

Emotional Intelligence Training: Helping Non-Native Pre-Service EFL Teachers to Overcome Speaking Anxiety: The Case of Pre-Service Teachers of English, Algeria

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Abstract : Many EFL students with high capacities are hidden because they suffer from speaking anxiety (SA). Most of them find public speaking much demanding. They feel unable to communicate, they fear to make mistakes and they fear negative evaluation or being called on. With the growing number of the learners who suffer from foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA), it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore its harmful outcomes on their performance and success, especially during their first contact with the pupils, as they will be teaching in the near future. Different researchers suggested different ways to minimize the negative effects of FLSA. The present study sheds light on emotional intelligence skills training as an effective strategy not only to influence public speaking success but also to help pre-service EFL teachers lessen their speaking anxiety and eventually to prepare them for their professional career. A quasi-experiment was used in order to examine the research hypothesis. We worked with two groups of third-year EFL students at Oum El Bouaghi University. The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) were used to collect data about the participants' FLSA and EI levels. The analysis of the data has yielded that the assumption that there is a negative correlation between EI and FLSA was statistically validated by the Pearson Correlation Test, concluding that, the more emotionally intelligent the individual is the less anxious s/he will be. In addition, the lack of amelioration in the results of the control group and the noteworthy improvement in the experimental group results led us to conclude that EI skills training was an effective strategy in minimizing the FLSA level and therefore, we confirmed our research hypothesis.

Keywords : emotional intelligence, emotional intelligence skills training, EQ-I, FLCAS, foreign language speaking anxiety, pre-service EFL teachers

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