

การใช้บทบาทสมมติเพื่อลดความวิตกกังวลในการพูด ภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาที่สอง: กรณีศึกษานักเรียน ชาวภูฏานระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6

The use of role-plays to reduce esl students' speaking
anxiety: a case study of grade six bhutanese classroom

Tashi*

นิภาพร เฉลิมนิรันดร**

บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ศึกษาประสิทธิภาพของการใช้บทบาทสมมติเพื่อลดความวิตกกังวลในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาที่สองของนักเรียนชาวภูฏานระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6 และ 2) สำรวจความคิดเห็นของนักเรียนชาวภูฏาน ระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6 ที่มีต่อการใช้บทบาทสมมติเพื่อลดความวิตกกังวลในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาที่สอง กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ใช้ในการศึกษาค้นคว้าครั้งนี้คือ นักเรียนชาวภูฏานระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6 จำนวน 30 คน ซึ่งใช้วิธีเลือกแบบการสุ่มอย่างง่ายงานวิจัยนี้ใช้ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยแบบผสมผสาน โดยมีเครื่องมือที่ใช้ในงานวิจัย คือ 1) มาตราวัดระดับความวิตกกังวลในชั้นเรียนภาษาต่างประเทศก่อนและหลังการใช้แผนการสอนที่ประกอบด้วยการใช้บทบาทสมมติ 2) แบบสังเกตการสอนในชั้นเรียน และ 3) แบบสัมภาษณ์แบบกลุ่ม ผลการศึกษาพบว่าระดับวิตกกังวลในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชาวภูฏานระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6 หลังการเรียนโดยการใช้บทบาทสมมติลดลงอย่างมีนัยสำคัญที่ .01 อีกทั้งนักเรียนยังได้แสดงความคิดเห็นในทางบวกจึงสนับสนุนสมมติฐานที่ว่า การใช้บทบาทสมมติสามารถลดความวิตกกังวลในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษในฐานะภาษาที่สองของนักเรียนชาวภูฏาน ระดับชั้นประถมศึกษาปีที่ 6 ได้อย่างมีประสิทธิภาพ

Abstract

Speaking anxiety is a major concern for the debilitating effect on English-speaking competency. This paper reports a mixed methods case study of investigating the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety in Bhutan. In addition, it explores the opinions of students on effectiveness of role-plays in the classroom of English as a Second Language (ESL) grade six students to reduce speaking anxiety. The researcher administered Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) to study the anxiety level in the current ESL classroom as pre-survey and post-survey. The four lesson plans integrating role-plays were employed for the treatment sessions. The classroom

* M.Ed. Student, Master Degree in Education in Curriculum and Instruction, Suryadhep Teacher college, Rangsit University

** Lecturer, Suryadhep Teachers College, Rangsit University

observations and focus group discussions were carried out to evaluate 30 informants on the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. The result showed the significance level (p) 0.001 indicating statistically significant in reducing speaking anxiety after the treatment. The findings were supported with positive opinions towards role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. This study further discussed a number of implications for students, language teachers, and curriculum developers on role-plays implementation.

1. Introduction

English is the global lingua franca, that dominates world's business, academia, science, and technology. English is an international link language that plays an important communication tool for the citizens to keep in touch with the global developmental programs (Roux, 2014). The importance of speaking English has grown

immensely being the international link language, as communicating in English helps the citizen to keep in touch with the global developmental programs. English is an important communicative tool for the globalized community to achieve education goals and aspirations (Chayanuvat&Sodachan, 2018; Chalermnirundorn, 2015). In Bhutan, His Majesty the third King, Jigme Dorji Wangchuk established the foundations of Modern education in 1960s initiating the language 'English' as the medium of education (Thinley & Maxwell, 2013). Thus, communicating in English is the powerful tool to extend the literacy culture to the global audience

Dzongkha and English are considered as the official languages for any formal correspondence in Bhutan (Dorjee, 2014) the former as national language and the latter as language of education. English is seen as the

lingua franca amongst over twenty dialects prevailing in Bhutan (Karma, 2013). For instructional purposes in schools, English has been taught throughout the country based on four strands; Listening and speaking, Reading and Literature, Writing, and Language (Royal Education Council [REC], 2014). English is considered as an important medium for English as a Second Language (ESL) learners that benefits Bhutanese to be globally participating country in the global community productivity (Singay, 2018).

Speaking anxiety is termed Glossophobia that fears people in speaking especially in front of the crowd. Speaking anxiety has stemmed from worry, fear of making mistakes, and being humiliated due to inefficient English language skills. The feeling of anxiety, nervousness, tension, apprehension, and worry are some anxiety issues that learners faced in today's world (Horwitz, et al., 1986). Singay (2018) stated that the major challenges for Bhutanese students facing today is the difficulty in speaking English fluently. In the Bhutanese curriculum, majority of the modules were prescribed and taught in English. However, LaPrairie (2014) stated that in the English language learning, educators need

to understand different methodological choices to support English-medium education in Bhutan.

There is various literature on language learning anxiety as proposed by Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., and Cope (1986) that students felt uncomfortable in language learning due to foreign language anxiety. According to the number of researchers, facilitating anxiety can be regarded as motivation for a learner's success to improve their performances (Moyer, 2008; Saidi, 2015). On the contrary, the debilitating anxiety conquers negative emotions that have impacts on student's language learning and performances. However, the increase in the level of anxiety will increase the level of detrimental effect of language learning therefore affecting the developmental process of speaking (Saidi, 2015). The teachers' role is to provide anxiety at par to the appropriate level so as to motivate students in the process of language learning to communicate effectively.

Teaching approaches are the factors that hinder oral communication ability of students that increase speaking anxiety. Students develop speaking competency through practice and should be given enough opportunities for students to speak in the target language. However, in the Bhutanese education system, most of the instructional practices are governed by teachers ultimately leading children to remain passive (Singay, 2018). The rigid curriculum, obsolete teaching methods, and inadequate familiarization with the English language in the early years of schooling are the reasons for the poor performance of English speaking in Bhutan

(Bidha&Thinley, 2010; LaPrairie, 2014). The study conducted by Rabgay (2014) found that classroom interactions are predominantly teacher centred. Moreover, 75.71% of the time was used by teachers for lecturing therefore students hardly get time to speak, share ideas, and ask questions.

Such learning environment deteriorated the conceptual understandings as the students remain dependent on teachers to decide what, when, and how to learn (Dorji, 2005). Therefore, it has been succinctly captured in the study of Bhutan Council for School Examination and Assessment (BCSEA, 2013), 'the equal percent of students faced difficulties in speaking and writing skills than listening and reading'(p. 39).

There exist countless approaches to develop the ability of speaking English through reducing speaking anxiety, one of the approaches used in this study is role-play. Role-plays provide opportunities for students to communicate in different cultures and contexts of the community (Fadilah, 2016). Role-plays are found to be interesting and fun that would benefit the students in reducing English speaking anxiety (Da Costa, 2017). Role-plays refer to any real-life activities that empower students to acquire the ideas and facts of different roles to act accordingly (Islam, P., & Islam, T., 2013). Role-plays are as described by Basic (2011): 'Learners talk a lot, where participation is even with high motivation, and language is of an acceptable level' (p7). Moreover, role-plays are found most relevant and having a positive effect on reducing speaking anxiety (Ansari, 2015; Atas, 2014; Putri & Sri Hariyati, 2016).

In Bhutan, anxiety caused major barriers in developing speaking skills (Bidha&Thinley, 2010; LaPrairie, 2014; Singay, 2018). However, speaking anxiety is given less attention by the teachers and previous researchers in the Bhutanese classrooms. The research based English oral communication approaches for building speaking competency are rarely put into practice in the daily teaching. Anxiety provokes fight or flight reflexes to the learner's emotions that needed to be addressed. Horwitz et al. (1986) framed two options to deal with anxious students; firstly, help them learn to cope with existing anxiety; second, make the learning context less stressful. Thus, the need for an explicit study of speaking anxiety experienced by Bhutanese students are found genuinely important to support speaking competency level. Consequently, the loss of confidence, feeling embarrassed, and lack of volunteerism are some visible symptoms seen in Bhutanese classroom signifying the lack of speaking competency (Bidha&Thinley, 2010).

he Bhutanese students are victims of speaking anxiety due to lack of some probable reasons like unimportance placed on speaking fluency in the schools and due to obsolete teaching methods. It has been found that speaking fluently is the most challenging task to achieve for the majority of students (Bidha&Thinley, 2010). Since not many studies were conducted in Bhutan using role-plays to reduce speaking anxiety, this study was designed for examining the effectiveness of

role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety for grade six students. Furthermore, this study elucidated the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety, and how the students perceive speaking anxiety after the intervention of role-plays.

2. Research Objectives

2.1 To investigate the level of speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students before and after employing role-plays and its effectiveness.

2.2 To study the opinion of students on effectiveness of role-plays to reduce speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students.

3. Research Questions

3.1 Does the use of role-plays be effective on reducing the level of speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students?

3.2 What is the students' opinion towards effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety be?

4. Methodology

The mixed methods study was adopted using qualitative and quantitative approach which aimed to investigate the effectiveness of role-plays to reduce speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students, and to study the students' opinion towards role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. The Figure 1 describes the research design of the study.

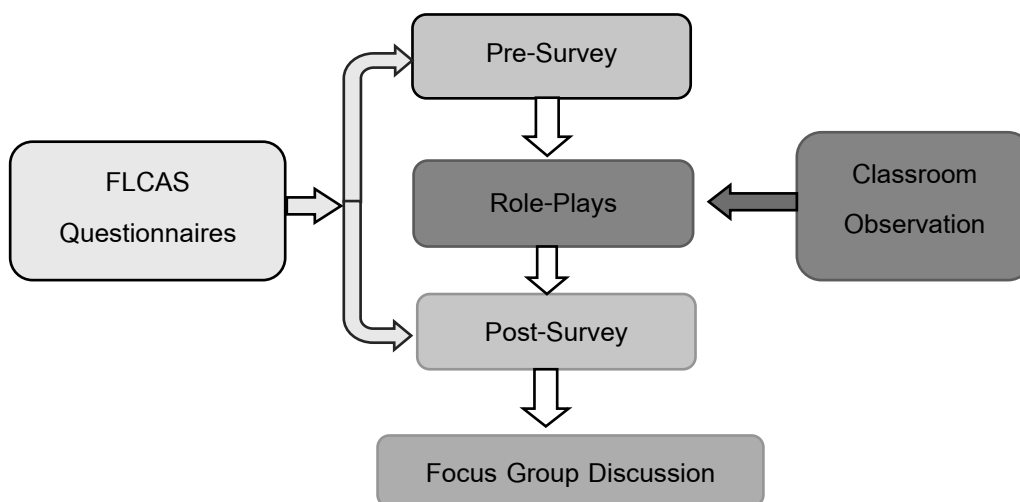


Figure 1 Research Design of the study

Figure 1 illustrates that the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) questionnaire adapted from Horwitz, et al. (1986) was employed for pre-survey and post-survey to investigate the level of speaking anxiety. Role-plays were implemented to test the effectiveness in reducing speaking anxiety. The classroom observation was employed during the treatment sessions. Later, focus group discussions were carried out to study the students' opinion on effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety.

4.1 Population and sample group

The total population of this study consisted of 90 students in three sections of grade six. The researcher used the cluster random

sampling to select a section of the sample population from the total population of three sections of grade six students. There were 30 students in one section consisting mixed ability group chosen for the purpose of the study. The sample target group consisted 50% male and 50% female.

4.2 Research Instruments

The research instruments used for the study were: 1) 4 lesson plans, 2) FLCAS Questionnaire, 3) Classroom observation sheet, and 4) Focus Group discussion. The researcher used 4 lesson plans of 100 minutes each integrating role-plays approach. Table 1 below shows the content of the study used for the treatment sessions. The treatment sessions were carried out after pre-survey to decrease the level of speaking anxiety.

Table 1 Table of content for the treatment lessons

Lesson plans	Topic	Time
Lesson plan 1	Socialization (Role-plays)	Week 1
Lesson Plan 2	Expressing likes and dislikes and Preferences (role-plays)	Week 2
Lesson plan 3	Real life situation (script role-plays)	Week 3
Lesson Plan 4	Short Stories (script role-plays)	Week 4

Source: Chesler& Fox, 1966; REC, 2018

1) Instructional Approach Interventions: Four Lesson Plans

The researcher implemented four lesson plans after the pre-survey using role-plays as the instructional approach. The real plays and surreal plays were two types of role-plays employed in the sample group. Firstly, the real plays implemented in the lessons were: 1) socialization (a reality act of conversation between two person meeting at the airport), 2) Expressing likes, dislikes, and their preferences taking roles of different personalities (students, teachers, farmer, doctor, priest), 3) Conversation between waiter and customer in the restaurant, 4) act of conversation between doctor and patient on flu home remedy, 5) complaining of noise at the late night (dance party organizer and neighbor), and 6) hotel reservation (play the part of hotel receptionist and a customer). These activities were ingrained in the first three lesson plans. Secondly, surreal plays were carried out as per the last lesson plan with the roles of characters in the chosen short stories (Fictions) from grade six student's curriculum text. The short stories chosen for the role-plays were, 1) 'The People Who Hugged the Trees'- Adapted by Deborah

Lee Rose, 2) 'The Orphan Boy- A Maasai legend': Retold by Tololwa M.Mollel, 3) 'Belle's Journey' written by Marilyn Reynolds, and 4) 'The Spider Web' written by Clifford B Hicks. They were asked to choose the characters to perform dramatic role-plays.

2) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Questionnaire

The 25 FLCAS survey questionnaire adapted from Horwitz, et al., (1986) was used for collecting quantitative data through pre-survey and post-survey from 30 research participants. FLCAS analyzed the level of speaking anxiety before and after employing treatment sessions.

3) Classroom observations

The researcher used the classroom observation instrument to observe the treatment sessions. The observation instrument consists of 10 statements that helped in analyzing the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. The classroom observation statements facilitated in theorizing the research question, will the use of role-plays be effective in reducing the level of speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students? The observations were done by the teacher researcher and two peer teach-

ers. It was the qualitative data collection method through behavior observation observing the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. The classroom observations were done in every treatment session. There were 4 treatment lessons that were observed by the observers during the role-play's intervention.

4) Focus group discussions

The qualitative data, focus group discussions were administered to respond to the research question 2, What is the students' opinion towards effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety? Five groups consisting of six students were used from the sample group for the focus group discussion with open ended questions. This focus group discussions corresponds to the opinion of students on effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. In this discussion the researcher posed seven open ended questions to guide the discussion, they took notes and wrote their responses and discussed. The discussions were recorded for the analysis purposes. All the groups were allotted 20 minutes each for the discussions and done after the post survey.

4.3 Validity and Reliability

Three experts used The Item Objective Congruence (IOC) to validate the lesson plans, FLCAS survey questionnaire, classroom observation sheet, and focus group discussion. All the 4 lesson plans were rated as +1 by three experts which indicated that the items were congruent with the research objectives and valid for the study. The IOC ratings for the FLCAS survey questionnaires were rated +1 by all the

experts indicating congruent for the pre-survey and post-survey. The classroom observation statements and focus group discussion questions were rated above 0.67 which shows the items were congruent and valid for the study.

Furthermore, the FLCAS items were piloted and tested with one section of 34 grade six students in the target school, which was not the sample group of the study. The reliability statistics Cronbach's alpha (α) was 0.749 which indicated that the instrument was good and had high level of internal consistency. A score of 0.70 or greater is generally considered to be acceptable in Cronbach's Alpha scales.

4.4 Ethical considerations

The researcher obtained approval letters from Ministry of Education, Chief District Education Officer, principal of the research school, and consent letters from the parents to conduct research ethically. The respondents in this study were maintained anonymity.

5. Data Analysis and Result

The data were analyzed in two areas, 1) Quantitative: comparative statistical analysis of pre-survey and post survey; and 2) Qualitative: Grounded Theory (Coding system). The details of data analysis were described under two major research approaches, quantitative and qualitative.

5.1 Quantitative Analysis Results

FLCAS survey questionnaire was used for quantitative data analysis from the data collected from the pre-survey and post-survey. A comparative statistical analysis of pre-survey and post-survey was carried out

using descriptive analysis and paired sample t-test based on mean, standard deviation and significant values.

A five-point Likert scale was used to derive scores of the FLCAS ranging from 1

(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) as shown in Table 2. The scores indicated a higher and lower anxiety level of the participants; the higher scores indicated higher level of speaking anxiety and lower scores portrayed lower level of anxiety level.

Five-point Likert scale		Mean	Level of Anxiety
5	Strongly Agree	4.21 - 5.00	highest
4	Agree	3.41 - 4.20	high
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree	2.61 - 3.40	moderate
2	Disagree	1.81 - 2.60	low
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00 - 1.80	lowest

Table 2 Five-point Likert scale with the mean score measuring level of anxiety

The comparative statistical analyses were done under three categories, 1) Individual total scores of pre-survey and post-survey with the level of anxiety, 2) Item-wise level of anxiety with mean and standard deviation, and 3) paired sample t-test.

5.1.1 Comparison of Pre-survey and post-survey based on individual total scores
Sincethere were 25 items used for this survey,

the level of total scores ranged from 25 to 125 (total scores) to indicate the level of speaking anxiety of individual participants. The level of anxiety was measured in terms of individual total scores ranging from: 1) 25 to 56 showing a low level of anxiety, 2) 57 to 89 stating medium level of anxiety, 3)90 to 125 reflecting the high intensity of anxiety (Adapted from Horwitz et al., 1986).

Figure 2 Comparison of Pre-survey and Post-survey: based on total scores

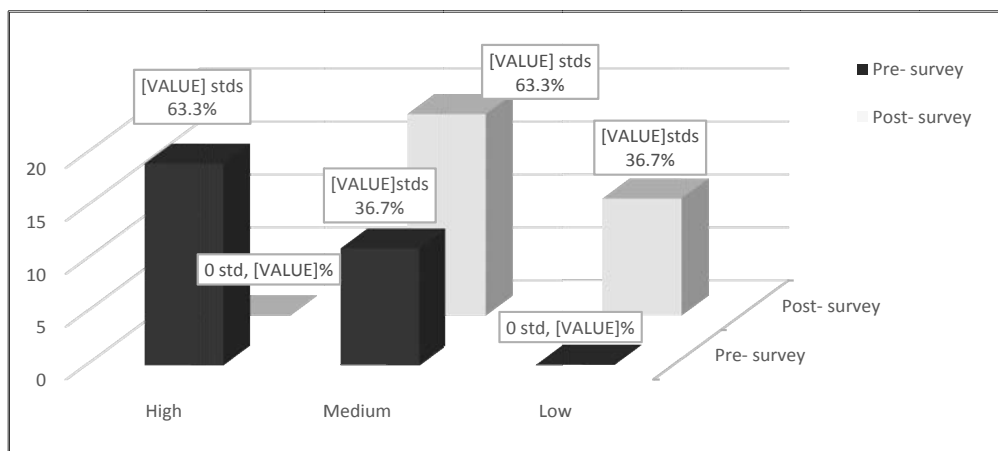


Figure 2 states, in the pre-survey, 19 students (63.3% of students) falls under higher level of anxiety whereas, 11 students (36.7%) are in the medium anxiety level, and no students (0%) existed in low level of anxiety. This showed that almost all the target population experienced speaking anxiety in language classroom during the pre-survey. However, after the treatment, statistics of post-survey indicated that 63.3% of total population dropped to medium level of anxiety followed by 36.7% low level. There was

no population existed in high level of anxiety (0%), that depicted that the level of speaking anxiety reduced after the treatment employed.

5.1.2 FLCAS Pre-survey and Post-survey: Itemwise level of anxiety

The target participants anxiety level was interpreted as per the mean score with the reference to opinion (agreement) in the Likert scale: 1.0 to 1.80 lowest level to 4.21 to 5.00 high-est level of anxiety (Refer to Table 2).

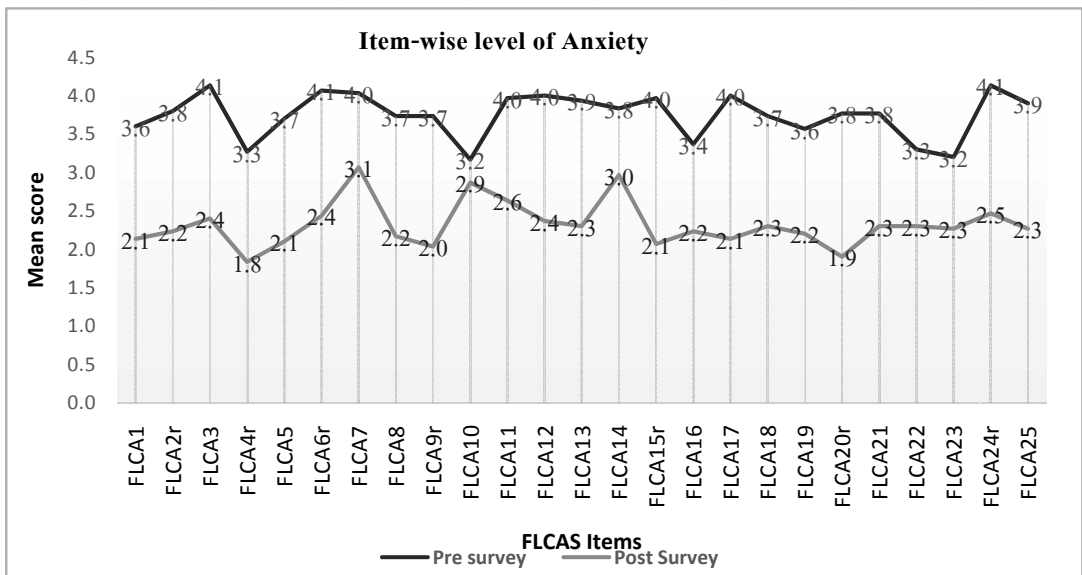


Figure 3 FLCAS Item-wise level of anxiety in Pre-survey and Post-survey

The Figure 3 denotes the level of anxiety for FLCAS items before and after the treatment. The lowest and the highest mean scores in pre-survey were 3.2 and 4.2 respectively whereas the lowest and the highest mean scores in

post-survey were 1.8 and 3.1 respectively. This showed that the level of anxiety in terms of 25 items reduced dramatically after the intervention of role-plays in the language classroom in terms of speaking anxiety.

5.1.3 Pre and post- survey: deviation and significant value. The inferential Comparative t-test Result statistics t-test with significance level of $p < 0.05$, The Table3 stated, the comparative statistical analysis that was done using paired Post-survey data. sample t-test by comparing the means, standard

Table 3 Comparative study of Pre-survey and post-survey

	Pre-survey		Post-survey		Mean difference (Pre-Post)	t	P- value (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Sample Group	3.7467	.36756	2.3187	.38930	1.428	14.1828	.001
Significance level (p): < 0.05 significant							

The report analyzed (Table 3) that the mean score of the pre-survey was 3.746 with the standard deviation 0.367 whereas, in the post-survey, the mean score was 2.318 which was 1.428 (mean score) lower than the pre-survey resulting significance value (p) 0.001 indicating statistically significant in reducing the speaking anxiety after intervention of role-play approach. This signified that the role-plays were effective to reduce speaking anxiety.

5.2 Qualitative data Analysis Results

The qualitative data was analyzed using the classroom observations and focus group discussions with coding system based on grounded theory of Corbin and Strauses (2008).

5.2.1 Classroom Observations Analysis result

This analysis helped in answering the research question, Will the use of role-plays effective on reducing the level of speaking anxiety in ESL grade six Bhutanese students? This was

interpreted in five core themes: 1) Classroom participation, 2) Enjoyment in learning, 3) Motivation to learn, 4) Reducing anxiety, and 5) Interaction: Speaking in English. The details were described below.

Theme 1. Classroom participation

The peer teachers observed that the students were reluctant to participate actively in the first session. However, throughout the observations it was found that the students were actively involved and participated effectively. As commented by the observers: 'the students are actively engaged in the activity but they participated with hesitations and the classroom seems noisy, that is the good sign of active participation. (lesson 1)'

Theme 2. Enjoyment in learning

The students agreed on the importance of role-plays as the joyful learning, despite the

fact that foreign language speaking caused the immediate anxiety. In the first session, students were observed reluctant to participate. As the observer stated, 'Students participated in hesitations' (lesson 1). This may be due to the speaking anxiety. From the consequent sessions, the peer teacher observed: 'They are happily participating in the activity' (lesson 3)

Theme 3. Motivation to speak

It was claimed that, if students were called on in class to speak without being prepared, they usually experienced shaking and sweating. To substantiate and motivate to speak without fear, it depended on teachers' motivation and inspiring activities. The statement: 'The students are motivated to speak through role-playing', illuminated whether the participants were motivated to speak English through role-play of not.

Theme 4. Reducing speaking Anxiety

In the initial process, peer teacher and researcher observed that, students spoke in hesitation or did not speak at all; they never volunteered to speak in the class; and felt uncomfortable to speak in the crowd. The observer (in lesson 1) stated: 'Students were uncomfortable to speak in front of others and quite nervous during the speaking activity'. However, the researcher observed that there was a gradual improvement in speaking. As observers stated: 'students seemed confident in speaking' (in the 3rd session). 'They gained confidence in volunteering and speaking' (in the 4th session).

Theme 5. Confidence in Speaking English

During the initial session, students faced difficulty in using their own ideas to continue speaking. The Observer observed:

'Students were found uncomfortable to speak English in front of the peers and found them quite nervous (stammering, shy and diffident) during the speaking activity (in the 1st session).

'Students were found gradual improvement in speaking without hesitation but with a lot of grammatical errors' (in the 3rd session).

Gradual improvement in gaining confidence was experienced during the course of treatment session as observed by the peer observers.

Finally, the researcher and peer observers observed that the students were participating actively with little hesitation in speaking English to communicate in the classroom. In general, students gained courage to open up the conversation in English in every time they were provided the roles to play. Therefore, role-plays were found effective in reducing speaking anxiety.

5.2.2 Analysis of Focus Group Discussion Result

The focus group discussion was conducted to answer the research question: What are the student's opinions towards effectiveness of role-play in reducing speaking anxiety? The discussions were coded under three themes:

Theme 1. Enjoyment in Learning

Students as observed in the classroom observation, they really enjoyed the lessons with

the role-plays. Through the discussions, researcher identified the following opinions stating role-plays are joyful learning:

- They considered role-plays as the playful learning to speak through fun.
- Interaction with their peers made lessons delightful and entertaining.
- Role-plays were drama and the replications of our life that happens daily.
- Role-plays were considered as jokes and comedy actions to gain confidence.

The role-plays helped to reduce speaking anxiety through relaxed learning.

Theme 2. Gaining Confidence: Role-plays in reducing Speaking anxiety

The students articulated that role-plays were enjoyable way of reducing speaking anxiety. The discussions on gaining confidence were summarized below.

- Role-plays helped in developing speaking skills although it was difficult.
- Speaking in front of crowds panicked them still, but anxiety gradually decreased.
- Role-plays reduced the feelings of speaking apprehension.
- They felt courageous to speak without hesitations after the treatment.

Almost all the students expressed that they felt comfortable to speak, but few needed more practice. Fears wouldn't be removed but it was perhaps reduced through role-plays.

Theme 3. Motivation: Role-plays improved speaking skills

Motivation was the key element for any developmental process of the student's skills and learning. Role-plays were considered as the joyful learning that activated speaking ability by reducing anxiety. The following were the discussions summarized toward role-plays motivation:

- Role-plays motivated them to speak without taking care of the errors.
- Role-plays boosted courage to help speaking without fear.
- Different roles provided different ideas to express and to communicate.
- The learners were inspired through real-life activities reducing the tension.

Role-plays were the activities meant for improving speaking skills through reducing speaking anxiety. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the opinions towards role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety were: 1) role-plays were joyful activities that created environment interesting and conducive, 2) role-plays helped to gain confidence in reducing speaking anxiety through active participation, and finally 3) role-plays motivated to improve speaking ability through joyful practice.

6. Discussion

This study consisted of two major findings: 1) the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety and 2) students' positive opinions towards role-plays in reducing speaking

anxiety. Grounded to the findings of this study, the effectiveness of role-plays in reducing the speaking anxiety was broadly discussed as the significant effect in speaking competency and motivating students to speak confidently (Atas, 2014; Ansari, 2015; Adnyani, et al., 2014). The instrument, FLCAS survey Questionnaire that had been used previously with positive result in a number of previous studies (Suleimenova, 2013; Yalçın, Ozlem&Incecay, 2014; Adnyani, Seken, & Nitiasih, 2014) was implemented in this study to analyze the level of speaking anxiety.

In the Bhutanese classrooms, findings indicated that the teacher dominated teaching learning system prevailed in primary schools (Sherub& Dorji, 2013; Singye, 2018) that led to the detrimental learning outcomes of the students' language development due to the language anxiety. As Foreign language Anxiety affected language learning aspects that created the tension and apprehension feelings and emotions specifically to the second language learners. The possible reason for detrimental effect of learning was due to conventional learning techniques where the teacher dominated learning process existed in the instructional process (Adnyani& et al., 2014).

The possible reasons to account for such significant result was, generating the highly favored modes of reducing speaking anxiety from role-plays implementation: having joyful learning environment, highly motivated environment, active classroom participation, and spontaneous speaking activities. These themes generated in classroom observations are broadly in consonance

with the elements of role-plays described by the researchers Dacosta (2017), Krebt (2017), Rashid and Qaisar (2017), and Islam & Islam, (2012). Therefore, in line to the findings, the researchers (Atas, 2014; Ansari, 2015; Nguyen & Thi Do, 2017; Putri & Sri Hariyati, 2016; Adyani& et al., 2014) supported that the role-plays in classroom situation were effective in reducing speaking anxiety, reducing the fear and anxious feelings of the participants, and improve speaking competency.

However, the findings of speaking anxiety affecting the speaking competency ran counter to the 'facilitating anxiety', as the researcher Asif (2017) concluded that the anxiety helped in language learning. but Hewitt & Stephenson (2012) claimed that certain level of anxiety helped in learning, whereas, higher level of anxiety produced negative result. The findings revealed that higher the level of anxiety, higher the detrimental effect on speaking competency. Therefore, anxiety decreases the learning proficiency of the students.

Since the role-plays were considered as the real-life activities (Islam & Islam, 2012; DaCosta, 2017), it supported the student's positive opinion towards the role-plays in reducing speaking anxiety. The possible reasons for students to have the positive opinions on role-plays towards reducing speaking anxiety would be the role-plays were joyful learning as it was real-life activities (Rashid & Quisar, 2017), it helped gaining confidence (DaCosta, 2017), it motivated speaking and eradicated anxious feelings of speaking (Krebt, 2017; Adnyani& et al., 2014), and also role-plays were the power with

great influence for emotions to play (Gray, 2013).

The positive opinion of students was supported by the researchers Suleimenova (2013), Yalcin&Incecay (2014), and Asif (2017), recommending that a positive, motivating and encouraging class environment, team work, and relaxed and composed teachers were essential for creating enjoyable learning to overcome speaking anxiety. The role-plays were effective in reducing speaking anxiety (Fata, Usman, &DwiJuniyana, 2017) and helpful for lower grade students (Suryani, 2015) since students felt that it was the real plays (Kusnierek, 2015).

7. Practical Implications of the study

The implications of this study offer the suggestive evidences for employing role-plays in ESL language classroom to reduce the level of anxiety and increase the language proficiency. The implications for students, teachers and curriculum developers were discussed below:

- The study appears to support the role-plays approach that created positive environment for overall language development of the students. Mostly, it benefited the development of speaking competency through boosting confidence.

- With the continuous process and sufficient activities incorporating role-plays will reduce the level of anxiety through joyful and conducive learning.

- Other than speaking competency, role-plays developed other technical elements of language: pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical competencies.

- Using this approach role-plays, teachers can shift from traditional lecture methods to child centred learning, that is what is needed in 21st century education. The paradigm shift from monotonous teaching to variety of joyful teaching learning approach to motivate students in learning.

- Integrating role-plays in the curriculum to focus on reducing speaking anxiety is the role of curriculum developers. It was found that the need of focusing more on speaking is seen important for effective communication purposes.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study analyzed that role-plays were effective in reducing speaking anxiety to the grade six students in Bhutan. The students had positive opinions towards implementing role-plays in the classroom activities for reducing speaking anxiety and to develop speaking competency. English language teachers should be recommended to use role-plays in the instructional activities to develop speaking competency by reducing speaking anxiety. The implementers should study the existence of the feeling of anxiety in speaking and should take appropriate measures for effective reduction. The teachers must be flexible enough to implement role-plays in the classroom behaving in a friendly manner, helpful and making students feel comfortable to speak in the class. If role-plays were presented in a rigid form, it may not be effective in reducing anxiety. For the primary level students, it may be important to base activities on easy language and familiar topics for role-plays, so students will

be able to participate in conversation with low level anxiety.

From the result of study, the researcher would like to provide the recommendations for the teachers and the future researchers as follows:

- Conduct similar research with a larger sample population in a longer research period to get general consensus that can have greater implications to majority of Bhutanese students.

- This study used FLCAS survey questionnaire for the pre-survey and post-survey to compare the anxiety level after the treatment sessions. The researcher conducted post-survey only once to analyze the level of anxiety. If the future researchers conduct more post-surveys with the longer duration of treatment sessions, it will provide authentic comparative analysis result that will have better implications.

9. Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to heartily thank Dr.Nipaporn Chalermnirundorn, the thesis advisor for being generously resourceful in this academic writing. The successful completion of this thesis article depended on her motivation and guidance, without which it would not be possible. I am indebted to her for being the consistent guider towards fulfilling my journey, thank you.

References

- Adnyani, N.W.S., Seken, I.K., &Nitiasih, P.K. (2014). The effect of Scripted Role Play and Foreign Language Anxiety on the Eleventh-grade students' Speaking competency.*Journal of English Education Indonesia*, 2(1), 1-11.doi: <http://119.252.161.254/e-journal/index.php/jpbi/article/view/1439>
- Ansari, M. S.(2015). Speaking Anxiety in ESL/EFL Classrooms: A Holistic Approach and Practical Study. *International Journal of Educational Investigations*,2(4), 38-46.
- Asif, F. (2017). The Anxiety Factors among Saudi EFL Learners: A Study from English Language Teachers' Perspective. *English Language Teaching*, 10(6), 160-173.
- Atas, M. (2014). The reduction of speaking anxiety in EFL learners through drama techniques. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 176, 961 – 969. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.565
- Basic, L. (2011). *Speaking anxiety: An obstacle to second language learning?* Retrieved from <http://hig.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:453921/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Bidha, S.,&Thinley, D. (2010). Building Students' Oral Fluency: Perspectives on the Use of Spoken English in Bhutanese Classrooms. *RABSEL: the CERD Educational Journal*, 14, 11-34.
- Bhutan Council for School Examination and Assessment. (2013). *A Study of Student Achievements in English Literacy and Mathematics Literacy at Grade X*. Thimphu: Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment.

- Chalermnirundorn, Nipaporn (2015). *The use of integrative Motivation in ESL Reading skills: A Case Study of Tertiary-level Thai University Students (Unpublished Doctoral dissertation)*. Rangsit University, Thailand.
- Chayanuvat, A., & Sodachan, M. (2018). The effectiveness of Metacognitive, cognitive and social learning Strategies on Private University freshman students' Listening Achievement, Self-Awareness and Social Interaction: A Case Study. *Rangsit Journal of Educational Studies*, 5(1), 57-70.
- Chesler, M., & Fox, R. (1966). *Role-playing methods in the classroom*. Centre for research on utilization of scientific knowledge. USA, University of Michigan: Science research associates, Inc.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage publishers.
- Da Costa, N. (2017). The use of Role Play activities to Improve English speaking skill of the grade 12 students of Technology Science of Escola Secundária Geral 4 De Setembro Unamet Dili in the school year 2017. *International Journal of Advanced Research (IJAR), Int.JAdv.Res.* 5(8), XX-XX. doi:10.21474/IJAR01/xxx
- Dorjee, Kinley (2014). Linguistic landscape of Bhutan: An overview of number of languages, language policy, language education, and language use in Bhutan. *Bhutan Journal of Research & Development*, 3, 87 - 102.
- Fadilah, F. (2016). Teaching Speaking by role-play. *Okara Journal of Languages and Literature*, 10(II), 209-216. doi: 10.19105/ojbs.v10i2.980
- Fata, I. A., Usman, K., & Dwi, J. (2017). Setting Sight on Role Playing: To Accommodate or to Repudiate? *SOSIOHUMANIKA: Jurnal Pendidikan Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*, 10(1), 91-106.
- Gray, P. (2013). *Free to Learn: Why unleashing the instinct to play will make our children happier, more self-reliant, and better students for life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Hewitt, E., & Stephenson, J. (2012). Foreign language anxiety and oral exam performance: A replication of Phillips's MLJ Study. *The Modern Language Journal*, 96, 170-189.
- Horwitz, E. K. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 112-126.
- Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125-132.
- Islam, P., & Islam, T. (2013). "Effectiveness of Role Play in Enhancing the Speaking Skills of the Learners in a Large Classroom: An Investigation of Tertiary Level Students" in *Stamford Journal of English*, 7(1), 218-233.
- Karma Phuntsho (2013). *The History of Bhutan*. New Delhi: Random House, India.
- Krebt, D. M. (2017). The Effectiveness of Role Play Techniques in Teaching Speaking for EFL College Students. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 8(5), 863-870.

- Kusnierek, A. (2015). Developing students' speaking skills through role-play. *World Scientific News* 7(1), 73-111.
- McCroskey, J. C. (1970). Measures of communication-bound anxiety. *Speech Monograph*, 37, 269-277.
- Moyer, K. H. (2008). Debilitating and facilitating Anxiety Effects on identification. *Journal of Undergraduate Psychological Research*, 3, 6-10.
- Nguyen, H. B., & Thi Do, N. N. (2017). Students' Attitudes towards Drama-based Role play in Oral Performance. *European Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, 2(3), 30-48.
- Putri, A. A., & Sri Hariyati, H. (2016). Improving Students Speaking Ability by using Role play at Seventh grade of DarulMahdeeyah, Thailand. *International Conference on Education (IECO) Proceeding, LPPM, University of Muhammadiyah Jember*, 1, 63-69.
- Rabgay, T. (2014). A Study of Factors Influencing Students' Academic Performance in a Higher Secondary School in Bhutan. *RABSEL; CERD Educational Journal*, 16(2), 74-97.
- Rashid, S., & Qaisar, S. (2017). Role Play: A productive Teaching Strategy to promote Critical thinking. *Bulletin of Education and Research*, 39 (2), 197-213.
- Roux, P. (2014). English as an International Language: The debate continues. *Polyglossia*. 26, 45-57.
- Royal Education Council. (2014). *Teacher Guidebook for grade V English curriculum*. Thimphu, Bhutan: REC.
- Saidi, M. (2015). *The Impact of Students' Anxiety on Oral Performance: Case study: first year LMD students of English at Mohamed Khider University-BISKRA* (Unpublished Master's thesis). Mohamed Khider University of Biskra, People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.
- Sherab, K., & Dorji, P. (2013). Bhutanese Teachers' Pedagogical Orientation in the Primary Classes: A Factor on Quality Education. *Journal of International Society for Teacher Education*. 17. 17-28.
- Singay. (2018). English Oral Communication Needs of Bhutanese Students: As Perceived by the Teachers and Students. *English Language Teaching*, 11 (4), 74-81.
- Suleimenova, Z. (2013). Speaking Anxiety in a Foreign Language Classroom in Kazakhstan. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 93, 1860-1868.
- Suryani, L. (2015). The Effectiveness of Roleplays in Teaching Speaking. *ELTIN Journal*, 3(2), 106-109.
- Thinley, D., & Maxwell, T.W. (2013). The Role of English in Culture Preservation in Bhutan. *Journal of Bhutan Studies*, 28, 1-29.
- Yalçın, Özlem & Incecay, Volkan. (2014). Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: The case of Spontaneous Speaking Activities. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 2620-2624.