HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

REDUCING SPEAKING ANXIETY THROUGH COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Maxmudova Saodatxon Akmaljon qizi
Student of the Faculty of English Philology,
Uzbekistan State World Languages University,
Email: husanova_05@icloud.com
Supervisor: **Tukhtakhujayeva Madina**
Associate professor Department of Teaching languages methodology and educational technology Uzbekistan State World Languages University Tashkent, Uzbekistan
doi:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.24160348

Abstract. Speaking anxiety is one of the common problems among EFL learners (English as a Foreign Language). It may prevent them from taking part in classroom discussions, expressing their ideas and communicating confidently in English. In this article we will consider how collaborative classroom activities can reduce speaking anxiety and create supportive learning environment. Theoretical background of foreign language anxiety is presented here: role of cooperation in language learning; practical activities that encourage students to communicate with classmates. B1 level learners are considered in this paper (Collaborative Language Learning (CLL) as main teaching approach with principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)). Discussion is based on existing literature and practical implications for English teachers are given.

Keywords: speaking anxiety, collaborative learning, EFL learners, speaking skills, confidence, CLL, CLT.

Introduction.

Speaking is one of the most important skills in learning a foreign language because it enables learners to express opinions, share information and communicate in real life situations. However, students also get anxious when asked to speak English in front of their classmates or teachers. They may worry about making grammatical mistakes, pronouncing words incorrectly or getting negative reactions from others. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope [3] define foreign language classroom anxiety as a specific type of anxiety that occurs when learning and using a foreign language and affects students' participation and willingness to communicate. Collaborative classroom activities might help solve this problem by allowing learners practice speaking with their peers in a more comfortable environment (pair work, group discussions, role-playing etc.) Students have the opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other. So this article looks at how collaborative activities can support B1-level EFL learners to overcome speaking anxiety and develop greater confidence in English communication.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Theoretical Background. Foreign language speaking anxiety is related to learners' nervousness, fear of making mistakes and how others will judge them. Students with high levels of anxiety may understand the lesson but can't express their thoughts orally so they avoid classroom discussions or only give short answers. Collaborative learning may be one way to overcome these difficulties: students work together to achieve a common learning goal (instead of depending entirely on the teacher); learners exchange ideas, practice language and support each other during classroom activities. Social interaction in learning is also part of Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective [4] which stresses the role of interaction and support in learning and development. When students communicate with classmates they can receive help from them, observe different ways of expressing ideas and gradually become more independent. Topçu Gedikli and Başbay [1] state that collaborative activities reduce speaking anxiety and positive attitudes towards language learning. Kamarulzaman, Hassan and Abdul Ghani [2] discuss the potential of collaborative learning to increase learners' confidence during English-speaking tasks. These findings give us a basis for

thinking about collaborative activities as one way to help anxious language learners.

Main Analysis.

Collaborative Classroom Activities and Speaking Anxiety Collaborative classroom activities provide opportunities for students to practice English without immediately having to speak in front of the whole class (e.g. learners can first discuss a question with a partner then share their ideas with a larger group). This gradual process may make speaking tasks feel less stressful. These are particularly relevant for B1 level learners who can communicate about familiar topics but might still have fluency, vocabulary and confidence problems.

At this level they need regular opportunities to express opinions, describe experiences, explain preferences and take part in simple discussions.

The teacher should provide tasks that match learners' abilities and interests. Topics like education, hobbies, travel, family traditions, technology and everyday experiences can be motivating because students already know some of them. Useful phrases, vocabulary lists and examples can also help learners organize thoughts before speaking.

The Role of Collaborative Learning in Speaking Development Collaborative.

Learning helps with speaking development because it gives students more opportunities to use English actively. In teacher-centered lessons some learners may be silent while a few confident ones dominate classroom discussions. Pair and group activities can distribute speaking opportunities more evenly. During small group discussion each student could have a specific role (discussion leader, note taker, presenter). Organization like this encourages participation and gives learners responsibility. Students can help each other find suitable words, clarify meanings and develop answers too. Gordani Arabani Moghtader [5] studied the relationship between cooperative learning, communication anxiety and self-confidence among EFL learners. Their study provides further support for exploring cooperative activities as a way of encouraging communication and confidence. But collaborative

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

learning does not automatically remove anxiety. Some students still feel uncomfortable speaking in groups (e.g. when they fear criticism or think their English is weaker than that of their classmates). For this reason the teacher needs to set rules for respectful communication and make learners see mistakes as normal part of learning.

Practical Classroom Activities.

Several collaborative activities can be used to reduce speaking anxiety among B1-level learners: Think-Pair-Share students think about a question individually, share their ideas with a partner then share answers with the class (individual preparation gives time for learners to organize their thoughts before speaking); Role-play students act out everyday situations (ordering food in a restaurant, asking directions or preparing for a job interview); these give clear context for communication and allow learners to practice useful expressions; Small group discussions encourage learners to exchange opinions on familiar topics (the teacher can ask guiding questions to help students maintain conversation). Working in small groups may also make speaking feel less intimidating than addressing the whole class Collaborative problem solving requires students to work together to find a solution to a problem (e.g. a group plans short trip within limited budget or how to organize university event). Students explain their ideas, listen to others and reach shared decision 4 Peer feedback allows learners to respond positively to one another's speaking. Students can say what their classmates did well and suggest one area for improvement. Feedback should be constructive not only about mistakes. These activities can be adapted to learners' proficiency level, interests and classroom needs. Their main purpose is to give meaningful opportunities for communication but gradually build students' confidence.

Teaching Approach and Classroom Implementation.

Collaborative Language Learning (CLL) can be the main teaching approach for this topic because it stresses cooperation, interaction and shared responsibility in learning. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) can complement this by focusing on using English to communicate meaningfully in realistic situations. In practice the teacher might start a lesson with a familiar question or short warm up activity. Next students work in pairs discussing the topic using helpful expressions given by the teacher. Then they move into small groups to do a speaking task before presenting their ideas to the class. For example in a lesson on travelling students might first talk about their favorite destinations with a partner.

They could then work in groups to plan a three-day trip, agree on activities and present their plan. The teacher watches students during the task; gives language support when needed; encourages quieter learners to participate. The teacher's role is not just correcting grammatical errors. It is also creating a safe environment (giving clear instructions), selecting suitable tasks (not every mistake needs correcting immediately) and giving all learners speaking time. If mistakes are corrected immediately it interrupts communication and increases nervousness so it may be better to give brief guidance during an activity and after the speaking task discuss common errors.

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

Critical Discussion.

Collaborative classroom activities have several potential benefits for learners who have speaking anxiety: they give more opportunities for communication; peer support; practice expressing ideas before speaking to whole class; help learners recognize that making mistakes is part of language development. But how well are they organized? If one student completes the task while others remain silent the activity doesn't provide equal speaking opportunities. Learners might feel uncomfortable if classmates laugh at mistakes or dominate the discussion. Teachers should therefore set clear expectations for teamwork, assign roles when possible and monitor participation. Activities should also go from less demanding tasks (pair discussions) to more demanding tasks (group presentations).We need to recognize that collaborative activities are not a complete solution for every learner. Some students might need extra preparation time, individual encouragement or other ways of participating. The studies in this article give us useful evidence for the potential benefits of collaborative learning but they do not show that every activity will reduce anxiety in every classroom. Teachers need to take their students' needs into account when choosing and adapting activities.

Pedagogical Implication.

There are some practical implications for English language teachers from this discussion:

First, teachers should provide regular opportunities for students to speak in pairs and small groups rather than relying on whole-class questioning alone (this can help distribute participation more evenly).

Second speaking tasks should be appropriate for learners' proficiency levels. B1 level students might benefit from familiar topics, useful expressions, vocabulary support and enough preparation time. These resources can help them communicate their ideas not worry about finding every word.

Third, teachers should encourage cooperation and respectful peer interaction. Students need to know that classmates are partners in learning not competitors. Positive feedback and supportive classroom rules may help create an environment where learners feel more comfortable expressing themselves.

Finally, teachers should observe students' participation and gradually increase speaking tasks difficulty. Pair work first then move towards group discussions and presentations is a manageable progression. This might give learners confidence by repeated communication practice.

Conclusion. Speaking anxiety prevents EFL learners from participating actively in classroom communication. Collaborative classroom activities are one way of creating a more supportive environment in which students can practice English, exchange ideas and learn from their peers: pair discussions, role-play, group problem-solving, peer feedback etc. provide meaningful opportunities to develop speaking skills and confidence. For B1-level learners these activities should be selected carefully according to language abilities and learning needs. Collaborative Language 6 Learning (aided by CLT) can help teachers organize interactive lessons in which students take responsibility for

HSR (LONDON),
HOUGHTON STREET REVIEW JOURNAL
ISSN: 2058-5519|Impact factor-15.9
http://houghtonstreetreview.com/index.php/hsr

learning. Collaborative activities cannot remove all forms of anxiety but careful planning might make participation more likely and speaking
practice more comfortable and meaningful.

References.

1. Topçu Gedikli, E., & Başbay, M. (2020).
2. The impact of collaborative activities on EFLlearners' speaking anxiety levels and attitudes. Çukurova Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültü Dergisi, 49(2), 1184–1210.
3. Kamarulzaman, L. M., Hassan, J. & Abdul Ghani, M. T. (2020). Integrating collaborative learning in English proficiency classroom: Does it resolve students' speaking anxiety? Jurnal Sains Insani, 5(1).
4. Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. The Modern Language Journal, 70(2), 125–132.
5. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Harvard University Press.
6. Gordani Y., Arabani, A. S., & Moghtader, I. J. (2021). Communication anxiety and self-confidence among learners of English as a foreign language : The role of learning cooperatively. Global Journal of Foreign Language Teaching 11(4), 257–270.