OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF SPEAKING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A STUDY OF THE ROLE THAT SELECTED HUMANISTIC TECHNIQUES PLAY IN REDUCING LANGUAGE ANXIETY ASSOCIATED WITH ORAL PERFORMANCE IN THE TESOL CLASSROOM

by

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Abstract

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Summary

The aim of this study was to investigate the role that humanistic techniques play in reducing feelings of language anxiety associated with oral communication in the TESOL classroom. Students in the experimental group attended classes which incorporated humanistic techniques such as journal writing and group work and where the affective needs of the students were taken into account. Students in the control group were provided with the normal course content along more traditional lines and their affective needs were not taken into account. Language anxiety was measured by means of questionnaires, journals and interviews. The results revealed that general feelings of anxiety about oral communication decreased in the experimental group. The experimental group achieved higher scores in the final written examination although there was no significant difference in the oral examination results between the two groups. The drop-out rate in the experimental group was lower than that of the control group.

Key Terms

English language teaching; TESOL; EFL; Foreign language anxiety; Test anxiety; Communication apprehension; Humanistic techniques; Group work; Journals; BALLI; FLAS

Student number: 800-540-0

Declaration

I declare that, OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF SPEAKING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A STUDY OF THE ROLE THAT SELECTED HUMANISTIC TECHNIQUES PLAY IN REDUCING LANGUAGE ANXIETY ASSOCIATED WITH ORAL PERFORMANCE IN THE TESOL CLASSROOM, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

……. ……

SIGNATURE DATE

(MS AD BOWEN)

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I would like to dedicate this dissertation to all the EFL students I have taught at Wits Language School and particularly to those who participated in this study.

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