described the procedure for data collection and analyzed the data to address the research question. The following statistical methods were used: Mean and standard deviation to find the most and least value for the respective variable, correlation analysis to see the relationship between affective factors and second language acquisition, ANOVA to assess any significant differences among means of both the variables and finally the t-test to examine if there were significant differences between the mean scores of the test and the marks of the students.

**Tools Used**

1) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery developed by R. C. Gardner, was used to measure the level of affective factors.

2) Percentage of Marks of previous Board Examination of the students in English was used to measure the level of achievement in English Language.

The present study was conducted on the basis of the randomization sampling technique. The affective factors influencing second language learning of 300 students studying in different schools located in the rural and urban areas of Ferozepur District were investigated and compared. The data was obtained through an affective factor inventory and marks achieved in English in the class Tenth examination were also noted to know the academic achievement in English of the students. The English-language version of the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) modified by the researcher was used. This modification was essential as per the local area-specific conditions.

**Chapter V: Presentation and Analysis of Data**
This part reported both the quantitative and the qualitative data and analysis of the data collected to address the research question. The data was presented and then analysed in a meaningful way so as to reach a meaningful conclusion in accordance with the statement of the problem. This led to bring out the pedagogical implications.

**Chapter VI: Conclusion**

The conclusion included a brief summary of the investigations and results drawn from it. The chapter discussed the findings of the data. Based on the findings, the researcher presented the conclusions and recommendations of the study. Further, it pointed out pedagogic implications for second language acquisition. It also included a comparison of findings of the research with the previous research findings and indicated the limitations of the study. It finally ended by providing suggestions for further research.

**Pedagogical implications of the Research**

The results of the research show a significant influence of affective factors on learning of L2. An emotionally balanced environment is must need of a progressive learning. Physically students may be present in the class-room but emotionally and mentally somewhere else. This certainly will lead to wastage of the most innovative techniques and the most attractive materials. Thus negative affective reactions involved in the language learning process can be the cause of stagnation in the teaching-learning process. Hence, when dealing with the affective side of language learners, attention is to be paid to overcoming problems created by negative emotions and fostering and encouraging facilitative emotions.

Significance of the study lies in the fact that emotional intelligence is no static like intelligence quotient but rather it is dynamic and can be adapted or modified for creative purposes. Thus the affective factors can be modified more easily than the other factors like cognitive or developmental or socio-economic factors. Therefore the teaching of English should not be considered as a mere teaching of grammar, vocabulary or sentence structure. Students overall participation is must in successful L2 learning.

The present study reveals that non-rural students are far better and adjusted emotionally and educationally to language learning situation (both 1st and 2nd) and have higher academic achievement than SC and ST boys. This difference was particularly seen in rural areas in comparison to urban areas. (Samita Sinha, 2009)

Emotions are important in the classroom in two major ways. First, emotions have an impact on learning. They influence the ability to process information and to accurately understand what learners encounter. For these reasons, it is important for teachers to create a
positive, emotionally safe classroom environment to provide for the optimal learning of students. Second, learning how to manage feelings and relationships constitutes a kind of “emotional intelligence” that enables people to be successful. Emotional intelligence deals with understanding oneself and others (Gardner, 1999). Specific behaviors and skills can be taught to help students develop emotional intelligence.

One’s emotional state has the potential to influence his thinking. For example, students learn and perform more successfully when they feel secure, happy, and excited about the subject matter. Although emotions have the potential to energize students’ thinking, emotional states also have the potential to interfere with learning. If students are overly excited or enthusiastic, they might work carelessly or quickly rather than working methodically or carefully. In addition, emotions such as anger, anxiety, and sadness have the potential to distract students’ learning efforts by interfering with their ability to attend to the tasks at hand. Emotions can interfere with students’ learning in several ways; including 1) limiting the capacity to balance emotional issues with schoolwork, 2) creating anxiety specifically about schoolwork, and 3) triggering emotional responses to classroom events.

**Limitations of the study**

This study does not take age, socio-economic status, developmental and cognitive factors into account. The study is limited to small size population (n=300). The population area is also small i.e. the data is collected from schools situated in rural and urban areas of Ferozepur district only. So it is not acceptable to generalize the findings of this study across different ages or different levels of language proficiency. Another limitation of the present study is that it is based on the academic achievement of students at secondary level.

**Suggestions for further research**

The study was limited to a single District of the Punjab province and the sample size was small, that is (300). To give a more holistic picture of the situation, further large scale, nationwide and longitudinal studies are required to develop better understanding of the correlation between affective factors in ESL learning. Only a mass of research can provide directions for policy making in ESL settings like India where the target language is perceived and is necessary for the attainment of economic goals. Future studies can use the findings of the present research to correlate instrumental / integrative motivation to students’ proficiency and achievement in ESL in Punjab.

In the present research sex, age, and ethnic bias were not taken into account. A more detailed study is needed to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and these
variables in second language learning. Moreover, in the current study, the effect of emotional intelligence was on second language learning, further studies are needed to investigate the effect of emotional intelligence on second language teaching. Another study could examine the role of emotional intelligence in language testing, specifically the relationship between emotional intelligence and different test forms. This study was conducted in an EFL situation. Further research with the same format and design can be conducted in other situations to compare the results and to find out whether EQ has different effects in different contexts. Moreover in present study, role of affective factors is delimited in achievement in English in secondary school students. So there is scope to conduct research to evaluate role of affective factors in achievement in other subjects and languages as well. Further the research can be done with same topic in case of graduate and post graduate students.

REFERENCES


