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COMMUNICATION APPREHENSION AMONG SENIOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SERBIA

ABSTRACT: The primary aim of this research is to examine to what degree communication apprehension is present among senior elementary school students and to investigate whether levels of communication apprehension as reported by participants differ along various external and internal factors. A total of 267 participants attending the fifth, sixth and seventh grades of elementary school took part in the research. Communication apprehension was investigated with an 8-item foreign language communication apprehension scale and additional background questions concerning one internal and six external factors. The findings suggest that communication apprehension exists among elementary school students to a moderate degree and that there are statistically significant differences in terms of gender, final grade in English, final average grade, attending private lessons and a perceived importance of learning English.

Key words: communication apprehension, English language, elementary school, students, private lessons, gender.

ANKSIOZNOST PRI USMENOM KOMUNICIRANJU KOD STARIJIH UČENIKA OSNOVNIH ŠKOLA U SRBIJI

APSTRAKT: Ovo istraživanje ima za cilj da ispita u kom je stepenu anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju prisutna kod starijih učenika osnovnih škola, kao i da ustanovi da li se nivoi anksioznosti pri usmenom komuniciranju razlikuju kad su u pitanju različiti eksterni i interni faktori. Ukupno 267 učenika petog, šestog i sedmog razreda osnovne škole učestvovalo je u istraživanju zasnovanom na upitniku koji sadrži skalu anksioznosti pri usmenom komuniciranju od osam pitanja i dodatnih pitanja koja se odnose na šest eksternih i jedan interni faktor. Rezultati upućuju na zaključak da anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju postoji kod starijih učenika u osnovnoj školi u umerenom stepenu, kao i da postoje statistički značajne razlike kod faktora pola, zaključne ocene iz engleskog, konačnog proseka, činjenice da idu na privatne časove ili ne, kao i uverenja da je učenje engleskog jezika bitno.

Ključne reči: anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju, engleski jezik, osnovna škola, učenici, privatni časovi, pol.

1. INTRODUCTION

The topic of anxiety among foreign language learners has been addressed and examined in various contexts, on different respondents, in different situations as well as by different methods by many researchers over the last fifty years (e.g. see Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986; Luo 2014; MacIntyre 1995; Mihaljević Djigunović 2002; Suzić 2015; Young 1991; Woodrow 2006), who agree that anxiety is a factor that greatly influences the behaviour and performance of individuals in the foreign language classroom. However, Horwitz et al. determined that communicating orally in a foreign language is the activity that causes the most anxiety in students (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986: 132). This feeling, also known as communication apprehension, can hinder the production of language and is detrimental to the feeling of self-confidence, even when a person is very confident in their overall knowledge. It is a pattern of anxiety which can profoundly affect much or all of students' oral communication, social skills and self-esteem. Given that most research in this area has been conducted on adult learners or older students (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986; Luo 2014; McCroskey 1984; von Würde 2003; Woodrow 2006), in this paper we intend to investigate how children in senior grades of elementary school cope with communication apprehension at a time when they also enter puberty, deal with peer pressure, pressure from parents and teachers, and society in general, without having developed mechanisms for dealing with communication apprehension that such pressure can produce.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Foreign language anxiety has been an area of interest of a large number of psychologists and linguists for a long time because it can often be a traumatic experience for foreign language students (Suzić 2015: 47). According to MacIntyre and Gardner (1994: 284), it is a state of tension and fear that is associated with the process of foreign language acquisition which involves the development of all language skills and many additional aspects of language such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Lesse (1970) defines anxiety as a cognitive and affective reaction characterized by fear of an impending, potentially negative outcome that a person thinks is impossible to prevent. The person may or may not be aware of the source of fear and whether the impending threat is real or imaginary (Schlenker and Leary 1982: 642). Consequently, Eysenck (1979: 364)

remarks that “worrying and other task-irrelevant cognitive activities associated with anxiety always impair the quality of performance”.

Language anxiety is not only related to cognitive processes, it also affects many other aspects of foreign language learning and use, so some researchers (e.g. Crookall and Oxford 1991) believe that high language anxiety can cause problems with self-confidence, self-esteem and willingness to take risks and thus prevents successful language learning (von Wörde 2003: 1). In many cases students are not even aware of language anxiety and sometimes they are unsure of their feelings, but are still aware of the existence of a general feeling of discomfort (von Wörde 2003: 4). Therefore, it can be concluded that language anxiety is manifested through four components, namely physical, behavioural, emotional and cognitive, with the first two being the easiest to notice. Their recognition and identification is crucial in facilitating the process of learning a foreign language for an anxious student (Mihaljević Djigunović 2002: 18). The latter two, on the other hand, have a detrimental effect on foreign language learning since negative emotional states such as worry cause negative cognitive reactions like self-belittling thoughts or task-irrelevant thoughts (Zeidner 1998) and together they directly impact the task that students have before them. This in many instances is best seen in oral communication in the foreign language, which requires the learner to do several different things simultaneously – plan speech, construct a sentence in the foreign language, remember the words needed for sentence construction, use adequate grammar, pay attention to their interlocutor, their reactions and body language, all the while being self-conscious about how others evaluate their speech in the foreign language. Having in mind that all speakers have a cognitive ceiling which defines how much they can process at a certain moment, the experience of speaking in a foreign language can be quite overwhelming and often difficult to cope with, leading to the negative affective state of anxiety.

For almost four decades researchers dealing with communication have focused their attention on how a feeling of anxiety in communication, also known as communication apprehension, affects overall behaviour in that situation. It is far more than the initial stage fright frequently found in classrooms during various speaking exercises, school assemblies, and drama productions. It can be defined as an “individual’s level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons” (McCroskey 1982: 137). Communication apprehension, thus, most often occurs in three situations: when using the mother tongue (L1), when using a foreign language (L2) and finally, when using both languages. It has been confirmed that people who are usually

talkative and unrestrained in the use of their mother tongue can become shy, embarrassed or silent when they need to use a foreign language. Also, the opposite situation is possible – someone can experience insecurity and inhibition when using the mother tongue but feel completely relaxed when using a foreign language because of the feeling that someone else is speaking through them. This phenomenon can be compared to and explained through a situation in which someone who stutters while speaking does not have that problem when singing or acting (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986: 127).

Communication apprehension is also said to be situational rather than pervasive in a child's behaviour. "A tendency to be anxious when communicating may be specific to only a few settings (e.g., public speaking) or may exist in most everyday communication situations, or may even be part of a general anxiety trait that arises in many facets of an individual's life" (Friedman 1980: 6). Much research has dealt with communication apprehension in terms of a personality trait, but later the model of communication apprehension has expanded to include both trait and situation views (McCroskey 1977).

Although the causes of communication apprehension cannot be precisely determined or fully enumerated, what some authors (e.g. McCroskey 1977; Wheelless 1971) believe is that they stem from the early childhood (McCroskey 1977: 85). Richmond and McCroskey (1998: 49-50) believe that the reason for this type of anxiety lies in biological and environmental factors and that reward and punishment, as well as imitation of parental communication, are of great importance for the development of communication apprehension. Some of the external factors that can also be the cause of communication apprehension are gender, low self-esteem, motivation, attitudes, negative experiences, student beliefs, class activities, etc.

There are three general theoretical assumptions which are the basis of most studies about communication apprehension (McCroskey 1977). The first is that people who experience a high level of communication apprehension will try to avoid communication whenever possible, as well as withdraw from it. The second is that, as a consequence of such avoidance or withdrawal and, thus, inaccessibility, a person will experience negative consequences on their economic, academic, political and social life. The third theoretical assumption is that a person with a high level of communication apprehension, due to avoidance and withdrawal, will be seen by the environment in a more negative context than a person who does not exhibit such behaviour (McCroskey 1977: 85). These three theoretical assumptions will in most cases manifest themselves in three ways: communication avoidance,

withdrawal from communication and communication disruption (McCroskey 1977: 85; McCroskey and Richmond 1987: 149; Suzić 2015: 42-43). The fourth way in which communication apprehension can manifest itself is excessive communication in which a person tries to cope with excessive anxiety and achieve their communication goal in spite of that. People who communicate excessively in stressful situations are described by others as poor interlocutors (Suzić 2015: 43).

Therefore, difficulties in communicating in front of large groups or during public speaking, as well as difficulties in receiving or understanding a spoken message are all manifestations of communication apprehension. People who have already experienced these problems are likely to feel much more anxious in a foreign language class where they have almost no control over the communication situation and where what they say is evaluated (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986: 127). Therefore, it is important to pay attention to how communication apprehension reflects on the overall atmosphere and the individuals in the classroom during a foreign language class and this is especially relevant when teenagers are concerned because in this period of their life they develop a sense of self, struggle with insecurities and feelings of being judged, and are overall concerned with their public image.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The main goal of this paper is to determine to what extent communication apprehension is present among senior elementary school students and how it differs along particular external and internal factors such as the students' gender, their final grade in English at the end of the first semester and at the end of the year, their final average grade at the end of the year, whether they attend private classes and their perceived importance of learning English as a foreign language. With this in mind, we set the following hypotheses:

H1: Senior elementary school students experience a medium level of communication apprehension.

H2: Boys are less anxious than girls.

H3: Students with higher final grades in English are less anxious.

H4: Students with higher final average grades are less anxious.

H5: Students who attend private lessons are less anxious.

H6: Students who have higher perception of the importance of English are less anxious.

The instrument used for the purpose of this research comprises a five-point Likert communication apprehension scale developed by Luo (2014: 108) and

translated into Serbian by the author, which is preceded by a set of questions that aim to yield data about the informants concerning external and internal factors which may differ in terms of communication apprehension. In the paper the obtained data are presented in frequency and percentage and the level of communication apprehension in the classroom situation is determined with the mean value and standard deviation. In addition, the interplay of internal and external factors and the level of communication apprehension is tested with a t-test and an analysis of variance (ANOVA).

As for the participants, a total of N=267 students attending the fifth, sixth and seventh grades¹ of an elementary school in Serbia participated in the research in May 2022 after their parents or legal guardians signed an informed consent form. The research included students of both genders and different socio-economic statuses. A total number of fifth grade students was N=104 (39.0%), of sixth grade students was N=89 (33.3%), and of seventh grade students was N=74 (27.7%). Regarding gender, there are N=125 (46.8%) boys and N=142 (53.2%) girls. When it comes to the final average grade, N=3 (1.1%) respondents did not have the passing grade (i.e. they were failing the school year), N=5 (1.9%) passed with sufficient (2), N=15 (5.6%) with good (3), N=99 (37.1%) respondents passed with very good (4), and finally, more than half of the students or N=145 (54.3%) ended the school year with excellent (5). N=153 (57.3%) students never attended private classes in English, while N=114 (42.7%) reported attending private classes outside school. The internal factor which refers to the perceived importance and usefulness of learning English as a foreign language in school was also examined and the results show that N=14 students (5.2%) believe that it is not important to learn English and do not see any benefit in that, while N=253 of them (94.8%) recognise the importance of learning English.

4. RESULTS

The results of this research will be presented in two sections. The first will show the levels of communication apprehension among the fifth, sixth and seventh graders of elementary school in the classroom situation relying on descriptive statistics of the scale. This is followed by the second section, which examines how

¹ Since the research was conducted in late May eighth grade students were unavailable because they were preparing for their final exam.

communication apprehension differs in terms of external and internal factors by using several statistical tests (t-test, ANOVA, and Tukey's post-hoc test).

4.1. Communication apprehension in the classroom situation

The analysis in this section is based on the data from the scale that comprises eight statements related to communication apprehension in the classroom situation, which the respondents ranked using a five-point Likert scale (one question was negatively coded). By analysing the respondents' answers, we found that the mean value of the anxiety coefficient is $M=20.07$ (the anxiety coefficient ranges from 8 to 40), with the standard deviation being $SD=7.45$. When the value of standard deviation is added to and subtracted from the mean, it provides a range for medium-level anxiety, which in this case is 13-27, which means that all results below 13 indicate low anxiety and those above 27 indicate high anxiety. With this in mind, low-level anxiety was found among $N=46$ (17.23%) respondents, $N=170$ (63.67%) respondents reported to be moderately anxious, while $N=51$ (19.10%) of them were highly anxious, which confirms the first hypothesis.

In order to determine which situations in the classroom contribute the most to the occurrence of communication apprehension among the respondents, the mean values and standard deviation for each of the situations from the questionnaire are presented below. If the five-point Likert scale used in this study is divided by three (low, medium and high communication apprehension), we get three ranges, where values 1-2.3 represent a low level of communication apprehension, values 2.4-3.7 indicate a moderate presence, while values 3.8-5 represent a very noticeable presence of communication apprehension in a given situation. Situations in which moderate or high anxiety was determined are marked in bold letters (see Table 1).

	strongly disagree	disagree	neutral	agree	strongly agree	Mean	SD
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)		
1. I panic when I have to speak in English without having time to prepare an answer.	97 (36%)	46 (17%)	41 (15%)	55 (21%)	28 (10%)	2.52	1.42
2. I am embarrassed to volunteer in an English class to give an answer to a question.	173 (65%)	37 (14%)	28 (10%)	15 (6%)	14 (5%)	1.73	1.17
3. I feel my heart pounding when I know I will be called out in English class.	133 (50%)	46 (17%)	24 (9%)	31 (12%)	33 (12%)	2.19	1.46
4. I get nervous and confused when I speak in English class.	131 (49%)	49 (18%)	28 (10%)	32 (12%)	27 (10%)	2.16	1.40
5. I'm afraid that my classmates will laugh when I speak in English.	149 (56%)	27 (10%)	19 (7%)	22 (8%)	50 (19%)	2.24	1.61
6. I feel confident when I speak English during class.	110 (41%)	54 (20%)	33 (12%)	37 (14%)	33 (12%)	2.36	1.44
7. I always have the impression that others in the class speak English better than I do.	84 (31%)	48 (18%)	52 (19%)	34 (13%)	49 (18%)	2.69	1.49
8. When I speak English in front of the class, I am very aware that I speak a foreign language.	17 (6%)	15 (6%)	27 (10%)	50 (19%)	158 (59%)	4.19	1.21

Table 1. Adapted scale for measuring communication apprehension in classroom situation

As can be seen Table 1, most respondents feel a slight presence of anxiety in situations when they need to communicate in English in class. What is important

to note here is that in situations 1, 7 and 8 the respondents report moderate or high presence of communication apprehension, i.e. they feel anxious to a greater extent when they need to speak in English without having previously prepared an answer, they always have the impression that others in the class speak English better than they do, and finally, they are very aware of the fact that they are communicating in a foreign language before their classmates.

When it comes to fifth grade respondents, the situations in which they feel the most anxious are situations 1 (M=2.70, SD=1.49), 5 (M=2.59, SD=1.71), 7 (M=2.86, SD=1.53) and 8 (M=4.19, SD=1.29). An interesting fact is that in the fifth grade the average values for almost every statement are on the dividing line between low and moderate anxiety, except for situation number 2 (M=1.84, SD=1.26), in which students show no anxiety when they need to volunteer to give an answer to a question.

The situation is somewhat different with sixth grade students. The respondents feel most anxious in situations 1 (M=2.56, SD=1.41), 7 (M=2.55, SD=1.45) and 8 (M=4.04, SD=1.17), that is, when they need to speak without prior preparation, when they have the impression that others are better at speaking than they are, and when they are aware that others evaluate them while speaking in a foreign language. So, unlike fifth graders, sixth graders are not afraid that their classmates will laugh at them while they speak, but they are also on the verge of becoming moderately anxious regarding the confidence in their own speaking skills.

When it comes to seventh grade students, they feel moderate anxiety in situation 7 (M=2.59, SD=1.46), when they think others speak English better than they do, and high anxiety in situation 8 (M=4.35, SD=1.13), when they are aware that others judge them as they speak a foreign language.

Another significant fact is that the mean value of communication apprehension in relation to the classes was the highest for the fifth grade (see Table 2).

Grade	N	Mean
5 th grade	104	21.48
6 th grade	89	19.84
7 th grade	74	18.35
Total	267	20.07

Table 2. Mean value of the CA coefficient in relation to the class

After the descriptive analysis of the communication apprehension scale, we are going to focus on factors along which the degree of communication apprehension may differ and see when these differences are statistically significant.

4.2. Communication apprehension in relation to external and internal factors

The difference between boys and girls in terms of the level of communication apprehension was analysed in a t-test, which proved to be statistically significant ($t=-2.77$, $p=.006$). The comparison of mean values unequivocally shows that girls feel a higher degree of anxiety than boys, which also confirms the second hypothesis.

In order to test the third hypothesis, we used ANOVA to find out if there are any significant differences among students in terms of the grade in English at the end of the first semester and at the end of the school year. When it comes to the English grade in the first semester the differences among students are statistically significant ($F=29.986$, $p=.000$). The data was further analysed by Tukey's post-hoc test and it was shown that those respondents who have grade 5 in English at the end of the semester are more anxious than their peers with lower grades. In addition to this, another statistically significant result is the one regarding the final grade in English ($F=32.981$, $p=.000$), where further analysis with Tukey's post-hoc test again showed that students with the final grade 5 feel a higher degree of communication apprehension in comparison to students with lower grades. This in turn means that our third hypothesis is rejected because the students with the highest grades in English are more anxious than their peers with lower grades.

Another ANOVA established that there are some significant differences among students in terms of the final average grade when it comes to communication apprehension ($F=4.649$, $p=.001$) and a further post-hoc analysis confirmed that students with grade 4 at the end of the year experience communication apprehension at a greater level than students whose final average grade is 5, which means that our fourth hypothesis must be rejected.

Another statistically significant difference in the level of communication apprehension established by a t-test refers to students who do or do not attend private classes. Based on the obtained results ($t=2.20$, $p=.028$) and the comparison of mean values, we can conclude that students who attend private English classes are less anxious when communicating in the classroom situation ($M=18.91$, $SD=7.19$) than students who do not attend private classes ($M=20.93$, $SD=7.54$), which in turn confirms our fifth hypothesis.

Finally, the difference in the level of communication apprehension between students who perceive English as an important subject and those who do not also proved to be statistically significant ($t=2.46$, $p=.015$). The results of a t-test clearly show that respondents who consider it important and useful to learn English in school have a lower level of communication apprehension ($M=19.81$, $SD=7.33$) than students who do not attribute importance to learning a foreign language ($M=24.79$, $SD=8.36$), which consequently confirms our sixth hypothesis.

5. DISCUSSION

The research based on Luo's (2014) scale of communication apprehension intended to determine the level of foreign language communication apprehension among senior students in primary school. The results indicate that the majority of students from the sample report moderate levels of communication apprehension, which corresponds to the results obtained by Luo (2014) and Suzić (2015). The mean values of individual items from the questionnaire provide an insight into which of the mentioned situations provoke communication apprehension the most. Generally speaking, most of the respondents report feeling somewhat anxious when they need to communicate in class without preparation and when they compare themselves with other students, while the awareness that they speak in a foreign language has the highest score in the questionnaire. Similar results were obtained by Luo (2014: 108-109), in whose study the largest number of respondents (45.2%) stated that they feel highly anxious when they need to give an answer without preparation and that they think that others speak foreign language better than them (44.7%), thus indicating respondents' generally low self-confidence. A certain percentage of respondents (35%) stated that they are aware of speaking a foreign language in front of their classmates, which indicates that they care about their peers' opinion about them. The results of this research also coincide with the results obtained by Horwitz et al. (1986), in whose research almost half of the respondents (49%) reported feeling anxious when they need to speak without prior preparation, while 28% said they are anxious in situation number 8 (*When I speak English in front of the class, I am very aware that I speak a foreign language*), which shows that anxious students feel significant tension when they risk "revealing" themselves in front of others when speaking in a foreign language (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986: 129). As for situation number 7, 31% of respondents think that others speak English better than themselves. When it comes to the research conducted by Suzić (2015: 113-115), also with

elementary school students, the obtained results coincide with the results of this research in situations 1 and 7.

After examining the communication apprehension levels in the classroom situation, we looked into how communication apprehension differs in terms of several external and internal factors. The first task of the research was to examine whether communication apprehension differs among boys and girls in the sample and it was concluded that females are statistically more anxious than males. Luo (2014) reached the same results with her respondents, while Suzić (2015) did not notice any significant difference in communication apprehension level in regard to gender. Generally, the higher level of anxiety among female participants has been established in various studies and is explained by social factors and different upbringing.

The next task of the research was to determine whether students with a higher grade in English in the end of the first semester and the end of the year also experience higher levels of communication apprehension. The analysis of the data led to the conclusion that the respondents with grade 5 in English (at the end of the first semester and at the end of the year) are the most anxious. This can be explained by the presence of fear that grades achieved in the first semester will be expected (by parents mostly) at the end of the year as well, making the pressure higher. In this regard, Suzić (2015: 128) said that students, especially younger ones, are afraid that their wrong answer or unannounced test could affect their success, which explains the fact that students with better grades have a tendency to experience a higher level of communication apprehension.

Another research task was to determine how the end of the year grade affects communication apprehension and the conclusion was that those respondents with the average final grade of 4 are more anxious in communication than students with grade 5. Such results may be explained by the desire of students to improve their grades and achieve excellent results by the end of the school year, which might increase the level of communication apprehension they experience due their expectations and stress.

The next research task referred to investigating the differences in communication apprehension between students who attend private classes and those who do not. The results show that respondents who attend private English classes experience a lower degree of communication apprehension in a classroom situation. Given that Suzić (2015: 123-124) came to the same results, it can be argued with greater certainty that additional exposure to language reduces the degree of anxiety in elementary school students and that an individualized

approach gets better results, not just in terms of greater language competence, but also in terms of lower anxiety.

The last point in this research examines the differences in communication apprehension between students who perceive English as an important language and those who do not. As expected, students who think that it is useful and important to learn English a foreign language also feel less anxious than those who think that it is irrelevant to learn a foreign language at school. Therefore, students with a positive attitude towards the subject matter see the purpose in the effort they have to invest, which coincides with progress and success in learning the target language. What we can also see here is a possible connection with intrinsic motivation to learn the foreign language, which has been confirmed by many researchers (Dörnyei 2001; Gardner 1985; Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986; Khodadady and Khajavy 2013; MacIntyre and Gardner 1989), but this line of research was not pursued in this paper.

6. CONCLUSION

The hypothesis that communication apprehension is present to a moderate degree among senior elementary school students when communicating in English as a foreign language was confirmed in a quantitative analysis of the customized version of Luo's (2014) foreign language communication apprehension scale. This analysis was supplemented by the analysis of external factors related to gender, grade in English at the end of the first semester and at the end of the year, the final average grade and attending private lessons, while the internal factor in the analysis referred to the students' perceived importance of learning English as a foreign language at school. These factors showed the presence of statistically significant differences in each of the factors in terms of the degree of communication apprehension. Important conclusions are that female students are more anxious than male students, which implies that teachers should take into account the emotional reactions of the female part of the class and try their best to empower female students and raise their confidence. Also, the analysis showed that students who attend private English classes experience a lower level of communication apprehension, which means that a more individualized approach to foreign language learning yields better results and lower anxiety. A solution for all students in the state school system lies in extra-curricular activities which can be held in English (drama club, reading club, movie club) and which would contribute to increased exposure to the English language outside the classroom situation in a relaxed atmosphere. Teachers could also additionally motivate students by

assigning projects or research topics that interest them, with the purpose of praising students' effort in the classroom situation. In that way students might feel more confident and relaxed in front of their classmates. Radić-Bojanić and Topalov (2014: 40) also suggest the use of games to complement traditional teaching methods and develop a positive attitude towards learning and using a foreign language. This, among other things, lowers the affective filter and, therefore, lowers the level of communication apprehension in classroom situation. In addition to that, it is very important to work with authentic materials that imply creative, i.e. natural use of language.

Considering that this paper relied on the quantitative approach to the problem, one of the proposals for further research would be to confirm the obtained results and supplement them with a qualitative approach through a direct conversation with the respondents, i.e. interviews or direct observations of classroom events (cf. Suzić 2017). This would give an important insight into what would be the most effective ways and techniques that students could apply in order to reduce foreign language communication apprehension in the classroom situation, thus making the process of learning the foreign language simpler, more fruitful and more enjoyable.

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ANKSIOZNOST PRI USMENOM KOMUNICIRANJU KOD STARIJIH UČENIKA OSNOVNIH ŠKOLA U SRBIJI

Sažetak

Ovo istraživanje ima za cilj da ispita u kom je stepenu anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju prisutna kod starijih učenika osnovnih škola, kao i da ustanovi da li se nivoi anksioznosti pri usmenom komuniciranju razlikuju u zavisnosti od različitih eksternih i internih faktora. Ukupno 267 učenika petog, šestog i sedmog razreda osnovne škole učestvovalo je u istraživanju zasnovanom na upitniku koji sadrži skalu anksioznosti pri usmenom komuniciranju od osam pitanja i dodatnih pitanja koja se odnose na šest eksternih i jedan interni faktor. Rezultati upućuju na zaključak da anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju postoji kod starijih učenika u osnovnoj školi u umerenom stepenu, kao i da postoje statistički značajne razlike kod svih ispitivanih faktora. Utvrđeno je da su devojčice anksioznije od dečaka, što je potvrđeno i ranijim istraživanjima i objašnjava se raznim socijalnim faktorima prisutnima tokom vaspitanja koje se razlikuje kod devojčica i dečaka. Takođe je utvrđeno da učenici koji imaju zaključenu peticu iz engleskog prijavljuju viši stepen anksioznosti, što je verovatno uzrokovano pritiskom okoline da se održi visok prosek i dobije odlična ocena iz stranog jezika. S druge strane, učenici koji imaju vrlodobar opšti prosek pokazuju statistički značajno višu anksioznost, što je posledica pritiska da postignu što bolji uspeh, jer im se ocene od šestog razreda nadalje računaju za upis u

srednju školu. S druge strane, učenici koji idu na privatne časove engleskog jezika pokazuju manju anksioznost, verovatno kao rezultat više kontakta sa stranim jezikom, časova koji su individualizovani, i više pripreme koja im omogućava da bolje utvrde svoje znanje. Naposljetku, učenici koji izražavaju uverenje da je učenje engleskog jezika bitno takođe prijavljuju niži stepen anksioznosti, što ukazuje na vezu sa količinom truda koji su spremni da ulože da bi učili engleski jezik. Na osnovu ovih rezultata mogu se formulisati smernice koje bi pomogle nastavnicima da smanje anksioznost kod učenika, a tiču se raznih vannastavnih aktivnosti, opuštenije atmosfere na času i usmerenosti ka učenju, a ne ka ocenama.

Ključne reči: anksioznost pri usmenom komuniciranju, engleski jezik, osnovna škola, učenici, privatni časovi, pol.

APPENDIX 1.

Upitnik

Ovaj upitnik će biti iskorišćen za istraživanje u naučnom radu i anonimnog je karaktera.

Zaokruži:

Pol: muški / ženski

Razred: 5 / 6 / 7

Opšti uspeh koji ću imati na kraju godine: nedovoljan / dovoljan / dobar / vrlo dobar / odličan

Ocena iz engleskog jezika koju sam imao/la na polugodištu: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Ocena iz engleskog jezika koju ću imati na kraju godine: 1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5

Idem na privatne časove engleskog jezika van škole: da / ne

Mislim da je važno i korisno učiti strani jezik u školi: da / ne

Pročitaj rečenice koje sadrže situacije date ispod, razmisli o njima i **zaokruži** broj koji najviše odgovara tome kako se osećaš u toj situaciji.

- 1 - Uopšte se ne slažem
- 2 - Ne slažem se
- 3 - Svejedno mi je
- 4 - Slažem se
- 5 - Potpuno se slažem

Situacija	1	2	3	4	5
1. Uhvati me panika kada treba da pričam na času engleskog jezika, a da prethodno nisam pripremio/-la odgovor.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sramota me je da se sam/-a javim na času engleskog jezika da dam odgovor na neko pitanje.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Osećam kako mi lupa srce kada znam da ću biti prozvan/-a na času engleskog jezika.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Postajem nervozan/-a i zbunjen/-a kada pričam na času engleskog jezika.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Plašim se da će mi se drugi iz razreda smeјati kada pričam na engleskom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Osećam se sigurnim/-om u sebe kada pričam na engleskom tokom časa.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Uvek imam utisak da drugi u razredu pričaju engleski jezik bolje nego ja.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Kada pričam engleski pred razredom vrlo sam svestan/-na toga da pričam na stranom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5

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