Examining Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Anxiety: The Case of English L2 Learners

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Abstract

Examining speaking anxiety in learners of foreign languages is important not only for the learners but also for teachers and curriculum designers. The study aimed to examine foreign language learners' speaking anxiety in 100 M.A. students at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia. The survey was directed to M.A. students. The study used the PSCAS. The findings demonstrated that a variety of factors, including a limited vocabulary, pronunciation difficulties, social pressure, a lack of confidence, and negative past experiences, might contribute to speaking anxiety. Together, these components create a complex web of worry that keeps students from being open to vocal communication. However, the study also discovered several practical strategies that M.A. candidates could employ to boost their speaking confidence and lessen their speaking anxiety. These strategies included role-playing games, conversations in small groups, the use of technology, group projects involving collaborative speaking, regular constructive criticism, availability of interactive language labs, practical language application, progressively more difficult assignments, cultural immersion programs, and workshops on public speaking. By using these strategies, students can establish a supportive learning environment that promotes language proficiency and confidence. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations were proposed, such as integration of supportive learning environments, utilization of technology, implementation of practical language application, training in public speaking, gradual complexity in assignments, and promotion of positive thinking.

Keywords: Foreign Language Anxiety; Learner; Speaking; Anxiety; Public Speaking

1. Introduction

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety, often referred to as FLSA, is a common psychological phenomenon that many individuals experience when attempting to communicate in a language other than their native tongue. This form of anxiety arises from a fear of making mistakes, being misunderstood, or feeling inadequate while speaking in a foreign language. FLSA can have a significant impact on language learners, hindering their ability to express themselves and engage in meaningful conversations (Gargalianou, Muehlfeld, Urbig, & van Witteloostuijn, 2016).

Learning a foreign language encompasses both cognitive and affective aspects for learners (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). Anxiety emerges as a frequently observed challenge within the emotional realm of the language learning process, predominantly manifesting in speaking classes where students must simultaneously process linguistic inputs and articulate their thoughts (Dryden, Tankosić, & Dovchin, 2021). These difficulties have prompted extensive research to address this prevalent issue and seek potential remedies (Çağatay, 2015). Learning anxiety is characterized as a state involving tension, apprehension, and nervousness closely tied to the autonomic nervous system. Additionally, language anxiety pertains to the apprehension students experience when using a foreign language (Sabuncuoglu, & Kurtoglu, 2021).

argue that anxiety can function as a significant barrier, acting as an affective filter that impedes students from achieving a high level of proficiency in a foreign language. Consequently, researchers continue to explore innovative approaches to mitigate its effects within language classrooms (Abin & Syam, 2019).

Based on the above, it is notable that anxiety acts as a significant barrier, hindering students from achieving high proficiency in a foreign language. Consequently, understanding the causes and strategies to manage foreign language speaking anxiety is crucial for anyone seeking to become a proficient and confident multilingual communicator.

1.1 Research Problem

The issue of foreign language anxiety among learners is a matter of significant interest for many researchers and those involved in the field of language education. Many languages learners struggle with the fear of making mistakes and feeling inadequate when speaking in a foreign language, which can impede their progress and hinder their ability to engage in meaningful conversations (Çağatay, 2015). This anxiety is considered a complex educational phenomenon that directly impacts the performance and progress of language learners. It can stem from various factors, such as social pressures, self-confidence, and motivation. Moreover, foreign language anxiety can lead to a decreased desire to learn and effective participation in educational processes (Liu & Chen, 2015). Therefore, a deeper study and understanding of it can contribute to the development of effective and supportive educational strategies for learners experiencing this

anxiety, thus enhancing the quality and effectiveness of foreign language learning. In light of this, the research problem can be defined by addressing the following questions:

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the gaps found in prior research and the identified problem, the researcher formulates the following specific questions:

1. What are the reasons for foreign language learners speaking anxiety?
2. What is the level of foreign language speaking anxiety experienced by M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University?
3. What are the best strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking confidence for M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University?

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

This study aims to Examining Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Anxiety.　　To achieve the stated aim, the research objectives were set in the following:

1. To identify the reasons for foreign language learners speaking anxiety.
2. To measure the level of foreign language speaking anxiety experienced by M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University.
3. To propose the best strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking confidence for M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University.

1.4 Research Importance

Exploring speaking anxiety among foreign language learners is not only vital to the learners themselves but also crucial for educators and curriculum planners. By understanding this form of anxiety, educators and curriculum planners can develop more effective teaching strategies to help learners overcome this challenge and boost their confidence when speaking a foreign language. Furthermore, identifying the root causes and visible effects of speaking anxiety can lead to a more efficient allocation of resources and efforts to achieve language learning goals, ultimately enhancing the overall learning experience for students. This understanding also opens the door to creating instructional methods and strategies aimed at alleviating this psychological pressure, potentially leading to improved communication proficiency among language learners. Notably, this research is sheds light on M.A. students at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia.

1.5 Definition of Terms

- **Anxiety:** A sense of discomfort on a personal level, encompassing emotions like unease, anxiety, fear, and worry, accompanied by persistent thoughts about an unpredictable future and unfavorable physical and mental responses (Xi, 2020).
- **Public Speaking:** is the practice of crafting and presenting a structured form of communication in front of varied audiences with different cultural, political, religious, economic, educational, and social backgrounds. It involves a speaker's regular act of expressing and sharing their ideas with a receptive audience (Ramos, 2020).
- **Foreign Language Anxiety:** Language anxiety, as defined by Horwitz refers to a complex set of self-perceptions, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors linked to classroom language learning due to the distinct nature of the language learning process (Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019).

1.6 Research Methodology

To be able to achieve the research objectives; the study will use the quantitative research method. The researcher will design a questionnaire, which will be the primary tool for collecting the data. This questionnaire will be divided in to 3 main sections, including:

- Section 1: the demographic variables.
- Section 2: statements that will find out the reasons for foreign language learners speaking anxiety.
- Section 3: statements that will propose the strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking confidence for M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University.

The survey will be directed to M.A. students. The SPSS software will be used to analyze the data.

Moreover, the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS) will be adopted to measure the level of foreign language speaking anxiety experienced by M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University. The study will use the PSCAS which was developed by Yaikhong and Usaha (2012). This scale used specifically to tap speaking anxiety in an EFL public speaking class for English language learners.

The respondents will rate their agreement or disagreement with each item using a five-point Likert scale, which typically ranges from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree".

2. Literature Review

2.1 Foreign Language Anxiety

Foreign Language Anxiety describes characterized as the encounter of stress, unease, emotional responses, and worries connected to the

process of acquiring a second or foreign language. It has been recognized that sensations of discomfort, apprehension, and tension are noteworthy emotional elements that affect individuals learning a Foreign Language (FL) (Oteir & Al-Otaibi, 2019).

However, it's important to distinguish anxiety during target language (TL) performances from general performance anxiety. The language anxiety experienced by EFL learners primarily stems from their developing foreign language communication skills. Several researchers have explored the role of anxiety, particularly in speaking performance, and many of them have found that anxiety hinders EFL learners' speaking abilities (Rachmawati & Jurianto, 2020).

The studies suggests that foreign language anxiety adversely affects the language learning process. Many researchers have noted that learners who experience higher levels of anxiety tend to perform poorly in speaking tasks. Speaking in a foreign language is often perceived as the most challenging skill for learners, as it tends to trigger more anxiety compared to other language skills (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014). Consequently, there is a strong connection between speaking and anxiety, and it's crucial to consider how anxiety can have a negative impact on the EFL learners' learning journey (Rachmawati & Jurianto, 2020).

It can be said that understanding the complex aspects of Foreign Language Anxiety is crucial for creating customized strategies that aid language learners and foster a more positive and effective learning journey.

2.2 Reasons for Foreign Language Anxiety

Anxiety is a complex blend of emotions, emotional states, and personality traits that contribute to specific factors shaping it. Even a confident learner can experience anxiety when facing a formal speech, especially if they have more experience in informal settings. Anxiety is influenced by how a learner perceives a task's importance (Toubot & Seng, 2018). To understand its effects on learners, it is essential to explore the sources of anxiety.

Communication Apprehension

Previous research has used various terms to describe communication apprehension (CA), such as reticence, shyness, or social anxiety. Anxiety arises when an individual desire to create a specific impression on their audience but lacks self-confidence in their own abilities. This lack of confidence can stem from factors like a limited vocabulary in the second language (L2), poor pronunciation skills, or grammar issues (Toubot & Seng, 2018).

Self-Confidence

The impact of learning in second language acquisition is strongly linked to the personality traits of L2 learners, with self-confidence being the foremost factor. In this context, individuals with high self-confidence and a positive self-image tend to experience greater success. Such individuals often exhibit a willingness to explore, the courage to engage in conversations in a foreign language, and a greater capacity for learning. Conversely, those lacking self-confidence may miss out on opportunities to practice their target language due to a fear of making mistakes and feeling embarrassed, as noted by Leong and Ahmadi (2017).

Fear of Negative Evaluation

learners with a high level of FNE do not always exhibit self-criticism, but they tend to avoid interaction and often make brief and concise contributions when engaging with others. Prior research has indicated that Foreign Language Negative Evaluation (FNE) directly influences the behavior of learners, especially in situations where communication is the focus (Rahmat, 2020).

In such instances, learners often restrict their participation in tasks that expose them to evaluation by peers or teachers. The way learners handle spoken interactions in a second language (L2) can influence how others perceive them, potentially leading to an overall negative impression, even if the learner excels in other aspects of the language or skills. Furthermore, difficulties in oral proficiency can significantly impact how peers perceive the learner. Additionally, if a learner believes they cannot perform as well in speaking as they can in other areas, they may abstain from exerting effort in speaking tasks. This avoidance and lack of practice can hinder the development of oral skills, exacerbating the issue of anxiety (Toubot & Seng, 2018).

Cultural Differences

Cultural differences between the learners and the target language culture seemed to be a significant factor contributing to anxiety. The less certain or acquainted learners were with the target language culture, the more likely it was to evoke anxiety (Rahmat, 2020).

Therefore, anxiety is closely connected to particular situations, impacting learners regardless of when or where they occur. As a result, anxiety can manifest as either a transient or enduring condition. Various types and degrees of anxiety can result in distinct effects on a learner's behavior.

It is notable that, understanding the underlying factors contributing to Foreign Language Anxiety not only aids in addressing and mitigating its impact on language learners but also paves the way for more effective teaching strategies and support mechanisms to enhance the overall language learning experience.

2.3 Strategies to Reduce Language Anxiety

As indicated in earlier research, it has been established that there are five strategies for mitigating language anxiety when speaking. The goal of this investigation is to develop a typology of strategies that students us to cope or to reducing their anxiety (Rahmat, 2020).

Preparation: involves proactive efforts to improve learning and study strategies in order to mitigate anxiety associated with language

classes. This behavioral strategy aims to enhance students' mastery of subject matter (Liu & Chen, 2015). Typical preparation actions include using English more frequently, diligent study, seeking help from peers, consulting dictionaries, asking questions to the teacher, mental practice of English, attentive listening, striving for improved performance, establishing a daily study routine, self-improvement, careful consideration of areas of difficulty, focused reading, class concentration, and prior review of materials before teacher engagement.

Relaxation: This approach is characterized by its emotional influence, with the primary goal of reducing physical tension connected to emotional arousal. It encompasses strategies aimed at diminishing somatic anxiety symptoms, which in turn restores the body's equilibrium by decreasing stress and anxiety hormones while enhancing cerebral blood circulation (Rahmat, 2020). It is a cognitive process that results in bodily relaxation. Common relaxation techniques include deep breathing, calming down, closing one's eyes, visualizing a state of calm, gentle physical movements, self-soothing gestures like touching one's hair or playing with hands, and engaging in activities such as looking at a watch, among others.

Positive thinking: involves efforts to counter or modify problematic thought patterns related to language learning. It serves as a soothing mechanism aimed at mitigating the cognitive processes that contribute to students' anxiety (Simon et al., 2020). Positive thinking is often a reflection of our life perspective and self-attitude. These strategies are designed to shift focus away from stressful situations towards positive and pleasant stimuli, providing relief to the anxious learner.

Key elements of positive thinking include self-confidence, finding enjoyment in lessons, believing in oneself, maintaining a relaxed approach, self-encouragement, prayer, disregarding potential consequences, affirming a lack of anxiety, humor, visualizing a successful performance, harnessing anxiety for motivation, and not taking matters too seriously, among others (Rahmat, 2020).

Peer seeking is characterized by students actively seeking out fellow students who appear to be struggling with comprehending the class material or managing their anxiety. For anxious students, recognizing that others share similar difficulties can function as a means of emotional regulation through social comparison. Common instances of peer seeking include reassuring oneself that problems considered difficult are also challenging for others, acknowledging that fellow students might be experiencing anxiety, actively searching for classmates encountering issues in understanding the class material, and engaging in conversations with nearby friends (Blöte, Miers, & Westenberg, 2016).

Resignation: is marked by students' unwillingness to take action to alleviate their language anxiety. Those exhibiting signs of resignation aim to downplay anxiety's effects by avoiding the issue altogether. Common manifestations of resignation include giving up, shedding tears, disengaging, accepting the situation as it is, dozing off during class, refraining from futile resistance, and attempting to endure the situation (Rahmat, 2020).

Based on the above, understanding and applying these effective strategies can significantly empower students to address and overcome their speaking anxiety, ultimately enhancing their language learning experience.

2.4 Previous Related Studies

Understanding and learning a foreign language is considered a significant challenge in our world today, where foreign languages have become essential tools for personal and professional communication and interaction. However, many individuals experience anxiety in the process of learning and using foreign languages.

Several studies have delved into the realm of language learning anxiety, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of anxiety experienced by students in foreign language learning environments. Al-Khasawneh (2016) conducted a study to assess the levels and sources of foreign language learning anxiety among Saudi students at King Khalid University. The study revealed a moderate level of anxiety among the students, stemming from various sources such as fear of communication, anxiety during English language lessons, fear of negative evaluation, and test anxiety.

Meanwhile, Aydın and Ustuk (2020) examined the levels of anxiety among foreign language teachers, and their findings indicated that foreign language teaching anxiety is influenced by factors such as the learner's low interest and the presence of monitoring by peers, mentors, or supervisors. Additionally, variables including age, gender, school type, and educational experience had significant effects on this anxiety.

Chahrazad and Kamel (2022) in their study that explored speaking anxiety among undergraduate students studying English as a foreign language, concluded that teachers play a pivotal role in mitigating the anxiety experienced by students who speak English as a foreign language. Furthermore, Çagatay (2015) observed that English as foreign language students typically demonstrate a moderate level of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA). It's noteworthy that FLSA tends to increase when interacting with native speakers as opposed to interacting with classmates.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Analysis of the Demographic Variables

Table 1. Gender Characteristics

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Female	40	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Table (1) shows that males account for 60% of overall sample size. While the female represents 40% of the sample size.

Table 2. Age Characteristics

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	22-25 years	22	22.0	22.0	22.0
	26-30 years	32	32.0	32.0	54.0
	31-40 years	17	17.0	17.0	71.0
	More than 40 years	29	29.0	29.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The age distribution of the sample is displayed in Table (2), with respondents between the ages of 22 and 25 making up 22% of the total sample. Furthermore, 32% of the sample as a whole consisted of respondents who were between the ages of 26 and 30. Furthermore, 17% of the sample as a whole consisted of respondents who were between the ages of 31 and 40. Finally, 29% of the sample as a whole consisted of respondents who were older than 40.

3.2 Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Anxiety

Through the use of SPSS, the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) of the responses and their ranks, which were obtained using a five-point Likert scale, were calculated. Means between (1 and 1.80) were regarded as very low, between (1.81 and 2.60) as low, between (2.61-3.40) as a medium, between (3.41-4.20) as high, and between (4.21-5.00) as very high.

Table 3. The reasons for foreign language learners speaking anxiety

No.	Statements	Means	Standard deviations	Practices degree
	Foreign Language Learners' Speaking Anxiety			
Q1	I feel anxious about speaking the foreign language because I am afraid of making mistakes.	3.89	0.886	High
Q2	Pronunciation concerns make me hesitant to engage in spoken communication in the foreign language.	4.03	0.858	High
Q3	I worry about being judged by others when speaking the foreign language.	4.05	0.903	High
Q4	A lack of confidence in my language abilities contributes to my speaking anxiety.	4.05	0.857	High
Q5	The fear of forgetting words or phrases impedes my willingness to speak the foreign language.	4.03	0.731	High
Q6	I feel more anxious speaking the foreign language in group settings compared to one-on-one interactions.	4.03	0.958	High
Q7	Pressure to perform well in language communication adds to my speaking anxiety.	3.76	0.965	High
Q8	Negative past experiences with speaking the foreign language affect my current level of anxiety.	3.88	0.935	High
Q9	I experience anxiety when speaking the foreign language in social or unfamiliar situations.	3.96	0.864	High
Q10	A limited vocabulary in the foreign language makes me anxious about expressing myself accurately.	3.89	0.886	High
	Overall	**3.96**	**0.357**	

The results of Table 3 provide insight into the complex nature of speaking anxiety that MS students who are studying a foreign language encounter. It is apparent that a multitude of elements play a role in their anxiety toward spoken communication. A prevalent apprehension that stems from the pressure pupils face to attain flawless language skills is the fear of making mistakes. Students' anxiousness is compounded by pronunciation concerns, as they worry about their speech being misinterpreted or interpreted negatively. The social component of language learning is highlighted by the additional layer of stress caused by the fear of being judged by others, especially in group situations. Furthermore, the unease felt in strange or social settings emphasizes how the environment plays a major part in exacerbating speech anxiety. A restricted vocabulary makes things even more difficult for kids since they find it difficult to express themselves clearly, which increases anxiety. This is made worse by their insecurity about their language skills and anxiety over forgetting words or phrases in the middle of a conversation. Students' motivation to participate in oral communication is hampered by a cycle of worry that is exacerbated by the pressure to do well. A comprehensive strategy that tackles language competency, self-assurance development, and fostering safe learning environments where students feel inspired to take chances and learn from their errors is needed to solve these issues.

According to Toubot and Seng (2018) when someone wants to have a certain impact on their audience but isn't confident in their own skills,

anxiety sets in. A small vocabulary in the second language (L2), difficulty pronouncing words correctly, or grammatical errors can all contribute to this lack of confidence, which is in line with the current study. According to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), those who lack confidence may pass up chances to practice their target language because they are afraid of making mistakes and looking foolish, which is compatible with the current study.

3.3 The Strategies Can Be Implemented to Reduce Speaking Anxiety and Enhance Speaking Confidence for M.A Students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University

Table 4. The strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking confidence for M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University

No.	Statements	Means	Standard deviations	Practices degree
The strategies can be implemented to reduce speaking anxiety and enhance speaking confidence for M.A students in Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University				
Q1	Encouraging collaborative speaking activities with peers can enhance confidence in the foreign language.	4.03	0.703	High
Q2	Regular and constructive feedback on speaking performance can contribute to improved confidence.	3.92	0.720	High
Q3	Access to interactive language labs with multimedia resources can provide a supportive environment for language practice.	3.96	0.710	High
Q4	Creating opportunities to apply language skills in real-world scenarios can boost confidence in practical communication.	3.86	0.774	High
Q5	Small group discussions can provide a less intimidating setting for M.A students to practice speaking skills.	3.92	0.706	High
Q6	Incorporating role-playing exercises can help students practice language skills in simulated real-life situations.	3.83	0.697	High
Q7	Integrating technology tools for language learning, such as language learning apps or virtual conversation partners, can offer additional resources for practice.	3.77	0.694	High
Q8	Gradually increasing the complexity of speaking assignments can help students build confidence progressively.	3.86	0.711	High
Q9	Opportunities for cultural immersion programs or language exchange programs can enhance practical language skills and confidence.	3.06	0.617	High
Q10	Conducting workshops focused on public speaking skills can equip students with techniques to manage anxiety and express themselves more confidently.	4.00	0.804	High
	Overall	**3.92**	**0.296**	High

The results provided in Table (4) offers significant insights into practical methods that Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University M.A. students can use to lessen speaking fear and increase speaking confidence. Collaborative speaking exercises with peers seem to be a promising strategy since they foster a supportive learning environment where students may communicate with one another and gain confidence while also encouraging active engagement. Furthermore, it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of receiving regular, constructive criticism on one's speaking performance. Such feedback boosts students' confidence in their language skills by highlighting their strengths and assisting them in identifying areas for growth.

One more effective tactic that is mentioned is having access to interactive language labs with multimedia resources. These labs provide a lively and engaging setting for language practice, enabling students to interact with real materials and get prompt feedback—both of which are essential for boosting confidence while speaking in public. It is also encouraged to create opportunities for language application in real-world settings, since this helps students feel relevant and confident by bridging the gap between classroom learning and practical communication.

Additionally, M.A. students can practice speaking in a less daunting environment in small group conversations, which promote a sense of community and peer support. Role-playing activities provide an organized yet imaginative method for language practice, enabling students to model real-world situations and hone their practical speaking abilities in a safe setting. Using technology to support language learning—such as apps or virtual conversation partners—supplements conventional teaching strategies and provides new opportunities for practice, accommodating a range of learning styles and improving accessibility.

In order to ensure that pupils are pushed but not overwhelmed, it is imperative that speaking assignments be made more complex over time. Opportunities for language exchange or cultural immersion programs improve students' language learning by giving them real-world cultural context, boosting their confidence, and developing their practical language abilities. Lastly, public speaking classes give students the tools they need to better express themselves confidently and manage their anxieties, enabling them to communicate successfully in a variety of settings. In general, these tactics provide a thorough framework for M.A. students to handle speaking anxiety and boost speaking confidence, creating a supportive learning environment that fosters language proficiency and self-assurance.

The significance of preparation, optimistic thinking, and peer support in addressing speaking anxiety is underscored by both the present investigation and prior studies including Liu and Chen (2015) and Toubot and Seng (2018) . Both studies stress how important it is to get ready by studying hard, asking friends for advice, and practicing language mentally. Furthermore, the two studies emphasize the

significance of positive thinking in diverting attention from stressful circumstances and preserving a calm demeanor. Both studies also acknowledge the importance of peer support in fostering a positive learning environment and assisting with social comparison-based emotional regulation.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, this study explored the complex topic of speaking anxiety among M.A. students at Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia who are learning a foreign language. Significant insights were acquired into the difficulties faced by students and possible solutions to improve their speaking confidence through a thorough investigation of the causes of speaking anxiety and the ways to reduce it.

The results showed that speaking anxiety can be caused by a wide range of causes, such as a restricted vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, pronunciation issues, social pressure, lack of confidence, and unpleasant past experiences. All of these elements work together to weave a complicated web of anxiety that prevents pupils from being willing to communicate verbally.

However, the study also found a number of useful tactics that M.A. students might use to reduce speaking fear and increase speaking confidence. These tactics included role-playing exercises, small group discussions, technology integration, collaborative speaking activities, consistent constructive feedback, access to interactive language labs, real-world language application, assignments that were gradually more complex, cultural immersion programs, and public speaking workshops. Students may create a nurturing learning environment that fosters linguistic competency and confidence by putting these methods into practice.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be proposed:

1. In order to reduce speaking anxiety among Master of Arts students, educational institutions should place a high priority on developing supportive learning environments that encourage peer interaction, constructive criticism, and collaborative learning activities.

2. Technology aids and multimedia materials can improve student engagement and offer more practice opportunities, which will increase their confidence while speaking in front of an audience.

3. To improve students' practical language proficiency and confidence, curriculum designers should prioritize language application in the real world through immersive experiences, cultural exchange programs, and language immersion projects.

4. Providing public speaking seminars and courses can help students become more proficient communicators by teaching them how to control their nervousness and speak up effectively in a variety of situations.

5. Teachers should provide speaking assignments that are more difficult over time so that students can challenge themselves to get better at the language and eventually gain confidence.

6. Students' attention can be diverted from stressful situations and a more at ease and self-assured manner during spoken communication can be fostered by encouraging positive thinking and self-affirmation.

By putting these suggestions into practice, educational institutions and language teachers may be crucial in helping Master of Arts students get over their fear of public speaking and build their speaking confidence, which will ultimately lead to a more enjoyable and successful language learning process.

Competing interests

The author Al-Hanake declares that she has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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No additional data are available.

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