

A Study on the Influence of Foreign Language Anxiety as a Second Language Acquisition Disorder and Its Coping Strategies

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Abstract: In the context of accelerating globalization, mastering foreign languages has become a key element of individual development and social progress. However, anxiety, a common negative emotion in the process of foreign language learning, has become an important obstacle to the learning effect. Based on this, this paper will deeply explore the definition of foreign language anxiety, analyze its specific impact on the process of foreign language acquisition in detail, and put forward targeted strategies, aiming to provide solid theoretical support for foreign language teaching, so as to promote the all-round development and effective improvement of learners in language acquisition.

Keywords: foreign language anxiety, second language acquisition disorder, coping strategies

Introduction

The process of foreign language acquisition is not only a journey of language skills improvement, but also a comprehensive process of simultaneous development of emotional and social adaptability. However, on this path, many learners often face a significant emotional barrier, namely foreign language learning anxiety. This negative emotional power cannot be underestimated, which greatly limits the progress of language ability. This kind of emotion not only seriously affects learners' oral fluency and expression confidence, but also its chain effect may be extended to the accuracy of listening comprehension, the depth of reading content and the breadth of writing conception, thus posing a broad challenge to the overall improvement of foreign language ability. Therefore, understanding and coping with this anxiety is crucial to promote the balanced development of learners in all aspects of language acquisition.

1. Definition of foreign language anxiety

Foreign language anxiety, as a negative emotional experience in the process of learning a foreign language, includes many aspects such as tension, anxiety, and fear. American psychologist Horwitz first defined it as a unique and comprehensive psychological concept in 1986. He believes that this anxiety stems from the uniqueness of language learning and is closely related to learners' self-awareness of their own language skills, internal beliefs, immediate emotional reactions, and related behavioral performance, forming a complex and interactive psychological phenomenon.^[1] Horwitz pointed out that foreign language anxiety not only reflects the psychological state of learners in language learning, but also involves their cognition and evaluation of their own abilities, as well as their emotional reactions and behavioral patterns in this situation. The proposal of this concept provides a framework for us to understand the psychological barriers in foreign language learning and promotes the in-depth study of emotional factors in the process of foreign language learning.

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2. The influence of foreign language anxiety on second language acquisition

2.1 Cognitive level

From a cognitive perspective, high-level anxiety significantly interferes with learners' information processing ability. When anxiety dominates, the learner's attention tends to shift from the current task unconsciously to the concern about failure or the expectation of negative results, which directly leads to the distraction of attention. In addition, high anxiety also profoundly affects the function of working memory, which makes learners encounter many obstacles in encoding, storing and retrieving new language information, thus increasing the cognitive burden. This extra cognitive burden not only limits the effective processing of language input, but also may hinder the understanding of grammatical structures and the stability of vocabulary memory, and ultimately affect the efficiency and results of overall language acquisition. Therefore, anxiety not only causes problems in attention distribution, but also has a negative impact on deep cognitive processing, which hinders learners' progress in language learning.

2.2 Emotional level

On the emotional level, learners who continue to experience high anxiety tend to experience a decline in learning motivation. Anxiety seems to be an invisible source of energy consumption, which constantly depletes learners' psychological resources, makes them feel tired and their enthusiasm for learning weakens. In addition, the vicious circle formed by frequent frustration and self-doubt further erodes learners' self-confidence and makes them doubt their language ability, thus weakening their enthusiasm and enthusiasm to participate in language learning activities.^[2] In some extreme cases, anxiety may also lead learners to adopt avoidance strategies, such as avoiding the use of the target language for actual communication, or even completely giving up the efforts of language learning, which poses a serious obstacle to the sustainable development of individual language learning. Therefore, emotional anxiety not only affects learners' mentality, but also may fundamentally shake their determination to continue learning.

2.3 Social level

From the perspective of social interaction, foreign language anxiety also has a profound impact on learners' interpersonal communication. The fear of making mistakes and being ridiculed by others has prompted some learners to actively avoid occasions where they need to use foreign languages for real communication or practice, thus greatly reducing their opportunities to use language in a practical environment. It should be noted that language practice and immediate feedback mechanism are indispensable key elements in foreign language learning. Without such opportunities, it is difficult for learners to identify and correct errors, to effectively consolidate what they have learned, and to gradually build fluency in language use. Therefore, the avoidance of social interaction not only hinders the growth trajectory of language skills, but also may aggravate learners' loneliness and self-closure, forming a vicious circle of anxiety and further deepening their psychological burden.

3. A study of foreign language anxiety as a coping strategy for second language acquisition disorders

3.1 Enhancing self-efficacy

Self-efficacy, as a yardstick to measure an individual's belief in successfully completing a specific task, is an indispensable driving force in the learning journey. In order to strengthen students' intrinsic motivation, teachers should lead students to set a clear and achievable small goal system and accumulate positive feedback by gradually crossing these milestone achievements. The core value of this strategy is that it promotes the germination and growth of a positive learning attitude, so that students can gradually develop a tough will to face challenges and overcome obstacles in the joy of experiencing progress. In addition, educators should also regularly review students' growth trajectory, especially focusing on their remarkable achievements, as a catalyst to strengthen positive psychological experience and consolidate

self-efficacy. This series of measures not only allow students to intuitively witness their own transformation journey, but also deepen their firm belief in their own potential and ability in continuous self-affirmation.^[3]

3.2 Improving teaching methods

Traditional education strategies may impose excessive psychological burden on students in some situations, especially when the classroom atmosphere tends to be tight and serious. In view of this, the introduction of diversified teaching methods is particularly important and urgent. By integrating innovative ways such as gamification learning strategies, role-playing activities, and the formation of cooperative learning groups, we aim to make the learning process more interesting and interactive. This kind of teaching mode can not only effectively stimulate students' interest and curiosity in learning, but also create a more relaxed and pleasant learning environment, so as to effectively alleviate students' anxiety. More importantly, the implementation of team cooperation projects enables students to hone their language skills in an atmosphere of mutual support and common progress, and promote their ability to communicate and collaborate with each other.

3.3 Increasing exposure opportunities

Practice plays a vital role in the process of language learning. Through elaborately designed simulation scenarios, such as shopping experience, restaurant ordering or travel information inquiry, we can build a bridge for learners to enrich their language practice. These practical activities should be carried out in the order from simple to complex, from basic dialogue to more complex and changeable communication situations, so as to help students gradually adapt to various language use scenarios. This practice arrangement not only aims to enhance students' familiarity and self-confidence with the target language, but also to enable them to exercise more practical and close to daily life language skills in practice, so as to comprehensively improve their language ability.^[4] In this way, students can continue to hone in the real language environment and better grasp the application skills of language.

3.4 Evaluation and feedback mechanism optimization

It is very important to construct an appropriate evaluation system to alleviate students' anxiety. The design of the evaluation system should focus on positive incentives, not just pointing out mistakes. Teachers should pay attention to students' effort process and growth trajectory, not only the score. Providing constructive feedback in a timely manner can help students reflect on themselves, clarify their own shortcomings on the road of growth, and provide them with specific directions for improvement. In addition, it is also an important means to reduce anxiety by strengthening effective communication between teachers and students, ensuring that students can deeply understand the purpose of evaluation and feel the care and support of teachers. Through regular one-on-one communication meetings, students can not only bravely express their personal feelings and confusion, but also provide teachers with the opportunity to flexibly adjust teaching strategies according to students' individual differences. This can not only enhance students' self-confidence, but also promote teaching and learning.

4. Conclusion

Foreign language anxiety is a common psychological phenomenon in the process of second language acquisition. Although its negative effects cannot be ignored, these adverse effects can be significantly alleviated by implementing scientific and effective intervention strategies. In this process, educators and learners need to work together to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. The purpose of creating such an environment is to help each learner effectively overcome the obstacles of foreign language anxiety, so that they can immerse themselves in the fun of language learning and enjoy the process of exploring new knowledge.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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