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Імплементация європейських стандартів в українські освітні дослідження

Збірник матеріалів

V Міжнародної
наукової
конференції УАДО

24 червня 2021 року



Українська асоціація дослідників освіти

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допомогою яких орган управління може максимізувати результативні показники. Але останні сьогодні практично не обговорюють в контексті пошуку шляхів оптимізації використання ресурсів і вдосконалення освітнього законодавства.

б. В умовах обмеженості фінансових ресурсів актуальним є визначення пріоритетів, які б забезпечували максимальний ефект з погляду приросту ВВП, вирішення соціальних та інших проблем держави. Але таких досліджень сьогодні практично немає.

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STRATEGIES TO REDUCE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPEAKING ANXIETY OF THE TRAINEE TEACHERS DURING METHODOLOGY COURSE

Key words: *English Language Speaking Anxiety, Trainee Teachers, Methodology Course, Anxiety Alleviating Strategies*

Setting the problem. The learning of the language can be an anxiety-provoking experience. Trainee teachers of English at the Faculty of Foreign Languages, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University obligatory take their English Language Teaching Methodology Course (Bachelor's Level), the Core Curriculum, designed by the team of the joint project of Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and British Council Ukraine *New Generation School Teacher* (2013-2019). The primary objective of the new Pre-Service Teacher Training (PRESETT) curriculum at Bachelor's level for trainee teachers of English is to raise standards of English teaching in schools and universities making them realistic rather than aspirational. Such teachers will develop further as reflective practitioners and make a shift from transmitters of knowledge to facilitators of learning [1].

In the first place, the new Curriculum intends to provide students with important professional skills related to methodology which is considered to be the core of language teacher education that provides a bridge between theory and practice. The new curriculum represents a significant change in the way English teachers are educated. The curriculum is developed in English and taught through the medium of English. The delivery in English promotes the development of students' language and professional competences. Traditional lecturing is eliminated as inefficient way of delivering content on a practical course. Therefore, modern ways of learning and teaching such as task-based learning, the use of case studies, simulations, group projects and problem-solving are used. All of these approaches are intended to promote high levels of interaction and students' involvement in their own learning processes.

The students are encouraged to participate actively, to set their own learning objectives and to solve problems both independently and with others. Thus, the students learn to self-reflect their own learning process, experiences and feelings, learn to be autonomous. That requires of them to use English at their utmost and creates some tension, anxiety in students. Anxiety is defined as the "subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system" [3].

Main research questions. Many of us have at some point in our lives experienced fear of speaking in public. There are many reasons why we could feel stressed when expected to speak in front of a group of people, but the symptoms of this fear are the same. Samuelsson [2] explained these symptoms show variation from just trembling, blushing, and sweating to feeling out of breath, dizziness as well as frightening to faint at the moment of speaking. My intention is to acknowledge the aspects of speaking anxiety in Methodology Course and to gain understanding of how trainee teachers feel about speaking English and speaking anxiety during sessions of the course. The purpose of this study is to examine how trainee teachers feel about speaking English in front of their group mates and to acknowledge the phenomenon of speaking anxiety in the Methodology classroom. The *research questions* that this study aims to investigate are:

1. Is English speaking anxiety in Methodology Course related to general foreign language classroom anxiety?
2. What do the trainee teachers identify as the reasons of their anxiety to speak English?
3. What can I do as a Methodology teacher to alleviate trainee teachers' anxiety to communicate in English?

Methods, research instruments used. This study is conducted using both qualitative and quantitative method. The quantitative part is based on the survey designed to establish the presence and amount of anxiety related to speaking English in Methodology sessions. The qualitative part is consisted of individual semi-structured interviews.

The concept of speaking anxiety is studied in two contexts. First, it is treated in a purely psychological context providing setting for the inquiry of trainee teachers' subjective thoughts and feelings about this phenomenon. Secondly, it is studied as a phenomenon that occurs specifically in Methodology sessions.

A total of 14 sophomores who were enrolled into research from Foreign Languages Department participated in the study. The main data collection was carried out, including surveys with three questionnaires and focused interviews. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), originally designed by

Horwitz et al. (1986) consists of two parts. The first part was designed to elicit basic background information including gender, age, number of years of English study, any experience going abroad to study English, and exposure to extra English-speaking courses outside the Methodology classroom. The second part was intended to measure trainee teachers' English language speaking anxiety in the Methodology sessions. Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) was used to test trainee teachers' FLSA level which was designed for assessing anxiety in relation to public speaking. However, the PSCAS covered a wide range of speaking contexts, but some of its items were relevant to public speaking Methodology classroom anxiety. Thus, a few such items relevant to public speaking in a classroom setting were considered, adopted, and adapted. The Questionnaire III was to identify the strategies for coping with FLSA. Trainee teachers had to estimate the importance of using this or that strategy making a choice with 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of 12 descriptive strategies. The purpose of this survey was to identify the most frequently used ones. On the basis of a preliminary data analysis, some strategies that were believed to be helpful in reducing trainee teachers' English-speaking anxiety were identified. Then the participants with high level of anxiety were identified judging from their scores for Questionnaires I and II. These trainee teachers were instructed in the specific strategies and asked to apply them in their Methodology sessions. Then, two months later, trainee teachers were asked to take the same survey again with Questionnaire II and half of them were interviewed so as to examine the effectiveness of the strategies.

Findings and conclusions. The first research question was addressed to the existence of relation between speaking anxiety in Methodology Course and general foreign language classroom anxiety. According to the results of the FLCAS's test the high level of fear of negative evaluation feel more than two fifth of responders; communication apprehension is a stumbling block for less than a third of trainee teachers, and formative/ summative assessment anxiety is observed in just under a fifth of students. Approximately one in fourteen of participants doesn't have foreign language classroom anxiety, which is explained having experience of communication outside the learning environment. Overall, trainee teachers experience foreign language classroom anxiety mainly because of the fear of negative evaluation.

Due to the results of the first section of The Questionnaire II Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) conducted for assessing anxiety in relation to public speaking, approximately half of students have a comparatively high level of FLSA, just over a quarter of responders experience moderate anxiety level and the same proportion of trainee teachers shows little or no speaking class anxiety. Based on the results of these two surveys we can state that there is a direct correlation between speaking anxiety in Methodology Course and general foreign language classroom anxiety. Students are afraid to be criticized by peers that leads to fear to speak in English at all.

Another research question was to figure out the reasons of trainee teachers' anxiety to speak English. The second section of the Questionnaire II was an open-ended question that asked the trainee teachers to explain, from their own perspective, what factors make them nervous when they speak English in Methodology sessions. The survey showed that the causes of the speaking anxiety fall into four categories: fear of negative evaluation (two-fifth of trainee teachers), fear of being in public and shyness and fear of speaking inaccurately (the same proportion of responders constituting the half of the lot), and others i.e. not related to these three categories.

In order to answer *the third research question* that using specific teaching strategies can help in alleviating and reducing the speaking anxiety felt by trainee students the Questionnaire III was conducted which demonstrated that all 12 strategies were believed by the participants to be useful in reducing FLSA. Participants reported the following strategies arranged in decreasing order: strategies concerning Methodology teachers' personal characteristics and behaviours; creating relaxed or friendly atmosphere; reducing the fear in making mistakes; trying to remind oneself to relax; strategies concerning error correction; preparing well; using more body language; overcoming the reasons leading to anxiety; trying to use a FL more; being brave to speak a FL; trying to use simple words; watching some real life TV/Web programmes in a FL. Most of these strategies, except the last one, were mentioned by more than one trainee teacher. The findings of the same questionnaire taken in two-month term demonstrated a significantly decreasing tendency in anxiety scores (18% of participants). Their level of speaking anxiety dropped from high to moderate while the proportion of students with little or no anxiety remained the same in the end of the period. The interview findings were consistent with the quantitative results.

The study showed a significant correlation between speaking anxiety in Methodology Course and general foreign language classroom anxiety. Trainee teachers reported various sources of speaking anxiety, which help expand the understanding of the affective domain of second language acquisition. The goal of this study was to suggest some effective strategies to alleviate trainee teachers' FLSA. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, 12 such strategies were identified. The results revealed that trainee teachers suffer from anxiety mainly in relation to communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation. They share similar reasons for anxiety such as fear of being in public, shyness, and inaccuracy when speaking.

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ЗАГАЛЬНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ РОЗВИТКУ ІНШОМОВНОЇ ОСВІТИ В ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОМУ СОЮЗІ

Ключові слова: іношомовна освіта, іноземні мови, вища освіта, Європейський Союз.