

Anxiety Is a Double-Edged Sword!

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Preface

Hi Everyone!

Many of us have started teaching for the first time. Many of the students have started learning it for the first time. Many do learn quickly, many don't! The latter can be due to several factors among which 'anxiety' is a notorious one.

We have studied all about "debilitative" and "facilitative" anxiety (Brown, 2000), but how can we really put it into practice!? Have you considered that? Especially with regard to our crowded classes and the young generation with their emotional and behavioral delicacies.

I invite everyone to double-check their perspectives and plans of dealing with anxious students so as to reduce its negative side and increase the positive one! Good luck, then! 😊

Quotable Quotes

"Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom."

Soren Kierkegaard

"If you want to conquer the anxiety of life, live in the moment, live in the breath."

Amit Ray

"Our anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strengths."

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

"Man is not worried by real problems so much as by his imagined anxieties about real problems."

Epictetus

"Anxiety is a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a

channel into which all other thoughts are drained."

Arthur Somers Roche

No Comment!



"WE'D LIKE TO FORM A SUPPORT GROUP FOR HOMEWORK ANXIETY."

Share your ideas with us: azimi.hz@gmail.com ☺

Teaching Tips 1: Three Ways To Decrease Anxiety

- Attack negative thoughts

One of the most effective ways to help your students to deal with anxiety is to attack their negative thoughts. Many anxious students actually provoke their anxiety by setting unreasonable standards for their performance. Teachers can help students simply by identifying perfectionist tendencies that keep them from recognizing their language learning successes. In fact, the teacher should help anxious students to focus less on what they are doing wrong and more on what they are doing right.

- Student-centered lessons

Teachers should plan their lessons from the students' perspective. In other words, teachers should ask themselves whether an activity may be embarrassing or anxiety-provoking for students.



- Create opportunities to discuss anxiety

Many students find it tremendously helpful to know that their teacher acknowledges the reality of their anxiety. Anxious students almost always benefit from finding out that they are not alone in their struggles. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to discuss language anxiety openly with their students.

Quick Tips

1. Use group work to give students practice saying new phrases before asking them to perform individually.
2. Acknowledge students' anxious feelings and help them realize that anxiety is a widespread phenomenon.
3. Encourage students to concentrate on communicative success rather than formal accuracy.
4. Ask yourself how it must feel to be a student in your language classroom from time to time.

Teaching Tips 2: Seven Tips For Helping Learners Minimize Anxiety In Speaking


Since anxiety is most observed in language classes during speaking practice, we have decided to provide another section so “Teaching Tips” exclusively for the speaking skills. Hope you like it:

If you have students who seem to need

some help in overcoming the kind of anxiety that does not require professional intervention, then you might consider sharing these strategies with them.

1. Allow for planning, preparation, and practice time: In the confidence-building stage, adequate planning time enables learners to become familiar with what they want to say and build success. Try the pyramid approach; that is, build in opportunities for learners to work individually, in pairs, and in small groups before proceeding with speaking in a whole class, so that learners can rehearse and modify what they want to express.
2. Take a few deep breaths: This tip needs a bit of elaboration to be useful. If you have taken a voice training course, you know that breathing is fundamental to speaking. To release tension and slow down the heart rate, try relaxing the shoulders and breathing through





the nose (noting the expansion of the diaphragm); holding the breath and tightening your stomach muscle, fists, and toes; and counting one-one thousand, two-two thousand, three-three thousand, four-four thousand, and five-five thousand. Then exhale through the mouth and release all tension. Repeat this a few times.

3. Know the first 60 seconds like the back of your hand: This enables learners to start talking and feeling confident because the opening is usually the most nerve-wracking phase. After a smooth start, the butterflies start to dissipate, and the process usually gets much easier as they move along.
4. Think positively: Remind your students that no one wants to spend time listening to an insubstantial talk or engaging in a bad conversation. Encourage learners to see themselves as fluent and confident speakers and to remember that listeners want them to succeed.
5. Warm up the “gears:” In addition to drinking some water for dry mouth, encourage students to exercise the mouth muscles, much like a warm-up that one would do before a sports game, by exaggerated voicing “wee-woo-wee-woo” or “wow” a few times to loosen the facial tension. In situations of dry mouth when water is inaccessible, gently chewing the tongue a few times will create some saliva to moisten the mouth.
6. Start speaking after inhaling:


Shortness of breath can exacerbate the nervousness or anxiety associated with speaking, so speak after inhaling a full breath.

7. Experience builds confidence: Create opportunities for your students to build successes. At the same time, encourage your students to gain experience and to practice wherever and whenever they can by trying to respond to what their interlocutors say to them.

Teaching Tips by You!

Mr. Jahanban had sent us his ideas on teaching, remember? Since his letter was a bit long, we published half of the letter in the previous ETFun. Here is the second and final section:

As a(n) (English) teacher, I have learnt that:

9. If I am to enjoy teaching, people like Henry Ford can be a good example for me, because this man (1863-1947), who created the Ford car and changed the motor industry by introducing new ways of making cars in large numbers, believed that he had never worked in his life, since he had enjoyed his work on the grounds that he did his work enthusiastically and wholeheartedly, and like him, if I enjoy what I do and take no account of this fact that teaching is not financially rewarding, I will seldom feel bored, tired or frustrated. Of course, the last but not the least point in this regard is that “we cannot do great things, only small
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things with great love" (Mother Teresa).

10. Expecting my students to listen attentively and silently to me for an hour and sometimes more is not a realistic and practical expectation and I myself have experienced this repeatedly during my school years and some in-service training classes, especially when, one way or another, the class has been boring, so in order to make my teaching effective, I should make use of timely strategies to let students say something related to what is being taught and in fact make teaching an interactive process rather than a lecture class.
11. I should not presume that my students behave and think similar to when I myself was a student. It is taken for granted that everything changes continuously and without a break in this world and my students are not an exception to this rule, so I should admit that this generation is probably, on average, more intelligent than the previous one, as the next generation will have IQs higher than those of the present one (at least I think so!). On the other hand, they live in a world more developed than that I spent my childhood in and they have access to technologies that were non-existent in those days; hence, I should be flexible and adopt appropriate methods and strategies for such learners. Also, I should always be ready to change and never forget the word 'CHANGE'.
12. A teacher can change the world, but how can I be such a teacher? If I am to change the world, first I have to change myself, because this is the most practical thing I can do and one that brings about many changes in others and in particular, my pupils. In other words, I should practice what I preach!
13. Every student is a potential high performer provided that I leave no stones unturned in order to pave the way for them to actualize their full potentials. As a case in point, it happens that a student does not learn the vocabulary items included in his English book, and because of this I may regard him lazy, unintelligent, slow, dull, and empty-headed, but that same student knows English words like send, exit, a.m., p.m., silent, message, select, setting, and many others as easy as ABC. Why? Who is to blame here? I myself, the learner, both of us, or none of us? Maybe the latter words are interesting because they are of practical use for that student or maybe practice makes perfect in this regard, the reason being that he sees and uses these words when he is making use of his cell phone!!
14. I will be disappointed if I expect all my students to be excellent in English. I should remember that my students are not the same with regard to their IQs, aptitudes, interests, social classes, and many other influential variables. In fact, some of them may not be so good at learning languages, but be second to none when it comes to learning mathematics, for instance, and such knowledge leads me to be realistic and flexible in my expectations.

15. I shouldn't make any judgement about my would-be students. It goes without saying that making judgements is detrimental not only in teaching but also in all the aspects of life; therefore, I should be very careful, optimistic, and sanguine unless there are some evidence to the contrary.

Hasan Jahanban Isfahlan, the 5th educational district, Tabriz, East Azerbaijan Province

Jokes

1. They say people are more afraid of public speaking than they are of snakes. It doesn't seem to make sense. I mean, you don't see someone walking through the desert, suddenly shouting, "Watch out! A podium!!"
2. - Teacher: "John, why are you doing your math on the floor?"
- John: "You told me to do it without using tables!!"
3. - Teacher: 'Craig, you know you can't sleep in my class.'
- Craig: 'I know. But maybe if you were just a little quieter, I could!!'
4. - Headmaster: I've had complaints about you, Johnny, from all your teachers. What have you been doing?
- Johnny: Nothing, sir.
- Headmaster: Exactly!!

Funny Riddles

1. What's the name of a six-sided polygon?
2. What has hands but cannot clap?
3. What word looks the same backwards and upside down?

4. What never asks questions but is often answered?
5. What belongs to you but other people use it more than you?



Crosswords

Easy Crossword Puzzle # by Dave Fisher
(puzzles.about.com)

Across

1. Combines
5. Numero uno
9. Classic last night TV
12. Field yield
13. Bow
14. Ornamental pond fish
15. Instrument
16. Uncommon
17. Actor Brynner
18. Water source
20. Pressing
22. It's brewed.
23. Honey maker
24. band
28. Unruly crowds
32. Afire
33. Uses shears
36. Boxing great
37. You walk on them
39. Evicts. in a way
41. "And !" (really)
44. Kind of gun
45. Orb
48. Dynamite units. usually
52. Wrath
53. Computer contents
55. Extinct
56. Average score for Woods

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11
12					13					14		
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18				19			20		21			
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32				33			34	35		36		
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45							48			49	50	51
52				53		54			55			
56				57					58			
59				60					61			

- 57. Tied
- 58. Notion
- 59. Regular, abbrev.
- 60. Let
- 61. The latest

Down

- 1. Behaves
- 2. Lose hold of
- 3. Way in or out
- 4. Shares equally
- 5. Good buy
- 6. Two or more periods
- 7. Prepare for surgery
- 8. Cry of accomplishment
- 9. Isle of (largest of the Inner Hebrides)
- 10. Verb preceder
- 11. Merry-go-round music
- 19. Some kitchen staff wear them
- 21. Jewel
- 24. Santa's helpe
- 25. Tell a whopper
- 26. Polished off
- 27. El (Spanish hero)
- 29. Boat propeller
- 30. Kind of sandwich
- 31. Bro's counterpart
- 34. Country dweller
- 35. Roasting rod

- 38. Definite article
- 40. Ancestry
- 42. Command
- 43. Make a rug
- 45. Drinks slowly
- 46. Kind of fall
- 47. Rancher's concern
- 49. Secret message
- 50. Was aware of
- 51. Seven
- 54. Milimeters in a centimeter?

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Teaching Tips:

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2. <https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2011/05/03/7-tips-for-helping-learners-minimize-anxiety-in-speaking/>

Jokes:

1. <http://ask.metafilter.com/166563/Jokes-about-Fear>
2. <http://academictips.org/blogs/jokes/>
3. <http://www.teachhub.com/top-20-teacher-jokes>
4. <http://iteslj.org/c/jokes-short.html>

Funny Riddles:

1. <http://www.rd.com/jokes/school-jokes/>
2. <http://www.everythingmom.com/parenting/45-riddles-and-brain-teasers-for-kids>

Crossword:

<https://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http%3A%2F%2Fmichaelshuemaker.com%2Fblog%2Fnew%2Ffree-easy-crossword-puzzles-printable>

Answers to the *Funny Riddles*:

1. Sixagon!!
2. A clock!
3. SWIMS!
4. A doorbell!
5. Your name!!