

ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM AND THE MANY HINDRANCES

by:

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Every time the students are in their English class or asked to communicate using English as a medium, they often choose to close their mouths instead of speaking because of the factors that hinder them from confidently speaking in English.

According to Merve Savaşçı (2013), active speech roles are not well adopted by students in the classroom. As a result, students who refuse to adopt such are not likely to participate in speaking activities where they should practice and develop their communicative skills.

Also, they are pressured or nervous when they try to speak in English because they care about the reactions of others once they commit mistakes in the pronunciation of words or commit some grammatical errors. It also comes with psychological factors that trigger the students' anxiety in speaking the second language, and these fears can impact them psychologically.

Whether we admit it or not, there are times that other students or people mock or laugh at those who mispronounce words and cringe over a faulty construction of a sentence. Sometimes, those people who commit mistakes are being teased. Because of the prescriptivism and being grammar police, many people tend to lose their self-confidence when expressing their thoughts and opinions using the English language.

Another struggle is that “sometimes you feel that when speaking a foreign language, it takes you many words to express something that would take you two seconds to say in your language. In other words, you lack fluency. This is because you

still think in your language when you speak” (Trina Cannoot, 2017). There is a hesitation when speaking the second language that often makes it harder to understand what one is trying to say or explain.

Aside from the fear of committing mistakes and lack of self-confidence, other factors that can affect them psychologically are shyness, anxiety, and lack of motivation. These factors are due to lack of vocabulary, less knowledge of the grammatical rules, and having problems with English proficiency.

Based on the study by Elaine Horwitz and Joann Cope, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety (1986), they found three leading causes of students’ anxiety. First is communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is when a student is able to converse in the target language. Their low ability in this aspect, in many cases, causes anxious feelings among many students. The second cause: test anxiety, deals with students’ fear of being tested. The last reason has to do with other students’ evaluations.

If these factors would not take action, they will hinder them from practicing the use of a second language in the classroom and deteriorate their potential to learn the language further. Most of all, these factors can worsen the situation in the school because many students might not understand or be developed in this field, knowing that this language is essential for globalization since English is the universal language.

References:

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