

INVESTIGATING ONLINE SPEAKING ANXIETY FACTORS AMONG L2 LEARNERS IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

This study set out to investigate online speaking anxiety factors among institute L2 learners during the Covid-19 pandemic. It also investigated whether there is any significant difference between females and males' anxiety or not. The participants comprised 50 male and female L2 learners in Shiraz language institutes, aged 14 to 27, with varying English proficiency levels selected through non-probability sampling of the convenience type. Mc Croskey questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted by the researcher using SPSS software (version 24) along with the assessment of data normality. Based on the results of the research, factors such as lack of readiness, personality, fear of speaking in class, fear of negative evaluation, and getting tense and nervous cause speaking anxiety among institute L2 learners during the Covid-19 pandemic. Notably, a significant gender difference was observed only in the components "Fear of negative evaluation" and "Lack of readiness". Understanding online speaking anxiety factors is crucial for both instructors, L2 learners and syllabus designers, as emphasized in this study.

Keywords: online learning, speaking anxiety, Covid -19 pandemic

Introduction and Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted numerous aspects of life, with the education sector experiencing some of the most significant disruptions. The sudden shift from traditional face-to-face learning to online platforms was necessitated by the global health crisis, fundamentally altering the dynamics of teaching and learning. This rapid transition presented a host of challenges and opportunities, particularly in language learning, where speaking skills are essential. As students and institutions navigated this shift,