OVERCOMING COMMUNICATIVE ANXIETY IN SPEAKING CLASSES: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES

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Abstract

The inability to speak correctly because of communicative anxiety in speaking classes serves as an ongoing obstacle which prevents EFL and ESL students from learning languages effectively. The research study investigates speaking anxiety through its psychological foundations and it presents evidence-based teaching methods which instructors can use to decrease student fear while developing authentic communication skills. The research results show that teacher-centered support combined with learner autonomy development and task design based on psychological principles can effectively reduce communicative anxiety.

Keywords

communicative anxiety, speaking anxiety, EFL/ESL learners, psychological strategies, methodological approaches, language teaching.

Аннотация

Коммуникативная тревожность на занятиях по говорению представляет собой одно из наиболее устойчивых препятствий для эффективного овладения языком в контекстах EFL и ESL. В данной статье рассматриваются психологические основы тревожности при говорении и обобщаются научно обоснованные методологические стратегии, которые педагоги могут применять для снижения тревоги обучающихся и формирования подлинной коммуникативной компетенции. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что сочетание поддерживающего поведения преподавателя, развития самостоятельности обучающихся и психологически обоснованного проектирования заданий способно существенно снизить коммуникативную тревожность.

Ключевые слова

коммуникативная тревожность, тревожность при говорении, обучающиеся EFL/ESL, психологические стратегии, методологические подходы, обучение языку.

Annotatsiya

Speaking darslarida kommunikativ tashvish EFL va ESL kontekstlarida til egallashning eng barqaror to'siqlaridan biri hisoblanadi. Ushbu maqolada speaking tashvishining psixologik asoslari ko'rib chiqilib, o'qituvchilar tomonidan qo'llanilishi mumkin bo'lgan, ilmiy asosga ega metodologik strategiyalar umumlashtiriladi. Mazkur strategiyalar o'quvchilardagi tashvishni kamaytirish va haqiqiy kommunikativ kompetensiyani rivojlantirishga yo'naltirilgan. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'qituvchining qo'llab-quvvatlash xatti-harakatlari, o'quvchi mustaqilligini

rivojlantirish va psixologik jihatdan asoslangan topshiriqlarni loyihalashning biriktirilishi kommunikativ tashvishni sezilarli darajada kamaytira oladi.

Kalit so'zlar

kommunikativ tashvish, speaking tashvishi, EFL/ESL o'quvchilari, psixologik strategiyalar, metodologik yondashuvlar, tilni o'qitish.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking anxiety refers to the fear which students experience when they must speak a second or foreign language which they have not yet mastered. The research shows that speaking anxiety affects students in significant ways because it prevents them from learning. Speaking skills differ from reading and writing because oral communication results in immediate social evaluation of the learner which creates social pressure that leads to speaking anxiety. When a student anticipates negative assessment from peers or instructors, the resulting affective filter effectively disrupts not only fluency but also the cognitive processes that underlie accurate and meaningful language production [1]. EFL students face a severe problem because they cannot practice their target language outside of class which leads to their speaking tasks. Research consistently demonstrates that speaking anxiety negatively correlates with oral performance, participation rates, and overall language proficiency outcomes [7].

METHODOLOGY AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study adopts a qualitative, literature-based analytical approach, systematically reviewing recent scholarly publications on speaking anxiety in language learning contexts. At the affective level, anxiety shows itself through physical symptoms which increase body activity and through self-assessment that brings negative results and through a total fear of speaking which scientistsidentified as "communication apprehension" [2]. Cognitive dimensions include thought patterns which lead to catastrophic outcomes and people who concentrate excessively on accuracy lose their ability to produce fluent speech and people who keep expecting to fail will experience memory problems during their oral performance assessment. Social dimensions include three elements: students' fear of being mocked by others, their ability to handle peer evaluations, and the unequal power relations which exist between teachers and students. These elements create a classroom environment which makes students feel scared to take risks. This risk becomes a major obstacle to their language development process [3]. The psychological literature on verbal communicative competence development explains that self-efficacy beliefs function as a mediation factor which determines how anxiety responses develop. Learners who believe they can communicate effectively will experience less performance anxiety. This occurs even when they face actual language constraints which limit their abilities to express themselves [6].

The research identifies different teacher strategies which help students reduce their anxiety. The analysis of EFL teacher behavior by Khoudri shows that teachers who establish a safe learning space through their use of appropriate teaching methods create an environment which helps students become more comfortable speaking English and communicating with others [8]. The findings of this research show that cooperative learning structures which use pair and small-group tasks help students reduce their anxiety because these tasks create less social pressure than whole-class speaking activities which require students to speak in front of everyone. These tasks help students build their oral skills through practice in less intense social settings before they start to perform in front of larger groups of people [4].

The role of task design is equally important because research demonstrates that tasks which emphasize authentic communication instead of evaluating formal language correctness, which leads to reduced testing anxiety through their detailed performance assessment process, offer students valuable chances to practice their actual language abilities [9]. The instructional

methods of learner-centered approaches together with self-monitoring and positive self-talk and planned preparation activities have proven successful in decreasing anxiety when teachers demonstrate these techniques instead of allowing students to figure them out themselves [5]. Central Asian educational research shows that local teaching methods use language training to help students reduce their asabiy bosim anxiety. The study recommends three core elements which include structured relaxation techniques and graded task difficulty and systematic development of positive communication skills to create a foundation for teaching language through anxiety-sensitive methods [10].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the existing literature reveals that speaking anxiety exists as a multiple-faceted condition which needs treatment through methods that match its various dimensions. There are multiple findings which create a need for researchers to examine them closely. The classroom psychological climate establishes itself as the primary element which determines student anxiety levels because teachers who create a learning space that accepts students fully produce better results than all other teaching methods which involve error correction [8]. The research shows that teachers develop their own teaching methods through their classroom attitudes and their ways of interacting with students. The research establishes graduated exposure as an essential element which must guide anxiety-sensitive task scheduling.

Students who start learning speaking through easy-to-do speaking tasks which follow a structured format begin with scripted dialogues and information-gap tasks in pairs before they develop their capacity to speak without any constraints show lower anxiety levels than students who must face demanding speaking tasks from their first day of study [3]. The principle uses established psychological models which explain anxiety desensitization to develop practical applications for designing curriculum and organizing lesson plans in speaking courses. Third, learner strategy instruction emerges as a significantly underutilized resource in current EFL pedagogy. Research shows that learners use ineffective coping methods which include avoidance and silence and code-switching to handle their anxiety problems. Explicit training about cognitive restructuring and preparation and rehearsal techniques and self-efficacy development methods can change these behavior patterns.

The practice guideline requires speaking programs to include strategy instruction as essential content for building communicative skills. The social structure of speaking activities determines how people handle uncertainty which results in different levels of anxiety. The class format with its requirement of individual public performances represents the most stressful situation for students and should be used only after students have developed enough expertise through their practice at easier activities; this particular task format enables students to work together through two-person or small group activities which help them develop their speaking skills while creating a less stressful environment that protects them from anxiety-based learning interruptions [2]. The literature review establishes a productive relationship between psychological research and methodological studies because anxiety-reduction techniques that achieve the highest success rates need to treat both cognitive and emotional factors of student anxiety by teaching students strategies and building their self-confidence through active teacher support and through school design elements which control learning tasks and student group methods and assessment methods that value student participation instead of their language mistakes.

CONCLUSION

Speaking anxiety in language classrooms is a pervasive but tractable problem. The present analysis demonstrates that its effective management requires attention to both the psychological dimensions of learner affect and self-concept and the methodological dimensions of classroom climate, task design, and instructional sequencing. A teacher who combines a genuinely supportive interpersonal stance with principled task selection, graduated exposure to

communicative risk, and explicit learner strategy instruction creates the conditions under which even highly anxious learners can develop genuine oral communicative competence. The evidence reviewed here suggests that no single strategy is sufficient and that the greatest gains are achieved when psychological and methodological approaches are integrated into a coherent, anxiety-sensitive instructional philosophy.

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