

English Language Anxiety and Its Impact on Communicative Performance

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www.ijrah.com || Vol. 4 No. 2 (2024): March Issue

Date of Submission: 09-03-2024

Date of Acceptance: 21-03-2024

Date of Publication: 31-03-2024

ABSTRACT

A lack of English language proficiency creates a debilitating impact on the academic performance of the students and people with limited knowledge in English experience a lack of confidence and low self-esteem. There are several factors which are responsible for English language anxiety which is existent among student communities all over the world. Secondary research has been performed to find out the relevant reasons. Language learners all over the world experience apprehension, nervousness, anxiety and anguish while learning any new language. Anxiety basically originates from cultural differences in the target language, learner's poor cognitive skills, and his limitations. This anxiety among students impacts the teacher's teaching abilities and goals and inversely affects the teacher's confidence and performance targets.

Keywords- English language proficiency, Academic performance, Self-esteem, English anxiety.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

English is considered as the co-official language of India and the Indian people usually try to communicate in English language with the people of other parts of the country because of the diversified culture and existence of thousands of different languages. There are almost thirty different regional languages in the country and for this reason; English is often used as the link language. In addition to that to get a good job and to achieve promotions is quite necessary to know and communicate in English (Salem, 2019). This kind of demand has made this language quite compulsory in the country but not all the people and students are capable of efficiently communicating in English. For this reason, the English language has become a language of anxiety and many people are still afraid of learning this language.

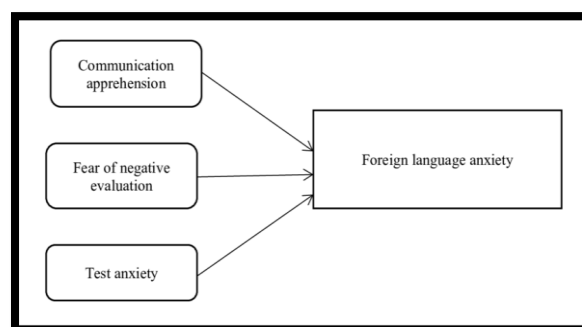


Figure 1: Foreign Language Anxiety
(Source: Self-developed)

Aim

The aim of this study is to learn about English anxiety and its impact on the communicative performance of individuals.

Objectives

- To understand the concept of English anxiety.
- To analyze the impact of English anxiety on the communicative performance of the people.

- To evaluate the challenges associated with learning and communicating in English.

Questions

RQ1: What is English anxiety?

RQ2: What is the impact of English anxiety on the communicative performance of the people?

RQ3: What are the challenges associated with learning and communicating in English?

Significance

In India, the status of the people is also defined by their ability to speak and communicate in English for this reason this language is also regarded as the upper class language (Bećirović, 2020). People who are capable of communicating in English are often considered as more intelligent and educated than those who cannot.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of English anxiety

According to Naser Oteir and Nijr Al-Otaibi, (2019), India is a diverse country with more than 30 major regional languages. People who speak different regional languages may find it quite difficult to communicate with people who live in other parts of the country. For this reason, English is often used as a link language so that an interrupted communication process can be developed. In India English is also regarded as a professional language and hence for acquiring a job and achieving promotions proficiency in English is mandatory. It has been also observed that English proficiency is considered the benchmark of higher education and intelligence. For this reason, this language is mostly confined to the higher class of the society.

III. LANGUAGE ANXIETY

Given the mandate of the respective governments most of the states and the students spend considerable time learning the English language from nursery classes till the end of their academic life. English is mostly used as a medium of instruction in almost all Indian states and union territories. Despite its prevalence students, faculty members, high ranking officials in educational institutions face difficulty to converse and compose. Very little study has been undertaken to discuss about this growing anxiety among non English speaking population. There are several themes which emerged along this language inefficiency analysis, one being the lack of language skills in general apart from personal insecurities which rule you, the fear of judgment by others or some negative influences on performance.

Learning English language involves Complex linguistic, metacognitive and cognitive factors more than their own language. This significantly affects the learners in a way that it eventually affects their overall academic performance. Anxiety involves unpleasant encounters stressful feelings that a student develops before they have to speak, read or write in English language.

The Encyclopedia Britannica 2008 defines anxiety it as a habitual feeling fear which often remains in explicable. Explanation of anxiety keeps evolving with different people, different situations, types and levels. Anxiety itself has different type's namely state anxiety, situation anxiety, and trait anxiety. While trade anxiety is a personality trait, state explain the experience of fear at a particular moment and situational and Society is experienced in distinct situations. Anxiety further has two types being debilitating and facilitative while the former will weaken and hamper the academic performance, the latter facilitates and helps the student to improve their academic performance. The cause of this anxiety has various reasons including the instructor itself, method of teaching, the classroom, its ambience, and the student's perception about their assessment and so on. English language just being a foreign language continues to evoke fear and complex in the minds and brains of the majority of students. By just being the medium of instruction in school and in all major educational sectors students definitely face difficulty in expressing themselves in English which in turn impacts the overall academic performance of the students besides draining their efforts and diminishing their self confidence.

The anxiety level of students from rural areas is significantly higher as compared to their city bred peers who have more exposure and experience in this language. Their own perception that they will not be able to communicate correctly in English further strengthens their already established conviction about their poor English language skills. English language learning should be done in a very informal and friendly environment thereby encouraging students to participate in the learning process without much anxiety and fear. It should be taken into consideration that students should not be forced to take part in any of the performances and should not be imposed to do things, but their comfort, convenience and preferences should be sought before any such things happen. Moreover In case of mistakes or if they underperform they should not be left to feel very embarrassed and mistakes should be taken as a positive aspect of their learning.

The assessment criteria should always be intimated to the students in advance so that it eliminates the fear of being negatively evaluated. Every student should be made to understand that the purpose and impact of evaluation is a part of their learning and they should accept it as part of education as it is indispensable and conducive to the learning process. Fear of negative evaluation and general feeling of anxiety communication apprehension are also some of the factors under consideration. This is surprising to note that there is a strong and significant relationship between years of learning English and the language anxiety among English speakers. English language has vital place among speakers today and its major acquisition among English learners makes it more crucial than ever. In general it is found that lot of people makes mistakes even in cities

especially students who have to make academic submissions and other documents. Studies indicate that it is quite invertible for learners of English as a foreign language or as a second language to experience and that could impact their overall language learning skills. (nordin et al 2020). Considering extensive use of English language in all the universities all across the world and the enthusiasm to learn this language by a majority of the people the aspect of anxiety looms large. In majority of the countries in the world English language is introduced at primary level and implemented in even government school and other learning Institutions. The language and Society is most crucial while they performed in class and try to try hold conversations formally and informally. Speaking and writing can be broadly described as some kind of fear and tension associated with language speaking. English has majorly played the role of a link language between people of a foreign language and with first language. Globalization played a major role in popularizing English as a trade and link language across the world.

The Government of almost all the countries around the world had developed strategies to guarantee that the respective students gets adequate training and exposure and develop capacity to speak and master the English language. This which further strengthened the need for learning this language and was adopted as a medium of instruction. There are various factors which affect the learning of this English language as a first language or second language. One of them is the attention span of the student, the self confidence they have in them, the culture he is from, the atmosphere in the classroom, the techniques adopted to learn, his nervousness among others. Learning any language can add to one's anxiety to a great extent more so if an individual is not generally diverse in that particular language, the learner's major emotional components enormously influence second language learning. It is the sort of tension explicitly connected with learning the subsequent languages which will emerge from several sources.

Generally the Society and the prevailing condition around you will influence everyone's life at various levels without having a proper predetermined course of action. Despite having devoted a major time of studying in practicing and listening to English language outside the room through well planned receptive activities just as reading and listening and not speaking that language many of the students were unsuccessful in learning. Most of the students are well focused on private activities rather than public activities which involve face to face interaction and public performance. The reason for avoiding English was social, sociopolitical as well as individual. Despite the setback interest and enthusiasm were still found intact but they resorted to private arena which was less threatening and less taxing. Teachers are advised to strongly consider the emotional factors of students before assessment.

Reasons for anxiety can also be lack of language skills, wrong grammar, and incorrect use of diction, pronunciation errors, and lack of vocabulary. They may have personal insecurities like over thinking, stereotyping, and feeling of inadequacy besides judgment of others which comes under self degradation. Fear of judgment last but not the least negatively influences learning and performance, low scholastic performance, diminished self-esteem, communication with peers, performance uneasiness further diminishes the lack of language skills among students.

English language proficiency is directly related to class divisions and other associated issues in Indian society. When the learners remain unable to perform well in English, especially in terms of speaking and writing, they feel anxious and less confident. Lou and Noels, (2020), opined that this limited confidence has a huge impact on them and as a result, they often stay away from learning this language. The students also start refraining from participating in various discussions and conversations which require the English language only. This way English anxiety creates a direct impact on the communicative performance of the individuals.

Challenges associated with learning and communicating in English

Rajitha and Alamelu, (2020), stated that English is a foreign language and hence it is not that easy to become proficient in this language. People may face several difficulties related to grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and language variations while speaking in English and also while learning English. India is a country of language and cultural diversity and here people speak in different languages and dialects. For this reason, they mostly experience difficulties regarding pronunciation and grammar.

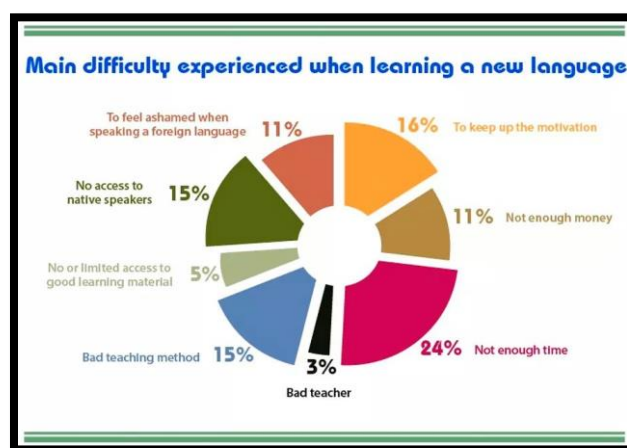


Figure 2: Difficulties Experienced while Learning English in Classrooms

(Source: Rajitha and Alamelu, 2020)

Literature Gap

The paper has successfully discussed the concept of English anxiety and various other issues related to it

but do not focus on the policies and techniques that can assist people to overcome English anxiety.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper has adopted a secondary research method where all the relevant data and articles have been collected from Google Scholar as secondary research resources (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). To support this secondary research an interpretive philosophy, a descriptive design and an inductive approach have been adopted.

V. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Analysis

Due to the presence of multiple social taboos and misconceptions majority of the people stay away from learning foreign languages and this tendency has developed English anxiety among people. According to Naser Oteir and Nijr Al-Otaibi, (2019), social stigmas have developed nervousness tension and fear among people and for this reason they suffer from a low cell system while speaking in English. Language learning anxiety is of 3 types and we are trade anxiety situation specific anxiety and state anxiety.

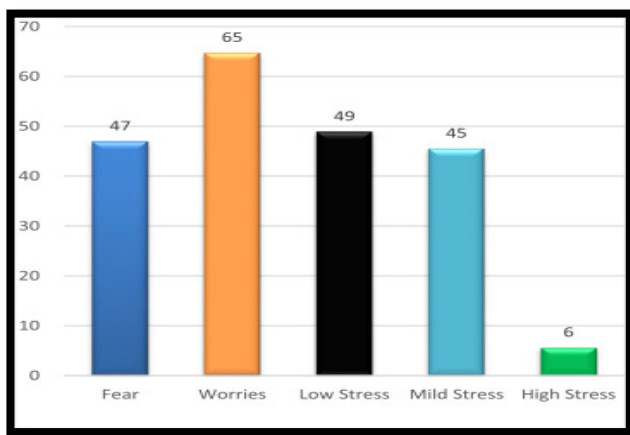


Figure 3: Stress among Indian Students While Learning English

(Source: Naser Oteir and Nijr Al-Otaibi, 2019)

Discussion

In order to deliver successful communication in English effective oral performance is crucial. Language learning anxiety often creates a huge negative impact on the ability of people to deliver successful communication using the English language (Damayanti and Listyani, 2020). Indian students may also experience language

learning anxiety within the classroom this is how the academic performance of the students often gets impacted negatively.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

All these above-mentioned incidents are responsible for the development of English anxiety and it has also been noticed that people who are not that efficient in communicating in English mostly suffer from low self-esteem. This English language anxiety is known for creating a debilitating effect on the student's performance and its impact can be seen in their academic results.

Recommendation

- To overcome language learning anxiety people need to break social taboos and stigmas associated with a particular foreign language.
- People need to focus more on learning grammar and vocabulary before conversing in English.

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