

# An Introduction to English Language Teaching Second Year 2020-2021

Asst. Prof. Mahdi Alasadi

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Week 3:

Lecture 6:

- **Problems Faced by Teachers When Teaching English as Interaction**



## Problems Faced by Teachers When Teaching English as Interaction

EFL/ESL teachers face some problems that block them from teaching English as interaction among people. These problems are:

1. **The Bandwagon Problem:** This problem refers to the teacher's tendency to adopt the most up-to-date teaching methods, techniques, and materials. Bandwagons provide confidence, the company of others who believe in the same thing, and useful techniques. However, it is only problematic if teachers:

- cannot see beyond the "in way" of teaching,
- cannot the fact that bandwagons are other people's prescriptions
- if they blindly follow a certain way of teaching because it is said to be the best

Bandwagons do not liberate teachers to be able to make their own informed teaching decisions.

2. **The "overly anxious" problem:** Anxiety is defined as a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is associated with feelings of uneasiness, self-doubt, apprehension or worry. Below are some factors that could raise the level of anxiety:

- Inability to pronounce strange sounds and words,
- Not knowing the meanings of words or sentences,
- Inability to understand and answer questions,

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- Reputation of language class as a place for failure,
- Peer criticism,
- Not knowing or understanding course goals or requirements,
- Testing, especially oral testing,
- Previous unsuccessful language-learning attempts,
- Encountering different cultural values and behaviors.

High degrees of anxiety can weaken the students. However, there are things that can be done to reduce the students anxious feelings:

- Avoid criticism and show understanding. To do this, when a student expresses an idea, we can use an “understanding response” by really listening to the student and paraphrasing back to the student what he or she said. Such paraphrasing not only can provide a way to the student to reflect on his or her own language in a noncritical way but can also improve understanding.
- Have students write about their anxiety through the use of personal diaries.

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3. **The Engagement Problem:** Promoting interaction in the classroom governs that the teacher abandon being the center of the class. To do so, the teacher is required to yield to the students so that they feel free to interact with the teacher and with each other. However, this is not easy for teachers who haven't experienced interactive classrooms, because they are afraid of that their classes will be chaotic and out of control. Students who come from a language learning background that does not encourage interaction will hesitate to interact, afraid that things will become out of control and embarrassing.

To avoid this the teachers are required to provide the kind of atmosphere that is conducive to interaction. Teachers need to show emotional maturity, sensitivity to the students' feelings, and perceptiveness and commitment that interaction in English is not only appropriate but also expected and necessary for the students if they want to learn to communicate in English.