

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING ANXIETY

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Abstract

This article investigates the psychological aspects and anxiety level accompanying English language learning in younger and older adolescents. The study is based on analyzing the influence of different age groups on psychological well-being when learning a foreign language. Key issues such as cognitive difficulties, social anxiety and fear of failure are highlighted, and the characteristics of younger and older adolescents in the context of English language learning are examined. The article offers recommendations for overcoming these problems using an individualized approach and innovative teaching methods that promote a favorable educational environment. This study is intended to enrich the understanding of factors influencing the effectiveness of language learning in adolescents and provide a basis for further research in the field of educational psychology.

Keywords: anxiety, English language, cognitive difficulties, social anxiety, fear of failure, younger adolescents, older adolescents, psychological well-being..

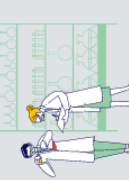
Introduction

Learning English is an integral part of modern education and a key element of linguistic competence in a global society. However, among adolescents, both younger and older, this process is accompanied by a variety of psychological problems and anxiety levels that can affect the success of learning. The psychological aspect of foreign language learning is becoming increasingly important in light of individual characteristics and age-related factors that influence the perception and assimilation of a new language environment. This article focuses on the study of anxiety that accompanies adolescents in learning English and will identify key age-related issues.

One of the key points is the relevance of the problem, grounded on globalization and intercultural interaction. In today's world, globalization leads to the need for English language proficiency for effective international communication. Anxiety in its learning can be a barrier to the formation of intercultural competence. Researchers E.K. Horwitz, M.B. Horwitz and J. Cope, who are the pioneers of language anxiety, have identified what it consists of and the possibility of measuring it. Fear of foreign languages or the phenomenon of language anxiety in the scientific literature, labeled as "xenoglossophobia", accompanied by avoidance of communication with speakers of other languages or feelings of discomfort in multilingual countries. This fear is due to cultural or lack of understanding of other languages.

In adolescence (13 - 15 years old), problems may arise due to lack of attention span, unstable emotional state and the need to conform to peer demands. At older ages (16 - 18 years), major problems may include adolescent stress related to future exams, procedures and methods of individual identity.

In connection with the decree of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on measures to develop the spheres of education and upbringing and science in the new period of Uzbekistan's



development. Systematic efforts are being made to improve the quality and effectiveness of the education and upbringing system and to develop students' modern knowledge and skills.

Adolescents who experience anxiety when learning English have various cognitive difficulties, including difficulty concentrating, thus distracting attention, which makes it difficult for them to assimilate new information and concentrate on lessons.

Fear of making mistakes may deter the adolescent from actively participating in lessons and using new language skills.

Anxiety can lead to a decrease in confidence in one's language learning abilities, also making it difficult to learn new material.

Anxiety can provoke perfectionistic expectations, which can also hinder the learning process as the adolescent may fear imperfection.

Worrying about receiving poor grades can cause stress, which in turn can affect the ability to absorb information.

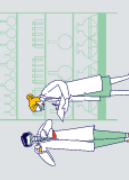
Younger adolescents who experience anxiety when learning English have difficulty with memorization. Anxiety can affect the ability to memorize new words, phrases, and grammatical rules, slowing down the process of learning.

In older adolescents, anxiety can lead to overestimating one's own performance and creating excessive expectations, creating additional pressure.

High school students dealing with anxiety have difficulty mastering more complex grammatical concepts and vocabulary.

The ability to effectively manage stress and anxiety plays an important role in successful language learning, as stress can slow cognitive processes.

In the field of psychology that utilizes cognitive processes in language learning, an outstanding figure is represented by L. Vygotsky. A Soviet psychologist and educator, his contributions to understanding the development of human thinking, including language thinking, have had a significant impact. In the context of foreign language learning, Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the importance of sociocultural interaction and communication for the development of language skills. He emphasizing the role of social interaction and influence in the process of formation of higher mental functions, including language abilities, psychological problems in learning a foreign language are studied within the framework of the theory and methodology of teaching by I.A. Zimnyaya (1991), G.A. Kitaygrodsckaya and other authors. Irina Aleksandrovna Zimnya in her book "Psychology of teaching foreign languages at school" considers issues related to psychological aspects of foreign language learning. She analyzes the mechanisms of language acquisition, the impact of various factors on the learning process and the formation of motivation in students. In addition, the author considers the influence of students' psychological abilities on the success of learning a foreign language in the school environment. In her work, I.A. Zimnyaya also touches upon the issues of individualization of learning, emphasizing the importance of taking into account differences in learning styles. She considers methods of stimulating interest in language learning, as well as strategies for overcoming difficulties that students may encounter.



G.A.Kitaygorodskaya, a Russian linguist and methodologist, put forward several basic postulates in the field of foreign language learning:

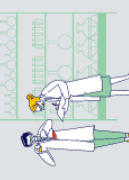
- 1)Communicative approach-emphasis is placed on the development of communicative skills, the ability to use language for effective communication.
- 2)Naturalness-supporting natural language development, paying attention to the context in which the language is used.
- 3)Psychological adaptation-learning should be combined with the student's psychological readiness to learn a new language, creating a favorable psychological environment.
- 4)Creative method: Stimulation of creative approach to language use, development of linguistic sense. These postulates of G.A. Kitaygorodskaya emphasize the importance of active communication and natural, creative approach in the process of teaching foreign languages.

The study highlights that anxiety can have a negative impact on attention processes, memory, and general negativity in foreign language learning. It is also worth paying attention to the fact that younger and older adolescents may have special difficulties related to the transition from childish to adult ways of thinking, which may exacerbate problems in learning English.

It is important to emphasize the rash of individualized instruction, taking into account the psychological characteristics of each student. Research cautions against neglecting the emotional aspects of learning and emphasizes the need to create a supportive environment for adolescents, especially given their sensitivity to stress and anxiety during adolescent development.

S.Y.Rubinstein, in his works touching upon the psychology of learning and the peculiarities of mental processes under conditions of stress and anxiety. He emphasized the relationship between mental processes and environmental conditions. He described anxiety and its effects on cognitive functions such as attention, memory, and problem solving. Rubenstein emphasized the importance of studying human behavior in specific contexts and conditions, including anxiety situations, to understand how mental processes adapt to different influences. Social anxiety is a significant problem in the context of English language learning among younger and older adolescents. This mental insecurity in social interactions can have a significant impact on the learning process, affecting students' motivation, engagement, and psychological well-being. Factors that are particularly problematic for adolescents are identified, including sociocultural differences, fear of peer evaluation, and negative perceptions of one's own language abilities. These aspects of social anxiety can create barriers to successful English language acquisition and confidence building. Within the study, during effective support strategies, mitigating the impact of social anxiety on the learning process is conducted. Understanding these strategies can be a key element in developing more effective programs and approaches to English language learning that take into account the psychological characteristics of adolescents.

The problem of social anxiety in English language learning of junior and senior adolescents can be revealed through various attributes and research methods. Some of them such as, questionnaires and surveys-using questionnaires aimed at identifying the level of anxiety and identifying specific situations related to English language learning that cause anxiety.



This is what American psychologist David C. Barlow says about anxiety and worry in a book that was published decades ago, "Without anxiety, little would be accomplished." Athletes, artists, performers, craftsmen and students would suffer; creativity would diminish; crops could not be planted. In its attachment theory goes informing about promoting parents to reduce anxiety and build resilience and how to cope with their children without applying hyper-parenting and allowing children to go out into the world, to learn the skill of protection, even when they fail they will be able to return to the family for support. Thus, this teaches children to cope with stress, thereby reducing anxiety when faced with stressful situations. Behavioral observation, i.e. monitoring of behavioral manifestations of social anxiety in the learning environment reveals avoidance of communication, shyness when expressing an opinion or participating in group tasks.

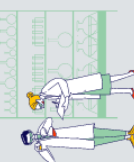
Also, in determining social anxiety and fear of failure, interviews are conducted with adolescents to gain a deeper understanding of their personal experiences, fears and feelings about learning English and social interactions in the context of learning. In their research A.M. La Gresa and N. Lopez determine that the manifestation of depression and social anxiety are necessary in the study of early adolescence and as a consequence there is a desire for negative influence during this period of influence due to the relevant hypersensitivity and susceptibility of the mental phenomenon of adolescents, which negatively affects their psychosocial functioning and can be levers of depressive disorder in older adolescence. Researchers in their works focus on the fact that high social anxiety causes a huge layer of obstacles to the successful social adaptation of the individual: a negative impact on success in learning, performance of the sphere of activity, performance and diversity of interactions, as well as personal and in extremely pronounced signs can cause isolation from society and incapacity of the subject.

The peculiarities of anxiety in learning English in adolescents of younger and older age highlight the following aspects, one of which is adolescents of younger age (11-14 years old). In this age category, possible problems are related to adaptation in the new structure of learning and the level of complexity of the language, including emotional instability and the desire to meet the expectations of others.

In younger adolescents, there is a lack of experience with independent learning and the development of motivation.

Older adolescents (15-18 years old) may have difficulties due to the pressure of the educational system and exam preparation. The effectiveness of language learning in older adolescents is influenced by individual perceptual characteristics and more complex social relationships and the desire for professional identification.

The common factors of anxiety in learning English among younger and older adolescents are sociocultural differences that affect motivation and interest in learning English. Family environment and educational practices reflect the formation of language skills and anxiety level. The peculiarity of anxiety happens to be the relationship between the psychological characteristics of adolescents and their success in language learning. Anxiety itself as a key factor is the distinction between normal anxiety associated with learning and pathological



anxiety that interferes with the effective learning of the material, and the role of teachers and family is to create a supportive environment and reduce anxiety in adolescents. Such a comprehensive approach as the development and testing of methods to identify the level of anxiety in adolescents learning English, as well as the analysis of the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies and programs aimed at reducing anxiety and increasing motivation allows us to consider the problem of anxiety in learning English, taking into account the differences in the age of adolescents. More appropriate pedagogical strategies for younger adolescents (11-14 years old) are interactive teaching methods - introducing game elements and interesting tasks to create a positive learning experience and the use of technology, multimedia resources and interactive applications. The individualized approach creates adaptation of the curriculum to the level of language competence of each student. Continuous monitoring by the teacher allows the methodology to be adjusted according to needs. The pedagogical skill of creating a supportive environment develops a trusting relationship between teacher and students and organizes group work to support mutual understanding and social integration.

An educator who uses a project-based strategy for older adolescents (15-18 years old) that incorporates project-based tasks related to real-life areas that increase motivation: it also encourages independent information-seeking and problem-solving. The use of teaching materials that reflect the interests and needs of adolescents, which enhances their motivation to learn the language, as well as the involvement of external resources such as virtual excursions or communication with native speakers have a connection with real needs. Skillful pedagogical support builds a clear self-esteem and understanding of the adolescents' own successes, and finally teaches methods of self-regulation of stress and anxiety in the learning process.

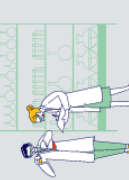
General programs for adolescents are recommended, such as:

1. Intercultural exchange courses - presenting opportunities to interact with native speakers and immerse themselves in the English environment and develop intercultural competence and increase their comfort level in communicating in English.
2. Mentoring support - organizing a mentoring system where experienced learners can help newcomers in language acquisition, support by mentors in solving problems and overcoming difficulties.

These strategies and programs are aimed at creating a favorable educational environment that stimulates motivation and reduces anxiety in adolescents in the process of learning English.

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