

How to Help Junior High School Students Reduce English Listening Anxiety

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Abstract: Through literature review, it can be found that listening anxiety of junior high school students is a common phenomenon. Starting with the study of the causes of junior middle school students' listening anxiety, this paper further analyzes what measures should be taken to reduce junior middle school students' listening anxiety, which can promote the improvement of teachers' English listening teaching level and provide new vitality for related research in the future.

Key words: foreign language anxiety; English listening anxiety; Junior high school students; solutions

1. Introduction

1.1 Study background

In contemporary society, English, as an international language, plays a pivotal role in the process of communication and learning between countries. As a kind of sensory stimulation, English listening is an important part of English learning, which is of great importance to the cultivation of English ability. Junior high school students become anxious easily during the English listening process. This paper will focus on the causes and coping strategies of English listening anxiety.

1.2 Purpose and significance of the study

English Syllabus for Junior Middle School of Nine-year Compulsory Education (trial revision) has provided detailed stipulations for the purpose and requirements of the listening teaching of junior high school English. Anxiety may have two sides: the facilitative anxiety and debilitating one. In this paper, it mainly talks about the bad one. Excessive anxiety will seriously affect students' English listening effect and lead to the decline of the overall English learning level. This paper will provide some insights into the causes and solutions of English listening anxiety in the hope of providing some help for junior high school students' English learning.

2. Problem Identification

2.1 Foreign language anxiety

Anxiety, as one of the most important emotional factors affecting foreign language learning, plays an important role in foreign language. Studies on foreign language anxiety began in the early 1970s. Anxiety is one of the main affective factors affecting individual second language learners. Early studies on foreign language anxiety mainly focus on the foreign language anxiety itself and its relationship with other anxieties.

2.1.1 Listening anxiety

Foreign language listening anxiety is a kind of language skill anxiety. Learning goals are one of the sources of anxiety,

and learners will become anxious when they feel unable to achieve the listening goals of a foreign language. Listening anxiety is fear, tension, and other emotions caused by the listener's inability to understand the speaker's meaning and make the correct response.

2.2 The causes of junior high school students' listening anxiety

2.2.1 English listening--immediacy

English listening mainly transmits information to junior high school students through the medium of sound. It stays for a very short time and, in general, can not be repeated. This requires junior high school students to process the information they heard in a short period of time and then absorb and output it, which has a high requirement on learners' language induction, acceptance and understanding ability.

Once learners have inattention or encounter difficulties in some listening language understanding, they are easy to be nervous, which will affect the understanding of the whole language material, leading to the failure of the listening process and bad results.

2.2.2 Weak foundation of students' English listening and insufficient knowledge reserve

Junior high school students with high level of anxiety are weak in English foundation. Inaccurate pronunciation of words, lack of vocabulary, lack of cultural background knowledge and so on will affect their listening level. Junior high school students feel that they do not understand and the understanding of the material is biased, which leads to low self-esteem and anxiety.

2.2.3 Lack of English listening skills and methods to relieve anxiety

Quite a few students do not use listening skills. Their prediction of key information, the search of important information, the skillful elimination of wrong answers and other aspects of skills need to improve. Many students react negatively to or even dare not face anxiety in listening learning, and lack strategies to relieve anxiety.

3. Measures Taken to Reduce English Listening Anxiety

3.1 Fostering students' English listening habits, skills and strategies

A good English listening learning habit can bring good results to English learning. Teachers should help students form their own learning habits such as, conducting English listening training every day, having active communication with classmates and so on, in the course of class, and make students adhere to the habits for a long time. Learning English listening well not only needs the habit to develop, but also needs good learning strategies to help, so as to achieve twice the result with half the effort. Teachers play an indispensable role in this process.

3.2 Cultivating students' confidence in English listening and stimulating students' listening learning motivation

When a student can do English listening well, he will easily build up confidence. When he has built up confidence, it is easy to produce enthusiasm and passion for English listening, and to learn better. Having the confidence and motivation to learn English well is the basis of learning English listening well. In order to achieve better results, teachers should be good at encouraging students, stimulating students' internal motivation, while combining with external motivation.

3.3 Teaching students according to their talents and combining formative assessment with summative assessment

Students have their own advantages and strengths, and each student has their own differences. Teachers should teach students according to each student's personality characteristics. For a long period of time, summative assessment is very common in the process of English listening learning, even now there is also such a phenomenon. Summative assessment attaches importance to results, while formative assessment attaches importance to process. We should combine the two to give full play to their advantages. Paying attention to the process plays an important role in English listening.

4. Conclusion and Implication

According to literature review, quite a few students get anxious about English listening. The causes are as follows: the characteristic of English listening: immediacy; weak foundation of students English listening and insufficient knowledge reserve; lack of English listening skills and methods to relieve anxiety. The possible solutions can be taken by teachers are as follows: fostering students' English listening habits, skills and strategies; cultivating students' confidence in English listening and stimulating student' listening learning motivation; teaching students according to their talents and combining formative assessment with summative assessment.

Due to the limited conditions, there are still many deficiencies in this study, and the conclusions obtained need to be confirmed by future studies.

Conflicts of Interest

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

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