

Speaking Anxiety of English Language of the Students of High Schools at Old Dhaka in Bangladesh: Reasons and Remedies

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Abstract

Speaking anxiety of English language for the students of mid level schools is the principal agenda for the ELT researchers because of its increasing demands in the global village. Speaking, one of the four skills of a language here in the English language is being hampered due to some silly facts established at schools for teaching the skill. This speaking skill is not earned owing to having the anxiety of the speakers. This research paper has attempted to bring out the reasons and possible ways of remedy of this anxiety in a specific territory of the country. It is presumed in our educated society that speaking anxiety of English language is a curse in the path of a student's development. Now-a-days the speaking ability by the students is a burning question in high schools. Even so this ability is not satisfactory to the teachers as well as the concerned parents. The aim of this term paper is to explore the reasons behind the anxiety in speaking the language and find the different ways to bring a solution. What are the major causes of this silent killer and its probable ways to solution have been investigated throughout gathering practical data from the students and teachers of high schools. The essential steps to eradicate this problem are suggested. Students and teachers are equally given importance for this purpose. The data from different mid level schools has been collected with taking permission from the legal authority.

Key Words: Speaking Anxiety, Teaching Technique, English Friendly Environment, Mid-level Schools

1. Introduction

Many people say that English is the hardest language to learn if you were not born in a primarily English speaking home. English is the most common language spoken all over the globe and in order to do business deals or travel to foreign lands those who do not know how to speak English need to do so. Knowing the English language will help people travel more easily and be able to communicate with others from different backgrounds. Speaking is the second of the four language skills, which are: 1. Listening 2. Speaking 3. Reading 4. Writing. Speaking is one of the three productive process including Reading, a semi-productive, of any language along with the English language by which we produce information. This paper is talking about the speaking anxiety of English language by mid-level students of a particular territory. Speaking cannot be said speaking until it is orally uttered. Speaking is auditory, temporary (immediate reception), prosody (rhythm, stress, and intonation), and immediate feedback etc. Despite the context of SLA (Second Language Acquisition), it is possible to learn the skill by non-native speakers with the language if there is some specific effective method in the mid-level schools. The researcher is bringing an afford to eradicate the problem in speaking. Through collecting data from the students and teachers by the researcher and under the supervision of a skilled supervisor, this term paper is going to be done. The targeting point of this paper is to find out the existing troubles of this anxiety and possible solutions to the problems.

2. Objective of the study

The speaking anxiety of English is a curse for the students of mid-level schools in Bangladesh. Even though, they are not able to express themselves by using the language in a standard society due to having this problem. It is important to articulate to the others for living in a civilization. The aim of the study is to explore the reasons of this anxiety and potential ways to its solutions. Students are also feeling some other problems which are hidden. Through this study, the researcher will show the exact reasons to the problem and possible remedies to the problem by which they can overcome this anxiety and place them in a proper platform. Teachers are also lacking some qualities what will also be explored through the research. After having investigated all things, the researcher, if necessary, will

request the government to take necessary steps. The researcher expects that the study will bring a remarkable change among the students in speaking the language. Some specific aims have been written below in points.

- To find out whether the tools for teaching speaking skill in the classrooms are available or not;
- To examine if the learners are motivated enough or not in speaking;
- To investigate the problems of the students facing in their schools and at home;
- To collect teachers' opinions in the issue;
- To know the existing method of teaching speaking at schools;
- To know the rational causes;
- To implement necessary steps;
- To look for if expert or competent teachers are available or not;
- To explore present demands of speaking the language by their teachers and parents and society;
- To have some ideas of the use of the language by the environment;

3. Significance of the study

The study reveals its importance in many ways. This study will help the students speak fluently. There are lots of students who are deprived in the schools from many opportunities and sometimes from their friends, teachers, relatives and society. When this crisis is resolved through this investigation, the victims will rejoice the advantages. The students having this problem will not have smart jobs whereas students without the anxiety of the English language will grasp the lucrative jobs which require English speakers from the job offers. This killing problem should be resolved immediately so that students do not have to lose all other advantages from their schools. This anxiety will create a great cause while the student having this problem wishes to study abroad. This anxiety never allows a student to be a good speaker of English language. As a result he/she cannot have an international job. They even cannot travel abroad and or make their travels fruitful for they feel anxiety in speaking in English. We should develop speaking skill from our early age. If it continues and no action is taken by the government hurriedly, the students will have to wait for a devastating and disorder future.

4. Literature Review

Speaking anxiety, often referred to as speech anxiety or stage fright, involves a central fear of being scrutinized or evaluated by others. This fear is often accompanied by a variety of physical and emotional reactions that can significantly interfere with a person's ability to successfully give a speech or presentation, including intense feelings of anxiety, worry, nervousness, trembling or shaking, sweating, and/or dizziness. (The Board of Regents, University of Wisconsin, 712 South Broadway St. Menomonie, WI 54751)

Remember, most speakers and presenters contend with varying levels of public speaking anxiety. You're not alone!

Rather than blocking out the audience, or seeing them in their underwear, try viewing them as allies who are generally supportive and want you to succeed.

Act calmly, even if you feel nervous or anxious. The more you dwell on this nervousness/anxiety, the more likely you will remain preoccupied with it.

Try to overlook minor errors during the speech/presentation. Overall impressions are more important to the audience than a word-perfect speech.

Consider speaking as an opportunity, rather than something you are forced to do.

Get outside of yourself and connect with the audience. Stay in the moment.

If self-critical thoughts start to surface, make an effort to switch off the left brain's "critical observer," and try switching on the right brain's "passive, supportive observer." (The Board of Regents, University of Wisconsin, 712 South Broadway St. Menomonie, WI 54751)

“[A] learner-centred classroom is one in which learners are actively involved in their own learning processes. There are two dimensions to this learner involvement. The first of these is the involvement of learners in making decisions about what to learn, how to learn, and how to be evaluated. The second is in maximizing the class time in which the learners, rather than the teachers, do the work”. (Nunan2003, p. 8)

[T]o learn speaking skill, the following system is required: “(a) Knowledge of the language

1. vocabulary,
 2. grammar,
 3. pronunciation,
 4. stress,
 5. intonation, etc.
- (b) Knowledge of meaning

1. word meaning,
2. utterance meaning,
3. synonyms,
4. antonyms, etc

(c) Knowledge of contexts

1. functions, feelings, emotions, attitudes, ...
2. social role-relationships,
3. (iii) necessity and conventions, etc”(Maniruzzaman 2002, p.134)

Harmer (1991) also mentions that the group discussion and whole class discussion are useful techniques for a number of reasons: the students’ talking time is increased; it gives students more opportunities to actually use the language to communicate with each other. Therefore, a degree of self-reliance and development of group members can be ensured when the students get enough scope of practice in the classroom. David Nunan (2003, p. 9) states some ways of making learners more involved in their own learning process so that gradually they can take control of that process. They ways are: 1. Make instructional goals clear to learners 2. Help learners to create their own goals 3. Encourage learners to use their second language outside the classroom 4. Help learners to become more aware of learning processes and strategies 5. Show learners how to identify their own preferred styles and strategies 6. Give learners opportunities to make choices between different options in the classroom 7. Teach learners how to create their own learning tasks 8. Provide learners with opportunities to master some aspects of their second language and then teach it to others 9. Create contexts in which learners investigate language and become their own researchers of language” (Nunan 2003, p. 09)

5. Research Methodology

The researcher has followed both qualitative and quantitative study approaches and the procedure of data analysis is the same too. The instruments of these qualitative and quantitative studies are interviews through questionnaires, case study, opinions, participant observations, interpretation and descriptive analysis. There are two questionnaires: one is made for the teachers and the other is made for the students, with two types of questions. One type is M.C.Q and the other type is open ended. Strength, consistency and practicality are the most important three aspects of any questionnaire and these components formulate the

questionnaire more authentic and pertinent. The author has also given freedom to students and teachers for their valuable suggestive words. All the data has been collected from the schools with the permission from the Principals.

6. Discussions and Findings

The researcher has gone to the students in order to look for the factors for which the students of the mid-level schools feel anxiety/nervousness of speaking the language. He also had to go to the instructors for this intention. Finally, the investigator has come to know some significant factors as reasons and remedies. These obvious factors have been discussed below:

Similar Opinions between Students and Teachers:

6. A. Fear is measured one of the major reasons for this speaking worry. The researcher has discovered this startling cause from going to the students and teachers at schools of Old Dhaka. He has found that more than 90% students and teachers judge that this anxiety happens for the panic of the students while speaking.

6. B. According to 93% students, the rest skills of the language are needed in order to speak the language whereas half of the teachers accept as true. In general, the four skills of the language should be developed for the language aptitude as to speaking. So, Reading, Writing and Listening are supporting skills to acquire the speaking skill.

6. C. The lack of practice of the language is another vital reason for this anxiety as it is seen that almost 100% students and teachers consider that. They also agreed to expand the practice hour to confiscate this crisis. This is an indispensable factor to boost the speaking talent and dwindle the speaking anxiety.

6. D. Introvert state of mind is a demerit for speaking the language. It is another key barrier to speak the language without anxiety in accordance with 100% teachers while students are 88% in this belief. The students having this attitude cannot speak well and feel anxiety when speaking to other people in the language.

6. E. Extra care of speaking skill of the English language at schools should be obligatory and maintained. In this regard, 100% teachers and almost 100% students do suppose that if it is done, this speaking anxiety would be removed. The students are realizing the less care given by their educators. On the other hand, the teachers are ready to give them extra care but due to class hour, it is hindered.

6. F. According to 98% students and teachers, it is recommended that Spoken English course in the schools beside their conventional subjects should be introduced. They consider that this kind of Spoken English course will facilitate them to a great extend to verbalize the language smoothly. The students sometimes go outside to some couching centers in order to learn the spoken English and in most of the cases they become triumphant.

6. G. Speaking method at schools is not up to the mark and this method should be contemporary and reorganized with the first world country like Singapore, France, Denmark etc. 77% students and 83% teachers have talked about the adaptation of the speaking method at schools which should be modified in the education system by the government .

6. H. 95% students and teachers judge that English-friendly environment encourages speaking in English to a great extend. The students demanded this atmosphere from the school authorities. But schools are unsuccessful to implement the atmosphere in favor of the students and because of this they (students) have been suffering from the anxiety for a long run. There is a saying that we are influenced by the atmosphere.

6. I. Shyness is another inevitable cause for the anxiety of speaking the language (English) by the students of mid-level schools of Old Dhaka. 93% students as well as teachers do consider this a cause to anxiety of the language. In our educational institutions there are a lot of students who are shy in nature. As a result they feel anxiety in the public speech.

6. J. Extrovert mindset urges speaking for the students as it goes against when introvert state of mind is established by the students. It is a positive attitude and helps a student approach the other people. 90% and 95%, following by the students and teachers respectively, suppose that extrovert mentality is inspiring the students to speak in English without anxiety.

6. K. This anxiety happens because parents are not capable of speaking the language with their children. Students of 83% and 95% teachers accept as true that due to incapability of speaking the language by the parents with their children (students) at home, this anxiety is spreading swiftly. Parents should use the language verbally with their children. On the contrary the teachers are worry about their educational qualification if they can continue to communicate in English with their children or not. The teachers suppose while asked the reason behind not to speak in English by the parents that most of the parents are workers and doing businesses at Old Dhaka. As a consequence, the parents do not carry the quality of speaking in English with their children.

6. L. Speaking practice in the schools is hampered due to class size and class hour is believed by 83% students and 88% teachers. As a result the students are not getting sufficient time for practice which results to anxiety of speaking the language.

6. M. The importance of speaking the language should be informed by both the teachers and the parents. More than 90% students and almost 100% teachers consider that the students should be informed about the importance of speaking the language by their teachers and parents.

Contrasting Opinions between Students and Teachers:

6. N. Almost 90% teachers do judge that the parents are not careful of their children about learning the speaking skill of the English language while the students are blaming that schools are unsuccessful to create the English-friendly environment as to the anxiety.

6. O. 100% teachers have believed that the negligence of the students is occurred in this issue where about 40% students have blamed the teachers for this negligence.

6. P. 40% students consider that the teachers are not telling about the importance of learning the speaking skill of English where a contrasting statement has been given by the teachers of 50%, and they have stated that parents are responsible to let their children know about the importance of learning this skill.

6. Q. English is not used in our daily life is believed by almost 70% teachers which has been opposed by 70% students. This is another logical reason for this anxiety.

7. Implications and Recommendations

The researcher has come to know the factors for what the speaking anxiety of the English language for the students of mid-level schools at Old Dhaka happens to the speakers while going to speak the language as well as the likely remedies of such crisis through evaluating their opinions. The researcher has experienced practically with his field work during his research period at a particular territory. From these experiences the researcher has acquired some suggestive words which have been talked about below:

- ❖ Spoken English course should be introduced in the academy beside their traditional English subjects like English 1st Paper and 2nd Paper;
- ❖ Extra care of speaking skill needs to be taken at schools by the relevant teachers;
- ❖ The practice of speaking English should be ensured at schools and home by the school authority and parents respectively.

- ❖ The school authorities are suggested to make sure that the students are getting an English-friendly environment at schools for the betterment of their speaking ability of the language;
- ❖ The English teachers are recommended to develop other three skills sufficiently of the language beside the speaking skill;
- ❖ The teachers should come forward to remove the students' shyness by making them participate in different cultural program where they can have a scope to express themselves;
- ❖ The importance of speaking the language should be encouraged by teachers and parents equally;
- ❖ Alike shyness, fear should be eradicated by the fair behavior of the teachers;
- ❖ It is urged to the teachers so that they can pay a special attention on extrovert tendency of the students and, monitor if they are developing this tendency or not.
- ❖ Class size and class hour of the English subject should be extended as much as possible by the government to have fruitful consequences in spoken English;
- ❖ To avoid mother tongue influences, teachers and parents are suggested to speak with them in English frequently;
- ❖ Parents are requested to speak with their children in English more frequently at home by telling its importance in our practical life;
- ❖ Students are essential to be urged by the teachers and both the teachers and parents are requested to inform the importance of this skill to the students;
- ❖ Introvert mentality should be minimized by the teachers while their stay at schools by giving them opportunity to perform extracurricular activities.
- ❖ Speaking method at schools is not modern and contemporary as a result the students are not getting proper teaching of speaking skill. The method should be customized and standardized;
- ❖ In some cases, it is seen that teachers are casual and indifferent. They should be more careful about teaching the speaking skill to the students;
- ❖ English needs to be used more in our family, social and state life;
- ❖ The government should arrange regular based training for the teachers so that they are likely to provide quality teaching to their students at schools;

- ❖ If necessary, speaking materials should be available in the class rooms;
- ❖ English has to be treated and implemented as the second language by the government strictly;
- ❖ English classes should be conducted in English by the teachers in the class-rooms;
- ❖ English debate could be organized at schools and prizes can be awarded to the good speakers as motivation;
- ❖ The teachers should get learners to speak outside as much as possible;

8. Conclusion

Finally it can surely be said that the speaking anxiety of the English language is a curse for the students of mid-level schools at Old Dhaka in Bangladesh. We along with school authority and government should contribute to exterminate this problem. If it is not resolved quickly, the students will come out from their education life with such strange mental disease. Moreover, the researcher has found some crucial reason behind the anxiety and has explained plausible ways to resolve the problems. If those ways are implemented strictly at schools and homes, it is hoped that there will certainly be a remedy from this anxiety. Eventually, the researcher is very much optimistic about his research that the findings will work as paramount to those people/students who have been suffering from this illness. Now, at the eleventh hour, I would like to thank to all teachers and students of the particular mid-level schools at Old Dhaka for their co-operation. Thank you for reading this.

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