

## Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Reduction through a Jigsaw Activity

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### Abstract

Language anxiety has been frequently reported as a universal challenge in EFL contexts. Studies in EFL learning and teaching have addressed the necessity of reducing students' anxiety in a foreign language class. This study aims to examine the anxiety levels of first-year non-English majors' students and to investigate the effects of a Jigsaw activity on their levels of speaking anxiety as well as their opinions about the use of a Jigsaw activity. Participants included thirty first-year Chinese students from a Primary Education department. The data were gathered by means of a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. Descriptive statistics were used to determine the level of anxiety. A paired-samples t-test was conducted to find the effects of a Jigsaw activity on students' speaking anxiety. The results revealed that a majority of students reported a high level of anxiety when speaking English in class. Students' anxiety has been reduced to a low level through the use of a Jigsaw activity. In addition, students expressed positive opinions about using a Jigsaw activity in an English-speaking class. Based on these findings, some pedagogical implications and suggestions for future research are proposed.

*Keywords:* Foreign language speaking, anxiety, Jigsaw activity, Chinese EFL students