

Effects of Anxiety on Students' Behavior and Classroom Environment in ESL/EFL Classrooms

Ammara Iqbal

Abstract

This research titled “Effects of Anxiety on Students’ Behavior and Classroom Environment in ESL/EFL Classrooms” is an attempt to study the effects of foreign/second language anxiety on students’ behavior and classroom environment in ESL classes. A sample of 100 adult learners from four different universities and degree awarding institutions of Lahore was selected. Using questionnaires for the survey, it has been observed that students’ social behaviors with their peers and their responses towards their teachers tend to get changed as a result of being anxious in ESL classes. The students become more silent, aloof and reticent, and start behaving in a more non-social and shy way when they are not relaxed in their ESL classrooms. It was discovered that their own beliefs and thoughts are the main reason for anxiety among them. Other factors like the presence of the teacher and peers also play a role, but not a very significant one when it comes to provoking of anxiety in ESL/EFL learners.

Keywords: EFL, ESL, FLCAS, FLA, anxiety

English Language in Pakistan has a long history. The British established their rule in sub-continent after their victory in the War of Independence in 1857 and so English language got the status of the language of the rulers and even after the passage of 90 years, when Pakistan got established in 1947, the impact and influence of English language continued. It still continues to be the official language of Pakistan and it is taught as a compulsory subject till Bachelors level in all the provinces of Pakistan and the masters programs of various disciplines include it as communication skills, business English, functional English etc.

Anxiety is defined by Spielberg (15) as a “subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness, and worry associated with an arousal of autonomic nervous system” (qtd. in Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope27). Academic anxiety and specially Foreign Language Anxiety is a recognized separate branch of anxiety. There are many factors such as parents’ education, students’ background, gender, exposure to media (both electronic and print e.g. TV, radio, newspapers, magazines), internet etc. that play a role in causing it. Under such circumstances, it becomes significantly important to see what relationship exists between anxiety and language learning and what steps can be taken to decrease anxiety in order to enhance the learning of English language.

Research Questions

The research questions this study aims to answer are:

1. How does the behaviors of students’ get changed (less motivation, low self-esteem, loss of confidence in interacting with others, feeling shy, poor relationships etc.) when they experience anxiety in learning English as a second language?

2. In a class room, what are its effects on general environment? Does it make it more teacher centered? Do the students become passive learners due to it?
3. Which particular classroom activity do the students find to be the most anxiety provoking? Is it asking/answering questions, giving presentations or participation in discussions?

Review

Following is a review of related literature.

Definition of Anxiety

Anxiety has been defined in various ways by psychologists. It has been defined as “the subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” (Spielberg 15). More specifically, David, & Hutchings claimed that general anxiety consists of two components: “worry and emotionality.” The term academic anxiety was introduced by Cassady as “a unifying formulation for the collection of anxieties learners experience while in schools” (1), so it can be said that academic anxiety is a combination of different forms of anxiety suffered by the students in their educational institutions and in an academic environment.

Foreign Language Anxiety

The specific kind of anxiety that learners experience while learning a new language has been termed as foreign language anxiety. Horwitz et al. claimed that FLA is “a phenomenon related to but distinguishable from other specific anxieties” (129). They also maintained that “just as anxiety prevents some people from performing successfully in science or mathematics, many people find foreign language learning, especially in classroom situations, particularly stressful” (125). Horwitz, Horwitz and

Cope view FLCA 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” (Horwitz & Young31).

So it can be concluded that researchers have defined foreign language anxiety as a psychological phenomenon which originates from the factors that are located both within and without an individual and it can manifest itself in both psychological and physiological ways. Reasons Causing Anxiety

Negative Self Perceptions

It has been found out that there are times when in a language class, there is nothing concrete or tangible that gives rise to learners' anxiety, and in fact, it is caused by their own self-perceptions and negative feelings towards the whole process of learning another language (Ferdous, Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, & Daley). These self-perceptions and negative feelings have absolutely nothing to do with their actual classroom experiences (Horwitz E. K.). Young also states that anxiety is caused by learner beliefs about language learning and personal and interpersonal anxiety.

Language Teacher

Language teacher plays a major role in the learning process of the students. It can be both encouraging and discouraging. Tseng believes the teacher plays a significant role. Some students don't have a lot of exposure to English outside the class, and if the teacher is not cooperative, it can prove to be a “serious obstacle” in the progress of their communicative ability and this can be a real problem for ESL learners as in the classroom, where they are expected to speak fluently (78).

Young also found that the beliefs held by the instructor as well as the interaction of instructor with the learner can have an effect on anxiety level of students. Zhang, H. states that the image of a dominating teacher is so strong in the minds of the learners, that even when the teacher gives positive feedback and encourages the students to participate, they treated those incentives as a “burden to force them to speak in the classroom” (32).

Classroom Environment

Following are the different areas of classroom environment that get affected by anxiety.

Overall Environment

Toth discovered that language classes are taken as ongoing exams by the anxious students which is anxiety provoking for them. Koch and Terrell found that learners were more comfortable participating in some activities, such as pair-work and personalized discussions, than others. Pair work has been suggested by Kitano also.

Tseng also states that some participants hold the stern and official setting of classroom responsible for their language anxiety. They feel more relaxed and comfortable in a classroom environment which follows the constructivists theory of learning as they highlight group activities and form learning groups in which both the teachers and the students play a part. Toth concluded that the learner anxiety was basically because of different situations, with features like the expectations of the teacher, if they could meet those expectations, the comparison with other class fellows and what is at stake for them in a language classroom.

Ferdous, Kondo & Ling, Marwanand Riasat also found out that classroom environment has an effect on students and they become conscious, the classroom environment can have fear of negative evaluation, pedagogical practices, teachers, speaking activities in class, lack of confidence, and lack of preparation and fear of failing the class also play a role. The teacher should try to create a “sense of community” in the classroom where everyone is considered equal, students are willing to help and support each other and difference in ability does not matter (*Kitano* 559).

Mistakes

The way errors are corrected in and outside the class also matters for the students. Some learners say that they find it degrading when they are corrected by teacher in class (Toth). He also found out that there are in fact a few factors that can be taken as “sources” of anxiety among language learners, “mistakes” being one of them (47). When errors are corrected explicitly by the teacher, it gives rise to more anxiety (Young). Also, at times, students become so conscious because of the fear of making mistakes that start making even more mistakes (Riasati). There are some teachers who believe it to be their responsibility to pinpoint each and every mistake that the student makes and they correct all mistakes of pronunciation spontaneously also, this gives rise to anxiety as students become very conscious about their spoken ability (Huang). But some students also reported that teachers’ attitudes were very positive and polite while correcting mistakes but most of them believed them to be “disturbing and discouraging” (*Bekleyen* 53).

Peers

The presence of other learners, or peers, also plays an important role in an ESL class. At times it happens that peers start evaluating others negatively without realizing that their negative evaluation has anxiety provoking effect also, and they become afraid of getting laughed at by their fellow student (Riasati). On the other hand, it has also been observed that some students are more relaxed and comfortable when they communicate with their fellow students as opposed to communication with the teacher (Bekleyen, Zhang H.). Some also said that their classmates are very supportive, and it is with their support only, that they are able to meet the challenges and achieve the goals of ESL learning (Bekleyen).

Classroom Activities

Some specific classroom activities and classroom related factors can be anxiety provoking for students (Young). Giving presentations in class has been reported to be highly anxiety inducing by most of the students. It was discovered that conversation classes were more anxiety provoking for students as compared with reading classes. They also have a fear of making mistakes while speaking, and they even panick because of it (Toth). According to Jones it's a "fear of appearing awkward, foolish and incompetent in the eyes of learners' peers or others"(31). The result of this fear is that students become quiet or reticent in classroom, instead of participating in the classroom discussions and activities, they prefer to remain silent and passively absorb knowledge(H. Zhang) although they have an intention to speak up and participate. Communication apprehension and test anxiety can also make the learners anxious (Horwitz et al.).Certain classroom

activities like speaking in front of the class can make them nervous (Ferdous, Riasati, Young). Donley reported that students feel anxious about speaking, taking written and oral tests and completing lengthy or difficult assignments.

Manifestations of Anxiety

Anxiety in students expresses itself in many forms. From physiological to psychological, its manifestations can be observed in ESL classrooms. Following is a description of ways in which anxiety manifests itself in ESL classrooms.

Physical Manifestations

Being visible, the physiological expression and indicators of anxiety can be easily illustrated. It is common for the teachers to see students who start making restless movements, squirming, playing with their hair, clothes, or stationery items like ruler, pencils etc. They, at times, even cannot talk easily, and start humming or stammering when they have to talk in the L2. As stated earlier, speaking activities are considered to be the most anxiety provoking for most of the students, so when they have to engage in an activity that involves speaking they feel “intimidated”, “dumb-founded” and anxious, as reported by Phillip’s students (19). Some might start laughing or smiling nervously, making attempts to avoid eye contact or using humor (Young). Young found out: “I hate when my teacher calls on me to speak. I freeze up and can’t think of what to say or how to say it...” (539).

Psychological Manifestations

In addition to physiological manifestations, anxiety among students in ESL classrooms can affect them psychologically too. Following are some of the ways in which it can affect them mentally.

Absorption of Knowledge

Investigations have showed the interference of anxiety at three different levels of cognition: Input, Processing and Output (Tobias). Keeping this model in consideration, the researcher observed that when students are anxious, the actual task goes in the background and they keep worrying over cognition that is directed towards self-humiliation. At the first level i.e. the input level, anxiety can create a mental barrier for students blocking their way to absorb the knowledge they receive. So the anxious students can have a real difficulty in understanding what the teacher says in the L2. Horwitz et al. even reported that a student said that he could hear “only a loud buzz” (126) when his teacher spoke in class, so the sounds could not be recognized. This validates the theory of Krashen who talked about anxiety being an affective filter, controlling the income of L2, so more the level of anxiety, less the level of absorption of language would be.

The second level of learning i.e. processing is related to the difficulty of task as well. If the task is not very difficult, effects of anxiety are not relevant to this stage of learning. So in a way they are co-related, as with the increase of difficulty of task, the effects of anxiety will also increase on processing (Tobias).

The final stage is the output one, where students have to use L2, and as it has been found, it is the stage where anxiety affects most of the students as speaking in the foreign/second language is the task they consider to be the most difficult one (Tobias).

Oral Performance

The oral performance of learners also gets affected by anxiety. Only talking

about the L2 can be a representation of anxiety in a considerable number of students (Young). It affects them more in situations which are evaluated such as oral tests, exams or presentations (MacIntyre, Phillips). This proves the existence of oral test anxiety among learners (Horwitz et al.) and this makes them have negative attitudes towards the learning process of foreign language.

Silence

Another effect of anxiety on learners can be silence. It becomes problematic for teachers when students do not speak in classes. There can be many reasons for learners' silence which can be no interest in classroom happenings, being unsure about the pronunciation of particular sounds in the L2, and general sense of uneasiness in L2 class. A large majority of the teachers 45% linked it to the low proficiency of language as held by the students.

The above review of the related literature about the issue of anxiety, its types, causes, effects as researched by different scholars belonging to different areas of the world show and prove that this is a very serious issue, and need to be looked into so that possible solutions can be discovered and applied, as there is need to eradicate this problem for making students' presence in ESL classrooms more relaxed and comfortable, which will also promote learning of ESL as many students cannot study and concentrate fully when they are uneasy, anxious or apprehensive in the classrooms.

Methodology

Research Design

This study is a mixed method study. To increase the validity and reliability of this study, it was decided to gather the quantitative data through questionnaires, whereas

qualitative data was collected through open ended questions, this way the data sources were triangulated.

Both forms of data were collected simultaneously and the information was integrated for the purpose of interpretation of the overall results. The quantitative data collected through closed ended questions was analysed statistically using SPSS, while qualitative data collected through open ended questions was analysed textually. The rationale for employing mixed methods is to make use of the positive characteristics and qualities of both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Sample

Adult learners from Lahore were selected. Purposive convenience sampling was adopted for this study, and a total of 100 students were included. Out of 100, 25 each were selected from four different colleges of Lahore including Lahore College for Women University, Lahore (LCWU), Government College University, Lahore (GCU), Government Islamia College for Women, Cooper Road, Lahore and Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College for Boys (M.A.O), Lahore. It was taken care of that only BS level students were approached whose age group was from 18-22 years. No gender discrimination was practiced. The rationale behind this strategy for the selection of sample was to make sure that students having diverse interests were selected, and no preference was given or no distinction was made on socio-economic background. The filling out of the questionnaire was considered equal to their consent to participate in this study.

Tools of Data Collection

Questionnaires were the main instrument for this study, which were used to conduct the survey, having three broad areas. First one intended to collect the basic information and demographics of the students i.e. their names, ages, institutes they are studying at, classes, their parents' education and the languages they speak at homes. After that, there were 30 questions in total, with 27 being closed ended and 3 being open ended. The closed ended questions were adopted from Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Elaine K. Horwitz (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SWAI) by Y. Cheng (Cheng, 2004). Likert scale (5 scale) was used and the options ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Procedure

The study was conducted through a survey based on questionnaires. The questionnaires had both open and close ended questions. It also included a short proforma to gather the demographic information of the learners filling it. After obtaining due permissions, BS level students were considered for this study. They were accessed in their free time and first of all they were given some information about the study being conducted. They were also made sure that their identities will be kept anonymous, and the data collected would be used for research purpose only.

Results and Discussion

As the questionnaires employed for data collection focused on different aspects of learning process of an L2 as experienced by learners, the analysis and description of results deals with different aspects individually. Following is a discussion of each

area based on results and takes into account as to how the learners have responded to different items of questionnaires.

Students' Own Thoughts and Perceptions

It has been observed and found out that many a times, there is nothing concrete or tangible happening or existing in the ESL classrooms that produces or gives rise to the anxiety level of the learners, and in fact it originates from their own thoughts and perceptions (Horwitz E.K, MacIntyre et al., Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, Toth). Keeping this finding in view, questions exploring students' own thoughts, feelings and perceptions towards the learning of ESL were included. Inconsistency with the previous researches, it was discovered that most of the students (49%) are always unsure of themselves when they participate in their English class, so maybe, the teacher cannot do anything to help this feeling. For its cure, as Tseng also found out, the students would have to help themselves, by convincing themselves to the point of getting rid of this feeling. Such students feel "embarrassed" when they are not able to say English words correctly in their classes. Supported by Khattak et al., Riasati, Tseng, and Young, it was found out that majority of the participants feels relaxed when they have done prior preparation (48%), so preparing well before the task or class is a successful strategy used by learners to keep them relaxed during their ESL class. However, there is a big number of such learners also (47%) who remain anxious even after preparation. So for these students, more strategies need to be employed as their sources of anxiety are strong. Also they do not feel bad when they volunteer answers in their English class and 52% are fine with it. Similarly, the presence of rules of English language also does not

scare the majority (56%) of the students.

Role of the Teacher

A teacher plays a very important role in an ESL classroom. The other researchers have agreed that his role is very significant (Riasati, Tseng, Toth). Keeping this significance in view, four questions in the questionnaire sought to get students' opinions about the role of the teacher in an ESL class and two aimed at knowing students' feelings towards the same issue i.e. when they are unable to understand what the teacher says in class, whether it makes them frightened or nervous. It was found out that although most of the students (56%) disagreed that they become frightened when unable to comprehend the teacher in ESL class, some of them (47%) agreed that they get nervous when they face the same problem, this is in line with the previous finding made by Ferdous. Also, majority of the students (45%) does not think that their teachers form opinions about them based on their comprehension of what is said, explained or taught in class, all this shows that students do not have any real complaints from the teacher when it comes to their problem of feeling anxious in class.

In consistence with the previous researches done by Riasati, Toth and Young it has been discovered that error correction is an important aspect of an ESL class. According to the findings of this study, most of the students (44%) disagreed making it clear that they do not think that the teachers are ready to correct all their mistakes, which is in line with the previous study by Bekleyen, showing that the teachers have been considerate of the fact that making mistakes is a normal and usual phenomenon.

Role of the Peers

In an ESL classroom, it is not just the teacher who plays an important role, but peers and their presence also matters a lot (Riasati, Toth, Young). Keeping this significance in view, the questionnaire included questions focused on this topic. In consistence with the findings of previous research (Donley, Jones, Riasati, Tseng, Young), the survey revealed that most of the students (52%) feel very self-conscious about speaking in front of other students but it has to do with familiarity as well, as 65% of them said that if they know the students, they would feel more comfortable speaking in front of them. In line with the research by Tseng, it was discovered that familiar faces make students feel more relaxed as compared to speaking in front of total strangers, and probably that is why, as discovered by Zhang, H. also, 48% are comfortable with the idea that their fellow students correct their mistakes. Jones and Toth agreed that students get very worried about making mistakes in a classroom which has to do with commonly held beliefs and opinions about making mistakes, and that is why 68% of the students said that they would feel more comfortable if it was commonly understood that making mistakes is a normal phenomenon and everyone does it.

It has been observed in the previous researches that some activities in classroom are preferred by the students over others, e.g. most of the students preferred working in small groups or pairs over working individually (Koch and Terrell, Young). This study discovered that a large majority i.e. 81% students said that they enjoy class when they work in pairs. Also 68% of the students said that they are less anxious in class when they know that other students are also answering questions.

Some students (43%) feel shy when they speak to more fluent speakers of English language in their class, this might have to do with several different kinds of reasons, for instance, students opinion that others might think bad of them, as having less ability and confidence, or it can be taken as a matter of saving one's 'face' Tseng in class as well. In consistence with the previous researches that aimed to know the role of the classroom environment in promoting or alleviating anxiety among students (Kondo & Ling, Marwan, Riasati), this study also found out that a high percentage of students (41%) expressed that the more efficient speakers make fun of them behind their back.

Classroom Activity

As agreed by researchers previously, certain classroom activities and tasks can be specifically anxiety provoking for students (Young). So this study also incorporated this issue. In line with the research done by Young, it was discovered that almost an equal number of students agree (39%) and disagree (38%) when they were asked if asking or answering questions makes them nervous, and most (52%) of them wished to be given a choice to answer a question instead of being called on to answer.

Almost an equal number of students agreed (46%) and disagreed (45%) with the statement that giving presentations make them the most nervous while planned and scheduled debates invite more willing speakers according to 62% of the students. So once again the previous findings (Young, Riasati, Donley) are confirmed that oral activities and tasks requiring oral performance of the students make them more nervous.

Grading

In many previous studies it has been noted that students are very conscious

about the grades being assigned to them and also of being marked negatively (Horwitz, MacIntyre & Gardener). Grading and the knowledge that students are going to be graded on their performance also makes most (54%) of them nervous, the same finding was also made by Young.

Best Method of Error Correction

After the first twenty-seven close ended questions, there were three open ended questions in the questionnaire as well. Out of those three questions, the first open ended question asked the respondents' opinions about the best method of error correction. The students suggested various methods, some of which are for the teachers, and some students also suggested ways for self-correction of the learners. They have been analysed below, and after a description of caution to be observed by the teacher, the suggested ways students should use for self-correction have been described and analysed.

Self-confidence

It was discovered that most of the students were very conscious about their self-confidence. For this purpose, the students suggested that there should not be any at-the-spot correction in an ESL classroom, as that can be very upsetting for the students, especially during the presentations, previous researchers have discovered the same, (Adeel, Ferdous, Khattak et al., Young). So, it was suggested that mistakes should be corrected after the class, or at least, after the presentations are over. Moreover, the students said that they would not like it if their mistakes were mentioned in front of the whole class, this would also bring harm to their self- image. In consistence with the previous work by Phillips, another way suggested by the students would be either rephrasing the sentence by the teacher or by asking the student to rephrase his sentence

whenever a mistake is made. This would encourage him to look for the mistake himself, giving him confidence that he can learn autonomously as well.

Comfort Level

In consistence with the findings of the researchers in the past (Kitano, Kondo & Ling, Marwan, Riasati, Zhang, H.), it was suggested by the students that the teachers should increase their comfort level in ESL classrooms. Teacher can resort to different strategies for this purpose, for example, as also suggested by Ferdous, they should try to keep their tempers in control. Also, the teacher should be conscious about the speed of talking when delivering the lecture generally and especially while discussing mistakes with a student, the same issue has been noticed by Adeel also. They must try to avoid intimidation and sarcasm (Ferdous).

More Practice and Tasks

As also discovered by Adeel, Riasati and Young, the respondents said that more practice of spoken English helps in correction of mistakes as well as boosting confidence. For this purpose, extra classes should also be arranged for those students who need them.

For making more practice possible for students, teachers can also use the audio-visual aids. The students can be asked to solve exercises on the internet, or in the power-point presentations prepared by the teachers, while specifically developed activities can be given to students for homework in flash drives or through email. In addition to audio-visual aids, printed material like books and magazines can also be used. The students should be encouraged to read the books other than their syllabus books as well.

Equal Chances

In an ESL class, the teacher must make it sure that an equal number of chances to participate are provided to all students, regardless of any discrimination on the basis of fluency or accuracy. The problem of fluent students outshining the ones who are not so fluent can be avoided by asking for responses individually, but after giving them some time to prepare for this activity.

Self-correction

In addition to these methods, there are a few ways that students can use to correct their own mistakes. They can use sources like internet to help themselves. Also, it was suggested by a student that one should watch English movies, and whenever possible, movies with subtitles should be watched as they also help in making one know the structures of language, while making one know the pronunciation of the language too. As supported by Tseng, another student suggested listening to English songs, as they would also help them know and use better language. Another way of self-correction as suggested by the students is that they should be cooperative and helpful towards each other. The students who collectively wish to improve their fluency would speak in English only when they are together. In addition to practice for fluency, when a student has a problem regarding any word or concept, then too one can ask one's friends for help. This way, there would be an environment of cooperation and help and everyone would get a chance to learn.

Anxiety Provoking Source: Teacher, Peers or Your Own Thoughts

The second last question asked as to what was the source in class that students believed to be the most anxiety provoking one. It was found out that out of the three options given against

this question, 40% students expressed that they believe their own thoughts to play the most dominant role. This is consistent with the previous researches also (Horwitz ,MacIntyre et al. Onwuegbuzie, Bailey & Daley, Toth). 19% students expressed that the teacher makes them nervous by even his/her presence, 15% said that it's the presence of other class fellows that disturbs them by making them more nervous, they do it by either expressing their opinions openly about them, or by making fun of them behind their back. So it can be said and concluded that the students believe that their own thoughts, which make them nervous and conscious about the language play the most important role.

Any Suggestion?

The last question of the questionnaire asked if the students would like to give a suggestion regarding teaching of English language or any other aspect of an ESL classroom that would help in reducing anxiety levels of students. Following is an analysis of students' suggestions and important points have been highlighted.

Friendly and Humble Attitude

It has been observed previously also by Adeel. That Pakistani ESL classrooms are not friendly, and they are unwelcoming to the point of being threatening. In such circumstances, it is the teacher who can bring a change, and according to this research, the students suggested that the teachers should have friendly and polite attitudes in classrooms. As suggested by Khattak et al. also, the teacher should recognize anxiety as a problem that the students face, and then attempts should be made to alleviate it. In consistence with the research carried out by Riasati, it was discovered that students believe that if the teacher is very strict or stays at a great distance from the students, the

students will not feel comfortable to ask for any clarifications which is going to prove a big obstacle in their learning process.

Equal Opportunities

Adeel and Risati found out that teachers should use the methodology of providing equal opportunities to all the students in class, and in consistence with their research, this research also found out that the students expressed that equal number of opportunities for participation should be provided to all students in class. The teacher can resort to such strategies as asking students to answer or respond one by one, or, the teacher can assign individual tasks to all the students which are to be presented in class after completion. This way, as supported by Riasati, all the students would get equal chances to participate.

Positive Reinforcement

The importance and significance of positive reinforcement cannot be denied, students perform better when instead of criticism, they receive encouragement from their teacher (Huang). Zhang H. has also discussed in his work that the teacher can reduce the anxiety level of the learners by providing positive feedback and the same was highlighted by the students in their responses as well. The teacher can tap on the back or shoulder of the student to show appreciation (Tseng). Students want specific and visible signs of positive reinforcement, which can be a nod, a smile or an expression like “good”, the same finding was made by Bekleyen also.

Use of L1 and Easy Language

As suggested by Cummins previously, this study found out that the students said that the teacher must not make it a point to use only L2 in class, refraining from the use

of L1 of the students totally and completely. They said that the teacher should use L1 also occasionally in class, remaining vigilant to the needs of the students, as and when required by them.

Conclusion

Looking at the results and analysis of data dealing with the anxiety causing sources, it can be concluded that most of all, it is students' own thoughts, beliefs and opinions that make them nervous. Although the presence of teacher and fellow students play a role, but most of the times, it is just students' perceived notion that they would play a negative role or a discouraging one. In reality, most of the times, they get nervous owing to their own negative thoughts and opinions.

Also, it was seen, as consistent with previous researches, that students believed giving presentations to be the most difficult and anxiety causing activity, whereas asking or answering questions was seen as an activity that some students want to avoid, while others want to ask or answer questions voluntarily. However, it was expressed unanimously that they liked working in pairs or groups, and on the topics of their own choice which should be interesting as well.

It was also seen that classes do get dominated by more fluent and efficient speakers of English language. This problem needs urgent attention of the teachers, and they must adopt strategies which would give equal number of opportunities to all students, without concentrating on one group only, and even extra classes should be arranged for the ones who require more practice than others, so that they can be brought on equal level with the rest of the students in an ESL classroom.

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