

Critical assessment of Speaking Anxiety and Strategy Use for Learning English as a Foreign Language in Full and Partial English-Medium Instruction Contexts

Mu-Hsuan Chou, Associate Professor of Foreign Language Teaching at Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages, published *Speaking Anxiety and Strategy Use for Learning English as a Foreign Language in Full and Partial English-Medium Instruction Contexts*, a demonstration of his views on second language learning methods in the 2018 TESOL Quarterly issue. He conducted a large-scale questionnaire survey of 638 students in Taiwan using quantitative analysis methods. Through multivariate analysis, hierarchical multivariate regression and independence chi-square test to test his theory, which simply said that "learning a foreign language requires a good environment". Mu-Hsuan Chou believes that if learning English is done without a complete EMI context, the learning process of spoken English becomes more difficult, leading to more anxiety. Mu-Hsuan Chou justified his view by conducting an analysis of 638 college students at four universities in Taiwan.

Mu-Hsuan Chou tried to prove that his research applied not only to Taiwan, but also to more areas with backward English proficiency, so he minimized the potential biases existing in the study as much as possible. In the sample sampling stage, two of the four universities were complete EMI ((327 students, about 51%), and the other two were partial EMI (311 students, about 49%). These students also had different majors, such as modern foreign languages, social sciences, science, design, art and other majors. Students must teach this way in English, regardless of their English level or whether they like the complete EMI context. Mu-Hsuan Chou thought this made sense and laid the foundation for his following experiments, such as the chi-square test for independence. Preliminary analysis in the first-year grading test scores found no significant relationship between the context of the EMI and the participants' English proficiency prior to receiving the EMI.

One of my responses to this article was that I saw the relationship between student anxiety and the quantitative and qualitative analysis we learned in language classes. Mu-Hsuan Chou believes that personal emotions have always been a part of human behavior, and the performance of personal learning activities is also affected by emotional fluctuations. In the complete EMI context and the partial EMI context in all the students studied, it can cause anxiety, fear, and stress, resulting in a student's performance. Several factors identified by the exploratory factor analysis could help to explain this relationship.

Mu-Hsuan Chou using exploratory factor analysis to a large number of single questionnaire items refinement, formed a small number of related variables, through multivariate analysis, the refinement data using MANOVA to compare groups, using independent sample t-test two different context of oral scores, report results show a complete EMI students than accept partial EMI students oral test scores is higher. Mu-Hsuan Chou reported on speech anxiety in a one-way group MANOVA, with five dependent variables extracted from exploration factor analysis: language anxiety, lack of confidence in speaking, negative feelings of English learning in class, fear of being corrected by the teacher, and fear of failing English courses. The analysis showed that students receiving a complete EMI had lower language anxiety, lower language uncertainty, and less negative emotions about English learning, but there were no significant differences in fear of being corrected by teachers and fear of English performance. In this report, mathematical explanations explains anxiety, language uncertainty and the influence of negative emotions about

English on oral performance.

I think this analysis by Mu-Hsuan Chou is a good explanation of the impact of EMI model on students in recent years. Many regional students have poor spoken English, and they attribute the reason to insufficient vocabulary, rather than the influence of language environment. In many cities with backward educational level, the way to assess English ability is the accumulation and application of listening and vocabulary. With the lack of output stage training, the test scores hide the real purpose of learning the language. But only quantitative analysis is limited, because the survey is too focused on speaking anxiety, if you can add some qualitative analysis in the study will be more comprehensive, for example, regular to two different EMI context of students one-on-one conversation, it can be better is to make up for the limitations of some questionnaire survey.

Mu-Hsuan Chou believed that to prove the differences in oral language strategies between different EMI contexts, he analyzed the MANOVA between univariate groups, including three dependent variables: rehearsal strategy, paraphrasing strategy, and borrowing strategy. When considering the results of the three dependent variables alone, it was found that students with full EMI adopted more strategies, seeking opportunities to practice English and used synonyms and repeated descriptions in speech than students with partial EMI, but there was no significant difference in the borrowing strategy.

His ability to predict spoken English anxiety by using stratified multiple regression to assess control measures after controlling for the context effects of both EMI and finally concluded that the rehearsal strategy was the best predictor. Because EMI has created an English interactive environment, students in this environment, although their speaking level is different, but once they entered the complete EMI context, will use the rehearsal strategy to train their oral skills, such as imitating native English speakers, widely looking for native English speakers, in short as much as possible to initiate dialogue and discuss those topics they are not familiar with. This result suggests that the more frequently college students use rehearsal and referral strategies when practicing speaking language, the less likely the anxiety appears in spoken English, and that students receiving the full EMI test have less language anxiety than the partial EMI test.

About the rehearsal strategy is the best predictor, this is also a very meaningful view. The mental design before the rehearsal will help the student to more or less overcome some fear of the unknown situation, allowing the student to reduce his oral anxiety, and thus improve his oral English ability. However, this view involves psychology, which, as a combination of humanities and social sciences, not only needs qualitative analysis, but also quantitative analysis is indispensable.

Mu-Hsuan Chou found in the six components of spoken language (fluency, grammar use, sufficient content information, vocabulary use, conversationist appropriate response, correct pronunciation) that students receiving partial EMI were more difficult in using accurate vocabulary, maintaining fluency, and making appropriate responses with interlocutors than students receiving full EMI. Among them, language fluency is the highest proportion of students' feedback. Students think that there are some reasons for the tension and vocabulary, and some students say that they fail to integrate their ideas into the grammatical structure. In the use of vocabulary, students in completing the EMI contexts and those in part of the EMI contexts agreed that limited vocabulary, ambiguity about the meaning of the vocabulary in special contexts, and lack of opportunity to speak English were the main causes of their confusion. In terms of fluency,

they tend to stop in the conversation to find the right words, organize the language, or think about the content, which makes sure that they fail to speak very long sentences fluently. In responding appropriately to the interlocutor, the students said that despite trying to understand what they said between them, their limited vocabulary and poor grammatical structure hindered them and, of course, tension made them forget the words originally planned to appear in the conversation. In the grammar and pronunciation parts, they have realized that their oral grammar has no formal written grammar, such as, consistency of subject and verb, wrong use of words, mixing of Chinese and English grammar, and some students are often confused by accent, intonation, synonyms. The analysis showed that students with a full EMI context received higher oral scores and used similar words or synonyms to compensate for the vocabulary shortage, thus allowing them to continue the conversation.

Obviously, in the spoken language component, Mu-Hsuan Chou conducted a qualitative analysis in a self-reported form, and explained that these factors increase oral language anxiety, and such factors also further hinder the understanding. This analysis method is very meaningful, not only conducted a large-scale questionnaire survey, but also in-depth understanding of students' ideas. However, the report itself has limitations, because it can not accurately understand the students' personality. In the future, if interviews or diaries can be added to get feedback information in the future, it will be more helpful to the research.

Mu-Hsuan Chou research provides a lot of experience in theory and teaching, through quantitative research shows that in students receiving complete EMI context than part of EMI context students, speaking anxiety, speak more confident, have more positive feelings about the course, will use a wide range of methods to find different opportunities to practice oral English, in using vocabulary and maintain fluent communication and respond to interlocutors will perform better, of course, accept complete EMI context students their spoken English performance is higher. The qualitative research shows that the lack of content knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and special topics can lead to oral language anxiety. Students of two different EMI agree that the grammar in spoken language, the content knowledge and pronunciation of specific topics are difficult to improve, and their anxiety occurs more in the input processing and output stage.

In this paper, Mu-Hsuan Chou uses three mathematical methods to demonstrate one by one whether college students' average spoken English scores differ between full EMI and partial EMI contexts, whether their anxiety level varies when speaking English, and whether the strategies they use when speaking also differ. With our consistent findings around these three questions, the answer is yes. In the context of complete EMI students will use more ways to faster into the context, these methods to reduce their speaking anxiety has an important help, and with the reduction of speaking anxiety, complete EMI students in learning enthusiasm is stronger, the relationship between them depend on each other, mutual penetration, mutual conversion. Obviously, the complete EMI context is a great help to college students in learning spoken English. In addition, the students of EMI in the complete EMI context then successfully predicted the best predictor of speaking anxiety- rehearsal strategy through mixed research. They chose the rehearsal method suitable for their own difficulty coefficient, and multiple rehearsals could most effectively improve their oral English. Finally, an analysis report using a qualitative survey demonstrated the relationship between six parts in spoken English and the EMI context.

The above series of analyses still overly focus on the discussion when speaking, ignoring the

changes in first language ability. However, in foreign language learning, the classroom atmosphere, target language ability, teaching conditions, learning motivation, students' willingness to participate in the dialogue, and personality all need to join a discussion. These methods are very good qualitative analysis, but they are not involved in this paper, and I think the research in these aspects may provide more teaching methods, which can help students to improve their oral English skills.

Read reference:

Chou M H. Speaking anxiety and strategy use for learning English as a foreign language in full and partial English - medium instruction contexts[J]. *Tesol Quarterly*, 2018, 52(3): 611-633.