Teaching Effectiveness Strategies In Reducing Anxiety During English Learning And Speaking

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ABSTRACT

　　　　Anxiety is one of the major problems that learners face while speaking English language in classrooms and it is considered to be one of the most important problems that can prevent learners from learning the English language. This study focuses on the basic strategies that an English teacher should follow to reduce the anxiety of the students while learning and speaking English and the means of implementing effective teaching strategies to reduce anxiety level among the learners.

Introduction

　　　　The importance of communication in the English language is increasing day by day. Across the non-English world, a large number of people take interest in knowing how to write and speak English, because English is the need of the modern time. It is almost believed that without English, humans cannot make progress in any field of life. However, it is also becoming one of the generalized facts. Students of English language and literature learn English in a qualified environment. Unlike them, some common people can speak English very well and that too with proper accent and pronunciation in order to communicate with their friends and colleagues.

　　　　Learning English language can be a frustrating process as many often encounter many difficulties which prevent them from acquiring the target language. Most of the learners agree that speaking in the English language can be one of the most anxiety-provoking activities they face in language learning classrooms. Learning a language does not depend on learning or memorizing the rules only; it affects learners' emotions and how they react towards this process (Occhipinti, 2009).Language anxiety can have profound consequences on the language learning process. It can create avoidance behaviours in the learners' attitudes toward ESL/EFL learning. Motoda (2005) stated that the debilitating effects of ESL/EFL can be shown in the learners' feeling of confusion when using the English language, or when skipping the SL/FL classes.The goal of this study is to find out specific teaching strategies that can help in reducing anxiety in English learning and speaking.

Teaching

　　　　Teaching is imparting knowledge or skill. It is the process of carrying out those activities that experience has shown to be effective in getting students to learn, it is also an academic process by which students are motivated to learn in ways that make a sustained, substantial and positive influence on how they think, act, and feel.

Teaching is a process that elevates students to a level where they learn deeply and remarkably. Barnett in his article "What Makes a Teacher Great?" defines teaching as

> A social process, because it is influenced by the political and social backgrounds of the country.It is a form of interpersonal influence aimed at changing the behaviour and potential of another person. It is an interactive process, primarily involving classroom talk which takes place between a teacher and the pupils and occurs during certain definable activity.

Teaching is an arrangement and manipulation of a situation in which an individual will seek to overcome and from which he will learn in the course of doing so. It is an arrangement of contingencies of reinforcement. It is concerned with the activities which are concerned with the guidance or direction of the learning of others.

Teachers are an extremely important facet of any society for a multitude of reasons. Teachers are the people who educate the youth of the society, who in turn become the leaders of the next generation of people. They teach and impart knowledge to students, for what is learnt from their teachers at a young age will most likely stay with them for the rest of their lives. So, teachers certainly have a significant mark on the development of students as they teach them and help them develop their knowledge so that they can go on in life and be responsible and productive members of the society.

A teacher who truly cares for his or her profession can definitely have a profound effect on his or her students. A student will become significantly more interested in learning if his or her teacher is really interested in teaching the subject matters. If a teacher finds a way to engage his or her students in an interesting yet informative manner, then all of this teacher's students will certainly develop a thirst for learning

and acquiring knowledge. A teacher who moulds a student at a young age to realize the value in learning and to get systematic education, is doing a great service not only to that child, but also to the society in general.

Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness is the ability of a teacher to communicate effectively with students and other teachers. It includes the intra and inter-personal skills. The role of a teacher is not just mere teaching of the subject matters but also shaping and mouldingthe students in all dimensions. Teacher effectiveness helps the teacher to complete this task easily.

R.A. Sharma in his work "Teacher Education and Pedagogical Training Competency Based Teacher- Education" opines that

Teacher effectiveness is as an act of faith of teacher as well as students. Teaching is a system of actions and activities which induce learning through interpersonal relationship. The teaching of actions and activities generate social relationships and emotional climate for providing new experiences and insights to the students. The conduciveness of the learning climate depends on the faith of the students and teacher. The students' learning outcomes depend on the faith the students have in teaching as well as the teacher. Thus, teacher effectiveness varies from students to students and teacher to teacher. It is also related to professional ethics.

Good and effective teachers should have a democratic and co-operative attitude. They have to be kind and patient. They should be pleasing in appearance and manner and fair and impartial in attitude with a sense of humour. They should be consistent in behaviour and have a good disposition. They must take interest in the problems of the pupils. They have to be open minded and flexible and make use of recognition and praise and be competent in their subjects.

Teaching is said to be the noblest profession, since it is service rendered for the

entire well-being of man, his body, mind and spirit. It renders happiness and a good teacher will be well satisfied with his job.

Many researchers believe that the teacher effectiveness is one of the most important factors responsible for job satisfaction. Since ages, the role of a teacher is regarded as an important one, not only in moulding the personality of the learner but also in shaping the society. At the same time it is important to realize that an incompetent teacher is dangerous to the nation.

Teachers shape the density of students in the classroom. They develop societies that indicate the path of progress to the nation and sustain human aspects of existence. They nurture and cultivate humanistic, ethical and moral values among pupils. Due to technological progress and new vistas of knowledge resulting from scientific innovations, the role of teachers is assuming new dimensions.

A good teacher plays a vital role in all efforts to relate education to national development and social change. It is the responsibility of the teachers to guide and inspire prospective students to enrich their discipline and to inculcate values which are in consonance with the cultural heritage and social objectives. This involves the transmission of knowledge through research, investigation and enquiry. In order to do justice to this very challenging task, the teacher has to be active in all dimensions and include national and emotional integration and social service. Moreover, the intellectual content of the traditional Indian outlook and needs of the radically changing world need to the harmonized.

The concept teacher effectiveness can be formed with the use of the following qualities like sense of humour, ability to explain, ability to manage class and helping the students by moulding and guiding them.

Ways to Enhance Teacher Effectiveness

Some of the important ways to enhance teacher effectiveness are: self realization, gaining subject knowledge, getting experience, proper trainings, getting new knowledge, refresher courses for teachers, improving soft skills and updating knowledge.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a relatively permanent state of worry and nervousness occurring in a variety of mental disorders, and it is usually accompanied by compulsive behaviour or attacks of panic. It is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some usually ill-defined misfortune, an abnormal sense of fear, nervousness and apprehension about something. If a person possesses any anxiety then he may become a disordered person. Cooper Samuel in his article "Stress and Anxiety among Language Learners" on the net classifies anxiety disorders into six. They are "panic disorder, Obsessive – Compulsive Disorder (OCD), Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Social Anxiety Disorder, Social Phobias and Generalized Anxiety Disorder" (Koul, 2008).

Language Anxiety

In general, Spielberger (1983) defines anxiety as the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with the arousal of the nervous system. In addition, Gregersen and Horwitz (2005) argue that learners who feel anxious in their second language learning may find their study less enjoyable.

Anxiety is a fear that affects every person. There are many reasons for a person to experience feelings of anxiety. Adults experience anxiety becauseof the stress in their jobs and students experience various levels of anxiety because of inferiority complex, negative reinforcement by the teachers understand the portions easily,compete with their peers, fear about the test etc. English language learners, as well as those students learning a foreign language, experience anxiety when it comes to such classroom activities as speaking in front of a group of their fellow students, or taking a test in a language other than their first language.

Horwitz et al. (1986), define second language anxiety as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to

classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (128). Saito and Samimy (1996) state that anxiety has a significant impact on language learning and achievement. Some studies conclude that high levels of anxiety usually have a negative effect on the language acquisition process (Wu, 2010).

Language Learning Anxiety

According to Gardner and Macintyre (1995), language learning anxiety is a fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language. Macintyre argues that anxiety can make the difference between success and failure in language learning. Gardner and Macintyre (1995) and Macintyre and Gardner (1991) show that anxiety might negatively correlate with language learning outcomes, and they insist that reducing anxiety might enhance learners' motivation and improve their foreign or second language learning. They suggest that affective factors, especially anxiety, are the obstacle in the process of language learning. Based on the argument, how to lower the anxiety and promote students' English language learning appears to be urgent and important (Dillon, 2010).

A student may have problemsin reading English passages, they may see the text blurred, mistake letters, be not able to concentrate, take longer time to understand the subject and also to finish the passage. At this situation parents, teachers and the environment generally pressurize on the learners to do the task as expected and so feelings of anxiety and discomfort naturally emerge. For example, dyslexic students often feel stressed and "dumb" and less capable and this leads to discouragement about continuing in school (The International Dyslexia Association, 2012).

The following are some of the teaching effective methods that can be implemented by the English teachers to reduce English learning and speaking anxiety.

Peer Group Learning

According to Kang (2006) peer group learning is an excellent means of overcoming anxiety. Here a small group of students who have close relations with each other andget togetherhaveregular interactions. They share views and exchange ideas with each other and do activities in groups. Peer group learning is one of the strategies that can be used to drive out the anxiety in speaking English. Students will feel more comfortable when they learn in groups than when they work individually.

Developing Self Confidence

Developing students' self-confidence is one of the most important influences on language learning. Success or failure is probably the affective side of the learner. The implementation of speaking strategies in learning influences the learners' confidence. For instance, a learnerneeds to speak in front of a class with confidence. The teacher should bring confidence in the minds of the students that he or she is with them and that he or she will help them when the students'commits mistakes while he or she speaks English. When students feel that they are alone and there is no support from their surroundings, the level of anxiety increases. Through this strategy the teacher can enhance the learners' learning experience and increase their confidence and motivation in learning.

Developing Communication Skills

It is the responsibility of the teacher to teach how to speak and to share their aspirations and opinions with other members or group. Besides, the students can learn how to work in a group or team in order to create a good relation. Slavin (1987) stated that students who use cooperative learning can learn and communicate better than students who use individual learning. When the students have good communication skill, it can decrease their anxiety to speak and help them to have interaction with other peers or people.

Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning can occur among the students in the learning process through the existence of peer groups. It becomes a factor

which can also reduce the students' anxiety in English learningwhen the students learn together and help each other. Cooperative learning also helps them when they sometimes need help from others. This mode of learning was supported by the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) of Vygotsky which stated that there is a cognitive level when the students cannot do anything alone, but they need guidance from adults or to solve problems peers.

Play Way Learning (Games)

To reduce learners' language anxiety, Saunders and Crookall (1985) also suggested that teachers should use different games where students can use the target language. Games are a welcome break from the usual routine of theEnglish language class. They are motivating and challenging. Games provide language practice in the various skills – speaking, writing, listening and reading. They create a meaningful context for the language use (Kim, 1995). Games are one of the strategies that can be used to manage the students' anxiety in middle level and low level of anxiety. Play way learning can reduce the students' anxiety in learning English, and enhance their interest in the acquisition process.

Relaxing

Relaxing is also part of the effective teaching strategies which helps the students to control their anxiety level. Games offer students fun and a relaxing learning atmosphere. Lee (2002) stated that games are activities used to provide fun and a relaxing atmosphere especially in classes for student to acquire a second or foreign language. In addition, Hadfield (2004) defines a game as an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun. The element of fun in games provides the learners more life situation with more chance to express their ideas in their own ways but under the limit of rules. When students join games, anxiety is reduced and speech fluency is generated and so communicative competence is achieved.

Motivation

Motivation is an important strategy in the effective learning of English. Motivation playsa major role in all aspects of life. It is the first step to start the process of teaching. It develops confidence and makes the students feel free to clarify their doubts with the teachers. Games and associated activities are excellent ways of motivating learners to speak. Lewis and Bedson (1999) write that games are fun and students like to play it. Playing games is a vital and natural part of growing up and learning. Through games the students experiment, discover, and interact with their environment. Chen (2005) opines that the benefits of using games in language learning are to promote communicative competence, create a meaningful context for language use, increase learning motivation, reduce learning anxiety, encourage creative and spontaneous use of language and to construct a cooperative learning environment. Games add variation to a lesson and increase motivation by providing a plausible incentive to use the target language. Games can provide their stimulus.

Amusing Activity

A game is an amusing activity. Most of students like playing games. They get not only enjoyment but also many other benefits such as refreshment, enlightment, freedom from stress,ability to exhibit their talents etc. Games help and encourage many students to maintain their interest at work. Play is a purposeful activity and games are a part of playing. Games are a very appropriate teaching technique in the classroom (Linse and Nunan, 2005). Gee (2003) expresses that games supply a nonthreatening environment for coping with new learning. When the learners are having fun, they are likely to accept risks, make mistakes without having feelings of failure, and try to solve their initial feelings and use it in their daily life. Games are the most effective areas where learning takes place. A learner who encounters a new English word, expression, pattern or even reading English text she/he is immersed in a game, is far more motivated to learn it and much more likely to internalize it than

a child who receives the new knowledge from her/his teacher before a game.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study the researcher finally concludes that a good English teacher should make the teaching more effective to instill confidence and it is the responsibility of the teacher to drive out fearamong the language learners. Moreover the teacher should motivate the students and convey to them the fact that the language learning concept is very simple and help them to speak the language. When the students practice to speak the language, the teacher should reinforce them positively and correct them when they commit mistakes. So teachers should implement peer group learning,develop self-confidence, develop communication skills,use and cooperative learning and play way learning be relaxing and usemotivation and amusement as strategies in managing students' anxiety in speaking English and bring out the best of in their communication skills.

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