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Challenges and strategies for creating an English-speaking classroom

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Luisa Buccella 2019



Overview

- Reticence – what does the research say?
- University of Adelaide ELC
- Survey results
- Challenges
- Strategies
- Summary
- References

Research

“Speech is not only a product of acquisition, but also a necessary precondition to it’

Baron – Lucarz (cited in Carter & Heinrichsen, 2015)

Research – Reticence

- Students are reluctant to engage in English – avoid interaction
- Performance anxiety
- Fear of losing face
- Proficiency in target language
- Previous experience
- Cultural beliefs about appropriate classroom behaviour
- Habits
- Lack of confidence
- Personality

Research –

- Create a

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Pre-Enrolment English Program (PEP)

The PEP course

- Pathway students
- English-speaking policy
- Course Progress Consultation grades – general speaking & IL
- Class norms

Challenges & Strategies Survey

Student perspective

Challenges and Strategies – Class survey

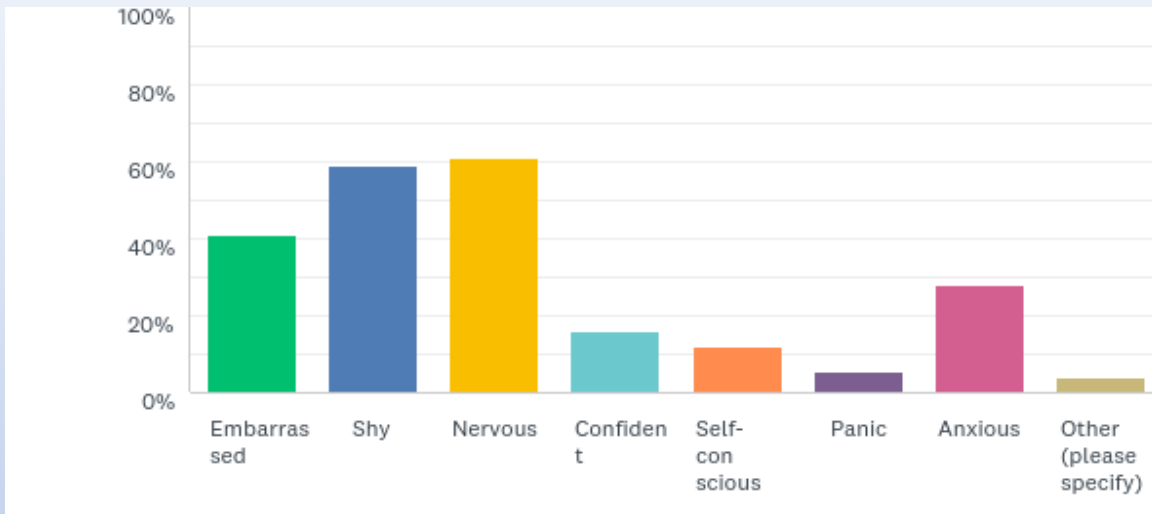
- Class discussion to explore the challenges faced by students & strategies they use
- Most effective classroom strategy- punishment or reward
- 16/17 prefer reward over punishment
- 14/17 punishment is highly effective

Challenges and Strategies

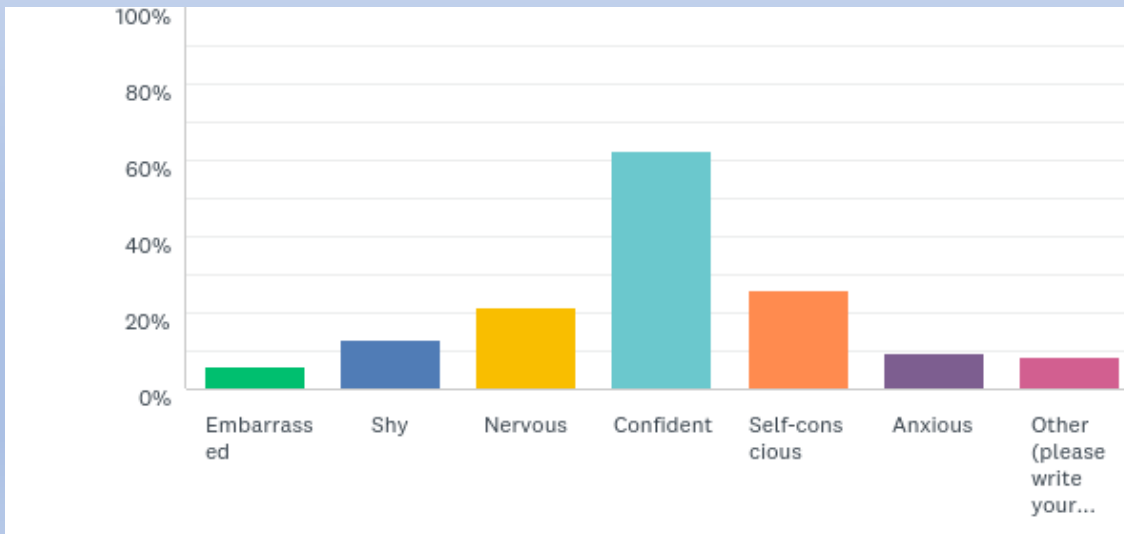
– PEP student survey

149 PEP students 6 questions

How students felt in week 1 when speaking English in class



How students felt after 7 weeks (average) when speaking English in class

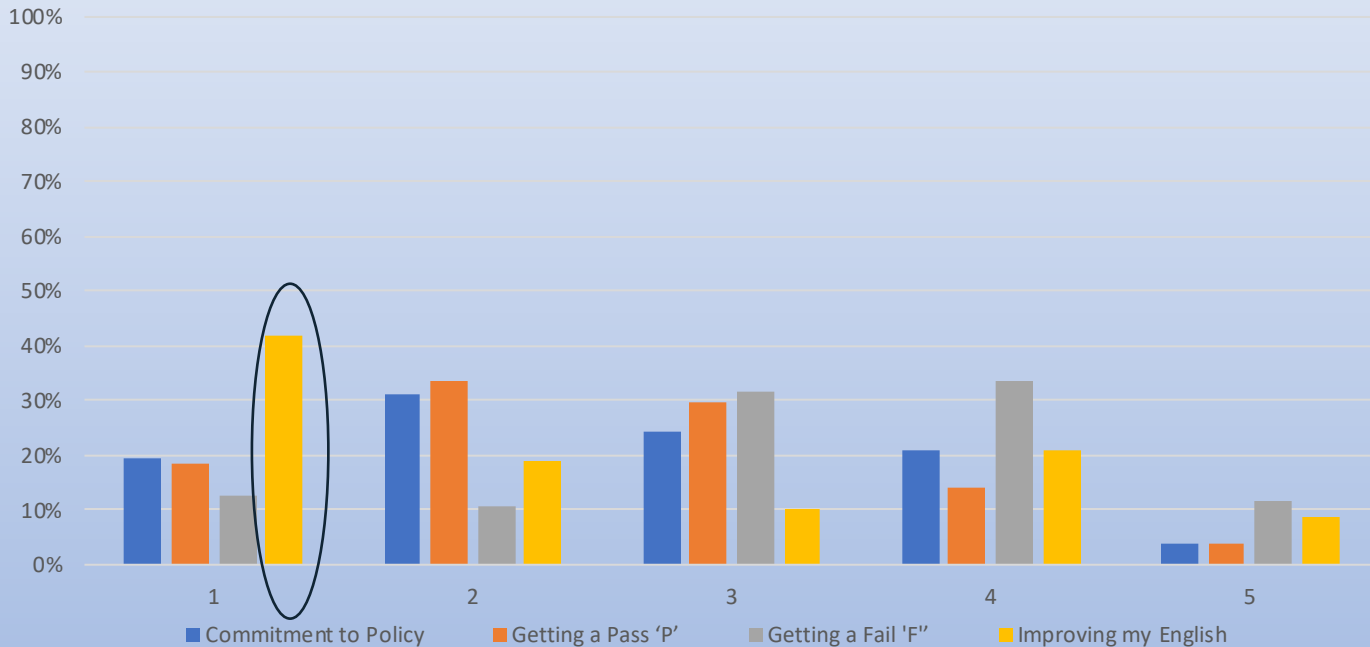


Results – student reasons for reticence

Students are more concerned about grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation than what their peers and teachers think about them

	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	SCORE
Grammar	28.19% 42	25.50% 38	26.85% 40	11.41% 17	8.05% 12	149	3.54
Vocabulary	34.23% 51	25.50% 38	14.09% 21	14.09% 21	12.08% 18	149	3.56
Pronunciation	17.45% 26	19.46% 29	32.21% 48	9.40% 14	21.48% 32	149	3.02
Being worried about what my classmates think of me	7.38% 11	16.78% 25	18.12% 27	28.19% 42	29.53% 44	149	2.44
Being worried about what my teachers think of me	12.75% 19	12.75% 19	8.72% 13	36.91% 55	28.86% 43	149	2.44

Motivators for speaking English in the classroom



Results – Student comments how they feel

Week 1

Normal

Cannot express clearly

Afraid error

A little bit hard

Hope to express myself but fear making mistakes

Excited

Week 7

More confident than before

It seems like I have more time to think when speaking English

Just a little nervous

OK

a little better

Much better

Relaxed

Better than before but still a little nervous

Afraid of making mistakes

Results – Student comments - what motivates them

- Improve English skill
- Improve my speaking skill
- Improve my oral speaking
- Improve my English skill in order to communicate with others
- Improve my oral English skill that can find me a good job in Australia
- I want to improve my oral English and communicate with local students
- I want to pass PEP and communicate easily so I always speak English in class.
- Pass the pep
- I think the most thing which motivates me most is the "P" in the final exam
- Communicate...

What are your main challenges?

5 minutes

What are your main challenges?

5 minutes

Challenges & Strategies

Teacher perspective

Survey

- 10 PEP teachers
- 2 open-ended questions

Challenges

- Monocultural classrooms
- Culture
- Fear and frustration
- Lack of awareness

What are your most effective strategies?

5 minutes

Strategies

- ELC English-speaking policy
- CPC grades
- Benefits
- Student responsibility

Summary

- **Challenges for both students and teachers**
- **Student and teacher perceptions may be different**
- **Policy is important**
- **Some strategies are more effective than others**
- **Creating a safe and supportive environment is essential**

References

Carter, SJ & Henrichesen, LE 2015 'Addressing reticence', *Journal of Adult Education* Vol 44, No 2, pp. 15-20.

Liu, M & Jackson, J 2019 'Reticence in Chinese EFL students at varied proficiency levels', *TESL Canada Journal* Vol 26, No 2, pp.65-80.



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