

PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS THAT HAMPER THE ENGINEERING STUDENTS FROM SPEAKING IN ENGLISH

Dr.K.Gurusamy

Professor, Department of English.

Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil-2626126

Abstract: *The aim of this study is to find out the psychological factors that hamper the Engineering students from speaking English and the reason for the factors and also to find out the possible solution to overcome them. The data collected from the Engineering students during classroom observations, questionnaires and interaction. The findings revealed that the psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence and lack of motivation that hamper the students from speaking in English. The above factors were mainly caused due to their fear of being laughed at by others, who are in and around us. The possible solution to overcome those psychological factors were to motivate the students to be more confident in speaking English and they need not worry about the mistakes committed during their speech. The finding suggested that the teachers should be more aware of their students' hindrance and give them lot of speaking practice in the class room.*

Keywords: Psychological factors, hamper, speaking English

INTRODUCTION

In LSRW skills, Speaking is one of the productive skills. To improve the speaking skills one needs to take lot of effort to speak correct English. The speaking activity must focus on how to assist students to use and to communicate in English (Richard, 2008). Richard further says that most of the students often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their speaking proficiency. That is why teachers' efforts should be focused on developing students' ability to speak since learning to speak is considered as the greatest challenge for all language learners (Pinter, 2006). In this sense, teachers have to give more opportunities to the students to speak themselves by providing with ample speaking activities that enable them to speak English (Brown, 2001). Based on this it is found that some psychological factors such as shyness and anxiety are considered as the main causes of students' reluctance to speak (Brown, 2001). Gebhard (2000) says that the students' problem in speaking is caused mainly by their shyness or anxiety. From the above quotes it was clearly indicated that it is the responsibility of a teacher to make the students to overcome the hurdles.

The psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence and lack of motivation that hamper the students from speaking in English.

SHYNESS

Shyness acts as a hurdle to speak. It is an emotional factor because of which many students suffer a lot to speak in English. Speaking in English in front of others is a common phobia that students encounter. By nature, shyness makes them very quiet. It makes their mind go blank and they forget what they want to speak. They are also afraid of being laughed at by others, and they make mistakes due to their inability in speaking correct English. Students' shyness is their perception on their own ability. Paying attention on this aspect is quite important.

Reason for Shyness

Shy learners are caused by their nature that they are very quiet. In this case, the students are not very confident and tend to be shy because most of them find it very intimidating when speaking English in front of their friends and teacher. In addition, Saurik (2011) identifies that most of English students feel shy when they speak the language because they think they will make mistakes when they talk. They are also afraid of being laughed at by their peers

Overcoming shyness

Shyness is also called hesitancy; it is the feeling of uneasiness, lack of comfort, or clumsiness especially when a person is around other people. This mainly happens in the new circumstances or

with the people who are not familiar. It can be a typical of people who have low self-respect

Building self-confidence

Everyone has some peculiarity to present in the country. It may sound corny, but it's true. They may think about what they know, what they can do, and what they have accomplished, rather than fixating on how look, sound, or dress. They should consider that everyone, even the "beautiful people", has something about themselves or their life that they don't like. There's no particular reason why our "problem" should make us shy while their "problem" doesn't make them shy.

Get comfortable

To be comfortable one should have close contact with the people who fetch the best in us, and enrich our confidence. This will work out to other occasions being more relaxed. To be appear and perform friendly one should express with open and friendly attitude with our kinesics.

Make an eye contact and Smile

A simple smile can change the way of a stranger and can make better a day, and brighten them also. It is a welcoming method to acknowledge others, and it makes an attractive virtuous preliminary to start a discussion with any outsider or colleague. During discussion make an eye contact with the people that will boost the conversation. The eye contact will prove confidence between the two for further discussion.

Speak clearly with good posture

When conversing with a stranger standing or sitting straight will impress the people who are talking with and that would understand the stranger that we are self-confident and interested to talk with others. The clarity in speaking definitely will support to escape the possible confusion of demanding to reproduce due to hesitant.

Laugh genuinely often amusing

Laughing genuinely at time may ease the tension situation and make the people free and comfortable but laughing unnecessarily spoil the situation definitely.

Don't look pensive

The people should not work on papers or texts, if they want someone to talk with us. The people should set a goal on small activities daily, and then develop more innovative activities gradually.

Listing the situations that feel anxious.

List out the situations that cause the least anxiety and the most anxiety, then initiate the work one-by-one. Starting from the easier situations then move on to the difficult one. This practice will build confidence and one can overcome all the difficult situations.

Introduce to a new person daily

It is very easy to converse with the strangers very shortly without fear of committing mistakes. Because after the conversation, we may not have a chance to meet those people. So that it is easy and more comfortable for our conversational situation to talk with a stranger daily.

Add new friends

It is very important to make new friends frequently. With those people we can share our interests, like and dislike, plan and everything to be convenient for the situation. It is important to start conversation with an initiative like, what are your hobbies? Who is your favourite hero and so on? Majority of the people are genial and answer with polite conversation.

Don't relate our self with others

Most of the people compare or imitate with others' way of presentation or speaking. It is a wrong notion, the more we compare the worst we receive.

It is essential to be courage enough to speak logically without fear, it become more contented with the idea and finally act accordingly

Practically all the people are shy to some level, but the amount of shyness varies. One can improve his confidence in speaking only by practicing conversation skills regularly with various groups of people and discussing new topics also.

The best solution for overcoming shyness while speaking is to provide lot of time to speak slowly with the people who closely associated us.

Shyness is not a permanent personality attribute; it is an emotion. Everybody has the power to modify their state of mind of shyness through their desire and activities.

ANXIETY

According to Horwitz[101] et al. Anxiety can be defined as “the personal feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system.

Speaking Anxiety

The fear of speaking in public is associated with anxiety or communication apprehension. It's a frightened sensation related with bodily sensations that are all too painful.

Foreign Language Anxiety

It is defined as obviously multifaceted self-perceptions, principles, state of mind, and manners related to using a foreign or second language for communication.

Grounds for Anxiety

According to an article, there are various reasons for anxiety, the roots for anxiety in speaking are.

- 1) Lack of preparation.
- 2) Excessive preparation on the topic with in the time limit.
- 3) Worrying about the audience exaggeratedly dangerous.
- 4) Distress about not attracting or making the interest of the audience.
- 5) Plan to imitate other speakers rather than being themselves.
- 8) Displeasure in being the center of attraction and also less self-confidence.

Suggestions for overcoming language anxiety

According to Rollsand Kim [102], there are various strategies which can be used in managing with second language anxiety

The first strategy is to identify the feelings of our own second language anxiety.

It is very important to find our own mental state and know the bases of our anxiety. Some people become nervous when they are going to speak or present it doesn't mean they will perform poor. Nervousness sometimes will help in improving the strength and interest to the situation.

The second strategy is to share our feelings in anxiety with others. Normally this feeling of anxiety is not problem of individuals. Even the professional artists and experienced speakers might have some sort of anxiety when they are facing the audience in public. It is understood that a slight feeling of anxiety is common since it is experienced by many. Speakers should keep in mind that nobody is conscious of their fright unless there is an outward signs of nervousness. They must concentrate on their message to reach the audience and do not worry about the mistakes committed. Mistakes are the best way for learning if we commit lot of mistakes lot of things we can learn.

The higher educational institutions like Universities and colleges should implement the advanced methods to reduce the speaking anxiety and increase the students 'competencies to overcome the problem.

The teachers should give an opportunity and encourage the students to express themselves in the target language and support them in reducing their anxiety and also the teachers can give some relaxation techniques being adopted by the Psychologist to reduce their anxiety.

To increase the level of efficiency in the English language, the most important thing is, that we have to practice a lot. Practice will make perfect. Practice in speaking with family, relatives' even friends also, or sending text messages in English also help to increase the level of expertise in English and it will reduce the level of second language anxiety indirectly.

It is determined that English language anxiety is multi-dimensional and it disturbs the students inversely depends on the background of the situation.

FEAR OF MAKING MISTAKES

The primary reason of fear of mistake is that students are afraid of looking foolish in front of other people and they are concerned about how other will see them (Kurtus, 2001).

The fear of making mistakes becomes one of the main factors of students' reluctance to speak in English in the classroom (Robby, 2010).

Fear of speaking in a target language is the most common to all the people. It's a form of recital anxiety in which a person becomes very disturbed that he or she will look anxious visibly and sometimes have a panic attack while speaking. The primary reason is that they feel afraid of looking foolish in front of other people. The best way to overcome this fear is a complete preparation and a positive attitude towards the listeners.

Effects of fear

Before the start of speaking some people got nervous and their heart starts beating faster and their mouth gets dry and some may even get queasy or feel like unconsciousness.

If a person starts speaking with fear the heart beat rapidly increase and he can hear his voice trembling and the whole body may start exciting. The person may hesitate to speak or start speaking rapidly.

Looking foolish

Usually people become anxious when they are invited to speak in front of the audience, the reason behind was the speaker may have a wrong notion that the audience will think of the speaker as foolish or stupid in front of the peers or particular group.

The reason most people get anxious when required to speak to a group is that they are afraid of looking foolish or stupid in front of many of their peers and important people. They are afraid that their mind will become empty and their speaking skills will become lower the opinion of others.

Being shamed can abolish a person's self-image and confidence.

To reduce the fear

There are numerous methods used to overcome the fear of committing mistakes or looking foolish when speaking to a group or with an individual.

1. To Build an emotional bond between the teacher and the students
2. Create a supporting Learning and harmonious atmosphere.
3. Prepare well before the start of the speak to a group.
4. .Rehearse well the speech
5. Reduce the fear of listeners/audience.
6. .Feel free before the start of the speak.

LACK OF CONFIDENCE**LOOKING CONFIDENT IN FRONT OF PEOPLE**

According to a research, feeling nervous in front of people is not a problem of an individual but majority of the people are facing it. People are more anxious of speaking to people and dealing with people than of insects or of heights or darkness. The only reason for this fright is their lack of confidence.

To get confident in front of others**Establish original self**

The foremost mechanism to look confident in front of people is to show their original self. The speaker is advised not to replicate or follow or try to duplicate other's ideas, style of walking, the way of talking, dressing mannerism and other character aspects. He should have a confident that he is the greatest and distinctive in all the ways.

Prepare intellectually

After mentally prepared to meet the people to speak, know about them and prepare well before the speech. Proper and complete knowledge of the topic to be discussed will boost confidence.

Use formal language

During the conversation with others it is the practice to use formal language always; this will make the people feel contented and self-reliant. Believe that those people are our peers and contributors and in some time friend to them. But do not use jargons or nonsenses words because it may create a negative thought in front of the audience.

Getting confidence in front of other people is not a phobia. By practicing speaking with the people associated with us definitely will boost our confidence and to create a comfortable atmosphere in which learners are encouraged to talk in English and are praised for their speech.

LACK OF MOTIVATION

Motivation is a key to students' learning Nunan (1999) stresses that motivation is important that it can affect students' reluctance to speak in English. In this sense, motivation is a key consideration in determining the preparedness of learners to communicate.

Reason for the Lack of Motivation are dreary teaching, monotony, lack of perceived relevance of materials and lack of knowledge about the goals of the instructional program. Uninspired teaching affects students' motivation to learn. In this context, a monotonous teaching, in many cases, reduces

the students' motivation due to their feeling of boredom. This shows that paying attention to those four factors is vital. In response to the issue of motivation, Solutions to Overcome Lack of Motivation is that teachers can do activities like promoting students' awareness of the importance of English, enhancing students' interest in English, and to develop their self-confidence.

TIPS FOR OVERCOMING THE HURDLES IN SPEAKING WELL

1. Don't worry about the mistakes committed by.
2. Be persistent .because it isn't a one day process.
3. Identify certain phrases that can be used in multiple situations and use it whenever it is required.
4. Know how to greet somebody properly.
5. Don't haste through the sentences. Talk leisurely and carefully
- 6.Restrict with simple sentences until you get confidence.
7. Check your pronunciation with online tools.
8. Observe the language and pronunciation of the famous speakers and try to frame sentences like them.
9. Arrange a friend, relatives or anyone to point out your mistakes and correct them.
10. Speak to them in English only.
11. Record your speech every day and check the pronunciation, speed, clarity and emphasis.
12. Utilize the opportunity to voice chat with another user. This is an effective way to

CONCLUSION

One of the most important aspects for enlightening the spoken English is to know extensive vocabulary for expressing our thoughts confidently and fluently. Having a good stock of vocabulary would help the learners to be more exact with the construction of words and sentences and eloquent in their speech. The second aspect is to have basic grammar knowledge for improving spoken English. With the knowledge in grammar and vocabulary the learner has to read any one of the leading English newspapers in order to strengthen their knowledge. It is not necessary to read every page and all the articles, rather to read the articles which are very much interested for them. Finally they can form a peer group and learn through discussion and to create an English speaking atmosphere helps to acquire the language with ease. Watching English broadcasts and movies enable them to accomplish this task.

REFERENCES.

1. Richard, J.C. (2008). *Teaching Listening and Speaking: From Theory to Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge Press University.
2. Pinter, A. (2006). *Teaching Young Learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
3. Gebhard, G.J. (2000). *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language*. USA: The University of Michigan Press.Han, Eunhee. (2010).
4. Saurik. (2011). *Learning English The Easy way!* [Online] Available: <http://guides.wikinut.com/Learning-English-The-Easy-Way!/2wuchx26/> (March 15, 2011)
5. Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B. and Cope, J. Foreign language classroom anxiety.Modern Language Journal, **70**, (1986), 125-132.
6. Kurtus, R, (2001), *Overcome the Fear of Speaking to Group*. [Online] Available: <http://www.school-for-champions.com/speaking/fear.htm> (June 20, 2010)
7. Robby, S, (2010), *Conquer Your Fear of Making Mistakes when Speaking English*. [Online] Available: <http://englishharmony.com/conquer-fear-of-making-mistakes-when-speaking-english/> (March 15. 2011)
8. Nunan, D. (1999). *Second Language Teaching & Learning*. USA. Heinle&Heinle Publisher.