



Affective Domain and Foreign Language Learning: A Bibliometric Analysis

St. Asmayanti. Am¹, St. Asriati. Am²

¹Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan

²Magister Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar,
Sulawesi Selatan

Corresponding E-Mail: st.asmayanti@unismuh.ac.id

Received: 2025-05-18 Accepted: 2025-08-26

DOI: 10.24256/ideas.v13i2.6718

Abstract

The affective domain, which includes emotions, motivation, attitudes, and values, plays a crucial role in shaping learning outcomes in foreign language education. Yet, much of the existing research investigates these factors in isolation, providing only a limited understanding of how they interact and influence second language acquisition as a whole. This study aims to map the evolution of research on the affective domain in foreign language learning from 2019 to 2023 through a comprehensive bibliometric analysis. Data were retrieved using the Publish or Perish software with Google Scholar as the database, yielding 231 publications. After applying defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, 149 documents were retained for analysis, consisting of 121 journal articles and 28 books. Bibliographic information was managed with Mendeley Reference Manager and analyzed using VOSviewer version 1.6.19 to generate visualizations of co-authorship, citation networks, and keyword co-occurrence. The results show that enjoyment, motivation, and anxiety remain central themes, with enjoyment increasingly highlighted as a facilitating factor for learner achievement. Citation analysis identified highly influential works on grit, classroom emotions, and emotional intelligence, reflecting the field's growing alignment with Positive Psychology and Social and Emotional Learning frameworks. Co-word analysis revealed five major thematic clusters: learner enjoyment and achievement, domain comparisons across Bloom's taxonomy, emotional learning practices, integration of affective constructs into SLA frameworks, and systematic reviews of the field. Temporal analysis indicated a shift from general theoretical discussions prior to 2020 toward more empirical, context-specific, and measurement-based studies after 2021. This study contributes to the literature by clarifying thematic directions, identifying research gaps, and

positioning the affective domain as a central element of second language acquisition.

Keywords: *affective domain; foreign language; learning; language learning; SLA*

Introduction

The acquisition of a foreign language is a complex and dynamic process shaped by interrelated cognitive, social, and emotional variables. Among these, the affective domain—which encompasses emotions, motivation, attitudes, and personal values—plays a pivotal role in influencing how learners engage with and process a second language (Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964). The affective domain involves internal states that shape learners' enthusiasm, persistence, and emotional responses to language learning experiences, thus exerting a profound impact on learning outcomes (Stander, 2022).

A growing body of research acknowledges the role of affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, and attitudes in second language acquisition (SLA). However, most of these studies tend to examine these variables in isolation, analyzing their effects independently rather than considering the interplay and synergy among them (Jain & Sidhu, 2013; Dong et al., 2022; Malik & Pervaiz, 2023). This fragmented approach may obscure the complexity of how emotional variables interact to influence language acquisition holistically (Gómez, Restrepo, & Díaz Larenas, 2023).

Scholars have highlighted how positive emotions—such as enjoyment and interest—can broaden learners' engagement and promote deeper cognitive involvement (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Zheng & Zhou, 2022). Conversely, negative emotions—particularly anxiety—are shown to impede the learning process (Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014; Papi & Khajavy, 2023). Additionally, studies demonstrate that learners' affective orientation—like their attitudes toward learning English—can directly influence their academic success (Herwiana & Laili, 2021; Le & Le, 2022). Despite such findings, the broader landscape of global research trends in this field remains underexplored.

To date, there has been limited comprehensive effort to map the evolution of research on the affective domain in foreign language learning, particularly through quantitative and longitudinal bibliometric methods. This creates a knowledge gap in understanding how this body of research has developed over time, what its major thematic clusters are, and which researchers, institutions, and regions have contributed most significantly to its growth. While previous reviews have discussed theoretical or empirical aspects of affective variables, they often lack a structured overview of the research landscape, trends, and knowledge networks across time.

This study aims to fill that gap by conducting a bibliometric analysis of publications from 2019 to 2023, utilizing tools such as Publish or Perish and VOSviewer. By doing so, we identify core research areas, co-occurrence of keywords, influential authors, and the evolution of affective domain scholarship in foreign language acquisition. Moreover, we explore how different affective

components are thematically clustered and how these clusters have shifted in prominence over time.

Method

This study employed a bibliometric analysis approach to systematically explore the evolution of research on the affective domain in foreign language learning from 2019 to 2023. Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative technique that allows researchers to map the structure, trends, and key contributors in a scholarly field. The research procedure was conducted in a structured and chronological sequence to ensure transparency and replicability.

The first step involved data retrieval using the *Publish or Perish* software (version 8.2), which extracted publication data from the Google Scholar database. The search was limited to the years 2019–2023 and used combinations of the following keywords: “affective domain,” “foreign language learning,” “second language acquisition,” “SLA,” and “language education.” This initial query yielded 231 academic records, including journal articles, book chapters, and conference papers.

In the second step, the documents were screened for relevance using defined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria required that publications be written in English, peer-reviewed, focus on the affective domain within the context of foreign or second language learning, and be available in full text. Furthermore, documents had to be indexed or cited in reputable academic sources such as Scopus, Web of Science, or Google Scholar. Publications were excluded if they concentrated solely on the cognitive or psychomotor domains, were non-scholarly (e.g., opinion pieces), or were duplicate records. After applying these criteria, 149 documents—consisting of 121 journal articles and 28 academic books—were selected for analysis.

The third step was data organization and software preparation. The bibliographic data of the selected publications were exported in RIS format and managed using Mendeley Reference Manager to ensure accurate documentation and to eliminate duplicates. The refined data set was then imported into *VOSviewer* version 1.6.19 for bibliometric mapping and visualization.

Data analysis focused on a range of bibliometric indicators. These included the annual number of publications (to track research growth over time), most productive authors and journals, citation analysis (to identify influential works), and co-authorship networks. Additionally, keyword co-occurrence analysis was conducted to uncover thematic clusters and emerging trends in the literature. Geographic and institutional distributions of authors were also examined to identify global research patterns.

The choice of these indicators was based on their relevance for understanding both macro-level developments (e.g., publication trends, research productivity) and micro-level insights (e.g., topic clusters, research gaps). To ensure the quality and relevance of the data, a quality assurance process was

implemented. Two independent reviewers examined the titles, abstracts, and keywords of the selected documents to confirm their eligibility. Any discrepancies between reviewers were resolved through consensus discussions.

Findings and Discussion

1. Bibliometric Results

The bibliometric analysis was conducted on a total of 149 selected documents related to the affective domain in foreign language learning, published between 2019 and 2023. Several quantitative indicators were analyzed, including citation counts, keyword co-occurrences, publication sources, and author networks. The most cited article in this dataset was *"L2 Grit: Passion and Perseverance for Second Language Learning"* (Teimouri et al., 2020), with 149 citations, indicating strong scholarly interest in emotional resilience in second language acquisition. Other frequently cited works explored themes such as classroom emotions, boredom, and emotional intelligence in language learning contexts.

The keyword co-occurrence network, visualized in Figure 1, revealed five major clusters. Each cluster represents a thematic concentration within the affective domain literature. Figure 2 presents an overlay visualization that shows temporal evolution in keyword prominence, and Figure 3 highlights the relative density of terms based on research frequency.

Citation Analysis

This document analyzes the most popular publications on foreign language acquisition and the affective domain. One hundred forty-nine studies on the affective domain and foreign language acquisition were analyzed. Table 1 illustrates the most commonly referenced publications, authors, and journals. The paper entitled "L2 Grit: Passion and Perseverance for Second-Language Learning," authored by Fuller Yasser Teimouri, Luke Plonsky, and Farhad Tabandeh, is the most cited work, with 149 citations and is published in the journal *Language Teaching Research*. This section constitutes the principal component of the article, detailing the research findings, and typically represents the most extensive portion. The results presented herein stem from a rigorous data analysis process encompassing statistical calculations, testing procedures, or other methodologies employed to attain the research objectives. The findings of the research should be articulated succinctly

Table 1. Citation analysis: top five authors, documents, and sources

Position	Title	Author	Year	Source	Citation
1	L2 grit: passion and perseverance for second language learning Emotions in classroom	Yasser Teimouri, Luke Plonsky, Farhad Tabande	2020	Language Teaching Research	149
2	language learning: what can we learn from achievement emotions research	Kaiqi Shaoa Reinhard Pekrunb, Laura J. Nicholas	2019	System	138
3	A control-value theory approach to Boredom in English classes among university students in China Foreign language learning	Chengchenli	2021	The Modern Language Journal	91
4	boredom: conceptualization and measurement	Chengchen Li, Jean-March Dewaele and Yanbong Hu	2021	Applied Linguistics Review	79
5	Trait emotional Intelligence and second language performance: a case study of Chinese EFL learners	Zhuo Chen & Ping Zhang	2020	Journal of multilingual and multicultural development	20

2. Cluster Interpretation and Thematic Analysis

Co -Co-word map network visualization

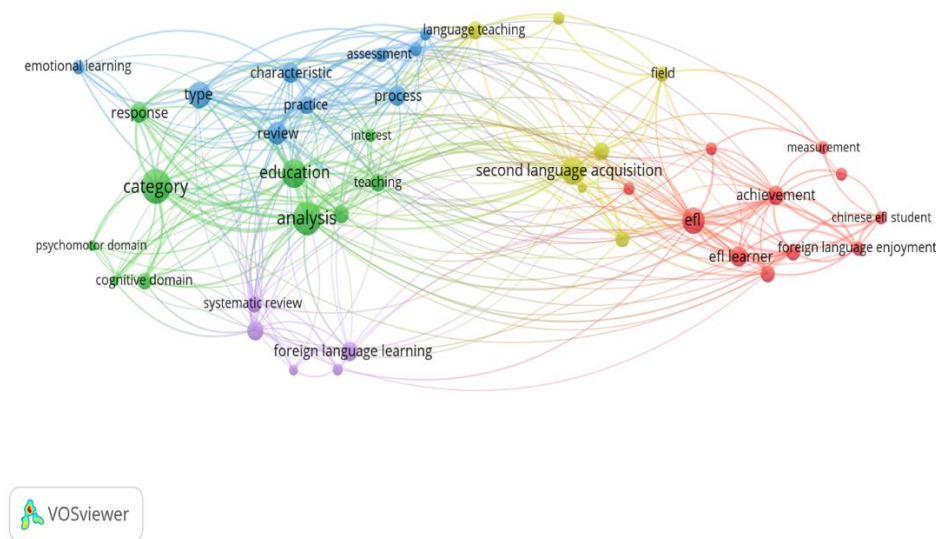


Figure 1. Co-word map network visualization

We restricted the co-occurrences in VOSviewer to five to illustrate the word co-occurrence. The network established five clusters after linking 27 nodes, as illustrated in Fig. 1. The prominence of the keywords in the analyzed articles is represented by the size of the nodes, which increases with the frequency of keyword co-occurrence. As demonstrated in Figure 1, the results of the visualization of the co-word map network concerning research advancements in the affective domain and foreign language learning are categorized into five clusters.

Cluster 1: EFL Learners and Enjoyment (Red)

The initial cluster, denoted in red, comprises seven elements: EFL, EFL learner, achievement, foreign language, enjoyment, measurement, and Chinese EFL student. This cluster seeks to explore various EFL learning-related subjects, including learner achievement, enjoyment, and measurement. The learner's background, motivation, and learning strategies can significantly influence the complexity and challenges of EFL acquisition. The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2003) inspired (MacIntyre, P. D., & Gregersen, 2012) argument that positive and negative emotions coexist and act differently and

should thus be studied holistically. As a result, since enjoyment is a key component of flow, a key idea in positive psychology, it was chosen as the constructive equivalent of FLA (Dewaele, J.-M., & MacIntyre, 2014). According to (Czikszentmihalyi, 1990), enjoyment is related to personal development and extends beyond a simple sense of pleasure.

Cluster 2: Domains of Learning and Educational Context (Green)

The second cluster, depicted in green, comprises eight elements: response, category, education, analysis, interest, teaching, cognitive domain, and psychomotor domain. The cognitive domain pertains to an individual's memory, thought processes, object recognition, and knowledge application. It underscores that the acquisition and application of knowledge are fundamental to understanding (Bloom, B. S., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, 1956). The development and change in a person's interest, attitude, value, appreciation, and adaption are emotional characteristics that researchers have discovered adaptive learning should consider (Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S., Masia, 1964). Adaptive learning should also consider learners' cognitive status (Nakic, J., Granic, A., & Glavinic, 2015).

Cluster 3: Emotional Learning and Practice (Blue)

The third cluster, denoted in blue, comprises seven elements: emotional learning, type, review, practice, process, assessment, and characteristic. Research indicates that the implementation of evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) programs and practices by educators enhances various school and student outcomes, such as school climate, behavior, and engagement (Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, 2011). To gain insight into how district, school, and classroom policies facilitate all students' social and emotional development, it is imperative to analyze SEL initiatives and outcomes.

Cluster 4: Language Teaching and SLA Framework (Yellow)

The fourth cluster, denoted in yellow, comprises three elements: language teaching, field, and second language acquisition. This cluster examines the interrelation between SLA as a discipline and language instruction. The complexity and dynamic nature of the language teaching process can be influenced by various factors, including the learner's background, motivation, and learning habits. (Krashen, 1985) stated that all required to learn a second language was intelligible input and motivation. He argued that the difference between learning and acquisition—the former involving metalinguistic data and corrective feedback—could hinder language acquisition

Cluster 5: Systematic Review and Research Mapping (Purple)

The final cluster, depicted in purple, comprises a systematic review and foreign language acquisition. This cluster emphasizes the significance of systematic reviews in understanding and synthesizing research on foreign language learning. Second language (L2) learners require further attention alongside systematic methodologies and practices (Aziz, 2000). Because of this, teachers are crucial in helping students meet all L2 learning standards while advancing modern education (Krashen, 1981).

Co- Word Map Overlay Visualization

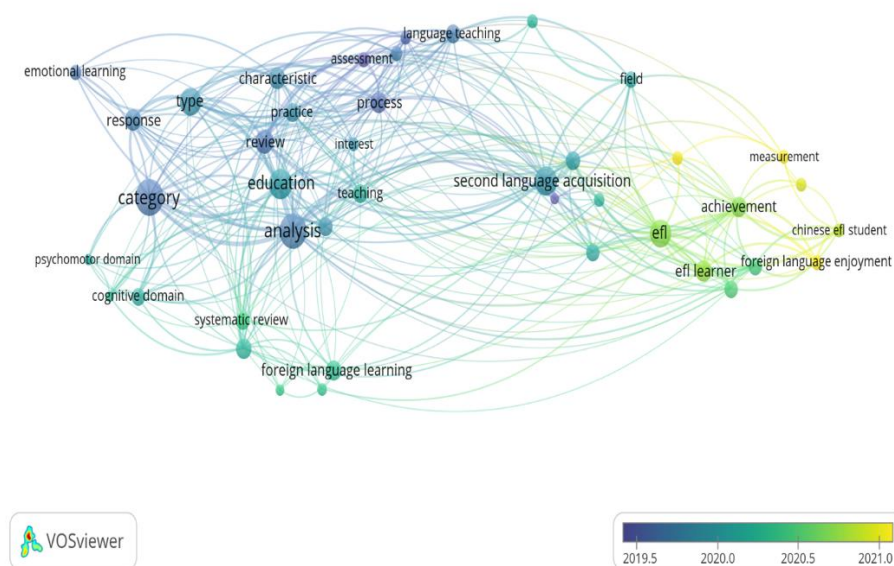


Figure 2. Co-word map overlay visualization

Figure 2 illustrates the results of the co-word map overlay visualization of research breakthroughs about the affective domain and foreign language acquisition. It indicates that from 2021 onward, numerous studies have focused on measurement, foreign language enjoyment, and Chinese EFL students. In contrast, research conducted in 2020 and earlier predominantly addressed topics including EFL, EFL learners, achievement, cognitive domain, psychomotor domain, systematic review, foreign language learning, teaching, and field. Furthermore, research prior to 2019 concentrated on emotional learning, response, category,

type, education, review, analysis, characteristic, practice, process, interest, assessment, and language instruction.

Co-Word Map Density Visualization

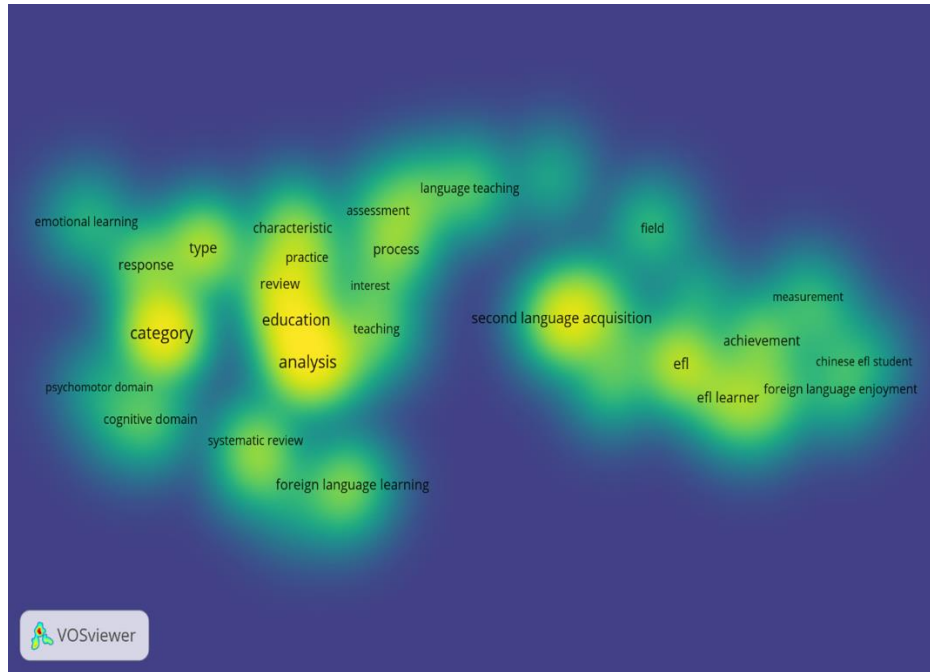


Figure 3. Co-word map density visualization

Figure 3 illustrates that a brighter color corresponds to more research on the subject. Consequently, we can deduce that terms such as category, education, analysis, review, and second language acquisition, which pertain to the affective domain and foreign language learning, have been extensively studied. Conversely, terms represented by a dull color signify a scarcity of research in this domain. Therefore, subsequent researchers have an opportunity to investigate terms such as cognitive domain, psychomotor domain, emotional learning, foreign language enjoyment, foreign language learning, and EFL learner.

Conclusion

This study presents a thorough bibliometric analysis of research concerning the affective domain in foreign language acquisition. The findings indicate that positive emotions and enjoyment are essential components in facilitating language learning. The application of bibliometric tools such as VOSviewer effectively illustrated the evolution of this research field, highlighting the most cited authors and significant trends. Subsequent research should concentrate on the interplay among various affective factors and further investigate domains such as cognitive

and psychomotor aspects in language education. This study has several limitations. It relies only on Google Scholar, includes only English-language works, and depends on metadata consistency in VOSviewer. Moreover, it does not distinguish between theoretical and empirical studies, which narrows the depth of analysis.

References

- Aziz, A. (2000). *Pedagogi Bahasa Melayu – Prinsip, Kaedah Dan Teknik*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publications & Distributors Sdn. Bhd.
- Bloom, B. S., Engelhart, M. D., Furst, E. J., Hill, W. H., & Krathwohl, D. R. (1956). *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: The Cognitive Domain*. New York: David McKay Co., Inc.
- Czikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology Of Optimal Experience*
- Dewaele, Jean-Marc, and Peter D. Macintyre. 2014. "The Two Faces Of Janus? Anxiety And Enjoyment In The Foreign Language Classroom." *Studies In Second Language Learning And Teaching* 4(2):237–74. DOI: 10.14746/Ssllt.2014.4.2.5.
- Dong, Li, Shireen Jamal Mohammed, Khaled Ahmed Abdel-Al Ibrahim, and Afsheen Rezai. 2022. "Fostering EFL Learners' Motivation, Anxiety, and Self-Efficacy Through Computer-Assisted Language Learning and Mobile-Assisted Language Learning-Based Instructions." *Frontiers In Psychology* 13. Doi: 10.3389/Fpsyg.2022.899557.
- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The Impact Of Enhancing Students' Social And Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis Of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development*, 82(1), 405–432.
- Eragamreddy, Nagamurali. 2024. "Motivation And Affective Factors To Learn English As Second Language." *Premise: Journal of English Education* 13(2):409. Doi: 10.24127/Pj.V13i2.9629.
- Fredrickson, B. L. (2003). The Value Of Positive Emotions: The Emerging Science Of Positive Psychology Is Coming To Understand Why It Is Good To Feel Good. *American Scientist*, 91(4), 330–335.
- Gómez, Juan Fernando, Jorge Emiro Restrepo, and Claudio Díaz Larenas. 2023. "Causas Y Efectos De La Ansiedad En Clase De Inglés: Factores Cognitivos Y Afectivos." *Revista Fuentes* 101–10. Doi: 10.12795/Revistafuentes.2023.22097.
- Herwiana, S., and E. N. Laili. 2021. "Students' Attitude Towards English Language Learning." *Journal of Educational Method and Technology* 2(3). DOI: 10.36412/Jemtec.V2i3.1026.
- Iksan, M., Husnaini, H., & Masruddin, M. (2022). Implementation Of Weekly English Program With Fun Learning Method For Pesantren Students. *Ethical Lingua: Journal Of Language Teaching And Literature*, 9(2), 872–879.

- Iri, Ruhan, and Emre Ünal. 2024. "Bibliometric Analysis of Research (1980-2023)." *Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 10(2):386-403. DOI: 10.31592/Aeusbed.1446738.
- Jain, Yvonne, and Gurnam Kaur Sidhu. 2013. "Relationship Between Anxiety, Attitude, And Motivation Of Tertiary Students In Learning English As A Second Language." *Procedia - Social And Behavioral Sciences* 90:114-23. DOI: 10.1016/J.Sbspro.2013.07.072.
- Kiruthiga, E., and G. Christopher. 2022. "The Impact Of Affective Factors In English Speaking Skills." *Theory And Practice In Language Studies* 12(12):2478-85. DOI: 10.17507/Tpls.1212.02.
- Krathwohl, D.R., Bloom, B.S., Masia, B.B. (1964). *Taxonomy Of Educational Objectives, The Classification Of Educational Goals. Handbook II: Affective Domain.*
- Krashen, S. (1985). *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications.* London: Longman.
- Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second Language Acquisition And Second Language Learning.* Pergamon, Oxford
- Lazarides, Miltos K., Irene-Zacharo Lazaridou, and Nikolaos Papanas. 2023. "Bibliometric Analysis: Bridging Informatics With Science." *The International Journal of Lower Extremity Wounds.* DOI: 10.1177/15347346231153538.
- Le, Xuan Mai, and Thanh Thao Le. 2022. "Factors Affecting Students' Attitudes Towards Learning English As A Foreign Language In A Tertiary Institution Of Vietnam." *International Journal of TESOL & Education* 2(2):168-85. DOI: 10.54855/Ijte.22229.
- Linnenluecke, Martina K., Mauricio Marrone, and Abhay K. Singh. 2020. "Conducting Systematic Literature Reviews and Bibliometric Analyses." *Australian Journal Of Management* 45(2):175-94. DOI: 10.1177/0312896219877678.
- Macintyre, Peter, and Tammy Gregersen. 2012. "Emotions That Facilitate Language Learning: The Positive-Broadening Power Of The Imagination." *Studies In Second Language Learning And Teaching* 2(2):193. DOI: 10.14746/Ssllt.2012.2.2.4.
- Malik, Sameetah Fatima, and Azhar Pervaiz. 2023. "Investigating The Effects Of ESL Learners' Motivation And Anxiety On Task-Based Language Teaching In Pakistan." *Linguistics and Literature Review* 9(1):65-87. DOI: 10.32350/Llr.91/04.
- Mubarok, Ahsin Fahmi, and Siti Nurindah. 2023. "Overcoming Affective Factors in Language Learning: The Role of Motivation, Anxiety, and Self-Confidence." *Transformational Language Literature And Technology Overview In Learning (Transtool)* 2(2):16-23. DOI: 10.55047/Transtool.V2i2.1353.

- Madehang, M., Masruddin, M., & Iksan, M. (2024). Reflecting On The Implementation Of Online English Learning In Islamic Higher Education: Lecturers And Students' Perspectives. *International Journal of Asian Education*, 5(3), 183-197.
- Öztürk, Oğuzhan, Rıdvan Kocaman, and Dominik K. Kanbach. 2024. "How To Design Bibliometric Research: An Overview And A Framework Proposal." *Review of Managerial Science* 18(11):3333–61. DOI: 10.1007/S11846-024-00738-0.
- Papi, Mostafa, and Hassan Khajavy. 2023. "Second Language Anxiety: Construct, Effects, and Sources." *Annual Review Of Applied Linguistics* 43:127–39. DOI: 10.1017/S0267190523000028.
- Passas, Ioannis. 2024. "Bibliometric Analysis: The Main Steps." *Encyclopedia* 4(2):1014–25. DOI: 10.3390/Encyclopedia4020065.
- Stander, Marga. 2022. "The Relationship Between Language Learning Strategies, Affective Factors, and Language Proficiency." *Language Learning In Higher Education* 12(2):391–408. DOI: 10.1515/Cercles-2022-2053.
- Zheng, Songyun, and Xiang Zhou. 2022. "Positive Influence Of Cooperative Learning And Emotion Regulation On EFL Learners' Foreign Language Enjoyment." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 19(19):12604. DOI: 10.3390/Ijerp191912604.