

Chapter V

Conclusion and Suggestions

Conclusion

It is believed that anxiety has its either facilitative or debilitating effects on one's learning process. This study gives more emphasis on the debilitating effects of anxiety, as it aims to explore its effects on students' performance in the language class. It focused on the English speaking skills dealing with the competence, particularly on the five aspects included, as discussed in the previous chapter. This study also investigated the different factors that contribute to learners' foreign language anxiety.

Basically, the students of this study are identified to have slightly high anxiety, and there are several factors that were identified to be anxiety-provoking situations, both external and internal factors. The external factors normally pertain to the different conditions or situations inside the classroom, such as the type of activities being done. The

internal ones mostly refer to one's perception and attitude towards their language learning experience.

The students themselves are also aware of some of the negative impacts of language anxiety on their speaking performance. From the analysis, the speaking scores reflect that language anxiety has an inverse relationship with the students' performance inside the classroom. However, the general performance of the class in ECC2 is considered to be good (B+) in spite of the experience of slightly high foreign language anxiety, in accordance with the school standards.

The results of the study show that students are more affected by internal factors compared to the external ones, pertaining to self-confidence about their own ability of using English to speak. They are aware of the need to practice the language constantly, or to apply other means in order to make improvements in their English skills. However, they tend to limit themselves with the opportunities that they have. For

instance, they only speak English inside the classroom, and even then, they do not speak in English all the time.

By nature, speaking performances are challenging since student are required to speak instantaneously with fluency, considering as well the flow of ideas to be presented. Thus, it takes good language skills and knowledge of the language with a certain degree of mastery in order to perform well. Most of the students are not able to achieve this competence because of various reasons, such as lack of vocabulary, knowledge in grammar, lack of self-confidence, etc. However, these challenges can be overcome by constant practice and exposure to the target language.

Aside from working on their vocabularies, it is important that students have more practice not only in speaking skills but also in the other language skills. This will enable them to construct sentences or paragraphs with a clearer flow of ideas, and to practice how to respond in a more spontaneous way. It only comes with a lot of practice so that students can

get used to speak in English well. Exposure to the different media and other sources of language is important as well in order for them to be more familiar of how to speak English fluently with the correct grammar, and with the standard pronunciation and intonation.

Suggestions

Since this paper is intended mainly to investigate the impact of Foreign Language Anxiety (FLA) to students' speaking competence, there are many other aspects in language learning that are not included. Thus, the focus of the topic itself presents many limitations of the present study. Since anxiety is one of the factors that affect language learning in general, it is most likely that anxiety also impacts the other linguistic skills aside from speaking (listening, reading and writing skills). Perhaps, the future researches can expand their scope including the other language skills in order to obtain a more holistic view of how FLA affects the language learning process.

Another limitation of the study is the number of the participants. Provided that this is a case study, the target participants need not to be of large number. The target participants were students from English Conversation Class (ECC) level II. If ever future studies can be conducted in the same school, they can also include the other levels of ECC, as there are four levels in total. It is possible that the different level of students will yield different responses towards FLA.

The present study also did not include the roles of the teachers in the language learning process. Since teachers play a key role in learning, it is also important to know the strategies or techniques that will help alleviate the students' anxiety. In relation to this, the present study also excluded the possible learners' strategies in coping up with their anxiety. Dwelling deeper into this aspect might be insightful not only to the learners themselves, but also to the teachers because those are the possible ways by which students can improve their classroom performance.

There are several suggestions that can arise from the data analysis. It has been concluded that most students would feel anxious when they are expected to perform a speaking activity without having enough preparation. In the interview, some students claimed that they are not given enough time to prepare before having the speaking performance. Based on the class observation, they are given approximately 10 minutes to prepare prior to the performance. Thus, the teacher can consider extending the preparation time for few more minutes, as the allotted class duration allows.

Other common sources of anxiety inside the classroom are the fear of failing the English subject and the nature of speaking activity. These situations are usually associated with lack of self-confidence, lack of grammatical knowledge, lack of vocabulary, etc. Faced with these kinds of concerns, teachers have a role to be more attentive to students' learning needs. By providing support and reassurance, teachers can gradually build the self-confidence of the students. Inside the classroom,

teachers should strive to make the communication as natural and authentic as possible since it helps in making the students more at ease when speaking English. The teacher also needs to constantly make sure whether the students can follow the lesson, so that they do not get lost in the middle of the learning process. It is also favorable if the teachers encourage the students to extend their learning and practice of speaking English outside the classroom. Some students asserted that by listening to English music and films with subtitles or by practicing to translate on their own can help them increase their vocabulary and improve in their knowledge of English grammar. One student even claimed that he would check the dictionary once in a while to learn more words.

Then, by having an open attitude and accommodating personality, teachers can invite the students to express their learning concerns and then give the students appropriate advices to overcome them. In this way, there will be a good rapport established between the teacher and the students. When

students are at ease in the classroom, the less anxious they will be. According to Tanveer (2007), teachers should make the effort in creating a friendly, informal and learning-supportive environment for language learning so that students feel more comfortable in speaking with more confidence and with less anxiety.

Even though the class is focused on speaking skills, some exercises can be varied into activities that involve the other linguistic skills. From time to time, the class also offers listening and reading exercises. One student admitted that she has difficulty following the listening tests, since she could not recognize the words and she find the conversation pace too fast. Being aware of this kind of problem, perhaps the teacher can choose a recording that is of slower pace. Aside from that, the teacher may also consider to discuss some vocabularies that the students do not know, in order to make sure that they understand the content of the listening test. Few students asserted that they should have more exercises, particularly

practice speaking with partners. Working with partners or any collaborative works proved to be less anxious for students as compared to individual performances.

In general, most of the suggestions given are pointed towards the responsibility of the teachers in assuring a meaningful learning to take place. With encouragement and positive attitude, teachers can facilitate the learning process of students by helping them cope with the language anxiety experienced. Thus, teacher has a crucial and challenging role in the learning process as they have to be aware of the students' learning needs and address any problems promptly.

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