



Dominant Causes of Speaking Anxiety Among English Class Learners

Abid Azizy

Universitas Islam As-Syafi'iyah

Email: abidazizy5@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This action research aims to explore the dominant causes of speaking anxiety among English Class learners, and to suggest effective strategies that can both help conquer learners' fear of communication and boost their confidence level. English Class students suffer from a substantial level of communication apprehension. The findings of this study will be to the benefit of English Class learners as they can enhance learners' oral communication skills which are impacted negatively by learners' speaking anxiety.

Keywords: Students' Anxiety, Speaking, Dominant

First Receive:
08 November 2022

Revised:
03 May 2023

Accepted:
15 July 2023

Final Proof Received:
20 August 2023

Published:
01 Oktober 2023

How to cite (in APA style):

Azizy, Abid .2023). Dominant Causes of Speaking Anxiety Among English Class Learners. *ELITE Journal*, 5(3), 708-721

INTRODUCTION

Many foreign language students are apprehensive about learning a new language in a certain situation. When they are asked to express their thoughts in front of their peers and lecturers, they appear to become more anxious. Then, when they talk in English, they never feel completely at ease. According to (Wiratno & Santosa, 204) (Wiratno & Santosa, 2014) Language is a means of communication in everyday society. With language we can exchange ideas, give and receive each other's opinions so that we can understand each other. Basically humans are always connected by language that allows humans to interact and exchange ideas.

English is the official language in many countries of the world which is why most official institutions in the world use it and demand for the members to be able to understand the language. It gives people access to a variety of information over the internet which is normally given in the English language as this way, it is able to reach and serve many people. English also helps people from different languages to communicate as it stands as the only language that most people from different countries understand.

In learning English, there are four skills that need to be mastered one of them is Speaking, which is a productive skill that students have to learn and it is the most widely used in communication. "Speaking is an important part of teaching EFL (English as a Foreign Language) communication, which is something that needs special attention" (Jack, 2002).

Speaking is the product of creative contraction of linguistic strings; the speaker makes choices of lexicon, the structure and discourse. Speaking in language needs words to develop to be sentence and needs structure in language and the information that speaker giver acceptable and understood

by listener. By speaking the students have opportunity to delivery what the students want to inform to the listener. As English learners speaking is one of the most important skills that they need to develop (Paramasivam, 2013) speaking is important to learn in learning English because speaking is an important tool in communication.

In learning to speak English, students' emotions tend to be more discouraging rather than encouraging. One of the emotional states that make such process become difficult is anxiety. Anxiety can be divided such as feeling of tension, worry, and anxiety will impede students' ability to perform successfully in a foreign language classroom.

Anxiety harms students' performance by way of worry, self-doubt, and reducing participation. Anxious students will have difficulties in following lessons and their speaking, may learn less and also may not be able to demonstrate what they have learned to practice. Even worse, they may experience more failure, which in turn escalate their anxiety.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the problem above, this study is interested to elaborate these following questions:

1. What Causes Students to Have Speaking Anxiety in English Class?

OBJECTIVE

To find out how students can experience anxiety when advancing in front of the English Class.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Anxiety is a psychological phenomenon that usually occurs in human life which is triggered by the unknown circumstances. anxiety is characterized by a feeling of being threatened which makes a person feel afraid, tense and feel worried. Anxiety is a taste of fear or catastrophe accompanied by certain physiological reactions, such as an accelerated heart rate, sweaty palms, and tightness in the stomach (Horwitz, 2011). Then anxiety also appears as a response to certain situations. Definition anxiety as a state of tension and fear as a natural response top received threat (Smith, 2009).

Although anxiety and fear sound similar, they are not the same. Halgin distinguishes between fear and anxiety; fear is natural. An alarm response to dangerous situations, whereas anxiety is more future-oriented, feelings of worry and anxiety about the possibility that something terrible will occur (R & Whitbourne, 2007). However, anxiety can be severe and last a long time in some situations. According to (Thomas, 2009) Trait anxiety is the name given to this form of anxiety. Anxiety is divided into two categories based on severity, length, and situations: state anxiety, which is a feeling of fear and nervousness as a reaction to a specific circumstance, and trait anxiety, which is most acute anxiety that is dependent on the person regardless of the situation.

Furthermore, other researchers, namely Huyen (2003), Boonkit (2010) and Liu (2011), lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and being laughed at, lack of preparation and shame were common causes of speaking anxiety. In addition, Gregersen stated that learners' anxiety about learning foreign languages, possibly caused by their learning, is less enjoyable.

Another study related to foreign language anxiety has shown that foreign language anxiety is mainly caused by a lack of confidence, which leads the learners to frustration.

According to Dixon (2012), there are three categories of anxiety in language learning: trait anxiety, state anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. From these quotes, it can be said that student anxiety can come from several possible factors. Different factors will cause other effects of stress and require different treatments to deal with certain types of anxiety.

Several signs can detect anxiety factors. Johnston (2006) describes some signs of seeing anxiety; physical symptoms such as sweating, headache and shortness of breath, emotional signs such as fear of death and cognitive signs such as difficulty concentrating. That is, they feel anxious. Students who show signs of anxiety should be helped by the teacher to reduce their stress and provide solutions to overcome them.

There are several signs of anxiety indicated by the symptoms of fear of the mind. These symptoms are feeling scared, maybe telling ourselves that we are physically ill, having a heart attack or going crazy, thinking that people are looking at us, worrying that we will lose control and embarrass ourselves in front of others, feeling that we have to do it. Escape and go to a safe place. Although anxiety is mostly about negative things, stress also has a positive side.

Researchers can conclude that "Anxiety is a feeling and is related to the psychological system of a person who feels uncomfortable caused by nervousness or worry about something might happen in the future". Furthermore, anxiety is the risk of a situation and can be reduced if a person has achieved what he wants.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted at Islamic University of As-Syafi'iyah. The method used in this research is quantitative research. According to Sugiyono (2015:207), quantitative descriptive analysis technique is data analysis by describing or describing the data that has been collected as it is without intending to make conclusions that apply to the public.

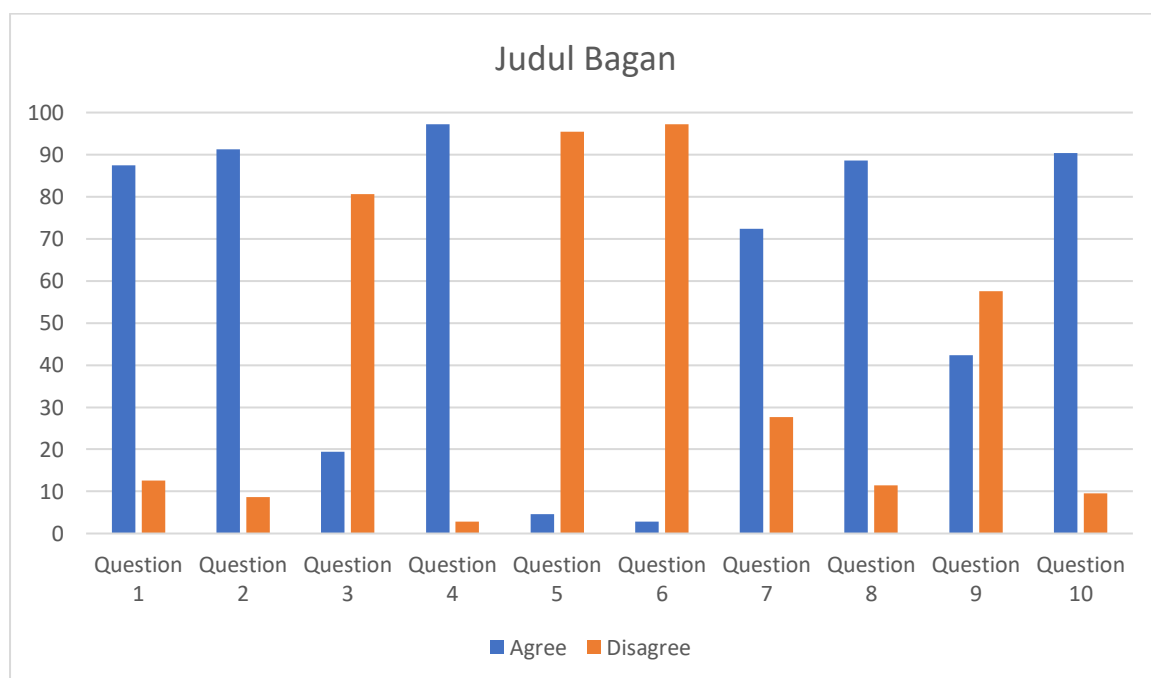
RESULTS

From the research that I made, I used a questionnaire in the form of a statement and then it will be filled in by several departments at the Islamic University of As-Syafi'iyah, which must reach 30 responses or more. The questionnaire that I made is as follows.

No	Statement	Description	
		Agree	Disagree
1	I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.		

2	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.		
3	I feel confident when I speak in English class		
4	In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.		
5	When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.		
6	I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.		
7	I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.		
8	I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.		
9	Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.		
10	I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.		

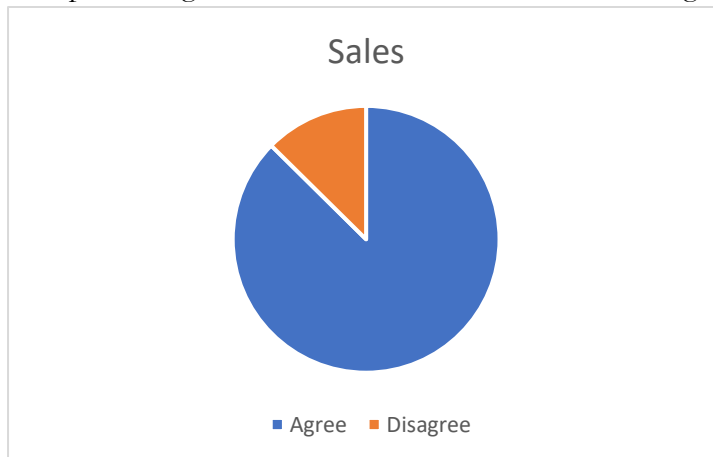
Diagram Questionnaire



Questionnaire Percentage

Is Divide the number of people who answered in the affirmative by the total number polled.

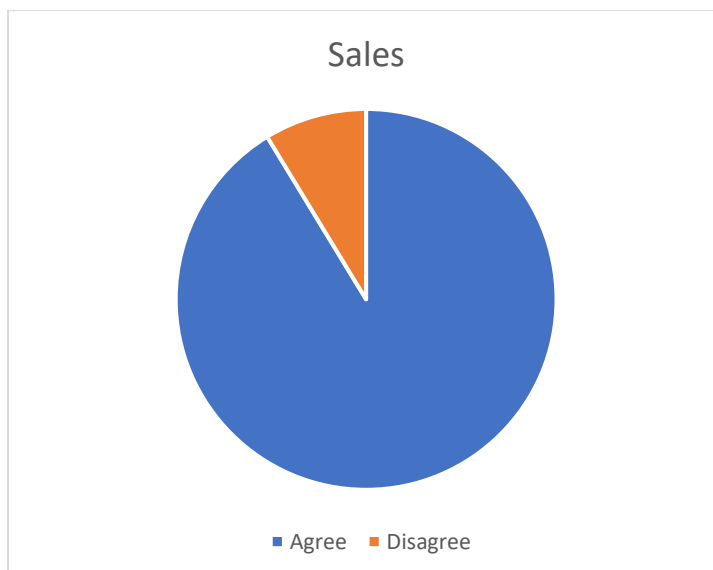
1. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.



Agree : 87.4 %

Disagree : 12.6 %

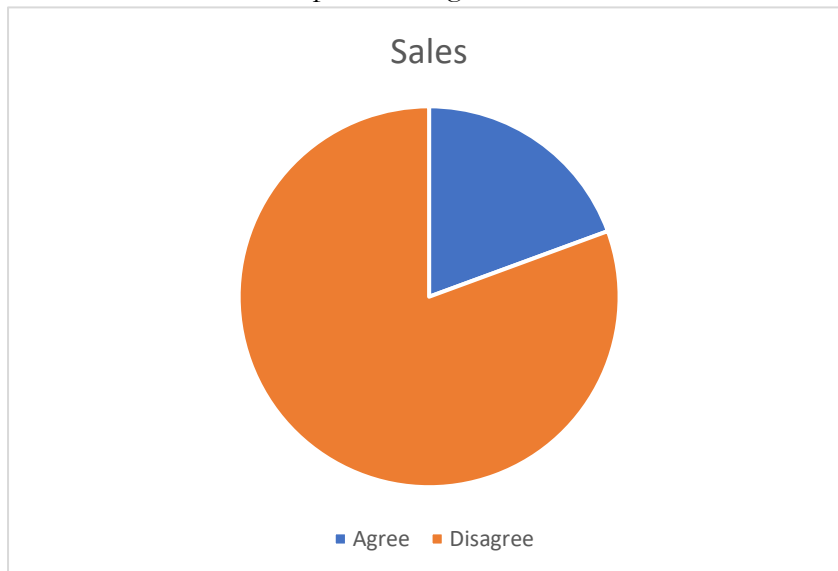
2. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.



Agree : 91.3 %

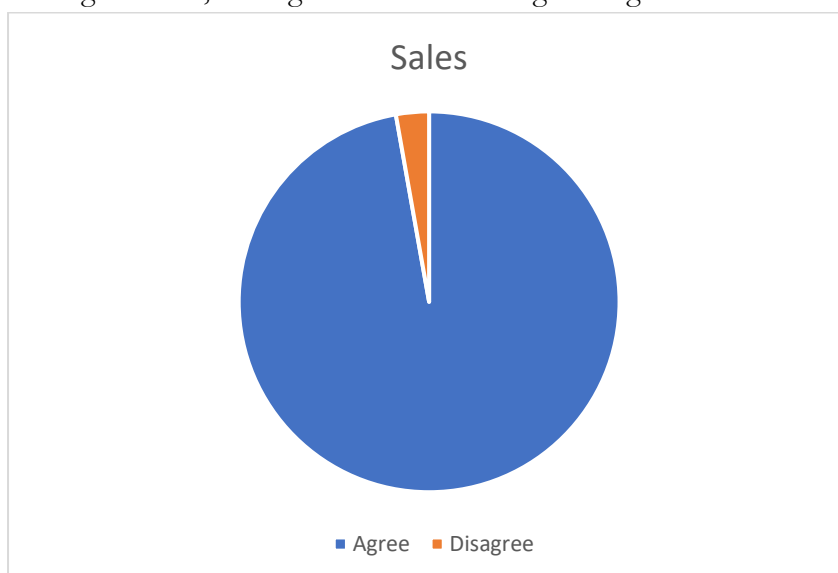
Disagree : 8.7 %

3. I feel confident when I speak in English class



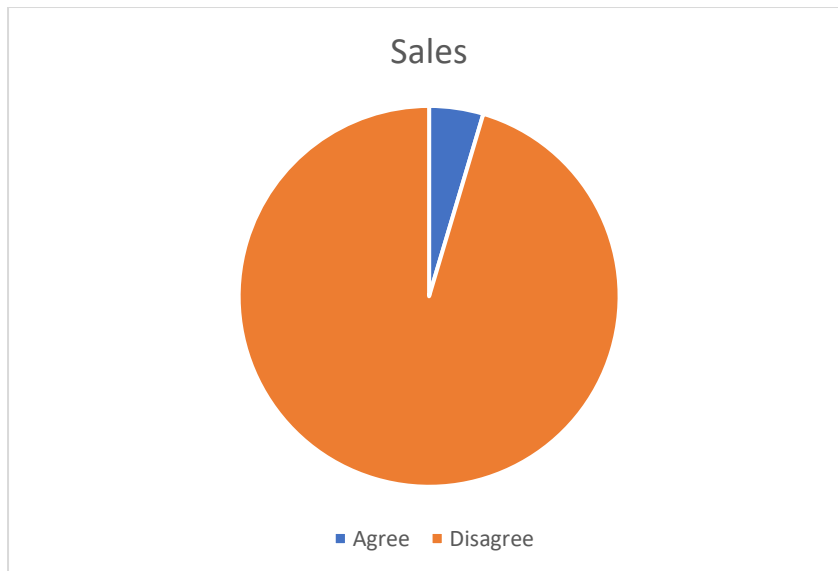
Agree : 19.4 %
Disagree : 80.6 %

4. In English class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.



Agree : 97.2 %
Disagree : 2.8 %

5. When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.



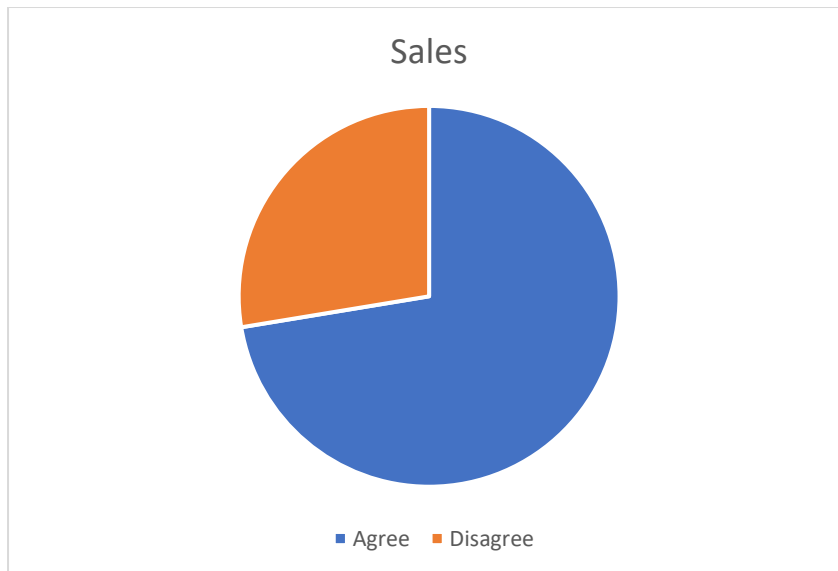
Agree : 4.6 %
Disagree : 95.4 %

6. I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.



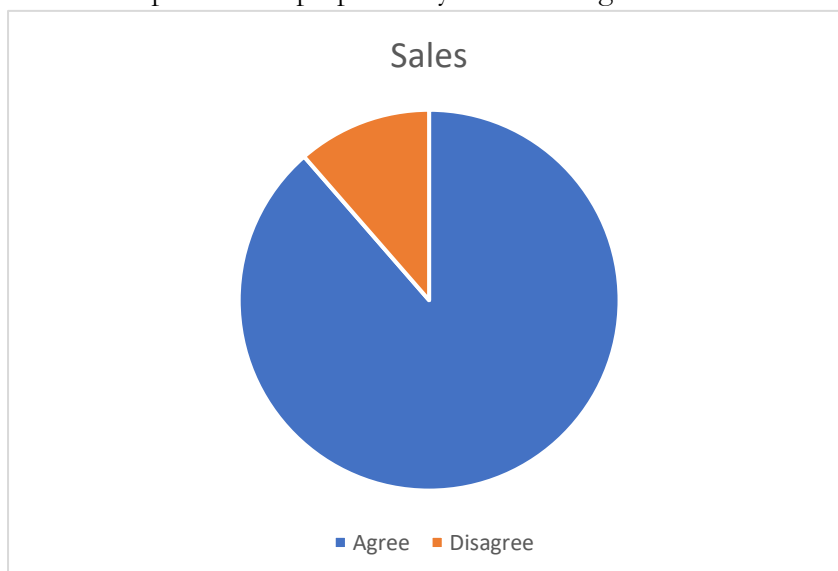
Agree : 2.8 %
Disagree : 97.2 %

7. I am usually at ease during tests in my English class.



Agree : 72.4 %
Disagree : 27.6 %

8. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.



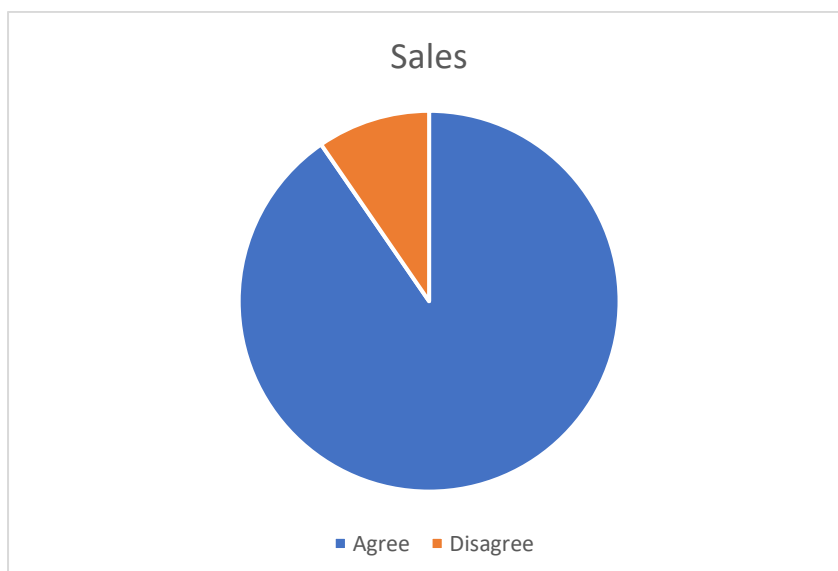
Agree : 88.6 %
Disagree : 11.4 %

9. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.



Agree : 42.4 %
Disagree : 57.6 %

10. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.



Agree : 90.4 %
Disagree : 9.6 %

DISCUSSIONS

Based on the theory of Huyen (2003), Boonkit (2010), Liu (2011) states that other common factors cause students, "Anxiety includes lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and being laughed at, lack of preparation and shame." Based on the interview, the researcher found that most of the students felt anxious when speaking English, mainly when they performed. Several causes make students feel nervous when speaking in front of the class. These factors are lack of vocabulary, confidence, fear of being wrong, and shame.

The researcher found that the dominant factor of the students was the fear of making mistakes. They are afraid of being laughed at by their friends if they make a mistake or fearful of making a mistake because it will make their friends receive wrong information. They don't want to embarrass themselves in front of their friends.

The second factor contributing to anxiety in speaking English is the lack of vocabulary. Many of them realized that they lacked language. It makes them anxious, causing more anxiety. The third factor that causes anxiety is a lack of self-confidence. Most of the students experience a lack of self-confidence. This reason is based on their lack of confidence, especially when speaking English. Although in fact, they look comfortable when said to personality. They just don't believe in themselves if they have to be the centre of attention in class by their friends.

Then the last anxiety factor is a shame. Shame is one of the causes of student anxiety. Based on in-depth interviews, many students experienced feelings of embarrassment when speaking. From this shyness, he won't say much in everyday tasks. In contrast, one of the students felt embarrassed to speak English because it was influenced by other factors, namely the lack of vocabulary.

As we know, some people are predisposed to feeling anxious about things (called trait anxiety), while others experience state anxiety in relation to some particular events or situations. Many learners may experience anxiety because of their perceived inability to adequately express their thoughts, or because they are afraid of being judged negatively or not being socially accepted.

In this section, I'd like to share some strategies for dealing with state anxiety, which might occur. This kind of anxiety might prevent students from enjoying practicing with peers, doing oral reports in class, or engaging in conversations with other English speakers (Woodrow, 2006).

Take a few Deep Breaths

This tip needs a bit of elaboration to be useful. If you have taken a voice training course, you know that breathing is fundamental to speaking. To release tension and slow down the heart rate, try relaxing the shoulders and breathing through the nose (noting the expansion of the diaphragm); holding the breath and tightening your stomach muscle, fists, and toes; and counting one-one thousand, two-two thousand, three-three thousand, four-four thousand, and five-five thousand. Then exhale through the mouth and release all tension. Repeat this a few times.

Start speaking after inhaling

Shortness of breath can exacerbate the nervousness or anxiety associated with speaking, so speak after inhaling a full breath.

Introducing Drama to Reduce Anxiety

Available online at <https://www.elitejournal.org/index.php/ELITE>

Drama improves the body language through practice and motivates to perform in group activities. Drama creates a communicative tension-free platform which can ensure optimal learning. (Miccoli, 2003; Gorjian et al., 2010). In the study of Atas (2014), a higher percentage of students reported that, introducing drama in their speaking class helped them to reduce tension and thereby improved confidence.

Building Sound Student-Teacher Relationship

A teacher can manage to create favorable atmosphere for learners to feel relaxed, by building a strong bond with them. Teachers should consider learners' sentiments, passions and curiosities to develop their self-esteem. (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017) say, "They should build a friendly relationship with their students".

Introducing English from the Beginning of Primary School Level

There has been a lot of controversy among researchers regarding age in relation to second language acquisition. However, many studies support, "The younger, the better", probably because the young learners perform better than the older ones in terms of second language acquisition including various language skills like morph syntax (Birdsong & Molis 2001, DeKeyser 2000, Johnson & Newport 1989, Patkowski 1980) and pronunciation. Therefore, introducing English from the beginning of primary school level is a vital need for the learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research and discussion above, the conclusion is that high speaking anxiety is felt by most students of Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at Islamic University of As-syafi'iyah. The researcher also found that the dominant factor of the students was the fear of making mistakes. Since this study limits its area to the causes and effects of speaking anxiety, further research could take an analysis of teachers' strategies for dealing with this problem. Learners need support to fight their fear of speaking in English. Instructors need to tackle the learners' anxiety with much delicacy and intelligence. New, effective, interesting and appropriate activities should be designed to assist the learners of 21st century.

SUGGESTIONS

At the end of the research, the writer puts some suggestion of the research. For the parties described below:

1. For Students

Students should always keep practicing their speaking skill to reduce their anxiety, so that when students be ready for the speaking class their not having their anxiety or at least they have minimize the anxiety of their own.

2. For Teacher

To assess and find out the student's speaking, It's important to remind your students to never expect any strategy to work magically the first time they try it. Suggest that they apply and experiment with different strategies a few times to find the routine that that best minimizes their anxiety associated with speaking.

3. Researchers

The author really hopes that this research be very helpful to others. So that the author can be more experience to create more useful article in the future.

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