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CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH CLASSES: THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE, ATTITUDES TOWARD ORAL REPORTING, AND SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study was an investigation on the challenges in English classes with regard to the use of Mother Tongue, attitudes toward oral reporting, and speaking proficiency among students in Spch 11 (Speech Communication) at the Visayas State University (VSU). The first set of data was gathered from forty (40) respondents using a survey questionnaire adopted from Atetwe (2013). It tackled about the challenges brought about the use of Mother Tongue in English classes. Data were summarized using descriptive statistics. The study found out that the use of Mother Tongue was perceived to have a negative influence in the performance of English, especially in pronunciation and writing. For this, it can be deduced that students must be exposed more on some oral and writing exercises using the English language with no Mother Tongue interruption. The study suggests that teachers come up with teaching methods that are interactive to develop their students' oral and written communication skills. The second set of data was gathered from forty-two (42) Spch 11 students at VSU. The participants of the study answered a self-report questionnaire on the respondents' attitudes toward oral reporting adopted from Mohite (2014) and a speaking proficiency test adopted from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS, 2018). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Spearman's Rho method was used to establish if there are connections between variables. Results showed that majority of the respondents agreed that they have somewhat negative attitudes toward oral reporting. In the items indicated, they perceived that most likely, these signs can obstruct and inhibit one's ability to speak since a person who experiences oral speaking anxieties will not be able to focus on the speaking process. Moreover, most of the respondents were "modest users" (35.7%). The rest of them were "limited users" (23.8%), "competent users" (21.4%), "good users" (14.3%), and "very good users" (4.8%). Lastly, results indicated that the respondents' attitudes toward oral reporting and their speaking proficiency are not statistically related. Results imply that a positive or negative attitude toward oral reporting can be a factor that may be associated with learners' speaking proficiency, but will not necessarily influence each other. Nevertheless, this study recommends that teachers encourage their students to minimize using the Mother Tongue inside the classroom, actively participate in oral reporting, and develop their oral skills for them to become proficient speakers of the English language.

Keywords: challenges, English classes, Mother Tongue, attitudes, oral reporting, speaking proficiency

I. INTRODUCTION

The development of competence in the Mother Tongue or first language serves as a foundation of proficiency that can be transported to learning another language or second language (Cummins, 2006). This competence in the first language is significant in the process of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). By the time children begin school, they have begun gaining confidence in their ability to communicate meaningfully in their Mother Tongue (Malone, 2007). They have built a foundation of knowledge and experience through observing and interacting with peers and

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adults in their community. The language, knowledge, and experience that students bring to school form an important foundation for their learning in the classroom. When home language is used at school, students may feel themselves accepted with their family and community, hence maintaining or raising self-esteem especially in oral reporting (Baker, 2011). An oral presentation is more than just reading a paper or set of slides before the class (Boisie, 2018). An effective oral presentation is more than just standing up and giving information. A presenter must consider how to best communicate the information before the class. Among the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking is one of the most complex, challenging, and demanding to practice and use (Wahyuni, 2016). Speaking demands the six structures of language (phonology, phonetics, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, and semantics) in a harmonious way to convey ideas or information. Speaking is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language on the spot. Speaking is very important since it is the most used skill when someone wants to convey messages and exchange information (Richards, 2008). The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Thus, it is imperative to know the students' attitudes toward oral reporting. Speaking proficiency plays a very important role in language learning because speaking is a process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-symbol, in a variety of contexts (StudyLib., 2018). Good English language competence may be a positive predictive validity variable on the performance of students on intelligence test. Therefore, there is a need to have a research on the challenges brought about by the use of Mother Tongue in English classes, attitudes toward oral reporting, and speaking proficiency of students who enrolled in a Spch 11 class. Students in Spch 11 have been using Mother Tongue and their English language as well in their everyday use as their means of communication. The use of Mother Tongue facilitates in their learning since not all students can understand English most of the time.

II. OBJECTIVES

This research delved on the challenges brought about by the use of Mother Tongue in English classes, attitudes toward oral reporting, and speaking proficiency of the Spch 11 students. Specifically, it aimed to:

1. Determine the students' challenges brought about by the use of Mother Tongue in English classes;
2. Identify the students' attitudes toward oral reporting;
3. Determine the students' speaking proficiency; and
4. Determine the relationship between the students' attitudes toward oral reporting and their speaking proficiency.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used a descriptive survey research design with students enrolled in a Spch 11 class (Speech Communication) during the second semester SY 2018-2019 at the Visayas State University (VSU). For the first forty (40) respondents, a survey questionnaire adopted from Atetwe (2013) was used to gather data on the challenges brought about by the use of Mother Tongue in English classes. For the remaining forty-two (42) respondents, a self-report questionnaire adopted from Mohite (2014) surveyed on the respondents' attitudes toward oral reporting. They were also made to answer a speaking proficiency test adopted from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS, 2018). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The Spearman's Rho method was used for the correlation analysis.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On the challenges brought about by the use of Mother Tongue in English classes, majority of the respondents indicated that the use of Mother Tongue influence the way they write in English. This concurs with Corder (1981) who argued that writing errors in second language are results of the use of Mother Tongue. Results further showed that the use of Mother Tongue can affect articulation of words and sounds in English as well as their writing skills.

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Pertaining to the respondents' attitudes toward oral reporting, findings revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that they have somewhat negative attitudes toward oral reporting. In the items indicated, they perceived that most likely, these signs can obstruct and inhibit one's ability to speak since a person who experiences oral speaking anxieties will not be able to focus on the speaking process. Furthermore, most of the speaking proficiency test-takers were "modest users" (35.7%). The rest of the takers were "limited users" (23.8%), "competent users" (21.4%), "good users" (14.3%), and lastly, "very good users" (4.8%). Findings further revealed that the respondents' attitudes toward oral reporting and their speaking proficiency are not statistically related. This is to say that a positive or a negative attitude toward oral reporting can be a factor that may be associated with learners' speaking proficiency, but will not necessarily influence each other.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can be deduced in this study that the use of Mother Tongue can influence writing and pronunciation of English words resulting in the tendency for the students to have a problem in spelling and difficulty in understanding terms. Because of such possibility, students must be made to undergo several oral and written exercises to practice their English pronunciation and writing to develop their speaking (especially in the articulation of words) and writing proficiency. To sum up, this study recommends that teachers encourage students to minimize using the Mother Tongue inside the classroom, actively participate in oral reporting, and develop their speaking skills to become proficient speakers in the English language.

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