

# EFL Saudi Students' Class Emotions and Their Contributions to Their English Achievement at Taif University

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## Abstract

This paper investigates class academic emotions of anger, anxiety, enjoyment, hope, hopelessness, pride, boredom and shame in the academic situation and their contributions to Saudi EFL students' English achievement. It also strives to find if there are any differences in class emotions and achievement according gender and streams (science and humanities). The sample consists of 315 (177 males & 138 females) university students. The Pekrun, Goetz, Titz and Perry (2002) class-related emotions scale was used to determine class emotions of students. The findings revealed that there are no differences between science and humanities ( $M = 22.763$ ,  $SD = 8.118$ ) in achievement and class emotions except in boredom in favour of science stream. The results also indicated that there were no differences between males and females in class emotions except in the enjoyment in favour of females. It also revealed that there were significant differences between males and females in English achievement in favour of females. On the other hand, it was found that emotions explained 65.8 % in variance of the students' academic achievement. Furthermore, the findings have implications for students, teachers, and curriculum developers who are to develop a curriculum well-suited with the needs of language learners.

**Keywords:** class emotions, gender, academic streams, English achievement, EFL Saudi students

## 1. Literature Review

### 1.1 Introduction

Learning outcomes such as cognitive, affective, motivational and physiological components are very important. Traditionally teachers are used to concentrating on the cognitive side and neglect the affective domain, though emotions are important as an output and input for learning and come forward at the beginning of the learning process. Learning English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia is facing many problems related to their cultural beliefs and attitudes that might be somehow connected to the class learning as well as other reasons. One of these reasons is the lack of taking students' emotions in consideration. Academic achievement flourishes with emotions such as enjoyment of learning, hope, pride, anger, anxiety, shame, hopelessness or boredom. These emotions are critically important for students' motivation, learning, performance, identity development, and health (Schutz & Pekrlln, 2007). This paper concentrates on the everyday university class academic emotions of anger, anxiety, enjoyment, hope, hopelessness, pride, boredom and shame. In this study, emotions are investigated in the context of learning English as a foreign language. In addition, this study provides evidence that the different emotions Saudi EFL students experience before, during and after the English class are also related to English achievement. This study expands the literature on achievement emotions by extending research to university students.

During the process of learning, students go back and forth between cognition and affect, at times experiencing both at the same time. It is important to remember that the students are not machines but also human beings, they have the emotions that can enhance as well as complicate their understanding the course or achievement. Then focus of this study is on the students' emotions in the classroom; what are the emotions they have before starting the course, during and after finishing the course and how these emotions influence on their English achievement. These emotions include students' enjoyment, anxiety, embarrassment, and nervousness, boredom... etc. According to research in education, psychology, and English, students do not learn without emotion. They may

feel overwhelmed or nervous, frustrated or excited, confident or confused, relieved or bored, or a host of other feelings.

We cannot deny that when we value something, we rely on our emotions and experiences as more than just reference points, yet some, or even more than some rely on their emotions as well, while we expect the students to rely on their thinking and minds: they are used as an inherent part of the decision-making process. Students, as responders to their teachers in the class, depend on their emotions when they read, write or listen, regardless of whether they are conscious of that connection between their emotions and their achievement or not. And students, in most cases, are emotionally invested in their achievement.

According to the researcher's teaching experience, some EFL Saudi university students as they learn English as a foreign language, have different emotions towards learning English, mostly negative, such as anxiety, nervousness, and frustration and have low spirits to learn and many other negative emotions that can hinder their English achievement. Therefore, if we know these negative emotions, we may help them to overcome these negative emotions and improve their achievement in all the subjects, but especially English. Because they study English twelve hours weekly and this can increase their GPA or lower it, more than other subjects that are studied three hours a week. When they are learning English, like any other subject, they are always tapping into our emotions, past and present, to make decisions about what and how to write, read, listen to, speak about and how to feel about what they've learnt. Some teachers can create in the classroom a welcoming and relaxing environment where psychological needs are met and language anxiety is kept to a minimum (Oxford & Shearin, 1994). But on the other hand some teachers can't. And so, during their classes students find the class a very annoying, boring class instead of the opposite.

So the student who has negative emotions towards learning English is more likely to have a low result in English and therefore avoid using English in future situations or even be afraid to abroad to complete his/her studies. Yet, other students who are fully interested and passionate about learning English would probably do the impossible to learn it. They are more likely to get a high result. But even some of those passionate students that don't get high achievement in English due to some circumstances, would still have the power, ability, passion, and love to learn it later. They will also use it in their future even if it's just used between family members.

### *1.2 Academic Emotions and Its Definition*

Positive and negative emotions are significant for learning. However, negative emotions have been more researched than the positive ones. Traditionally, emotions have been kept separate from learning or considered understated (Ford, 1992, pp. 143-144; Lange & Wilenius, 1997; Schutz & Decuir, 2002, p. 127) although actual learning in the absence of any contact with the learner's emotional level is not likely to occur (Meyer & Turner, 2002, pp. 107-108; Puolimatka, 2004). Generally, academic emotions are emotions which are experienced in an academic context. We identified five situations typically associated with academic achievement (1) attending class, (2) taking tests and exams, (3) studying or doing homework by oneself, (4) studying or doing homework in a learning group, and (5) of her situations in which one is cognitively occupied with academic achievement (e.g., talking about an upcoming exam with a peer). In these circumstances emotions can arise either due to the nature of the tasks to be completed or due to the expected outcome ( Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002).

Research has shown that emotions play a significant role in the learning process and academic achievement (Randler, Glaser-Zikuda, Vollmer, & Mayring, 2011). In line with contemporary component process models of emotions (Scherer, 2009), the control value theory views emotions as sets of interrelated psychological processes, whereby affective, cognitive, motivational, and physiological components are of primary importance. The control value theory provides an integrative approach for analyzing various emotions experienced in achievement contexts, including academic settings as well as achievement situations in other life domains (e.g., sports, professional activities). The theory builds on assumptions from expectancy value theories of emotions (Pekrun, 1992; Turner & Schallert, 2001).

Achievement emotions are defined as emotions that are directly linked to achievement activities or achievement outcomes. The definition proposed by the control value theory implies that activity emotions pertaining to current achievement related activities are also considered as achievement emotions. Examples are students' enjoyment of learning, boredom experienced during classroom instruction, or anger at the task demands of academic learning (Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, Goetz, Daniels, Stupnisky, & Perry, 2010). Dickinson (1987) describes it as being concerned with the learner's attitude towards the target language and users of it, and with his/her emotional responses. Govaerts and Gregoire (2008) have posited that emotions are short and intense subjectively experienced feeling states related to a specific context.

Psychologically and educationally Arnold (1999) defines affect as aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behavior. It can be seen that the term “affect” sometimes replaced by “emotions”, “feelings” or “affectivity”. However, from the aspect of language teaching, Apelt and Koering (1997) demonstrate that affectivity is the totality of all components of foreign-language instruction that influence the emotional attitude toward learning a foreign language and toward using it, as well as the foreign language atmosphere in general and the success of the learning and teaching process in particular. Emotions are defined as coordinated, multi-component processes of affective, cognitive, motivational, and expressive psychological systems (Pekrun, 2006).

### *1.3 Class Emotions as Predictors of Academic Achievement*

Researchers repeatedly have stressed the pivotal role emotions play on students’ learning and have voiced concerns about the need to investigate students’ emotions in the context of classrooms and schools (Goetz, Pekrun, Hall, & Haag, 2006; Goetz, Preckel, Pekrun, & Hall, 2007; Linnenbrink, 2006; Meyer & Turner, 2006; Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2006; Schutz & DeCuir, 2002). However, more and more teachers and researchers emphasize that affective factors of students in English learning should be concerned in the college English classroom. Teachers should develop students’ positive affection to learn English, making sure of the full participation of all students (Xu & Huang, 2010). Pekrun, Goetz, Titz and Perry (2002) established that students who experience positive activating emotions, that strengthen motivation and enhance flexible learning, have increased achievement. The findings of their study demonstrated a connection between academic emotions and students’ learning and achievement, in which positive emotions predicted higher achievement and likewise, negative emotions predicted lower achievement.

Goetz et al. (2006) have delineated “academic emotions” as “emotions that are directly linked to learning, classroom instruction, and achievement” (p. 290). Pekrun et al. (2002) further outlined four categories of emotions relating to student performance, namely (a) “positive activating emotions”, (b) “positive deactivating emotions”, (c) “negative activating emotions”, and (d) “negative deactivating emotions” (p. 97).

Xu and Huang (2010) mentioned that emotions which affect language acquisition can be classified as personality factors and factors between learners themselves and their relationship with teachers. Personality factors involve self-esteem, motivation, anxiety, and inhibition while the other involves empathy, classroom transactions and cross-cultural processes. Among these factors there are positive ones which can encourage learners and negative ones as well which will be hindrance to English learning such as anxiety, sadness. They added that many teachers and researchers emphasize that affective factors of students in English learning should be concerned in the college English classroom. Teachers should develop students’ positive affection to learn English, make sure full participation of students. Brown (2000), too, has believed that “learning arouses emotions and emotions arouse learning. What is still unknown are issues like the extent to which emotion is a necessary catalyst which enables learning, and the factors which enable the constructive use of emotions for effective learning” (p. 288).

Both positive and negative emotions can influence students’ learning. Negative emotions, such as anxiety, boredom, and hopelessness correlate negatively with interest and effort, whereas positive emotions, such as enjoyment and hope, correlate positively with the motivational variables (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002). Pekrun, Elliot and Maier (2009) suggested that achievement emotions are determined by the perceived controllability of achievement activities and their outcomes, as well as the value of these activities and outcomes. On a self-report instrument for college students, anxiety was the most commonly reported emotion and positive emotions were reported almost as often as negative emotions (Pekrun et al., 2002).

When students express emotions, instructors need to respond accordingly in order to keep the students in as positive a state of mind as possible. Furthermore, in order to teach effectively, instructors have to control their emotions both in the process of becoming accustomed to the new system and in perceiving the emotional responses of students (Wang, 2014).

In most studies, anxiety, interest, boredom, enjoyment, and other emotions have been analyzed independently. Few investigations have systematically examined combined effects (Huang, 2011).

As academic emotions have become a central focus in the education of students, it is essential to better understand what emotions students feel in the class. Therefore, this study will address an identified area of need in the literature regarding the academic emotions of anger, anxiety, enjoyment, hope, hopelessness, pride, relief, and shame. Of these, only anxiety (Schutz & Pekrun, 2007), enjoyment (Frenzel, Pekrun, & Goetz, 2007).

Enjoyment and pride were both positive predictors of grades. For students who report higher levels of both positive emotions, self-regulation was positively associated with grades. However, for those who report lower

levels of pride, self-regulation was not related to grades; and, for those who reported lower levels of enjoyment, self-regulation was negatively related to grades (Villavicencio & Bernardo, 2013). Research has shown how academic emotions are related to achievement and to cognitive/motivational variables that promote achievement (Villavicencio & Bernardo, 2013). Language class performance positively predicted enjoyment in language classes, and negatively predicted enjoyment in mathematics classes (Goetz, Frenzel, Hall, & Pekrun, 2008).

From the literature review, it was concluded that very little research has been completed on the remaining five emotions in connection to EFL achievement. In this study, the researcher investigated the eight academic emotions in the context of English achievement, gender and academic streams in university students.

#### *1.4 Academic Emotions and Achievement*

More recent psychological studies discuss that the significance of emotions in learning and achievement (Mayring & Rhöneck, 2003; Pekrun, 2000; Rantala & Maatta, 2012) and the emotions that affect learning and performance (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry 2007). Many researchers also have voiced concerns about the need to investigate students' emotions in the context of classrooms (Goetz, Preckel, Pekrun, & Hall, 2007; Pekrun, 2006; Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2006; Schutz & DeCuir, 2002).

#### *1.5 Academic Emotions and Gender*

As emotions influence career choices, it is important to examine gender differences in emotional experiences, especially given our society's current interest in encouraging women to enter traditionally male dominated mathematics and science fields (Frenzel et al., 2007). This was supported by Pekrun et al. (2007), who showed that the relationship between males' emotions toward mathematics and females' emotions toward mathematics were structurally equivalent. Nonetheless, females reported lower enjoyment in and higher anxiety and shame towards mathematics than males.

## **2. Study Problem**

Many Saudi students have negative emotions towards learning English such as anxiety and boredom that has built up in response to negative past experiences in English. It is unclear how achievement goals and achievement emotions are related; or how these goals and emotions may influence academic performance (Pekrun et al., 2009, p. 115). Therefore there was a need to study the extent to which academic emotions could be predicted by English achievement. In the field of educational psychology, research on feelings is lacking, and what does exist has focused more on negative rather than positive feelings. A classroom is not a desert of emotions, in some way or another it is slanted by joy, shame, hope, boredom or pride.

Emotions are a part of the human experience and should be regarded just as important as the learning process. If students' emotions aren't considered during his/her study of the language, it might lead to a lack of communication and understanding between the teacher and student. Not just so, but as well, it will lead to a lack of happiness and motivation during class. And even worse, it will lead to frustration and irritation. According to this researcher's personal experiences, lack of consideration for students' emotions can lead to hate and no interest of going to school or college. Reid and Hrekso (1981) assured that it is important to consider what happens internally to a person who is learning and to view learning as construction. The learner is the most important element in teaching-learning situation; not materials, lessons, or other factors external to the learners. So the current study focuses on the students' class emotions, to know what are the feelings they have before, during and after studying English 101 or 102 for twelve hours weekly and the effects of their emotions on their English achievement. No study to date has examined EFL students' class emotions and its contribution to their English achievement, especially in Saudi Arabia.

In addition, according to my teaching experience of more than fifteen years, it has been observed that some teachers are teaching the students without considering their students' emotions, concentrating only on how to finish the English syllable, prepare exams, preparing the class sheets ....etc. They have forgotten that EFL learners need a special treatment to make them accept and overcome the negative emotions that the students encounter during their learning English, especially Saudi students. Those students encounter many barriers to learning English; for example, some families do not encourage the students to learn English, their past school learning before entering the university did not focus so much on English as the other subjects. So those students need a special focus on their emotions and their teachers need to be aware of their students' emotions; negative and positive. So, emotions should not be kept away, they should come forward at the beginning of the learning process. So basically, this is one of the reasons that aroused the researcher to do this research.

Another reason for doing this research, though the importance of the emotions and its effect on the students' English achievement as a foreign language little is known about the topic in the Arab area, especially in Saudi

Arabia. According to the literature review, most studies have focused on negative emotions such as anxiety (Pekrun et al., 2002; Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007) and others focused on relationships between students and teachers. In other words, there is little emphasis on the emotional components and the area on which I plan to focus in this study.

Another reason is that there is a good relationship between emotions and achievement that emotions facilitate the thinking process and learning motivation that help the students to achieve well. Finally, according to the researcher's knowledge and Google researches, no study to date has combined the theoretical framework, independent variables (eight class emotions), the dependent variable (English achievement), sample population (Saudi university students), have been done in Saudi Arabia or the Arab world related to this subject. So this study has been conducted to fill in this empty gap.

The fundamental research questions are the following:

- (1). Can class emotions predict EFL students' English achievement?
- (2). Are there any differences between class emotions and achievement according to gender (males & females) and streams (science and humanities)?

### **Study hypotheses**

- (1). Class emotions can predict EFL students' English achievement.
- (2). There are differences between males and females in class emotions.
- (3). There are differences in English achievement according gender in favour of females.
- (4). There are differences in class emotions and achievement between streams (science and humanities) in favour of science stream.

### **3. The Purpose of This Research**

The purpose of this study was geared towards EFL university students' class emotions before, during and after studying the English course and its contributions to their English achievement. It also tends to find if there are any differences in class emotions and achievement according gender (males & females) and streams (science and humanities).

### **4. Significance of the Study**

The insights gained from this study can contribute to a better understanding of the EFL class emotions towards learning English and their effects on their achievement. Moreover, this study helps the teachers to know what the emotions that can predict or cannot predict the students' achievement and which ones have the biggest effect on their achievement. This study helps also the teachers and educators to know how the academic emotions are related to the learner variables such as, gender and streams. In addition, educators can apply this knowledge to create environments that reduce negative emotions and thus better enable students to demonstrate their knowledge. Understanding the extent to which achievement emotions could predict performance can support the development of appropriate instructional strategies to help and support Saudi students in learning English language. Educational practitioners could benefit from the results of this study, which could in turn impact policy change with regards to considering the importance of emotions in the educational field.

### **5. Methodology**

#### *5.1 Pilot Study*

This questionnaire was a pilot given to 186 (78 males and 108 females) randomly chosen from the Preparatory Year Programme (PYP) students for establishing its reliability. They completed class academic emotions questionnaire. Their ages ranged from 18-28 ( $M = 19.236$ ,  $SD = 1.362$ ). Then the data was analyzed to determine the reliability of the instruments.

#### *5.2 Participants*

The sample consisted of three hundred-fifteen university PYP students (177 males and 138 females) who were selected from among 6000 humanities and science students Taif University, Saudi Arabia. A class-related emotions scale was used to investigate how students feel when being in class at university. The sample was fairly representative of the Taif University population of students between the ages of 18 and 26 ( $M = 19.136$ ,  $SD = 0.901$ ). For males ( $M = 19.237$ ,  $SD = 0.942$ ) and for females ( $M = 19.007$ ,  $SD = 0.841$ ). According to the Saudi system of public education, these students began to learn English language at school in the sixth grade of primary school, at around 12 years of age. In other words, they have been exposed to learning English for seven

years before they enter the university. When they enter the university, they begin the Preparatory Year, including two semesters. According to this program, they have lectures in English language for 12 hours per week. During each semester of the Preparatory Year, there will be a Midterm Exam, including the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking, and the exam is worth 30 points. At the end of each semester, there will be a Final Exam, also covering the four basic skills, worth 60 points. In addition, there will be 10 points which are given to the students for attendance, class participation, homework, etc. Table 1 presents the number of students in each stream and gender. Students were informed that the surveys were not to be considered as tests and that they would not be seen by their teacher or other University staff.

Table 1. GENDER \* stream cross tabulation

		Academic Streams		Total
Gender		Science	humanities	
Gender	Males	101	76	177
	Females	70	68	138
Total		171	144	315

### 5.3 Instrumentation

#### 5.3.1 Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ)

The class-related emotion scales are a part of the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) that was designed by Pekrun, Goetz, Titz and Perry (2002) to assess college students' achievement emotions. The class-related emotion scales include 80 items and measure three positive class-related emotions (enjoyment, hope, and pride) and five negative class-related emotions (anger, anxiety, hopelessness, boredom and shame). The items of the scales pertain to the four different emotion component subscales within emotions (affective, cognitive, motivational, and physiological component subscales). In the questionnaire, items are presented in three blocks pertaining to emotional feelings experienced before, during, and after being in class. Items are mixed within blocks in the questionnaire.

In this study the class-related emotion scales include 77 items instead of 80 items as three items were deleted (9, 16 & 40). So enjoyment subscale includes 10 items (1, 22, 64, 5, 68, 73, 10, 30, 38 & 46). Hope subscale includes 6 items (7, 18, 21, 35, 4, and 12). Pride subscale includes 8 items (67, 28, 71, 50, 43, 74, 77, and 57). Anger subscale includes 9 items (26, 70, 41, 56, 75, 8, 66, 37, and 51). Anxiety subscale includes 12 items (15, 19, 47, 3, 11, 14, 23, 6, 53, 17, 33, and 62). Shame subscale includes 11 items (40, 55, 61, 32, 44, 65, 36, 69, 25, 49, and 59). Hopelessness subscale includes 10 items (13, 45, 9, 52, 76, 16, 20, 2, 29, and 72). Boredom includes 11 items (34, 60, 48, 58, 24, 63, 27, 39, 31, 54, and 42).

Students are asked to rate their emotional experiences on a five-point Likert response scale from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) (See Appendix A). An Arabic version of the questionnaire (See Appendix B) was administered to the Arabic native speaker participants to avoid any language related confusions and ensure samples' reliable responses.

As all the subjects are Arabic native speakers, the researcher translated the Achievement Emotions Questionnaire (AEQ) from English to Arabic. Then Questionnaire was sent to three professional Arabic professors to check the accuracy of the language used in the translation. And also it was sent to some professional in the English Language Centre of Taif University to make a back translation to be sure the meaning of the Arabic when translated back to English was accurate. The internal consistency reliability Cronbach's alpha is 0.88.

#### Item validity and internal consistency for class related emotions questionnaire

The corrected item-total correlation ranged from 0.32 to 0.63 ( $p < 0.01$ ), suggesting adequate item validity. The corrected item-Subscale 1 (enjoyment) correlation ranged from 0.34 to 0.67 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 2 (hope) the correlation ranged from 0.51 to 0.66 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 3 (pride) the correlation ranged from 0.52 to 0.67 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 4 (Anger) the correlation ranged from 0.39 to 0.74 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 5 (Anxiety) the correlation ranged from 0.38 to 0.65 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 6 (shame) the correlation ranged from 0.34 to 0.69 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 7 (hopeless) the correlation ranged from 0.53 to 0.81 ( $p < 0.01$ ), for Subscale 8 (Boredom) the correlation ranged from 0.54 to 0.83 ( $p < 0.01$ ). While the correlation between factors ranged from 0.32 to 0.85. The first 3 subscales of the emotions measure are correlated positively with each other, e.g., enjoyment, hope and pride and also the rest of the subscales are correlated positively with each other, e.g., anger,

anxiety, shame, hopeless and boredom. However, the first 3 subscales are correlated negatively with the rest of the subscales.

The internal consistency was high for the total questionnaire ( $\alpha = 0.88$ ), as well as for subscale 1 ( $\alpha = 0.77$ ), subscale 2 ( $\alpha = 0.69$ ), subscale 3 ( $\alpha = 0.72$ ), subscale 4 ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ), subscale 5 ( $\alpha = 0.83$ ), subscale 6 ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ), subscale 7 ( $\alpha = 0.81$ ), subscale 8 ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ). The mean total score was 269.193 (S.D. = 30.710). The mean for subscale 1 was 33.41 (S.D. = 7.36), for subscale 2 was 26.98 (S.D. = 5.54), for subscale 3 was 30.32 (S.D. = 6.33) for subscale 4 was 20.61 (S.D. = 7.49), for subscale 5 was 79.193 (S.D. = 8.69), for subscale 6 was 27.43 (S.D. = 8.98), for subscale 7 was 22.95 (S.D. = 8.73), for subscale 8 was 28.69 (S.D. = 9.11).

### 5.3.2 English Achievement

Students' English achievement measure was recorded on the basis of their current final-term grades in English. This final-term grade represents the teacher-based judgment of the students' oral and written performances in English over the first half of the year. English grades range from 0 to 100, 100 being the top grade. For the present analyses, these grades were presented so that higher values indicated higher achievement.

## 6. Results

Table 2. Descriptive data according to gender

Study variables	Gender	N	Mean	Std. D.
English Achievement	Males	177	74.129	8.511
	Females	138	76.289	9.067
	Total	315	75.076	8.810
Enjoyment	Males	177	32.017	6.845
	Females	138	35.500	6.876
	Total	315	33.543	7.063
Hope	Males	177	21.915	3.773
	Females	138	21.797	3.587
	Total	315	21.864	3.687
Pride	Males	177	28.486	5.963
	Females	138	29.058	5.755
	Total	315	28.737	5.871
Anger	Males	177	21.305	7.911
	Females	138	21.601	7.554
	Total	315	21.435	7.746
Anxiety	Males	177	27.537	10.349
	Females	138	27.029	8.983
	Total	315	27.314	9.762
Shame	Males	177	23.129	9.268
	Females	138	22.869	11.788
	Total	315	23.015	10.430
Hopeless	Males	177	23.565	11.016
	Females	138	22.000	6.109
	Total	315	22.879	9.215
Boredom	Males	177	24.622	8.793
	Females	138	23.246	10.2101
	Total	315	24.019	9.4491

Table 3. ANOVA for gender differences in English achievement and academic emotions

Study variables		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta square
English Achievement	Between Groups	361.754	1	361.754	4.716	.031	
	Within Groups	24010.417	313	76.711			
	Total	24372.171	314				0.01
Enjoyment	Between Groups	940.722	1	940.722	19.998	.000	0.05
	Within Groups	14723.449	313	47.040			
	Total	15664.171	314				
Hope	Between Groups	1.083	1	1.083	.079	.778	
	Within Groups	4268.048	313	13.636			
	Total	4269.130	314				
Pride	Between Groups	25.379	1	25.379	.736	.392	
	Within Groups	10795.751	313	34.491			
	Total	10821.130	314				
Anger	Between Groups	6.811	1	6.811	.113	.737	
	Within Groups	18832.605	313	60.168			
	Total	18839.416	314				
Anxiety	Between Groups	19.990	1	19.990	.209	.648	
	Within Groups	29905.895	313	95.546			
	Total	29925.886	314				
Shame	Between Groups	5.257	1	5.257	.048	.826	
	Within Groups	34153.663	313	109.117			
	Total	34158.921	314				
Hopeless	Between Groups	189.913	1	189.913	2.245	.135	
	Within Groups	26473.503	313	84.580			
	Total	26663.416	314				
Boredom	Between Groups	146.624	1	146.624	1.646	.201	
	Within Groups	27889.262	313	89.103			
	Total	28035.886	314				



Table 3 shows that there are significant mean gender differences between males ( $M = 74.129$ ,  $SD = 8.511$ ) and females ( $M = 76.289$ ,  $SD = 9.067$ ) in English achievement in favour of females. The above table shows that Eta square = 0.01 and this means that gender explains 1% from the variance of English achievement at the 0.01 level of significance. It shows also that given the scoring of the nominal variable of gender, ANOVA analysis for gender shows that females reported higher levels of enjoyment and Eta square = 0.05 and this means that gender explains 5% from the variance of enjoyment.

Table 4. Descriptive data for English achievement and class emotions according to academic streams

Study variables	Academic Streams	N	Mean	Std. D.
English Achievement	Science	171	75.7018	8.8762
	Humanities	144	74.3333	8.7033
	Total	315	75.0762	8.8101
Enjoyment	Science	171	33.9123	6.9170
	Humanities	144	33.1042	7.2321
	Total	315	33.5429	7.0630
Hope	Science	171	21.9123	3.8192
	Humanities	144	21.8056	3.5366
	Total	315	21.8635	3.6873
Pride	Science	171	28.8830	5.9387
	Humanities	144	28.5625	5.8042
	Total	315	28.7365	5.8705
Anger	Science	171	22.0409	8.0516
	Humanities	144	20.7153	7.3291
	Total	315	21.4349	7.7458
Anxiety	Science	171	28.0058	9.9105
	Humanities	144	26.4931	9.5529
	Total	315	27.3143	9.7624
Shame	Science	171	23.6842	11.2446
	Humanities	144	22.2222	9.3483
	Total	315	23.0159	10.4301
Hopeless	Science	171	22.5263	8.4201
	Humanities	144	23.2986	10.0919
	Total	315	22.8794	9.2150
Boredom	Science	171	25.0760	10.3447
	Humanities	144	22.7639	8.1189
	Total	315	24.0190	9.4491

Table 5. ANOVA analysis for differences between academic streams in English achievement and academic emotions

Study variables		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Eta square
English Achievement	Between Groups	146.382	1	146.382	1.891	.170	
	Within Groups	24225.789	313	77.399			
	Total	24372.171	314				
Enjoyment	Between Groups	51.050	1	51.050	1.023	.312	
	Within Groups	15613.122	313	49.882			
	Total	15664.171	314				
Hope	Between Groups	.890	1	.890	.065	.798	
	Within Groups	4268.240	313	13.637			
	Total	4269.130	314				
Pride	Between Groups	8.032	1	8.032	.232	.630	
	Within Groups	10813.098	313	34.547			
	Total	10821.130	314				
Anger	Between Groups	137.376	1	137.376	2.299	.130	
	Within Groups	18702.040	313	59.751			
	Total	18839.416	314				
Anxiety	Between Groups	178.899	1	178.899	1.882	.171	
	Within Groups	29746.987	313	95.038			
	Total	29925.886	314				
Shame	Between Groups	167.084	1	167.084	1.539	.216	
	Within Groups	33991.836	313	108.600			
	Total	34158.921	314				
Hopeless	Between Groups	46.625	1	46.625	.548	.460	
	Within Groups	26616.791	313	85.038			
	Total	26663.416	314				
Boredom	Between Groups	417.902	1	417.902	4.736	.030	0.01
	Within Groups	27617.984	313	88.236			
	Total	28035.886	314				

Table 5 shows that there are no differences between science and humanities streams ( $M = 22.763$ ,  $SD = 8.118$ ) in English achievement and academic class emotions except in boredom in favour of science stream ( $M = 25.0760$ ,  $SD = 10.34$ ), ( $F(1, 313) = 4.736$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) and Eta Square explains 1% from the variance of boredom.

Table 6. Correlations between academic emotions and English achievement ( $n = 315$ )

		Enjoy	Hope	Pride	Anger	Anxiety	Shame	Hopeless	Boredom
English Achievement	Pearson Correlation	.651**	.523**	.700**	-.518**	-.436**	-.216**	-.217**	-.099

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 shows that there are significant correlations at the level of 0.01 between English achievement and academic emotions except in boredom ( $P < 0.01$ ). The higher the English achievement, the more enjoyment, hope, pride there is, but there is less anger, anxiety, shame and hopelessness, the higher the English achievement.

Table 7. Model summary

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics
Model 1	0.811	0.658	0.649	5.219	R Square Change 0.658

The Table 7 shows that  $R = 0.811$  and  $R^2 = 0.658$ , this means that emotions explain 65.8 % in variance of English achievement. This means that class emotions play an important role in the academic achievement.

Table 8. ANOVA regression analysis; academic emotions

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16037.036	8	2004.630	73.594	.000
	Residual	8335.135	306	27.239		
	Total	24372.171	314			

Table 8 shows that class emotions can predict EFL students' achievement  $F(8,306) = 73.594$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . Regression analysis for academic emotions as predictors of English achievement data resulted in R-Square of  $R^2 = 0.658$ , which shows that the academic emotions accounted for 65.8% percent of the variation in English achievement. Since  $F(8,306) = 73.594$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , was significant, it means that academic emotions contributed significantly in the academic English achievement. It was concluded that academic emotions make a significant contribution and can be used as predictor of English achievement.

Table 9. Coefficients of regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	52.254	Std. Error	Beta	14.819	.000
	Enjoyment	.324	.059	.260	5.459	.000
	Hope	.181	.103	.076	1.761	.079
	Pride	.517	.069	.344	7.468	.000
	Anger	6.480E-02	.057	.057	1.144	.253
	Anxiety	-6.289E-02	.038	-.070	-1.640	.102
	Shame	-.239	.045	-.283	-5.357	.000
	Hopeless	-8.141E-02	.042	-.085	-1.927	.054
	Boredom	3.374E-02	.042	.036	.812	.418

Table 9 shows that some class emotions (enjoyment, pride, shame and hopeless) can predict significantly the English achievement (achievement =  $52.254 + 0.324$  enjoyment +  $0.517$  pride -  $0.239$  shame -  $0.081$  hopeless).

## 7. Discussion

There was a need to study the relationship between English achievement and class emotions as there was a scarcity in the literature studies involving class emotions and English achievement. This paper has approached the concept of eight academic emotions (enjoyment, boredom, anger, hope, pride, anxiety, hopelessness and shame) as predictors of EFL Saudi students' achievement. It is found that there was strong and significant correlations between academic emotions and English achievement and this result is consistent with the results of (Pekrun et al., 2002; Pekrun et al., 2009; Goetz et al., 2006; Randler et al., 2011) that indicated that emotions play a significant role in the learning process and academic English achievement. The results of this study revealed that some positive and negative academic emotions (enjoyment, pride, shame and hopeless) were predictors of students' English achievement as it explains that 65.8% of the variance of English achievement and class emotions and this result goes partially in line with the findings of (Pekrun et al., 2006; Villavicencio & Bernardo, 2013) who showed that pride and enjoyment predict students' achievement and also agrees partially with the results of (Goetz et al., 2008) who showed that Language class performance positively predicted enjoyment in language classes. This means the teachers need to offer an enjoyable class environment and ask questions that are suitable for the students' level that make them enjoy themselves and proud when they answer them. But they should not ask difficult questions that make them feel ashamed or hopeless.

It also showed that there are significant mean gender differences between males ( $M = 74.129$ ,  $SD = 8.511$ ) and females ( $M = 76.289$ ,  $SD = 9.067$ ) in English achievement in favour of females which means that females have better academic achievement than males. Females have been found by several studies to be more motivated and

higher achievers than boys. This result is consistent with the study of Hotulainen and Schofield (2003) who explains the same results in his study that girls were found to generally outperform boys and that boys consistently returned lower levels of perceived academic self-competence and lower GPAs than their female counterparts.

It is also revealed that there are no differences between science and humanities ( $M = 22.763$ ,  $SD = 8.118$ ) in English achievement. This can be explained in the light of the fact that the students have the same past school learning and same academic content. In addition, each stream has twelve hours teaching weekly for one year and both streams are taught by qualified teachers. The current findings also found that there are no differences between science and humanities streams in class emotions except in boredom in favour of science stream, and to explain this result we can say those students have generally similar emotions and this might be because of the students' teachers who follow similar teaching techniques and also the students have similar cultural backgrounds.

However, the science stream has more boredom than humanities and the cause of that is varied. It might be because the science teachers encourage students to memorize the learning science concepts; the focus is on lab demonstrations rather than hands on, problem-solving learning (Mallow, 2006). So, the science students express boredom more than humanities.

Moreover, it was found that given the scoring of the nominal variable of gender, ANOVA analysis for gender shows that females reported higher levels of enjoyment. And this result agrees with many studies that showed females are higher than males in the emotional intelligence (Day & Carroll, 2004; Grewal & Salovey, 2005; Joseph & Newman, 2010). However the current result contrasted with the results of Pekrun et al. (2007), which showed that the relationship between males' emotions toward mathematics, and females' emotions toward mathematics were structurally equivalent. Nonetheless, females reported lower enjoyment in and higher anxiety and shame towards mathematics, while Bowd and Brady (2003) reported that both women and men enjoying studying mathematics.

## 8. Conclusion and Future Research

It was concluded that positive and negative class emotions, as measured by the AEQ, play an important part as predictors of the students' English achievement as it explains 65.8% of the variance in English achievement. This means that the academic emotions improve and affects the students' English achievement. Emotions are fundamental to learning (Hinton, Miyamoto, & Della-Chiesa, 2008). It is known in every educational system that academic achievement is the most important outcome and researches done in the field of academic emotions have indicated its significant contribution to the academic achievement. Therefore considering students' emotions should be an aim of education. The current results have implications for the English teachers that they should take into account students' academic emotions towards learning English, without doing this; they cannot help them to reduce their negative emotions and call upon their positive ones. They need also to understand the students' class emotions towards learning English and support them when needed and try to reduce the negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, hopeless and boredom. Teachers should freely talk about feelings with the students. Education based on emotions can provide peace and less anxiety, anger, hopeless, and more enjoyment.

For the future research, the present study should be repeated by administering class emotions for different school and university stages, especially in the Arab world as not much research of the academic emotions has been done. In addition, academic emotions can be researched in different subjects besides English.

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## Appendix A

### PART I—Class-Related Emotions scale

No.	The questionnaire items	Strongly disagree	disagree	To somehow	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>Before starting the course</b>						
1	I get excited about going to class.					
2	It's pointless to prepare for class since I don't understand the material anyway.					
3	Even before class, I worry whether I will be able to understand the material.					
4	Being confident that I will understand the material motivates me.					
5	I am looking forward to learning a lot in this class.					
6	Because I'm so nervous I would rather skip the class.					
7	I am confident when I go to class.					
8	I wish I didn't have to attend class because it makes me angry.					
9	Even before class, I am resigned to the fact that I won't understand the material.					
10	I am motivated to go to this class because it's exciting.					
11	I worry whether I'm sufficiently prepared for the lesson.					
12	My confidence motivates me to prepare for class.					
13	The thought of this class makes me feel hopeless.					

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- 14 I worry whether the demands might be too great.
- 15 Thinking about class makes me feel uneasy.
- 16 Because I've given up, I don't have energy to go to class.
- 17 When I think about class, I get queasy.
- 18 I am optimistic that I will be able to keep up with the material.
- 19 I feel scared.
- 20 I'd rather not go to class since there is no hope of understanding the material anyway.
- 21 I am hopeful that I will make good contributions in class.

#### **During class**

- 22 I enjoy being in class.
- 23 I worry the others will understand more than me.
- 24 I'm tempted to walk out of the lecture because it is so boring.
- 25 When I say something in class I feel like I turn red.
- 26 I feel frustrated in class.
- 27 Because the time drags I frequently look at my watch.
- 28 I take pride in being able to keep up with the material.
- 29 Because I don't understand the material I look disconnected and resigned.
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- 30 My enjoyment of this class makes me want to participate.
- 31 I get restless because I can't wait for the class to end.
- 32 When I say anything in class I feel like I am making a fool of myself.
- 33 I get tense in class.
- 34 I get bored.
- 35 I am confident because I understand the material.
- 36 After I have said something in class I wish I could crawl into a hole and hide.
- 37 I feel anger welling up in me.
- 38 It's so exciting that I could sit in class for hours listening to the professor.
- 39 I get so bored I have problems staying alert.
- 40 I get embarrassed.
- 41 Thinking about the poor quality of the course makes me angry.
- 42 I start yawning in class because I'm so bored.
- 43 When I make good contributions in class, I get even more motivated.
- 44 I'm embarrassed that I can't express myself well.
- 45 I feel hopeless.
- 46 I enjoy participating so much that I get energized.
- 47 I feel nervous in class.
- 48 The lecture bores me.
-

- 
- 49 Because I get embarrassed, I become tense and inhibited.
- 50 I am proud of the contributions I have made in class.
- 51 Because I'm angry I get restless in class.
- 52 I have lost all hope in understanding this class.
- 53 I get scared that I might say something wrong, so I'd rather not say anything.
- 54 During class I feel like I could sink into my chair.
- 55 I am ashamed.
- 56 Thinking about all the useless things I have to learn makes me irritated.
- 57 When I do well in class, my heart throbs with pride.
- 58 Because I get bored my mind begins to wander.
- 59 When I talk in class I start stuttering.
- 60 I find this class fairly dull.
- 61 If the others knew that I don't understand the material I would be embarrassed.
- 62 When I don't understand something important in class, my heart races.
- 63 I think about what else I might be doing rather than sitting in this boring class.

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**After class**

- 64 After class I start looking forward to the next class.
- 65 I am ashamed because others understood more
-

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of the lecture than I did.

66 I wish I could tell the teachers off.

67 I am proud of myself.

68 I am happy that I understood the material.

69 I'd rather not tell anyone when I don't  
understand something in class.

70 I am angry.

71 I think that I can be proud of what I know about  
this subject.

72 I feel so hopeless all my energy is depleted.

73 I am glad that it paid off to go to class.

74 Because I take pride in my accomplishments in  
this course, I am motivated to continue.

75 When I think of the time I waste in class I get  
aggravated.

76 I feel hopeless continuing in this program of  
studies.

77 I would like to tell my friends about how well I  
did in this course.

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## Appendix B

## Arabic translation of PART I - Class-Related Emotions Scale

## عزيزتي الطالبة

فيما يلي مجموعة من العبارات التي ترتبط بانفعالاتك أثناء دراسة مقرر اللغة الإنجليزية بالجامعة، و أمام كل مفردة خمس بدائل، برجاء اختيار أحد البدائل التي تعبر عن إنفعالاتك قبل دراسة المقرر، و أثناء دراسته وبعد انتهاء دراسته، علماً بأنه لا توجد اجابات صحيحة و أخرى خاطئة، وإنما يجب أن تعبر عن إنفعالاتك الحقيقية في دراستك لمقرر اللغة الإنجليزية.

الإسم (اختياري) \_\_\_\_\_ العمر \_\_\_\_\_ المسار: (علمي) (إنساني)

عبارات المقياس	موقف بشدة	موقف	إلى حد ما	موقف	موقف بشدة
قبل بداية دراسة المقرر					
1 أشعر بالبهجة حين الذهاب الى محاضرة هذا المقرر.					
2 من غير المجدى التحضير للمحاضرة لأنى لا أفهم المادة على أى حال.					
3 قبل المحاضرة أشعر بالقلق عما اذا كنت سوف اقدر على فهم المقرر.					
4 أنا واثقة من أن فهمى للمادة سوف يحفزنى.					
5 أننى أتطلع إلى تعلم الكثير من هذا المقرر.					
6 لأننى عصبية جداً أود أن أترك هذا المقرر.					
7 أكون واثقة عندما أذهب للمحاضرة فى هذا المقرر.					
8 كنت أتمنى لو لم أحضر محاضرات هذا المقرر لأنه يجعلنى غاضبه.					
9 قبل بداية دراسة المقرر، أننى على يقين بأننى سوف لأفهم هذا المقرر.					
10 أنا متحمسة لدراسة هذا المقرر لأنه شيق.					
11 أنا قلقة عما إذ اكنت مستعدة بدرجة كافية لدراسة هذا المقرر.					
12 تحفزنى ثقنى للتحضير لهذا المقرر.					
13 فكرة هذا المقرر تجعلنى أشعر باليأس .					

عبارات المقياس	غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	إلى حد ما	موافق	موافق بشدة
14 أنا قلقة ما إذا كانت متطلبات أو تكاليفات هذا المقرر قد تكون كثيرة.					
15 أشعر بعدم الارتياح بسبب التفكير في المقرر.					
16 بسبب اليأس لم يكن لدى طاقة للحضور محاضرات المقرر.					
17 عندما أفكر في المقرر ، أشعر بعدم الارتياح.					
18 أنا متفائلة بأنني سوف أكون قادرة على المواكبة في دراسة هذا المقرر.					
19 أشعر بالخوف.					
20 أود عدم الذهاب للمحاضرة لأنه ليس هناك أي أمل في فهم المقرر على أي حال.					
21 لدى أمل بأنني سوف أقدم مشاركات جيدة في المقرر.					
أثناء دراسة المقرر					
22 استمتعت بوجودي في محاضرة هذا المقرر.					
23 أنا قلقة أن الآخرين سوف يفهمون أكثر مني.					
24 أنا أميل إلى الخروج من المحاضرة لأنها مملة جدا.					
25 عندما أقول شيء في المحاضرة أشعر بالخجل.					
26 أشعر بالاحباط في محاضرات هذا المقرر.					
27 لأن الوقت يمر ببطء إنني كثيرا ما أنظر إلى الساعة.					
28 أفخر لأنني قادرة على الاستمرار في دراسة هذا المقرر.					
29 لأنني لا أفهم المادة أفكر في سحب المقرر وعدم إكمال دراسته.					
30 استمتعت بدراسة هذا المقرر يشجعني على المشاركة.					

عبارات المقياس	غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	إلى حد ما	موافق	موافق بشدة
أشعر بالقلق لعدم قدرتي على الانتظار حتى انهي هذا المقرر.					31
عندما أقول أي شيء في المحاضرة أجعل زميلاتي يعتقدن بأنني غبية .					32
أشعر بالتوتر في المحاضرة.					33
يصيبني الملل أثناء محاضرات هذا المقرر.					34
أشعر بالثقة لأنني أفهم هذا المقرر.					35
بعد أن أقول شيئاً في المحاضرة أود أن أختبئ ولا يراني أحد.					36
أشعر بالغضب الشديد من دراسة هذا المقرر.					37
إنه من المدهش جداً أن أتمكن من الجلوس في المحاضرة لساعات للاستماع إلى أستاذ المقرر.					38
أشعر بالملل لأنني لدى مشاكل في البقاء في حالة تركيز أو تأهب.					39
أشعر بالحرج.					40
التفكير في ردائة المقرر يجعلني غاضبه.					41
يعتريني التثاؤب في القاعة لأنني أشعر بالملل.					42
عندما أقدم مشاركات جيدة في المحاضرة، يجعلني أكثر حماساً.					43
أشعر بالحرج لأنني لست أستطيع التعبير عن نفسي بشكل جيد.					44
أشعر باليأس.					45
أستمتع بالمشاركة كثير الدرجة أنني أمتلئ بالنشاط. .					46
أشعر بالتوتر في القاعة.					47

عبارات المقياس	غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	إلى حد ما	موافق	موافق بشدة
48 المحاضرة تصيبني بالملل.					
49 لأنني أشعر بالحر، أصبح متوترة ولا أستطيع أن أقول شيء.					
50 أنا فخور بالمشاركات التي أقدمها في هذا المقرر.					
51 لأنني أكون غاضبة في المحاضرة ، لا أشعر بالراحة.					
52 لقد فقدت الأمل في فهم هذا المقرر.					
53 خوفي أن أقول شيئاً خاطئاً في المحاضرة ، أفضل ألا أقول شيئاً.					
54 أثناء المحاضرة أشعر أنني محرجة جداً.					
55 أشعر بالخجل.					
56 التفكير في كل الأشياء عديمة الفائدة التي يجب أن أتعلّمها تجعلني أغضب.					
57 عندما يكون أدائي جيداً في المحاضرة، يدق قلبي بكل فخر.					
58 لأنني أشعر بالملل، يبدأ ذهني يتشتت.					
59 عندما أتحدث في المحاضرة أبدأ اتلعثم.					
60 أجد هذا المقرر ممل إلى حد ما.					
61 إذا عرف الآخرون أنني لأفهم المقرر أشعر بالحر.					
62 عندما أنا لا أفهم شيئاً مهماً في المحاضرة، يبدأ قلبي يدق .					
63 أفكر ماذا يمكنني أن أقوم به بدلاً من الجلوس في محاضرات هذا المقرر الممل.					
بعد دراسة المقرر					
64 بعد انتهاء دراسة هذا المقرر أبدأ أتطلع إلى دراسة المقررات التالية.					

عبارات المقياس	غير موافق بشدة	غير موافق	إلى حد ما	موافق	موافق بشدة
أشعر بالخجل لأن الآخرين فهموا معظم المقرر أكثر منى.					65
كنت أتمنى أن أستطيع أن أقول للمعلمة أنني أتمنى عدم وجودك نهائياً.					66
أنا فخورة بنفسى.					67
أنا سعيدة لأننى فهمت هذا المقرر.					68
لم أخبر أى شخص عندما كنت لا أفهم شيئاً فى محاضرة هذا المقرر.					69
أنا غضبانه بسبب دراسة هذا المقرر.					70
أنا فخورة بما عرفته عن هذا المقرر.					71
أشعر باليأس لأن كل طاقتى استنفدت.					72
أنا سعيدة لأننى توقفت عن حضور محاضرات هذا المقرر.					73
أفخر بإنجازاتي في هذا المقرر لذا لدى الدافع للاستمرار فى الدراسة.					74
أشعر بالغضب عندما أفكر في الوقت الذي ضاع في دراسة هذا المقرر.					75
أشعر باليأس بالاستمرار في دراسة هذا المقرر.					76
أود أن أقول لأصدقائي كيف كان أدائى جيداً فى هذا المقرر.					77

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