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Causal Relationship between School-Based Oral Performance with Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation

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Abstract

This study investigates the causal relationship between school-based oral performance with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. The school-based oral performance is the school-based oral evaluation (SBOE) results in the mid-term examination 2017 of 302 form four students from the Putrajaya Federal Territory government secondary schools in Malaysia. It is a cause and effect relationship between the school-based oral performance (independent variable) of the students with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation (dependent variables). The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of SBOE by determining the strength of the causal relationship between the SBOE performance with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. This is a quantitative study which is using MANOVA analysis method. Data were collected by using FLCAS. The Students had scored high marks in the SBOE. The effect size of the causal relationship had shown the partial eta-squared value of 0.106 which is considered quite large. The mean levels of communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation were low. This study had shown the effectiveness of SBOE which had proved that it can lower down the level of communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

Keywords: Causal Relationship, School-Based Oral Performance, Communication Apprehension, Test Anxiety and Fear of Negative Evaluation.

Introduction

The statistic from the Ministry of Education Malaysia shows that 80% of the secondary school students have passed in the English subject in *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* or SPM (Malaysian Certificate of Education) but they cannot communicate well in English (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 2017). According to the previous studies, most language instructors and teachers agreed that many Malaysian students face problems when communicating in English (Wan Zumusni, et. al., 2010). They also mentioned that students feel insecure, awkward, shy and apprehensive when they were asked to communicate in English in the classroom even at the university level. Perhaps, many students are lack of confidence to communicate in English language especially for the academic purposes and it includes students who managed good grades in SPM.

Theory has proved that language anxiety has found to be the main factor which is affecting language learning and the most powerful predictor on the students' target language performance (Liu and Huang, 2011). The affective filter hypothesis of Krashen's classic theory (1982) has proved that language anxiety acts as an effective filter and impedes language learning. Inputs are prevented from reaching the language acquisition device (LAD) in the brain to those who are not proficient in the target language (Krashen, 1982). Therefore, it is assumed that students who experience language anxiety could not speak well in the English language even to those who had scored well in the English subject. Language anxiety comprises of communication apprehension (CA), test anxiety (TA) and fear of negative evaluation (FNE) (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). Based on their theories, language performance and language anxiety are negatively related to each other. However, previous studies revealed inconsistency results and findings. There is no a clear-cut relationship between English performance and language anxiety. Several studies had consistently revealed that language anxiety can impede foreign/second language production for instance English performance (Akkakoson, 2016; Zhang, 2014). But, there were some studies had proved that there were no relationship between English performance and language anxiety or between language anxiety and English performance (Debreli and Demirkan, 2016).

This study investigates the form four students from the secondary schools that have the highest number of students passed in English subject in SPM for the last 10 years (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 2017) in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of the school-based oral evaluation (SBOE) by determining the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. In other words this study is to investigate whether the SBOE performance of the students have given any effect to the students' language anxiety. It will provide a base for future research for the Ministry of Education Malaysia in the implementation of a new English curriculum. So far, only a few studies had been done in Malaysian schools up to this point. Based on the researcher critical investigating of the literatures at the time of this study, there are still gaps to investigate the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance and language anxiety in the government secondary schools that have the highest number of students passed in English subject in Malaysia (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 2017).

The objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To determine the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance with communication apprehension.
2. To identify the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance with test anxiety.
3. To justify the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance with fear of negative evaluation.

The researcher outlined hypotheses for this study. The development of the related hypotheses are as follow:

H_{o1}: There is no significant causal relationship between school-based oral performance with communication apprehension.

H_{o2}: There is no significant causal relationship between school-based oral performance with test anxiety.

H_{o3}: There is no significant causal relationship between school-based oral performance with fear of negative evaluation.

Operational Definition

Causal Relationship

This study defines the causal relationship as the change in one event (dependent variable) is the result of the occurrence of the other event (independent variable). In other words, the change in the independent variable causes changes in causation relationship between school-based oral performance with language anxiety as dependent variable (communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation). It is a cause and effect relationship between school-based oral performance (independent variable) with language anxiety (dependent variable). It is said as causal relationship when the mean value of the dependent variable increases or decreases, as it is resulted of the independent variable. Therefore, in this study the mean level of communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation is resulted from the causation indicated from the school-based oral performance of the students in the mid-term English examination 2017.

In conclusion, the causation indicates that the mean level of language anxiety is affected by the school-based oral performance because of the high or low SBOE results in the mid-term English examinations 2017. The strength of the causal relationship is determined by the effect size in the analysis.

School-Based Oral Performance

The School-Based oral performance is the form four students' School-Based Oral Evaluation (SBOE) result in the mid-term examinations 2017. SBOE measures students' proficiency in speaking the English language, listening comprehension skill, and testing the students' ability to comprehend speech in daily situations (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 2017). It comprises 30% of the marks in the English subject for form four and five students of the government secondary

schools. It is conducted twice a year, from April to June and from July to September. Table 1 shows the bands for oral assessment.

Table 1: Bands for Oral Assessment

Level	Band	Marks
Excellent	9 – 10	25 - 30
Good	6 – 8	20 - 24
Satisfactory	4 – 5	15 - 19
Weak	2 – 3	10 - 14
Very weak	1	1 - 9

Source: Malaysia, Ministry of Education (2017)

Communication Apprehension

Communication Apprehension is a type of shyness characterised as fear of, or anxiety about, communicating with people (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p. 127).

Test Anxiety

Test anxiety is the type of performance anxiety resulting from a fear of failure in an academic evaluation setting (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p. 127). Normally it happens before, during and after the test.

Fear of Negative Evaluation

Fear of negative evaluation is the apprehension about others' evaluations, avoidance of evaluative situations (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986, p. 127).

Oral Language

Oral language is the foundation for the development of literacy skills and considered to be a strong indicator of reading, writing, and overall academic achievement (Bayetto, 2015). They found that the way for the development of literacy in a second language is through strong oral language skills. Oral language facility is one of the key influences in young people's reading and writing (Bayetto, 2015).

Literature Review

Oral English Language

SBOE is an assessment for the oral language which comprises 30% of the marks in the English language. A few countries have introduced oral language at the early years of education. An Education Review Office (ERO) in New Zealand has investigated how effectively young children's oral language learning and development were supported in their early years of education (New Zealand, Education Review Office, 2017). The findings highlighted the importance of supporting

the oral language learning and development from a very early age. In New Zealand, the national curriculum statement for early learning services, *Te Whāriki*, provides a framework for strengthening young children's oral communication knowledge, dispositions and skills. In Ireland, at every level in the primary and secondary schools curriculum, the development of oral language is given an importance as great as that of reading and writing. The integrated language process has an equal weighting of them whereas in Malaysia oral assessment is only 30% of the English subject. Oral language is important in Ireland because oral language is about communicating with other people at most basic level. Ministry of Education, Saskatchewan (2013) confirmed that the development of literacy as it relates to oral language development depends on the breadth and depth of life experiences, the ability to hear and speak and also interaction of children with adults who cares about their language skills and encourage them to speak through conversation. According to the research made by the Ministry of Education, Saskatchewan (2013), a child who enters a school with low levels of oral language skills will most likely take longer time to learn how to read and write than a child with better oral language skills. Therefore, the Ministry has developed an oral language as it plays a critical role in the development of literacy and its acquisition lays a foundation for learning reading and writing skills.

A study made by Keong, Yassin and Abdulrahman (2014) had proved that oral language or oral communication is very important. They investigated oral communication problem among 40 Yemeni high school students studied English as a foreign language at the Arab International School in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Results revealed that the oral communication problem among the students because of three factors. Firstly, teachers were neglected the practical side of the language but focused on the grammatical aspect. Secondly, the curriculum was not designed to practice oral communication. Thirdly, most of the students were not confident to communicate in English inside and outside of the classroom.

Previous Studies

Review of the previous studies showed that language anxiety had been widely investigated in educational research. Foreign language researchers and educators had always tried to find out the factors that may create a healthy environment for learning a foreign and second language (Oda, 2011). Various studies by previous researchers in this area demonstrated that inconsistency remains because of the different results and findings. According to Tran (2012), from the time the theory was introduced, the language anxiety research had been unable to establish a clear-cut relationship between foreign language achievement and language anxiety. Some studies found the positive correlation between them, but others found the negative one or no correlation. Language anxiety does not seem to depend on the proficiency level of the students (Catagay, 2015). Therefore, the relationship between English test performance and language anxiety is still under debate. In spite of the significant and the substantial volume of research conducted in this field, however, some very basic, fundamental questions about L2-related language anxiety still appear to be unanswered. This study deals with one of these unresolved questions in the study of language anxiety associated with second language (L2) learning. Specifically, this study addresses the question whether students who have passed with good results in the SBOE has affected certain levels of language anxiety in communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. On the other hand, the performance

in English is always associated with language anxiety (Ali and Wong, 2017). The performance in this study is the students' performance in SBOE in the mid-term English examination 2017. Based on the secondary and primary data, this study could also determine the effectiveness of the SBOE in the English language. So far, there has been no discussion found on students from the government secondary schools which have the highest number of passed in English subject in SPM in Malaysia (MOE, 2017).

Previous studies revealed that the participants experienced language anxiety because of low English proficiency, lack of practice, competition and task difficulty which might vary from context to context (Yahya, 2013). McCroskey and Baldwin (1984) mentioned that sources of language anxiety are due to lack of practice, lack of proficiency in the target language, insecurity and programmed thought pattern. Debreli and Demirkan (2016) found that the participants became anxious in speaking when they did not have enough practice in speaking, did not have a good English education before entering a university, afraid of making mistakes, did not trust themselves while speaking English and afraid of potential reactions of the other students regarding their speaking performance. Akkakoson (2016) found that 282 Thai university students of English as a foreign language experienced moderate level of language anxiety and the limited repertoire of students' vocabulary was found to be the major source of speaking anxiety (communication apprehension). The findings might help Thai EFL university students aware of the factors impede English speaking process. Dogan and Tuncer (2016) found that the participants experienced moderate level of language anxiety in speaking but around 70% of the students had passed in the English test.

Many studies found that communication apprehension had been identified as a contributing factor for learners' inability to communicate well in English. In Turkey, most of the public schools did not promote oral communication in the English courses (Mestan, 2017). Majority of the students learned English as part of the curriculum in the classroom only (Mestan, 2017). Mestan (2017) found that the language anxiety was the barrier in teaching and learning English because oral language was not promoted during the English language class. Therefore, students did not score good results in the English language. He also mentioned that the students were not exposed to oral language and the anxiety level in speaking the English language was high. Results showed that when the anxiety of the students increased, their fluency level decreased. Uyanik, Cobek, Basturk & Ugur (2016) revealed that language anxiety was negatively correlated with GPA. Their findings are in line with this study when they discovered that students with high anxiety were those who had lower GPA. Azelin, et. al. (2015) reported that the communication apprehension of the undergraduate students studying at a few public universities in Malaysia was at high level. The study suggested the language lecturers need to be aware of the fear of being evaluated. It is true because the highest mean level in this study showed that students felt self-conscious when speaking English in front of other students. Their studies were consistent with Mahfuzah, et. al. (2014). They found that students from UiTM, Perak, Malaysia experienced high level of communication apprehension. She reported that speaking was proven to be the most stressful one. Without proper guidance from the language instructors, many students felt lost when they were asked to speak in the classroom because speaking was the most anxiety-

provoking (Mahfuzah, et. al. 2014). They found that there was a negative relationship between speaking performance and communication apprehension.

Najarzadegan (2016) revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between test anxiety and EFL students' test performance. The study was carried out at the Iran Language Institute, Isfahan Branch, Iran. Teachers' role and low stress environment were important to avoid language anxiety (Najarzadegan, 2016). He mentioned that teachers should enhance the classroom atmosphere by introducing a low-stress and relax testing environment. Teachers also should increase students' self-assurance, by giving smiling face to students and perform non-verbal behavior. Therefore, the students felt confident on the examination day and they would be able to score good grades. A study made by Salari and Monzade (2015) showed that there was a negative correlation between test anxiety and English test score at Shokouh Language Institute of Kerman, in Iran. In other words, the lower the English score obtained by the students, the higher the level of test anxiety experienced by them. Another study in 2014 made by Mohamadi, Alishashi and Soleimani also revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between English test results and test anxiety. They published a paper from the University of Tehran, Iran. Students experienced test anxiety if they were in the test situation (Tenenbaum, 2012). A study was made on third grade students in two elementary public schools in a small urban district within the south eastern United States. The teachers selected the participants who experienced test anxiety by screening the checklist of the test anxiety symptoms. The symptoms were expressing poor performance, feelings of upset stomach, nausea of headache, and dramatic changes in mood. The students should avoid the test anxiety by taking the test as an opportunity for communication and skills improvement. Their studies had found that there was a significant negative relationship between oral communication and test anxiety. Tenenbaum, (2012) also had found the same but suggested that the test was an opportunity for communication and skills improvement.

Fear of negative evaluation was the main cause of language anxiety (Tzoannopoulou, 2016). Sources of fear of negative evaluation included disapproval by other, making mistakes, leaving unfavourable impression of others and negative judgment. A study made by Tzoannopoulou (2016) at Greek University, revealed that there was negative correlation between fear of negative evaluation and language performance. He found that negative evaluation was the highest anxiety compared to communication apprehension and language performance. Zia and Norrihan (2015) also found that fear of negative evaluation had scored the highest level of language anxiety compared to communication apprehension and test anxiety among the first year undergraduate students from Nangarhar University, Afghanistan. Amiri and Ghonssoly (2015) also found that students had scored the highest level in fear of negative evaluation. Results revealed that the fear of negative evaluation affected the students' English test achievement among medical students at Gonabad University of Medical Sciences, Iran. Marfuzah, et. al. (2013) found that L2 students at Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) Perak, Malaysia experienced high mean level of fear of negative evaluation. Classroom activities might develop a sense of competitiveness among each other. Shabani (2012) found that fear of negative evaluation was the highest level of language anxiety and he considered it as a serious source of language anxiety. The students feared of failing in the classroom, feared of forgetting the vocabularies and

structures, and unpreparedness of teachers' questions. The main sources of provoking fear of negative evaluation was fear of saying wrong things, fear of doing wrong things, unfavourable impressions on others and negative judgment by others.

Method

Participants

The participants were 30% of the number of students who had passed the SBOE in the mid-term examination 2017. Table 2 illustrates the sample size of the participants. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison, (2001) the sample size should be 278 if the population is 1000. The sample size in this study is about the number of which had been proposed by them as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2: Sample Size

Total No. of Schools	Total of Form 4 Students	No. of Students (Passed in SBOE)	Sample Size
11	1,250	1007	302

Instruments

This study is using the replicated, adapted and translated FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986, 1991). It consists of 33 items in a 5-point Likert scale that range from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". It has Part A and B. Part A is designed to obtain respondents' demographic information including age, gender, race, name of school, and mid-term English examination results. Part B contains 33 items are replicated, adapted and translated from Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope's (1986, 1991) FLCAS questionnaire. FLCAS is the most commonly and widely used tool which has been used to measure the foreign language anxiety until to date. It was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope in 1986. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope's theory of foreign language anxiety has been widely accepted with subsequent research acknowledging the uniqueness of foreign language anxiety and providing evidence that the FLCAS is a reliable tool (Aling, 2016). FLCAS has been found out to be a valid and reliable (Horwitz, Hrowitz & Cope, 1986, 1991). They found that FLCAS has a test-retest reliability results indicated that the initial and follow-up test results are highly correlated with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.98. Due to several reasons namely cultural elements, leaners' English language proficiency levels, cross-cultural issues, differences in teaching and learning contexts, it is necessary to design a reliable and valid version of FLCAS in different languages (Aydin, 2016).

This study has adapted and translated FLCAS into Malay version in order to measure language anxiety in the Malaysian context. Taking into account that this study is conducted based on learning English as a second language, the term 'foreign language' in the questionnaires used in the original FLCAS had been replaced with 'English Language'. However, the name of FLCAS has

not been changed. The translated FLCAS into Malay version had been validated by experts who had translated it into Malay version and translated it back into English version.

FLCAS has been adapted, adopted and translated into a few languages such as Turkish, Croatian, Arabic, Hungarian, Spanish and Japanese. In Turkey, Aydin, et. al. (2016) had translated FLCAS into Turkish version by five independent Turkish translators. Result showed that the Turkish version seemed to have a higher level of reliability coefficient than the English version. Cronbach's Alpha for the Turkish version is 0.86. Aydin, et. al. (2016) concluded that the Turkish version of FLCAS has obtained the construct validity. The study recommended that the Turkish version of FLCAS is an appropriate instrument to measure the levels of foreign language anxiety among Turkish EFL learners (Aydin, et. al. 2016). Tepeh (2016) had conducted a study at a grammar school in South Croatia. She had adapted and translated FLCAS (1986) into Croatian version. Result showed that the internal consistency of Croatian version (FLCAS) is Cronbach's alpha 0.88. Al-Saraj (2014) has modified and translated FLCAS into Arabic version which is called Arabic Foreign Language Anxiety Questionnaire (AFLAQ). Result showed that the internal consistency of the AFLAQ is Cronbach's alpha 0.89. Toth (2008) adapted FLCAS for the use of Hungarian EFL learners. It was translated to Hungarian language and back-translated to English language. The coefficient of the scale completed by 117 English majors turned out to be Cronbach's alpha 0.93 and 0.92 for 66 non-English majors. Cebrenos (1998) had translated FLCAS into Spanish version. Result revealed that the internal consistency is Cronbach's alpha 0.8164. Aida (1994) adapted FLCAS in order to establish reliability and validity as a measuring tool of language anxiety for Japanese students. The internal consistency of FLCAS in Japanese is Cronbach's alpha 0.92. Cao (2011) was able to confirm three factor model of foreign language classroom anxiety scale (FLCAS) is composed of three domains: communication, test anxiety, fear of negative evaluation are empirically derived through factor analysis and further confirmed having the best fit for language anxiety observation. In this study, the internal consistency of FLCAS in Malay version from the pilot study is Cronbach's alpha 0.86. The Cronbach's alpha value is the same as Turkish version of Aydin, et. al. (2016).

Data Collection

A random sampling technique was employed in order to enable this study to generalize the population (Cresswell, 2012). The steps taken in the data collection processes were as follow:

1. The permission to collect data at the schools was obtained from the Ministry of Education Malaysia
2. In the implementation of data collection, the researcher called the Principals of the schools and made appointments with them in order to distribute the questionnaires.
3. Participants were randomly selected from form four male and female students who had passed in the mid-term examination in 2017, in each government secondary school in Putrajaya Federal Territory. At the same time the number of students who had passed in the mid-term examination was also obtained from the schools and to be used as a sampling frame for this study.

4. 30% of the participants were selected from the sampling frame. For example, if the sampling frame consists of 1000 students and this study decided to take only 300 students.
5. Once the respondents had been identified, the English teachers proceeded to the classroom during the time when the students had their class session. The researcher was not allowed to go to the classrooms.
6. The respondents answered the questionnaire at their convenient time after the English teachers had finished teaching. The study employed the above method in order to allow respondents to answer the questionnaires without any pressure so whatever response provided reflects the true opinion from the respondents. Therefore, the response bias due to the time constraint and the presence of researcher would not occur.

Data Analysis

This study is using one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in data analysis. The procedure for performing a one-way MANOVA is to determine the cause and effect relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable. One-way MANOVA is the most suitable analysis for this study which based on one categorical independent and more than one dependent variables (Chua, 2014; Pallant, 2013). The dependent variables are communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. SPSS Statistics produces many different tables in its one-way MANOVA analysis (Pallant, 2013). This study shows only the main tables required to understand the results from the one-way MANOVA.

Results

Table 3 reveals the students' SBOE results in the mid-term examination 2017. In order to explain of the complete output, this study had interpreted the main required assumptions in MANOVA namely assessment of outliers, normality test, lavene's test, mean value of the descriptive analysis and effect size.

SBOE Results

All the question papers in the mid-term examination were set by the examination syndicate, Ministry of Education Malaysia. It is a national examination for all the government secondary schools in Malaysia. Results show that 74 students scored "excellence", 171 students scored "good", 56 students scored "satisfactory" and only one student scored "weak".

Table 3: Oral Performance

	F	%
25 - 30 Excellent	74	24.5
20 - 24 Good	171	56.6
15 - 19 Satisfactory	56	18.5
10 - 14 Weak	1	3
1 - 9 Minimum Result	-	-
Total	302	100

Level of Language Anxiety

Table 4 illustrates the mean value for the language anxiety level.

Table 4: Mean Value for Language Anxiety Level

Anxiety Level	Anxiety Level (Range)
Low	From 1.00 to 2.33
Moderate	From 2.34 to 3.66
High	From 3.67 to 5.00

This study has divided the level of language anxiety into three levels as what has been determined by Lim and Mardziah (2014). The level is the most appropriate and applicable to this study because they have utilized the level in a Malaysian context and have been used in measuring the level of language anxiety for form four students at the secondary schools.

Outliers

This study is accommodating the outliers. This tactic assumes that the procedure is robust against outliers, i.e. that the analysis is not distorted by their pressures. The outliers are illustrated under the normal distribution section.

Normal Distribution

Data are considered normally distributed if the absolute value of its skewness falls within the range of -1.5 to 1.5 (Awang, 2015); Mohamad et. al., 2016). The skewness in this study falls within the range of -1.5 to 1.5 except for items TA8 and TA11 which are considered as outliers (see Table 5).

Table 5 shows the assessment of normality for all items in FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991).

Table 5: The Assessment of Normality for All Items

Item	Skewness
CA1	.557
CA4	1.322
CA9	.973
CA14	.488
CA15	1.275
CA18	.417
CA24	1.060
CA27	.818
CA29	1.272
CA30	.411
CA32	.810
TA 3	.546
TA 5	.872
TA 6	.785
TA 8	2.741
TA10	1.277
TA11	3.205
TA12	.800
TA16	.856
TA17	.783
TA20	.627
TA21	.732
TA22	.130
TA25	1.024
TA26	.615
TA28	.269
FNE2	.679
FNE7	.935
FNE13	.683
FNE19	.734
FNE23	.955
FNE31	.720
FNE33	.598

Levene's Test

Levene's test of equality of error variances is applied to check the assumption of homoscedasticity for each dependent variable. If the p-value is less than the level of significance 0.05, meaning that all the variances are not the same. It is indicated that the variable has violated

the assumption of the equality of variance (Pallant, 2013). In this study the significance value of communication apprehension is 0.74, test anxiety is 0.49 and fear of negative evaluation is 0.33. The p-value is more than the level of significance 0.05. None of the variables recorded insignificance values, therefore, this study has not violated this assumption because the significance values are more than 0.05.

Mean Value

Table 6: Mean Value

GENDER	CA	TA	FNE
Male	1.77	1.72	1.81
Female	1.77	1.70	1.80

Results revealed that from 51.1% to 62.6% of the students disagreed and from 27.8% to 47.7% strongly disagreed that they experienced communication apprehension. 49% to 67.5% of the students disagreed and from 24.2% to 47.4% strongly disagreed that they experienced test anxiety. 55% to 67.2% of the students disagreed and from 23.8% to 39.4% strongly disagreed that they experienced fear of negative evaluation. Majority of the students had scored high marks in SBOE. 81.1% of them had scored “excellent” and “good” in SBOE in the mid-term examination 2017. The mean value for the communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation of the male and female students were low (see Table 6).

Effect Size

This study concluded that there is a significant causal relationship between school-based oral performance of the students with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. The decision is made based on the effect size. According to American Psychological Association (2001), in order to fully understand the importance of the findings, it is necessary to include the strength of the relationship of the effect size. The effect size is based on the value of the partial eta-squared (Pallant, 2013). The strength of the causal relationship between the school-based oral performance with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation is 0.106. For one-way MANOVA, it is recorded that the large effect size in the partial eta-squared is the value of 0.14 (Whitehead, Julious, Cooper and Campbell, 2015). Therefore, it can be confirmed that the effect size in this study is quite large.

This study had successfully rejected the null hypothesis. The results in this study is said to be statistically significant. The students with high performance in the SBOE had caused low mean level of language anxiety. In other words, there is a negative relationship between students who had passed the SBOE with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation.

Discussion

This study does not discuss other determinants related to students' SBOE results and language anxiety. Other determinants namely, the background of the students' family, their economic background, students' IQ and size of the schools. The Malaysian government has given the same facilities to all the government schools in Malaysia (MOE, 2018). The school teachers have gone through the same training and courses (MOE, 2018).

The literature review concentrated on the relationship between English language performance with communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. This study used quantitative method and employed primary and secondary sources of data collections. The data collection primarily used a questionnaire survey from FLCAS (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1991). Data were collected from the form four students from the Putrajaya Federal Territory government secondary schools which have the highest number of students passed in English subject in SPM for ten years in a row (MOE, 2017).

This study produced results which corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous works in this field, even though some of the previous results were inconsistent with this study but these findings supported previous theories. Finding from this study had proved that high performance in the SBOE affected language anxiety. Oral language plays an important role in acquiring and learning the language. The study also clearly demonstrated that school-based oral performance has a major impact on language anxiety for the English language learners. Research literatures on performance for English learners offered evident that students with moderate to high level of language anxiety produced low performance in English language. This study had proved that students with high performance in oral language were not affected by the language anxiety but their high results in SBOE had affected the test anxiety. This study offered evidence on the effectiveness of the SBOE.

One of the goals of SBOE is to judge the level of competency students achieve in speaking. Therefore, oral assessment can also produce useful information for diagnostic purposes to assess what students know and they can help teachers to determine groups of students need special attention. SBOE tasks are also instructional because it depends on the models, allowing students to actively engage in worth-while learning activities within the classroom. In the SBOE settings, students may be encouraged to seek out additional information, work in teams and try various approaches. From the researcher's point of view, the SBOE strategies are all beneficial for the form four students as the students benefit from the engagement in classroom activities. Furthermore the SBOE is a situation where students are asked to actively communicate in L2.

There were a few studies had done in the Malaysian schools. The studies made at the Malaysian schools in the state of Perak, Malaysia had shown that the students experienced language anxiety level from moderate to high level (Lily & Parilah, 2015; Lim & Mardziah, 2014). In 2015, only 17.32% of the students had scored "excellence" in English subject in SPM and in 2014, only 13.45% of the students had scored "excellence" in the state of Perak (MOE, 2017). Mohd. Hasrul, Noraini, Melor & Noriah (2013) had also found that the students experienced moderate level of language anxiety. The participants were form four students from PERMATA pintar (UKM) in the

state of Selangor, Malaysia. In 2013, only 21.99% of the students had scored “excellence” in English subject in SPM in Selangor (MOE, 2017). In 2012, Wong had found that students from the schools in the state of Sarawak Malaysia experienced language anxiety. In that year only 12.61% of the students in Sarawak had scored “excellence” in the English subject in SPM (MOE, 2017). In 2007, Siti Haryati had found that students from the schools in the state of Kelantan Malaysia experienced moderate to high level of language anxiety (MOE, 2017). Only 7.27% of the students had scored “excellence” in the English subject in SPM in Kelantan in 2007. In 2017 (SPM 2016), 33.96% of the students had scored “excellence” and 38.79% had scored “good” in English subject from the secondary schools in Putrajaya Federal Territory (MOE, 2017). Secondary schools in Putrajaya Federal Territory had been announced by the Ministry of Education Malaysia as the highest scored in the number of students passed in English subject in SPM in Malaysia 10 years in a row.

Conclusion

Theoretical Implication

According to the theory, language anxiety exists when the students are not proficient enough in the English language (Krashen, 1982). Therefore, the findings in this study are in agreement with the theory. The students’ language anxiety were at the low mean level because they produced good results in the SBOE. However, Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope’s theory on language anxiety is limited in the classroom only. Studies in language anxiety could be done outside of the classroom as well. This study suggests that the definition of language anxiety by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) has to be reviewed. They describe language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process. In fact, language anxiety might not be related to classroom language learning only, because many students cannot communicate well outside of the classroom too. For further research, a new instrument should be developed in order to measure the language anxiety inside and outside of the classroom. FLCAS which has been developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) should be reviewed, renewed and modified for further research.

Practical Implication

Based on the findings, the current study can contribute to several practical implications in relation to language anxiety in the context of secondary schools. The findings would be important to policy makers in English language at the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. The implementation of SBOE is to test the students’ proficiency in speaking the English language, a listening comprehension, and testing the students’ ability to comprehend speech in daily situations (MOE, 2017). If SBOE is only for the purpose of the examination, then, the main objective might have failed. This makes students unable to communicate in English outside of the classroom. It is good to practice the oral language in the classroom but oral English also needs to be used in other students’ activities. If the Ministry is serious about improving the quality of English language, a new oral-based English syllabus should be developed. This is because L2 researchers have investigated the relationship between oral language and literacy. They found that strong oral language skills pave the way for the development of literacy in a second language (Bernhardt & Kamil, 1995; Carrell, 1991). Condelli, Wrigley, and Yoon (2009) found that in a study

of adult English language learners with limited literacy, students whose oral English proficiency was higher at the beginning of the study showed greater gains in reading than those who began with lower oral English proficiency.

Contributions to the Body of Knowledge

Generally, this study suggests two broad avenues for future work. The first involves the development of national curriculum in English language where dependence upon oral English language. This type of English curriculum is essential in order to decrease language anxiety. However, the viability of communicative approach through oral English language is limited in the classroom but the development of new curriculum could support the use of English language in the school activities and co-curriculum.

The second avenue for work focuses on the development of English language training and skill for the English teachers. Oral language as a key part in English language activities should be included in the development of new English curriculum and teachers should be given training on the new communicative approach through oral language.

In addition to these two broad areas, based on the research objectives, results and findings, this study suggests a variety of key points of leverage for English activities to assist in developing effective communication skills to the emerging speaking problem. These points of leverage are listed in a particular sequence for specific reasons. The points of leverage involve a combination of the followings:

i. New Approaches

Efforts to rethink and implement new approaches effective responses to emerging communication because 80% of the students have passed in English subject but they still could not communicate well (Malaysia, Ministry of Education, 2017). Therefore, new approaches in English language are necessary to increase the speaking performance among the Malaysian students in order to lower down the language anxiety because other studies made in the Malaysian schools showed that students experienced moderate to high level of language anxiety.

ii. New English Curriculum

Initiatives to build a new curriculum in English language. The English curriculum has to be reviewed and renewed. Focus should be given to develop on oral English language and efforts to communicate in English in the school at all times. The potential new English curriculum activities need to be further discussed by the Ministry of Education Malaysia and the English teachers. It is suggested that a higher order thinking skill should be introduced in oral English language.

Future Research

For future research, this study suggests to investigate how to develop a new oral-based English curriculum for the schools.

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