

FROM SILENCE TO SPEAKING: INVESTIGATING BARRIERS TO ESP ORAL PARTICIPATION IN ROMANIAN UNIVERSITIES

Norica Felicia BUCUR*

Cristina GHENUȚĂ**

Abstract

This study investigates the factors that inhibit university students' oral participation in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) speaking activities within Romanian higher education. Drawing on a five-dimensional framework (linguistic, cognitive, affective, pedagogical, and socio-cultural) the research explores how these interrelated variables shape classroom silence. A mixed-methods approach was employed, using a structured questionnaire administered to 12 experienced ESP instructors. Quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were thematically coded to capture recurring perceptions and contextual nuances. Findings indicate that affective factors, particularly fear of negative evaluation, low self-confidence, and anxiety, constitute the most significant barriers to participation. Socio-cultural concerns, such as fear of losing face, further reinforce silence. Linguistic limitations, including insufficient vocabulary and grammatical uncertainty, and cognitive constraints, such as limited topic knowledge and preparation, also contribute substantially. In contrast, pedagogical factors were perceived as less influential, though instructors identified strategies (such as scaffolded tasks, collaborative work, and supportive feedback) as effective in promoting engagement. The study highlights that classroom silence is a multifactorial phenomenon rooted in the interaction of emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and social dynamics. It offers practical implications for ESP teaching, emphasizing the need for supportive, low-risk speaking environments and targeted instructional scaffolding to enhance communicative competence.

Keywords: ESP, speaking activities, classroom participation, barriers, higher education, Romania.

1. Introduction

Oral participation is a fundamental component of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instruction, yet many university students remain silent or minimally engaged during speaking activities. This paper examines the factors that inhibit students' active participation in ESP speaking tasks within Romanian higher education contexts. Specifically, it investigates how linguistic, cognitive, affective, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors contribute to classroom silence, drawing on instructors' perceptions to identify the most significant barriers.

Understanding the causes of non-participation is crucial because active speaking practice is central to developing communicative competence, particularly in ESP contexts where students must use discipline-specific language for professional or academic purposes. Silence not only limits language development but also affects learners' confidence, collaboration, and ability to engage meaningfully with content, making it a persistent challenge for instructors and curriculum designers.

To address this issue, the study employed a structured questionnaire comprising Likert-scale items and open-ended questions, designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights into instructors' perceptions. The questionnaire explored five theoretically grounded dimensions—linguistic, cognitive, affective, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors—enabling the identification of both the most prominent barriers and contextual nuances that influence students' willingness to speak in ESP classrooms. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative responses were thematically coded to highlight recurring patterns and insights.

This study builds on existing research that emphasizes the multifactorial nature of classroom participation in ESP and second language learning. While prior studies have highlighted language proficiency, affective

* Lecturer, PhD, Faculty of International Relations and Administration, „Nicolae Titulescu” University of Bucharest (e-mail: felicia.bucur@univnt.ro).

**Lecturer, PhD, Faculty of International Relations and Administration, „Nicolae Titulescu” University of Bucharest (e-mail: cristina.ghenuta@univnt.ro).

barriers, and pedagogical practices as key influences¹, this paper extends the literature by systematically combining multiple dimensions into a single analytical framework and focusing on Romanian higher education, a context that has received limited empirical attention. By integrating instructors' quantitative ratings with qualitative reflections, the study provides a comprehensive perspective on why students remain silent and offers evidence-based guidance for fostering active participation in ESP speaking activities.

2. A Cohesive Theoretical Framework for ESP Speaking Participation

Oral participation in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms is a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by intersecting linguistic, cognitive, affective, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors. While much research emphasizes language proficiency as the primary determinant of participation, empirical studies in higher education contexts increasingly show that students' silence and limited engagement result from a complex interplay of cognitive constraints, affective barriers, pedagogical practices, and socio-cultural norms². To systematically analyze these influences, the proposed theoretical framework integrates insights from second language acquisition, second language pedagogy and applied linguistics, highlighting how each dimension contributes to—or hinders—ESP learners' oral participation.

The framework conceptualizes oral participation as the outcome of dynamic interactions among internal learner characteristics (linguistic, cognitive, and affective) and external environmental factors (pedagogical and socio-cultural), mediated through task-specific interactions and social contexts. Each dimension is outlined below, followed by a synthesis of their interactions.

2.1. Linguistic Dimension

The linguistic dimension focuses on learners' knowledge and control of the target language, including grammar, vocabulary, fluency, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Drawing on Canale and Swain's model of communicative competence³ and Hymes' foundational work⁴, effective oral participation in ESP classrooms requires:

- Grammatical competence: accuracy in syntax, morphology, and sentence construction.
- Lexical competence: sufficient vocabulary, including discipline-specific terminology, to express ideas precisely⁵.
- Fluency and automaticity: the ability to produce language rapidly and with minimal cognitive effort⁶.
- Discourse competence: organizing ideas coherently in extended speech, appropriate to genre and ESP context⁷.
- Strategic competence: use of compensatory strategies (paraphrasing, circumlocution) to maintain communication despite linguistic gaps⁸.

Empirical research indicates that perceived linguistic inadequacy strongly predicts classroom silence, even among learners with adequate general English proficiency, especially when the task requires domain-specific communication⁹. Hesitation, avoidance, and self-monitoring emerge when students fear producing inaccurate utterances, highlighting the interplay between linguistic and affective dimensions.

¹ Almathkuri, J., Factors influencing EFL learners' oral participation in Saudi universities, in *English Education Journal*, 2025, volume 15, issue 2, pp. 50-55.

² *Ibidem*.

³ Canale, M., & Swain, M., Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing, in *Applied Linguistics*, 1980, volume 1, issue 1, pp. 1–10.

⁴ Hymes, D., On communicative competence, in J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*, 1972, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

⁵ Nation, I. S. P., *Learning vocabulary in another language*, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 3-15.

⁶ Skehan, P., Modelling second language performance: Integrating complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis, in *Applied Linguistics*, 2009, volume 30, issue 4, pp. 510–520.

⁷ Widdowson, H. G., *Teaching language as communication*, Oxford University Press, 1978, pp. 10-25.

⁸ Swain, M., Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development, in S. Gass & C. Madden (eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*, Newbury House, 1985, pp. 235-240.

⁹ Peng, J.-E., A study of willingness to communicate and classroom anxiety of Chinese EFL learners, in *English Language Teaching*, 2012, volume 5, issue 5, pp. 45-55.

2.2. Cognitive Dimension

The cognitive dimension addresses learners' mental processes and information-processing capacity during oral production. Speaking in ESP contexts is cognitively demanding because it requires simultaneous management of idea generation, lexical retrieval, grammatical encoding, and self-monitoring, often under time constraints¹⁰. Key theoretical constructs include:

- Information processing models, which emphasize that learners have finite attentional resources, which can become overloaded during complex tasks. Overload leads to hesitation, errors, or avoidance.
- Working memory, which determines learners' ability to manage multiple processes concurrently. High working memory capacity correlates with better oral participation¹¹.
- Task-based learning (TBL), which supports cognitive engagement by structuring tasks that focus on meaning while gradually integrating linguistic accuracy¹². Tasks such as role-plays, problem-solving, and case studies facilitate meaningful output without exceeding cognitive capacity.

The trade-off hypothesis¹³ further explains that learners prioritize one aspect of performance (e.g., accuracy) at the expense of another (e.g., fluency) when processing capacity is exceeded. This highlights the cognitive underpinnings of silence: learners may refrain from speaking to avoid overtaxing their processing system or producing errors.

2.3. Affective Dimension

The affective dimension focuses on emotional and motivational factors that influence learners' willingness and ability to speak. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis¹⁴ posits that anxiety, low motivation, and negative attitudes can block language input from being effectively processed. Conversely, positive emotions and self-confidence lower the filter, facilitating participation.

The Willingness to Communicate (WTC) framework complements this perspective¹⁵. WTC is determined by:

- Trait-level factors: personality, self-confidence, introversion/extraversion.
- State-level factors: topic familiarity, audience characteristics, classroom atmosphere.

In ESP classrooms, high-stakes or technical tasks may trigger anxiety, even in linguistically capable learners¹⁶. Socio-cultural norms, such as fear of negative evaluation or face concerns, exacerbate affective barriers, reducing oral participation.

Pedagogically, confidence-building activities, collaborative tasks, and supportive feedback can lower the affective filter and enhance WTC¹⁷. Therefore, affective variables interact with both linguistic and cognitive dimensions, shaping learners' oral engagement.

2.4. Pedagogical Dimension

The pedagogical dimension focuses on instructional practices, task design, and teacher scaffolding. It draws on socio-constructivist and interactionist approaches, which emphasize socially mediated learning and meaning negotiation:

- Socio-constructivist principles. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development suggests learners perform at higher levels when supported through scaffolding¹⁸. Collaborative learning and guided tasks reduce cognitive and affective strain while encouraging oral output.

¹⁰ Skehan, P., *A cognitive approach to language learning*, Oxford University, 1998 pp. 30-60.

¹¹ de Bot, K., Lowie, W., Verspoor, M., *Second Language Acquisition: An Advanced Resource Book*, 2005, Routledge.

¹² Ellis, R., *Task-based language learning and teaching*, Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 100-120.

¹³ Skehan, P., *Modelling second language performance: Integrating complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis*, in *Applied Linguistics*, 2009, volume 30, issue 4, pp. 515-520.

¹⁴ Krashen, S. D., *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*, Longman, 1985, pp. 2-10.

¹⁵ MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A., *Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation*, in *The Modern Language Journal*, 1998, volume 82, issue 4, pp. 547-550.

¹⁶ Yashima, T., *Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context*, in *The Modern Language Journal*, 2002, volume 86, issue 1, pp. 55-60.

¹⁷ Gregersen, T., MacIntyre, P. D., *Capitalizing on language learners' individuality: From premise to practice*, Bristol University Press, 2014, pp. 30-45.

¹⁸ Donato, R., *Collective scaffolding in second language learning*, in J.P. Lantolf & G. Appel (eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research*, Ablex Publishing, 1994, pp. 40-45.

- Interactionist approaches. Interaction facilitates comprehensible input, negotiation of meaning, and corrective feedback, which are crucial for ESP learners¹⁹. Pair work, group discussions, and task-based simulations enable authentic practice.

- Task-based language teaching (TBLT) integrates form-meaning focus, scaffolds tasks according to learners' proficiency, and promotes active participation in authentic ESP scenarios²⁰.

Empirical studies show that interactive, student-centered pedagogy increases oral participation, whereas teacher-centered instruction and monotonous tasks reinforce silence²¹.

2.5. Socio-Cultural Dimension

The socio-cultural dimension highlights cultural norms, interpersonal dynamics, and identity concerns. Two key frameworks underpin this dimension:

- Face Theory. Goffman and Brown & Levinson describe face as the public self-image individuals strive to maintain. Speaking in a foreign language can threaten positive face (desire for approval) and negative face (desire for autonomy), causing hesitation or silence²².

- Classroom communication norms. Cultural expectations regarding turn-taking, deference to authority, and risk avoidance influence participation²³. In ESP contexts, fear of peer or instructor evaluation is amplified in professional or technical discussions.

Socio-cultural norms interact with affective and pedagogical factors, reinforcing silence when risk-taking is socially discouraged. Strategies such as role-plays, simulations, and inclusive classroom cultures can mitigate face threats and encourage participation²⁴.

The five-dimensional framework provides a comprehensive model for understanding ESP speaking participation. It emphasizes that oral engagement is not solely a function of linguistic proficiency but results from the interaction of cognitive capacity, emotional readiness, pedagogical support, and socio-cultural context. This integrated perspective allows instructors and curriculum designers to identify barriers and implement strategies—such as scaffolding, collaborative tasks, confidence-building, and culturally responsive practices—to enhance participation and communicative competence in ESP classrooms.

3. Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to explore ESP instructors' perceptions of factors influencing students' participation in speaking activities at Romanian universities. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire comprising Likert-scale items and open-ended questions, designed to capture both quantitative and qualitative insights. The questionnaire addressed five dimensions of potential influence—linguistic, cognitive, affective, pedagogical, and socio-cultural factors—alongside instructors' overall perceptions and their demographic and professional background.

Participants included ESP instructors from various fields, academic qualifications, and teaching experience levels. Respondents rated statements on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) and provided open-ended responses regarding recurring patterns of silence, contributing factors, and strategies to encourage participation. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify the most prominent perceived barriers, while qualitative responses underwent thematic analysis to reveal recurring patterns and additional factors affecting students' speaking engagement. The integration of these analyses offered a comprehensive understanding of the multi-dimensional influences on student participation in ESP speaking activities.

¹⁹ Gass, S. M., *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*, Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997, pp. 25-40.

²⁰ Van den Branden, K., *Task-based language education: From theory to practice*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, pp. 80-95.

²¹ Littlewood, W., *The task-based approach: Some questions and suggestions*, in *ELT Journal*, 2004, volume 58, issue 4, pp. 320-323.

²² Benson, P., *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*, 2nd ed., Pearson Education, 2005, pp. 100-110.

²³ Hu, G., *Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: The case of communicative language teaching in China*, in *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 2002, volume 15, issue 2, pp. 95-100.

²⁴ Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H., *Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section*, in *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 2006, volume 5, issue 1, pp. 6-10.

4. Findings

The questionnaire yielded 12 valid responses from ESP instructors teaching ESP in Romanian universities. The sample was highly experienced: all respondents held a PhD, 11 were female, and 9 out of 12 reported more than 15 years of ESP teaching experience. Most taught classes of 15–40 students or more, and the proficiency levels they reported were mainly intermediate to upper-intermediate. This profile suggests that the responses reflect the perceptions of experienced ESP practitioners rather than novice teachers.

The quantitative results show that affective factors were the strongest perceived barriers to students' participation in speaking activities. Among the five factor groups, the highest overall mean was recorded for Affective Factors ($M = 3.91/5$), followed by Socio-cultural Factors ($M = 3.67$) and Linguistic Factors ($M = 3.64$). Cognitive Factors ($M = 3.43$) were moderately endorsed, while Pedagogical Factors ($M = 2.95$) received the lowest overall rating.

At item level, the strongest barrier identified by respondents was concern about classmates' evaluations or judgments (AF8), with a mean of 4.50, and 11 of 12 teachers (91.7%) agreeing or strongly agreeing. This was followed by low self-confidence in public speaking situations (AF1) with a mean of 4.33, and insufficient vocabulary to express ideas effectively (LF1) with a mean of 4.25, also endorsed by 91.7% of respondents. Other highly rated items included anxiety about volunteering to speak (AF3, $M = 4.17$), concern about losing face in front of peers (SCF3, $M = 4.08$), and low self-confidence in oral communication skills (AF2, $M = 4.00$).

Several items also clustered around the upper-middle range, indicating substantial though not unanimous agreement. These included fear of making mistakes (AF4, $M = 3.92$), limited background knowledge of discussion topics (CF5, $M = 3.92$), insufficient preparation before class (CF4, $M = 3.92$), and difficulty in constructing grammatically correct sentences (LF2, $M = 3.75$). Low motivation to participate (AF5, $M = 3.75$) and anxiety about being questioned repeatedly by the instructor (AF7, $M = 3.67$) were also viewed as relevant constraints.

By contrast, the least endorsed items were mainly pedagogical. Monotonous teaching methods (PF8) had the lowest mean (2.50), followed by ineffective or unclear instructor feedback (PF3, $M = 2.58$) and unengaging speaking activities (PF9, $M = 2.58$). Only 2 of 12 respondents (16.7%) agreed that each of these was a major cause of silence. Similarly, assessment systems emphasizing participation marks (PF5, $M = 3.00$) and limited wait-time for students to formulate responses (PF4, $M = 3.00$) were not strongly endorsed. This suggests that the respondents generally did not view classroom methodology itself as the main source of reluctance.

The open-ended responses reinforce the quantitative pattern. In response to the question about the primary factor behind silence, the most frequent themes were fear of making mistakes, fear of negative evaluation, limited language proficiency, and insufficient topic knowledge. Several teachers explicitly mentioned students' fear of being judged, embarrassed, or "losing face." Others highlighted the gap between students' general English and the specialized language required in ESP contexts. A smaller number referred to motivation, prior negative learning experiences, fatigue, or poor concentration.

The answers about recurring patterns of silence also showed clear convergence. Respondents observed that silent students often avoid volunteering, give minimal answers, let more confident peers dominate, or switch to the first language. Silence was reported to be more common among students with lower proficiency, low self-esteem, limited reading or world knowledge, or classes scheduled very early or very late in the day.

Regarding strategies to encourage participation, teachers most often reported using scaffolded tasks, small-group or teamwork formats, interesting and relevant topics, games, role-based or creative activities, oral presentations, and positive incentives such as bonus points. A notable trend in these responses is that many teachers try to reduce pressure by shifting attention from error to meaning, or by creating less threatening participation formats.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that students' silence in ESP speaking activities is perceived primarily as an affective problem, rather than simply a pedagogical one. The strongest items all concern anxiety, self-confidence, and peer judgment, which suggests that students may remain silent not because they have nothing to say, but because speaking is experienced as socially risky. The especially high mean for concern about classmates' evaluations is important: it implies that the classroom is not only a linguistic space but also a social one in which identity and face are at stake.

This pattern is strengthened by the prominence of socio-cultural concerns, especially losing face and avoiding embarrassing situations. These findings suggest that silence in ESP classes may be partly explained by students' attempts to protect themselves from public failure. In this sense, silence can be viewed not as passivity, but as a defensive strategy. The moderate endorsement of cultural norms encouraging restraint also indicates that some students may come from educational or interpersonal contexts where spontaneous public speaking is not strongly encouraged.

The role of linguistic factors remains substantial. Teachers clearly perceived insufficient vocabulary, grammatical difficulties, and uncertainty about tense usage as important barriers. This is especially plausible in ESP settings, where students are expected to use not only general English but also specialized terminology and discipline-specific discourse. The open-ended comments support this interpretation by repeatedly pointing to the gap between students' general proficiency and the demands of speaking in technical or academic contexts. In other words, affective difficulty and linguistic difficulty appear to reinforce one another: the less secure students feel linguistically, the more likely they are to fear judgment and withdraw from speaking.

The findings also show that cognitive readiness matters. Teachers gave relatively strong ratings to limited background knowledge and insufficient preparation before class, which suggests that silence is sometimes linked to not knowing what to say rather than not wanting to say it. In ESP classes, students may hesitate when they lack disciplinary content knowledge, not just language resources. This is especially relevant because ESP communication often requires students to discuss specific professional or academic topics, not merely everyday situations.

A notable result is the comparatively low rating of pedagogical factors. Since monotonous methods, poor feedback, and unengaging activities received the lowest means, the respondents did not generally attribute silence to poor teaching design alone. That does not mean pedagogy is irrelevant. Rather, it suggests that the teachers in this sample perceive silence as more deeply rooted in student psychology, linguistic preparedness, and classroom social dynamics than in instructional technique itself. The open-ended responses, however, show that teachers do see pedagogy as part of the solution: many reported using collaborative, scaffolded, and creative strategies precisely to reduce anxiety and increase willingness to speak.

Taken together, the results support a multifactorial interpretation of silence in ESP classes. No single variable explains non-participation on its own. Instead, the data suggest an interaction between fear of negative evaluation, low confidence, limited linguistic resources, and insufficient content readiness. In practical terms, this means that increasing participation is unlikely to be achieved through grading pressure or simple exhortation. More promising approaches are those that reduce the interpersonal threat of speaking, provide stronger linguistic scaffolding, and ensure students have enough topic knowledge and preparation time to contribute meaningfully.

These findings also have implications for ESP course design. If silence is strongly tied to peer judgment and face concerns, teachers may need to build participation gradually through low-risk speaking formats, such as pair work, small groups, rehearsed tasks, and collaborative preparation. If vocabulary and content knowledge are also key barriers, then pre-speaking support becomes crucial: teachers may need to pre-teach terminology, activate background knowledge, and structure speaking tasks more carefully. The reported success of strategies such as games, relevant topics, and teamwork suggests that participation increases when speaking is made both safer and more purposeful.

The results should be interpreted cautiously because the sample is small ($N = 12$) and reflects teacher perceptions rather than direct student self-reports or classroom observation. Even so, the responses are fairly consistent, and the qualitative comments closely match the quantitative rankings. For that reason, the data offer a credible preliminary picture: in these ESP contexts, student silence appears to stem less from poor teaching methods than from a combination of anxiety, fear of judgment, limited confidence, and insufficient linguistic or topical resources.

6. Conclusions

This study explored ESP instructors' perceptions of the factors limiting students' participation in speaking activities in Romanian university classrooms. The findings indicate that student silence is primarily driven by affective and socio-cultural factors, including fear of negative evaluation, low self-confidence, and concern about peer judgment. Linguistic limitations, such as insufficient vocabulary and grammatical difficulties, alongside

cognitive constraints like limited background knowledge and inadequate preparation, were also identified as important contributors. Pedagogical factors were perceived as less influential, although effective instructional strategies – such as scaffolded tasks, collaborative group work, and pre-teaching of specialized vocabulary – can help mitigate silence.

The research underscores that classroom silence is not merely a result of student passivity or poor teaching practices, but a complex interaction of emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and social dynamics. These insights have practical implications for ESP instruction: designing tasks that build confidence, fostering a supportive classroom environment, and addressing linguistic and content-related gaps can enhance oral participation and strengthen communicative competence.

However, the study has several limitations. The sample was small ($N = 12$) and consisted predominantly of highly experienced instructors, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the research relied on instructor perceptions rather than direct observation of classroom interactions or student self-reports, which could provide complementary perspectives on participation.

Future research could address these limitations by including larger and more diverse samples, integrating student perspectives, and conducting classroom-based observational studies. Comparative studies across different ESP disciplines, proficiency levels, or cultural contexts could further clarify how linguistic, affective, and socio-cultural factors interact to influence oral participation. Longitudinal research investigating the impact of targeted pedagogical interventions would also provide evidence-based strategies for enhancing speaking engagement in ESP classrooms.

This study might contribute to a nuanced understanding of ESP learners' oral participation, as it offers both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for transforming classroom silence into active, confident, and purposeful communication.

References

- Almathkuri, J., Factors influencing EFL learners' oral participation in Saudi universities, in *English Education Journal*, 2025, volume 15, issue 2, pp. 45-63.
- Belcher, D., English for specific purposes: Teaching to perceived needs and imagined futures in worlds of work, study, and everyday life, in *TESOL Quarterly*, 2006, Pearson Education, volume 40, issue 1, pp. 61-84, available at <https://doi.org/10.2307/40264515>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Benson, P., *Teaching and researching autonomy in language learning*, 2nd ed., Pearson Education, 2005.
- Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H., Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section, in *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 2006, volume 5, issue 1, pp. 4-18, available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2005.10.002>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C., *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*, Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M., Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing, in *Applied Linguistics*, 1980, volume 1, issue 1, pp. 1-47, available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/1.1.1>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- de Bot, K., Lowie, W., Verspoor, M. *Second Language Acquisition: An Advanced Resource Book*, 2005, Routledge.
- Donato, R., Collective scaffolding in second language learning, in J. P. Lantolf & G. Appel (eds.), *Vygotskian approaches to second language research*, Ablex Publishing, 1994, pp. 33-56.
- Ellis, R., *Task-based language learning and teaching*, Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Estrada-Chichón, J. L., Zayas-Martínez, F., Sánchez-Cabrero, R, Classroom-Situated Willingness to Communicate: Student Teachers of EFL in Spain, in *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 2023, volume 13, issue 1, pp. 96-111, available at <https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe13010007>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Gass, S. M., *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*, Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997.
- Gregersen, T., MacIntyre, P. D., *Capitalizing on language learners' individuality: From premise to practice*, Bristol University Press, 2014.
- Hu, G., Potential cultural resistance to pedagogical imports: The case of communicative language teaching in China, in *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 2002, volume 15, issue 2, pp. 93-105, available at <https://doi.org/10.1080/07908310208666612>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Hu, L., Wang, Y., The Predicting Role of EFL Teachers' Immediacy Behaviors in Students' Willingness to Communicate and Academic Engagement, in *BMC Psychol*, 2023, volume 11, issue 318, pp. 1-10, available at <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-023-01378-x>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.

- Hymes, D., On communicative competence, in J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.). *Sociolinguistics*, 1972, Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Krashen, S. D., *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*, Longman, 1985.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L., *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*, Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Littlewood, W., The task-based approach: Some questions and suggestions, in *ELT Journal*, 2004, volume 58, issue 4, pp. 319–326, available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/58.4.319>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- MacIntyre, P. D., Clément, R., Dörnyei, Z., & Noels, K. A., Conceptualizing willingness to communicate in a L2: A situational model of L2 confidence and affiliation, in *The Modern Language Journal*, 1998, volume 82, issue 4, pp. 545–562, available at <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1998.tb05543.x>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Nation, I. S. P., *Learning vocabulary in another language*, Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Peng, J.-E., A study of willingness to communicate and classroom anxiety of Chinese EFL learners, in *English Language Teaching*, 2012, volume 5, issue 5, pp. 45–55, available at <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n5p45>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Skehan, P., *A cognitive approach to language learning*, Oxford University, 1998.
- Skehan, P., Modelling second language performance: Integrating complexity, accuracy, fluency, and lexis, in *Applied Linguistics*, 2009, volume 30, issue 4, pp. 510–532, available at <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amp047>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Swain, M., Communicative competence: Some roles of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in its development, in S. Gass & C. Madden (eds.), *Input in second language acquisition*, Newbury House, 1985, pp. 235–253.
- Van den Branden, K., *Task-based language education: From theory to practice*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Widdowson, H. G., *Teaching language as communication*, Oxford University Press, 1978.
- Yashima, T., Willingness to communicate in a second language: The Japanese EFL context, in *The Modern Language Journal*, 2002, volume 86, issue 1, pp. 54–66, available at <https://doi.org/10.1111/1540-4781.00136>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.
- Yoshida, R., Effects of teaching speaking strategies on ESL learners' oral performance, in *Language Teaching Research*, 2013, volume 17, issue 3, pp. 1–20, available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168813499843>, last time consulted on 28.03.2026.