



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***AFFECTIVE FACTORS IN SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING ABILITY
ATTRITION AMONG ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS***

AZADEH ASGARI

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

2012

“A Journey of a Thousand Miles Begins With a Single Step.”

Lao-tzu
Chinese philosopher (604 B.C. - 531 B.C.)



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**By
AZADEH ASGARI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

June 2012

To My Heart And Soul: Nasrin & Morteza.

Your Love And Support Sustained Me

Throughout The Journey.



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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June 2012

Chairman: Ghazali Bin Mustapha, PhD

Faculty: Educational Studies

The prominent intention of this study is to investigate the influence of affective factors on second language (L2) writing ability attrition among English foreign language learners. The research objectives were investigated to identify a) the differences between learners' writing performance at the two stages, b) the effect of proficiency levels and groups of learners on L2 writing attrition, c) the relationship among affective factors and second language writing ability attrition, and d) the determinant predictor factors on L2 writing ability attrition among Persian language learners.

The intended research design methodology for this dissertation was as a mixed method design starting with a quantitative method followed by a qualitative method. In the quantitative phases, after making an initial pilot study, a TOEFL

writing test, the General Background Question (GBQ) survey, and the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) questionnaire were conducted among 366 learners who were randomly assigned among the EFL learners at the Kish English Institute's (KEI) at the two stages. The dependent variables are the comparison of scores in the learners' TOEFL writing performance based on the five aspects of Jacobs' rubric including the overall score of the essay and the score of each component between two groups across the three levels of language proficiency. The Statistical Package for Social Science software version 16 was used to assist in coding the raw quantitative data. After the analysis of quantitative phase was done, the structured interview was conducted among 12 volunteers at the Kish English Institute's (KEI) and recorded with their permission to explore the in-depth perception of the EFL learners regarding the L2 writing experience. The outcomes from the qualitative data were used to determine common responses to compare perceived issues and recommendations in language attrition and other learning factors.

Consequently, the quantitative data analysis consistently illustrated statistically significant L2 writing aspects (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics) along with their performance in the two various stages within a period of six months interval. Likewise, the null hypothesis regarding the impact of proficiency levels and groups of respondents was rejected for four aspects of L2 writing and this hypothesis was not supported by the mechanics factors. The length of L2 exposure was also significantly affective in the advanced level of the EFL learners. The other affective factors also have high associations in

predicting L2 writing attrition. The qualitative interview data in the following phase was consistent with the detected quantitative results in the first phases: participants admitted that lack of specific knowledge, specific vocabulary for an unfamiliar topic, lack of confidence in speaking, age, educational level, lack of motivation and negative attitude toward learning and speaking can be major factors leading to the attrition. Moreover, they also emphasized the effect of anxiety in the English classes.

The results of this study will enlighten educators, administrators and support staff of the barriers to complete the ESL/EFL program and to propose solutions that will help learners to succeed. Finally, some pedagogical implications that would prevent the L2 writing attrition were presented.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia bagi memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**FAKTOR AFEKTIF ATAS BAHASA PENULISAN KEDUA KEBOLEHAN
KECICIRAN ANTARA INGGERIS SEBAGAI PELAJAR
BAHASA ASING**

Oleh

AZADEH ASGARI

Jun 2012

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Matlamat utama kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji peranan faktor afektif terhadap kadar keciciran keupayaan menulis dikalangan pelajar EFL Parsi. Objektif utama telah dibincangkan bagi mengenal pasti a) perbezaan antara prestasi penulisan pelajar pada dua peringkat, b) kesan tahap penguasaan dan kumpulan pelajar terhadap keciciran penulisan L2, c) hubungkait antara faktor afektif dan keciciran kebolehan menulis L2, d) dan faktor-faktor penentu keciciran kebolehan menulis L2 dikalangan pelajar bahasa Parsi.

Kaedah reka bentuk kajian yang digunakan untuk disertasi ini adalah kaedah reka bentuk campuran yang dimulakan dengan kaedah kuantitatif dan diikuti dengan kaedah kualitatif. Di dalam fasa kuantitatif, selepas membuat kajian rintis awal, ujian penulisan TOEFL, soalselidik GBQ dan soalselidik AMTB telah dijalankan terhadap 366 pelajar yang telah dipilih secara rawak dikalangan

pelajar dewasa EFL pada dua peringkat di Institut Kei. Pembolehubah bersandar bagi kajian ini adalah perbandingan skor dalam prestasi penulisan TOEFL pelajar berdasarkan lima aspek rubrik Jacob termasuk skor keseluruhan esei dan skor bagi setiap komponen antara dua kumpulan merentasi tiga tahap penguasaan bahasa. Perisian analisis kandungan SPSS versi 16 telah digunakan bagi membantu dalam pengekodan data mentah kuantitatif. Selepas analisis fasa kuantitatif telah dilakukan, temubual berstruktur telah dijalankan di kalangan 12 sukarelawan di KISH Bahasa Inggeris di Institut (KEI) dan direkodkan dengan kebenaran mereka bagi mengkaji persepsi mendalam pelajar EFL berkenaan pengalaman penulisan L2. Hasil dari data kualitatif telah digunakan bagi menentukan respon umum untuk membandingkan tanggapan isu-isu dan cadangan dalam keciciran bahasa dan faktor pembelajaran yang lain.

Secara kesimpulannya, analisis data kuantitatif secara konsisten menggambarkan secara statistik signifikan aspek penulisan L2 (kandungan, organisasi, perbendaharaan kata, penggunaan bahasa, dan mekanik) bersama-sama dengan prestasi mereka dalam dua peringkat yang pelbagai dalam tempoh enam bulan berselang. Hipotesis nul kajian mengenai kesan tahap penguasaan dan kumpulan responden ditolak bagi empat aspek penulisan L2 dan hipotesis ini tidak disokong oleh faktor-faktor mekanik. Kepanjangan pendedahan L2 juga memberi kesan signifikan terhadap pelajar EFL tahap tinggi. Faktor-faktor afektif lain juga mempunyai perkaitan yang tinggi dalam menentukan keciciran penulisan L2. Data temubual kualitatif dalam fasa yang berikutnya adalah selaras

dengan keputusan kuantitatif yang dikesan dalam fasa yang pertama: peserta mengakui bahawa kurang pengetahuan tertentu, perbendaharaan kata tertentu bagi topik yang tidak biasa, kekurangan keyakinan dalam pertuturan, umur, tahap pendidikan, kekurangan motivasi dan sikap negatif terhadap pembelajaran dan pertuturan boleh menjadi faktor utama yang mendorong kepada keciciran. Selain itu, faktor-faktor tersebut turut menekankan kesan kebimbangan di dalam kelas bahasa Inggeris.

Hasil kajian ini diharapkan agar dapat memberi pengetahuan kepada para pendidik, pentadbir dan kakitangan sokongan terhadap halangan dalam melengkapkan program ESL/EFL, juga untuk mencadangkan penyelesaian yang dapat membantu pelajar untuk berjaya. Akhir sekali, beberapa implikasi pedagogi yang boleh menghalang keciciran penulisan L2 turut dibentangkan.

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Azadeh Asgari
June 2012

APPROVAL

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 5 June 2012 to conduct the final examination of Azadeh Asgari on her thesis entitled “Affective Factor in Second Language Writing Ability Attrition among English as a Foreign Language Learners” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

AZADEH ASGARI

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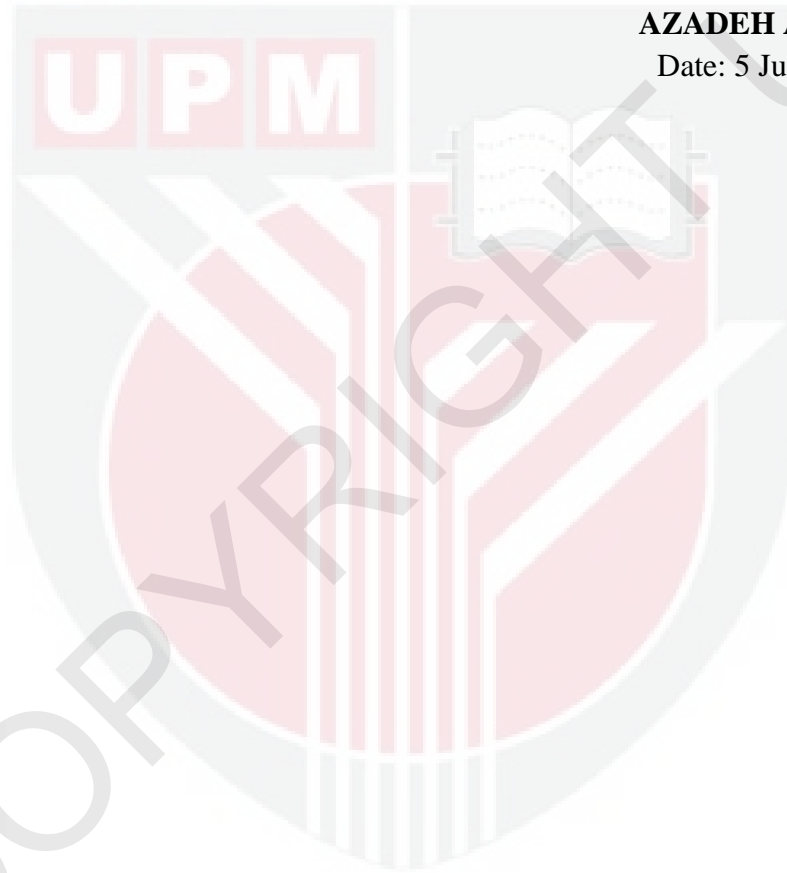


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