

The Effects of Anxiety on English Department Students` Speaking Performance in Faculty of Education in Qemenis

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الملخص: أجريت هذه الدراسة لتوضيح أن قلق التعلم كما يعرفه علماء النفس مرض مرتبط بالعملية التعليمية ويجب التغلب عليه أو تقليله من أجل تسهيل عملية التعلم السلس دون عوائق قد تعيق الأداء. هناك أيضًا اهتمام مصاحب بالمهارات اللغوية ، وقد يكون التحديث إحداها ، حيث يتولد هذا الشعور من قبل بعض متعلمي اللغة الأجنبية وهذا هو الموضوع الرئيسي لهذه الورقة البحثية المتواضعة لأنها تلقي الضوء على أنواع القلق ، الأسباب وطرق المعالجة بالاعتماد على البيانات المأخوذة من عينة مجتمع البحث باستخدام الاستبيان.

Abstract

This study conducted to show that learning anxiety, as it is known by psychologists, is a disease associated with the educational process and must be overcome or reduced in order to facilitate the smooth learning process without pitfalls that may impede performance. There is also a concomitant concern for language skills, and speaking may be one of them, where this feeling is generated by some foreign language learners and this is the main topic of this modest research paper as it sheds light on the types of anxiety, its causes and theoretical treatment methods depending on the data obtained from the sample of the research community by using questionnaire and presents anxiety effect on English speaking skill among English department students in faculty of education in Qaminis.

0. Introduction

Anxiety about learning, especially in language, is classified as one of the factors that mainly affect the process of learning and its effects on the target language in its various aspects for learners as a second language. It plays a very considerable role in the achievement of speaking skill and the extent of its influence on it, as it is not gradually addressed. This study tries to define anxiety and shows how anxiety affects English students performance in speaking skill and trying to find the negative effects that anxiety causes when speaking or trying to apply the practical application to students when interacting with each other or with their teachers.

Many researchers claimed that anxiety mostly becomes the negative determinant underlies foreign language learning processes. Previous studies (e.g. Chappel, 2005; Agbalizu, 2006; Nimat, 2013) showed that language anxiety can affect students' language production which is signaled by the negative correlation between language anxiety level and students' language achievement (e.g. students' exam grades). Horwitz et al. (1986) attributed that language anxiety could lunch three aspects of anxiety which are the fear of oral communication, fear of test-failure, and negative feedback of other's evaluation. Meanwhile, in response to the oral communication, McCroskey (2003) and Horwitz (2001) claimed that the fear of speaking performance in public have played a significant role of foreign language anxiety as it deals with shyness and emotions of each individual when communicate each other by using the target language. Simply, students who feel anxious will tend to speak rarely and to withdraw them self from myriad oral activities in class (Xianping, 2003).

0.1. The significance of the study

the importance of study lies in the anxiety of learning that exists in abundance among foreign language learners in the skill of speaking, as it has been shown through some studies on foreign language learners that there is anxiety or we can say that it is a relative fear of speaking in the target language for several reasons that may be a fear of speaking , using some expressions , wrong use of some combinations, the use of some phrases or specific terms that belongs to some western cultures in speech, all of the above reasons determine that the learner believes that generate his state of anxiety. The importance of studying is trying to overcome this stumbling block that prevents accuracy and fluency in foreign language speaking .

0.2. Objectives of the study.

This study aims to define anxiety, its types and the extent of its impact on learning the language as a whole. It also attempts to explain of the main reasons behind anxiety about learning generated in speaking with helping second language learners to overcome anxiety, whether temporary or chronic, by guiding them to the recommendations followed in speaking the second language. The main goal that this paper is helping and supporting Libyan students of the English language to speak without fear, anxiety or any other factor.

0.3 Study Questions

1. Is learning anxiety associated with speaking performance only?
2. What are the main obstacles that prevent good performance in speaking skill?
3. Why do students feel anxious about learning constantly?
4. Does learning anxiety have other reasons than those given by the students and the researcher?

1.Literature Review

Anxiety about learning in the skill of speaking the second language is an inherent element and is present in abundance among learners despite the different languages in terms of their structures, and for this reason many studies have given an explanation for this phenomenon with the identification of its different types and its significant and noticeable effect on performance in the second language regardless of the association to mother tongue and its relationship to the target language.

Pamungkas, A (2018) in his study finally reveals that foreign language anxiety, in term of English, did not susceptibly invert students' language performance due to the learning process. The students were able to overcome their fear of English learning. therefore, anxiety was existed among students, but their anxiety was regularly as moderate anxiety. In addition, according to the main determinant of this study, how foreign language anxiety affect students' performance, indicated positive correlation. It can be asserted that anxiety faced by all students, interestingly, raised students' motivation to perform well. Therefore, it was indicated that language anxiety can facilitate students to overcome their fear of learning tasks and activities demand and motivate them to perform better. Meanwhile, the distinguishing levels of anxiety found among counterparts indicated reliable result of level of anxiety, as well. Even though female students feel more anxious than male counterparts, but anxiety level was also reported as slightly level of apprehension among students. Some researchers contended that foreign language anxiety, specifically, did not susceptibly incline each student's achievement due to language learning process of academic speaking course. Therefore, present study have indicated a linear, interrelationship between language anxiety and counterparts, and students' language performance either. Both in specific and general result, students felt moderate level of anxiety which is specifically *communication apprehension* was found to be the most determinant worried by all students in academic speaking courses and conclude d this study by claiming that could not judge that the current finding successfully ruled out the previous language anxiety phenomenon which indicated to be debilitating factor for foreign language learning. More specifically, Horwitz et al. (1986) asserts that psychologists have finally differentiated foreign language anxiety as the specific anxiety reaction, since anxiety in language learning context is different with anxiety in various situations. They added that the more subtle factors in the study of foreign language anxiety need to be

considered, and not only emphasized on the quality of students' performance. Therefore, in regard to the contradictory result of language anxiety effect on language learning, some more factors loading need to be investigated in advance.

Horwitz (1986) asserts that the absence of specific anxiety measurement of a language could obviously hamper the research finding on the relationship of anxiety to second language learning performance. Moreover, Horwitz (1986) added that nor empirical literature that substantiates obvious relationship between apprehension and learners' performance of the target language. Thus, for the sake of overcoming previous research findings discrepancy, the measurement of anxiety should not be only administered for individual's specific stimulus of language learning. Moreover in earlier study, MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) attributed that it is important to delineate former investigation findings related to three perspectives of types of anxiety. Those are trait, state, and conditional-specific anxiety in which the three of them have been well identified by Scovel (1978), Spielberger (1983), and MacIntyre et al. (1991).

Spielberger, (1983) defines the term "anxiety" refers to the subjective feeling of tension, nervousness, worry, and apprehension associated with an provocation of the autonomic nervous system .

"The relationship between anxiety and performance can best be illustrated with an inverted "U", that is, "when anxiety is low, performance is also low. When anxiety is optimal, performance is high, but beyond an optimal level of anxiety, performance deteriorates" (Walker, 1997, p. 17).

Facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety are two divisions of Anxiety that Alpert and Haber made for the first time in 1960. The former refers to the anxiety leading to improved performance, while the latter refers to the one resulting in impaired performance.

"We should not overlook the possibility that observations of facilitating and debilitating anxiety are actually different ends of the same anxiety continuum" (Dewaele, 2013; Hembree, 1988).

1.1. Language Anxiety

"Language anxiety" can be defined as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p. 128).

Xiang (2004) showed Language anxiety "harms learners" performance in many ways, both indirectly through worries and self-doubt, and directly by decreasing class participation and creating undistinguished avoidance of the language"

language anxiety is a crucial and prominent element in the language learning context, and any theoretical model that seeks to understand and interpret the language learning process must consider its effect. Since it is commonly recognized that language anxiety is regarded as closely related to self-perception we need to recognize the role of this structure to understand language anxiety. "Self-perception" is a superordinate concept, which "includes self-descriptions (self-concept) as well as self-evaluations (self-esteem); the importance of each self-description and self-evaluation; and also the way in which all the self-descriptions and evaluations are organized to produce something recognizable as 'self'" (Walker, 1997).

1.2. Foreign Language Anxiety

"Foreign language anxiety" (FLA) refers to fear or apprehension happening when a FL / SL learner is expected to perform something in a second or foreign language as Gardner & MacIntyre, (1993) showed.

FLA is different from general term of anxiety although it sounds to be relevant to the latter in the way that the anxious foreign language learners feel nervousness, tension, and apprehension in some specific situations (Trang, 2012).

Parallels have been showed between FLA and three related types of performance anxieties: communication anxiety, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. But communication anxiety is one that is considered as “a type of shyness appeared with fear of or anxiety about communicating with others” (Horwitz et al., 1986, p. 127); it focuses on a person’s level of anxiety in communicating with others, and it is frequently associated with those who anticipate troubles in communication with others.

The increasing of different cross-cultural relations among individuals and their traditions in society create a need for people to communicate in variety of languages different from their native one. Due to reasons such as international business or the current interest in a foreign culture and foreign version of thinking the need to learn how to speak an FL fluently, correctly and even in a short time is evident. As a universal increases, people in most nations find themselves in the situation of speaking in front of others in an FL. However, speaking in the foreign language, both in social and academic contexts, entails risk taking and seems to be a challenging task, in which learners who are not fluent in the target language experience that they cannot express their personality, or their intelligence.

Researchers have consistently described learning a foreign language as a complex process, which implies the study of a new grammar, pronunciation, memorization of new words; but first and foremost it tests the learner’s ability in terms of his flexibility to take risks and making mistakes in front of other people. Over the years, the factors characterizing such processes have been clearly outlined: these factors may be strictly linguistic (e.g. grammar, syntax) or extra-linguistic such as socio-contextual (Schuman, 1978), the input received by the learner (Krashen, 1985).

1.3. Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

With regard to the term “foreign language speaking anxiety” (FLSA), as “an individual’s fear or nervousness associated with either real or anticipated oral communication in foreign language with another person or persons”.

1.4.Types of Learning Language Anxiety

In this part we will present some types of Learning language Anxiety with a brief account of comparisons that had been made by previous studies such as the effect of anxiety onto student’s achievement in any target or foreign language.

Horwitz et al. (1986) have been majorly attributed as specific references of any anxiety issues in foreign language that going to be examined, and the details as follows:

a) Trait anxiety

This kind of reticent refers to a person who frequently feels anxious in any situation. added that a person would be likely to become anxious as if he had high trait anxiety as well. Moreover, have argued that trait anxiety could notoriously impair a person’s cognitive functioning in term of person’s memory disruption, and it triggers person to be an “avoidance” personality.

b) State anxiety

State anxiety is simply regarded as a transient apprehension which is triggered by a particular provoking-situation, e.g. particular important test. In other word, a person would be likely to experience state anxiety if he had a fear of particular situation (e.g. fear of science, reading loudly, speaking fluently , etc.).

c) Situation-specific anxiety

MacIntyre & Gardner (1991) contented that conditional-specific anxiety is an advanced perspective of a state anxiety concept. Specifically, this anxiety is argued as persons’ apprehension that consistently rises over time in dealing with particular given situation. In this case, the anxiety reaction of respondents is tested in a well-defined situation (e.g. public speaking, writing exam, etc.) to find out the effect of respondents’ reticent on language learning.

Other types of language anxiety proposed by Horwitz et al. (1986) are:

a) Communication apprehension

Learners who perceive this strain while communicating in the target language will apparently feel uncomfortable to speak in front of others, due to the lack of language skills, especially speaking and listening skills.

b) Fear of negative evaluation

Whoever foreign language learners, who experienced a fear of negative evaluation, they will tend to consider this kind of strain as a threat to their image among peers. Students will perceive that committing errors is kind of obstacle to master their target language, rather than consider it as a part of natural process of foreign language learning.

c) Test anxiety

Learners, who exhibit this kind of apprehension, will intuitively consider any kind of foreign language learning process as a part of testing themselves related to their foreign language proficiency, especially in oral production. Aftermath, learners, who experience test anxiety, would not perceive the process of language learning as a good chance to improve their communication skills.

2. Methodology

To deal with the research questions, the quantitative research is used as the research design. This research design was chosen since the research was administered to measure the scale of language anxiety of academic speaking course students. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was administered to subjects of the study for the sake of attributing clear-cut results of students' anxiety degree measurement. This research paper relied on the regular sample, which represents students of the English Language Department from different classes at the College of Education, Qaminis, Benghazi University during the "Fall 2018" semester, and the data were collected through questionnaire prepared by the researcher was used to try to collect the largest possible number of data accurately about the state of anxiety among the students when speaking English language, especially for students in advanced levels.

2.1. Participants

The participants in this study or the sample of this study included 75 students in the English language department from the first semester to the eighth semester, 43 female students and 32 male students.

2.2. Analysis and results of collected data

The researchers found that different findings among participants with distinguishing responses to the questionnaire which included items to check the main reasons of anxiety of speaking skill as follows:

1. I feel anxious when I learn any language skills.

80% among participants showed that their fear of using speaking in front of others more than their performance in other skills.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	60	80%
N	0	0%
SD + D	15	20%
Total	75	100%

2. I get worried when I use what I learned.

The majority of students mentioned that feeling of anxiety controlled their actual use of the language items that have been learned.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	65	87%
N	5	6.5%
SD + D	5	6.5%
Total	75	100%

3. *I speak English fluently without fear or hesitation.*

75% of the students disagree with this point in according to their experiences in speaking tasks.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	56	75%
N	2	3%
SD + D	17	22%
Total	75	100%

4. *I feel anxious when I want to talk to others.*

60% responses to this item referred to feeling apprehension when talking to others which is one of the effective factors of speaking performance.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	45	60%
N	0	0%
SD + D	30	40%
Total	75	100%

5. *I feel afraid at times to pronounce some words.*

6. *I worry when I speak English with my classmates and my teachers.*

In (5 & 6) most respondents claimed that they feel of fear and hesitation when they speak to their colleagues and teacher.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	60	80%
N	0	0%
SD + D	15	20%
Total	75	100%

7. *I worry that I am always apprehensive about the wrong use of full phrases.*

60% of respondents completely agree with this item whereas 34 % of them are not which is considered as an indicator to show that the correct use of language must be applicable in all language skills performance not only in an individual skill.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	45	60%
N	5	6%
SD + D	25	34%
Total	75	100%

8. *Anxiety makes me too hesitant to speak fluently.*

90% of respondents claimed that anxiety affects their speaking performance and to some extent their learning process.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	67	90%
N	3	4%
SD + D	5	6%
Total	75	100%

9. *Some grammatical structures are confusing me in correct usage.*

80% among participants agree that their minimum amount of knowledge is one cause of confusion.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	60	80%
N	5	6%
SD + D	10	14%
Total	75	100%

10. *Not practicing the conversation because of constant anxiety or fear of the test.*

75% of respondents agreed that practicing is very significant to overcome their fear of doing any language skill.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	56	75%
N	4	5%
SD + D	15	20%
Total	75	100%

11. *Shyness and fear associated with influencing conversation use.*

90% of students are completely agree with this claim which is the influence of shyness on the speaking process.

Scale	No of respondents	Percentage
SA + A	67	90%
N	3	4%
SD + D	5	6%
Total	75	100%

2.3. Results of the study

According to this study and the figures that obtained about the effects of anxiety on speaking performance, the findings can be summarized as follows:

1. Most respondents feel of fear of speaking to others.
2. Anxiety affect their performance in speaking more than other skills.
3. Apprehension of using correct forms of phrases and sentences make students feel nervous continuously.
4. The students felt anxious about making language mistakes .
5. Feeling shy in front of their teachers and colleagues is also considered as a factor of anxiety.
6. The role of practicing is very demotivated to students to perform well.
7. Most students complained from the accurate usage of language structures.
8. Anxiety does not allow them to produce or create new utterances to express themselves to others.

3. Recommendations and Conclusions

Through the results obtained from the questionnaire, it became clear to us that anxiety about learning is a very natural feeling associated with the process of foreign language learners in general and among regular language students, and since the study aims only to find the reasons and factors that cause anxiety in its various types of language skills and their combinations, and in particular speaking skill. The study has shown that most students feel anxiety due to fear of making linguistic mistakes and confusion in the correct pronunciation of some words with a loss of confidence in their ability to express their knowledge.

In addition to being ashamed of their teachers and colleagues when practicing the skill of speaking, vice versa, their performance in other skills such as writing or reading. The results also showed that there are no opportunities for students to overcome this feeling, which negatively affects the performance and productivity of students. The cultural gap between languages and the students 'lack of awareness of them is also a reason for fear of expressing the language.

Referring to the questions in this paper, it became clear that students feel anxious about learning in general, but their anxiety about speaking is more effective, while the factors associated with anxiety, such as fear and shyness of making mistakes, affect their performance in speaking skill. Lack of confidence in their knowledge of the language is the main cause of anxiety over continuous learning. Finally, there are other reasons for anxiety, such as anxiety about the exam, anxiety about low grades obtained during daily study, shyness and lack of self-confidence.

We suggest the following based on what the study presented:

- Encouraging students to express their ideas and knowledge comfortably and without restrictions.
- Giving students the opportunity to intensively practice the skill, which gives them confidence.
- Address the feeling of anxiety psychologically and scientifically by including students in discussion sessions and interacting with each other with feedback from teachers.
- Support students in creative thinking and emphasize that speaking skill is an essential and important skill in language learning as grammar and meaning.

(Sample 1)**Questionnaire****The effect of anxiety on foreign language learners**

Gender: male () female () semester: signature:.....

1. I feel anxious when I learn any language skills.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

2. I get worried when I use what I learned.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

3. I speak English fluently without fear or hesitation.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

4. I feel anxious when I want to talk to others.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

5. I feel afraid at times to pronounce some words.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

6. I worry when I speak English with my classmates and my teachers?

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

7. I worry that I am always apprehensive about the wrong use of full phrases.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

8. Anxiety makes me too hesitant to speak fluently.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

9. Some grammatical structures are confusing me in correct usage.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

10. Not practicing the conversation because of constant anxiety or fear of the test.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

11. Shyness and fear associated with influencing conversation use.

a. completely agree () b. agree () c. disagree () d. completely disagree ()

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