The Relationship Between Bilingual Children's Language Anxiety and Learning Motivation

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Abstract. The goal of this study is to examine whether increased relatedness among bilingual children would decrease their language anxiety and improve their self-motivations in learning a foreign language. The relatedness in this study is defined as a innate psychological need for motivations by self-determination theory. Their language performance skills are also being observed under the control of relatedness. This article reviewed several past research on the discussion of language anxiety's impact on Bilingual children. Existed research showed learning motivations would improve under an increased relatedness and relaxing learning environment. Under this scenario, it would decrease the level of language anxiety, and students' language performances could be benefited. The outcome of a low level of language anxiety also shows significance in ameliorating students' positive attitude towards learning a foreign (English) language. This review gives teachers pointers on how to form a proper classroom setting where students are more likely to be motivated to speak out and less likely to be anxious about doing so, both of which may boost their students' academic achievement.

Keywords: Bilingualism; language anxiety; learning motivation.

1. Introduction

Anxiety is very common when it is related to research. Language anxiety is a part of the anxiety that affects thousands of people across the world. Language anxiety is defined as negative feelings, anxiety, and nervousness when the individual uses a language that is not their mother's tongue [1]. In the current decade, there exists approximately nearly 43% of the global population speaks two languages, and language anxiety is very common. For bilingualism, language anxiety occurs most in people who are learning a second language, and many bilingualisms start their learning at a very early age. As a result, bilingual children, there is more chance they face anxiety when they are learning new languages. When facing a new language, it could be very confusing and frustrating for children to adopt due to their cognition still developing. Furthermore, research finds that the adolescence period is very suitable for second language learning compared to midlife [2]. Investigating improving young early bilingual children in their second language acquisition (SLA) is critical for their future learning as they grow up.

Many previous studies suggested as language anxiety reduces bilingual students' motivation in their language courses. Finding a proper method to ameliorate bilingual children's language learning experience would be helpful for their final language achievement. Aiming to investigate the relationship between motivation and language anxiety would be helpful for caregivers to have a better understanding of providing bilingual children better experience and increase students' engagement in classroom settings. Thus, this paper will summarize several previous studies to generate further insight into improving bilingual children's study processes when they are facing challenges. Looking for bilingual students ranging from primary school to university is needed to find out whether there exists a similar pattern across bilingual children and adult bilingualisms to seek out a more general solution for future bilingual education studies.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition

Language anxiety was first introduced by Horwitz in 1986, and this theory explains there are three major factors that trigger language anxiety which are communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative social judgment [3]. Communication apprehension implies that individuals could have numerous ideas and thoughts which cannot be successfully translated and output in a second language for lacking the vocabulary to deliver their own messages to other people. The failure to access more second language vocabulary results in students with frustration and apprehension. As for text anxieties, it implies students usually fear evaluation under academics. The fear of negative social judgment claims that students might feel unconfident when using second languages to express themselves, and students might believe it would cause negative social evaluations from others.

2.2 The Effect of Language Anxiety on Students' Learning

As bilingual students feel anxious during the language classroom, they would become less active than non-anxious students when it comes to volunteering to answer questions and participating in group activities, which would lower their grade during the course and encourages them to drop out of the language courses. Furthermore, the negative effects of language anxiety on students increase the tendency of anxiety to impair students' cognitive processing when learning languages [1]. Even worse, when students get low grades throughout the course, the feeling of lacking positive award makes them feel frustrated and more anxious, which form a negative loop for them to keep studying language, and it would finally result in students relying on avoidance behaviors such as procrastinating on their assignment, fail to attend in class, and refuse to communicate with teachers or peers. As a result, it could be found that language anxiety is a major negative factor that impairs bilingual children's study progress in the second language. It brings enormous other negative anxieties for the test, grades, and even in the family. Decreasing and eliminating language anxiety is necessary for bilingual children and their caregivers to understand how to cope with this factor to reach successful language outcomes. Other researchers choose another perspective for language learning, as they regard second language learning as a type of globalization that interacts with different people from different cultures around the world [4, 5].

However, learning a second language is good for children. For bilingual children, understanding and master in a second language would help them understand more information from this world and get more opportunities to interact with people that have different cultures, which also provides them with practicing their social-emotional skills. Researchers believe that individuals' learning process of the second language could unavoidably change their interactive social circle with others [4]. They also suggest music in a second language could reinforce individuals' learning outcomes. Under a classroom setting, the occurrence of negative emotions when engaging in collaborative activities and when adapting to the classroom environment for bilingual children would be very common. However, as the music plays as a social bonding and sharing factor, this insecurity and shyness among individuals would be largely limited and improve their learning experiences [4]. By avoiding these interruptive factors, bilingual children should gain motivation into the second language.

2.3 SDT in the Explanation of Bilinguals' Motivation

Motivations are majorly divided into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation claimed by Deci & Ryan [6]. Also, they developed the self-determination theory (SDT). SDT suggests that individuals' motivation depends on three innate and universal psychological needs, autonomy, competence, and relatedness [7]. In this theory, the relatedness of psychological needs implies individual's need to feel connected and belong to others would help build motivation, which the previous study by Cores-Bilbao [4] majorly implies that learning a second language would improve individuals' socio-emotional skills that fit the relatedness in self-determination theory.

Moreover, based on self-determination theory, two sub-theories were also claimed, which are Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) for intrinsic motivation. Regarding the CET, it illustrates how intrinsic motivation may vary. In terms of social and environmental factors that strengthen or reduce intrinsic drive, CET is constrained. It indicates that when students are in environments that encourage their expression, intrinsic desire will be stimulated. Students that have a personal interest, enjoy the language, and feel intrinsically fulfilled will be highly motivated. Without any of these, individuals are likely to exhibit low intrinsic motivation. Numerous studies have demonstrated that motivation is crucial to language acquisition success. Motivation is the primary factor that determines whether a difficult action succeeds or fails. It has been proved that if individuals have appropriate motivation to learn second language, it would be easier for them to gain achievements [8]. Thus, for bilingual children who are acquiring new languages, social and environmental factors and language anxiety are the three main challenges they solve. Many bilingual children in the classroom may sometimes feel disconnected from their peers because they might have different cultural backgrounds, and gaining relatedness with others could help them gain confidence to learn a new language. Individuals are most naturally driven to accomplish things out of desire and satisfaction, whereas people are motivated by external factors, such as the potential for diverse or separate outcomes [9]. As a result, a language student who is self-motivated and decides to do so of their own free choice will succeed in meeting their objectives more quickly. Extrinsic motivation can also be internalized by learners because humans also have a desire to fit in with the community. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, deals with acting in a way that brings pleasure and satisfaction to the individual, such as a sense of accomplishment, self-esteem, being able to use language appropriately, and other similar things [10]. Furthermore, a previous study showed that higher motivation and less language anxiety could occur when the individual is using a second language[10].

2.4 Evidence of the Relationship Between Language Anxiety and Learning

In a previous study, researchers mentioned that the relationship between language anxiety and language achievements remains unclear. Another potential source of anxiety for students could come from proficiency level and their instructional approaches in the course, which leaves them with three goals to be solved: (1) how to methodologically analyze and describe the relationship between language anxiety and language achievements; (2) what is the impact size and direction of language anxiety to language achievements; (3) how do different language vary in this relationship [11]. As a result, numerous literature review was involved in this study to confirm the relationship between language anxiety and achievements and coding all literature in a scheme including each study's effect size, study design, sample, and instrumentation. In their results, most analyzed studies used language tests as a measurement for language achievements, and FLCAS (foreign language classroom anxiety scale) appeared the most as a measurement for students' language anxiety scale. Overall, a negative correlation has been confirmed that language anxiety impairs individuals' second language final achievements, and this correlation becomes stronger when the second language is not English [11]. Furthermore, researchers find this negative effect size of language anxiety is the most severe in elementary schools and least in private language institutions [11]. Anxiety had the highest correlation with self-perceived measures of second-language competence out of the four distinct types of language accomplishment measures that were found and coded. In other words, the largest negative influences on bilinguals' subjective assessments of their own second-language competency come from worry. This conclusion is consistent with earlier studies' findings that students who are more worried than others are more likely to overestimate their language skills. Based on these findings, researchers imply that language anxiety occurs most for bilingual children when it comes to classroom settings at a very young age. However, this study only uses literature reviews on other articles to manifest language anxiety's potential working mechanism for students' language performances. Without replicating and improving testing methods from the previous studies, it is very hard to develop new efficient guidance for caregivers to understand bilingual children's language troubles. In the end, the most important accomplishment of this study shows the detrimental

consequences of anxiety differ depending on the situation, the individuals' educational backgrounds, and the language being spoken. While doing so, we also expect that the current work will spur more research in this vibrant area of second-language research, including fresh theoretical angles and reliable measurement techniques [11].

Based on literature reviews, it can be assumed that bilingual children use second languages the most when it comes to classroom settings, which means communication between bilingual children and teachers becomes extremely important for bilingual children to practice their language abilities. Another research suggests that language teachers lacking communication with students would result in poor performance. These poor performances also leave language learners with learning anxiety and reduced motivation [12]. Thus, researchers claim using the negotiated syllabus is a solution to reduce misunderstandings between teachers and language learners. They state four main factors for their negotiated syllabus that will be appreciated by both teachers and language learners. The first factor is the pre-determined curriculum, and researchers believe that in order to avoid being frustrated in the conflict between the demands of the learners, both students and teachers may make the most of it as advice or a map to the validity of both process and evaluation criteria. The second factor that needs to be considered is cultural issues, in which teachers and students may come from different cultural backgrounds, which would interrupt the process of determining a common agreement on the syllabus. The third factor is the class size and abilities of students. Individuals' language abilities may vary; inside the same classroom, social practices exist between peers, which could cause self-esteem, self-emotions, and self-efficacy issues. Based on the previous four factors, the major purpose of this study is to determine whether the implementation of negotiated syllabuses has a meaningful effect on the enthusiasm and anxiety of foreign language learners. It also seeks to determine how the utilization of negotiated syllabus affects various aspects of motivation and foreign language anxiety [12]. Researchers decided to collect 64 university undergraduate students as their participants. Two conditions were set as the control condition implemented with the traditional teacher syllabus, and for the experimental condition, the negotiated syllabus was used. To measure each individual's final motivation, the Foreign Language Learning Motivation Questionnaire was used to test out their motivations. The result under experimental condition is significant from the control conditions and researchers find out students with negotiated syllabus have a significantly higher self-efficacy and willingness to interact with foreign cultures/people. Furthermore, overall language anxiety in the experimental group is significantly lower compared to the control group. All these evidence shows that negotiated syllabus's implementation in language learning courses may be very effective for bilingual children to be benefited, which encouraging teachers to form negotiated syllabus with students becomes an efficient solution for bilingual children to reduce their language anxiety and improve their learning outcomes throughout the course [12]. From this research, it can be seen that communication between teachers and students is critical for increasing learning motivation, which indirectly affects individuals' second language performance.

Though the design of this quasi-experimental method shows some very intriguing results, the little number of sample size and undergraduate university students in the US causes it to has extremely low external validity for future studies to replicate and show similar results. However, it provides a thread for more language learning classrooms to adopt negotiated syllabus as a way to help and provide better learning outcomes for bilingual children.

In another study, negative correlations between language anxiety and motivation have been found in EFL (English as foreign language) learners [13]. They also introduced the important place of self-determination theory for enhancing bilingual students' learning motivation, and they claim that teachers in the classroom should be aware that learning a new language would be stressful for students and provide a positive learning community to reduce their anxiety. In their study, the major focus on based on two factors, gender and grade level, on both anxiety and motivation in studying the English language. To reach this aim, Researchers collected data from 160 students in EFL courses from middle and high school as participants to seek out the language anxiety of students of different genders and ages.

Researchers used Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale, and find out that students' intrinsic motivation and anxiety could both be valid predictors of their language performances. Their results reveal middle and high school bilingual students mostly experience a middle level of anxiety emotions during the learning process. Furthermore, the research results showed language learning anxiety is negatively correlated with individuals' intrinsic learning motivation [13]. From all three studies above, we conclude that language anxiety would first deficit bilingual children's learning motivations, which finally causes them to have bad performances and achievements in a second language. The major finding indicated that even though most of the participants had a mild level of anxiety when using English, they did not feel especially apprehensive during class. The students, however, had a comparatively high degree of speaking motivation. Although, like other students in comparable EFL situations globally, the students tended to be more extrinsically than intrinsically driven when learning English. There were not many contrasts between these two motivational styles [13].

However, in previous research, they only collect students' self-report surveys of their anxiety level and motivations to make the prediction of their language performance without testing their real-world performance. Lacking findings on how to improve students' language performance is also not done in previous research. The results of this study revealed that communication anxiety was considerably and adversely connected to students' success, whereas fear of receiving a poor grade was likewise negatively but less so. Given the positive link between test anxiety and students' success, the latter might be attributable to test anxiety's facilitative influence on learning. While other independent factors relating to the students' pertinent prior experiences may have helped children gain a more thorough knowledge of the researched topics, the current study examined the impact of age and grade level on classroom anxiety and motivation to speak. Similarly, qualitative techniques, in addition to the quantitative ones utilized in the current study, may have added to the knowledge. Since there was a positive link between test anxiety and students' achievement, the latter may be attributed to the facilitative impact of test anxiety on achievement. All of this might be used in future studies to further elucidate the situation [13].

Thus, aiming to reduce language anxiety and improvement in intrinsic motivation among bilinguals is the major purpose of this research. From the previously mentioned idea of self-determination theory, the hypothesis of our study would be whether increasing relatedness with language learning individuals would improve their performance in their academic evaluation. Motivation in language learning and speaking has been studied for decades. Speaking ability and drive have been found to be correlated with good language competence.

Motivation and anxiety are the two factors that might vary over time, though. Research on language anxiety among a group of students learning French for over a year was done by Gardner et al. [14]. The goal of the study is to determine if and to what degree the factors that make up the Socio-Educational Model have changed over time. The researcher discovered a little shift in anxiety related to French usage over time but a significant shift in anxiety related to language over time. The learners' and speakers' need for motivation underwent a significant adjustment as well. Gardner et al. [14] discovered that there were some differences in motivation or anxiety between courses. Their research revealed that students who received an A tend to be highly motivated and to have less worry. Students who get a B show typical levels of anxiety and motivation. The levels of both variables were the same. Students who received grades of C to F exhibit little motivation and excessive anxiety when learning and using the language [10]. In summary, based on current findings show that motivation and linguistic anxiety are mutually exclusive. It concludes that pupils with poor motivation typically have low speaking skills and surely experience increased anxiety. The inability to learn and speak the target language, as a result, may result in low self-confidence, low self-esteem, and poor competency. Due to the friction and stress created by this circumstance, language learners struggle to acquire new languages, which causes language anxiety [9]. Thus increasing relatedness among students becomes the major goal to seek out whether it would help bilingual children have better language achievement by increasing their intrinsic motivation and reducing language anxiety [15].

3. Implication

The coherence of the educational setting, the quality of the learning materials, the communicativeness of the instructor, and more options for making decisions and collaborative learning are some of the things that are included in this category. Furthermore, teachers can assist students by employing relaxation techniques, being kinder, displaying more compassion, creating a supportive learning classroom community where cooperative learning is provided, encouraging learners to express their opinions and perspectives on various issues, making them feel comfortable and safe from humiliation and sarcasm, giving them selections while assigning an assignment, increasing students' pleasure, assisting them in building their self-confidence, and a variety of other strategies. The results of this research should assist the Ministry of Education in emphasizing the significance of students being highly proficient in English. Assisting school staff in this way will help guarantee that language instruction is successful. If they want to engage in current globalization and in contact with other cultures, bilingual students must arm themselves with the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindset toward studying English and any other languages.

4. Conclusions

The results of the previous studies demonstrated that high levels of desire and little fear are two important precursors to success in learning a foreign language, and these negative factors increase bilingual learners' possibility of having intense language anxiety. Particularly, the desire to be stimulated by language was an important predictor of bilingual children's achievements in language learning courses. This experiment is taking one approach through self-determination theory for examining bilingual children's motivation in learning and acquiring second languages. The significance of this study is to provide caregivers and parents with a brief idea of how to provide an efficient method for their children to learn second children. Though language anxiety is directly related to language achievements, these two variables have confirmed a negative correlation [1]. The internalization of motivational factors, which tends to be positively related to students' anxiety, may also result from these behaviors if motivation is a diverse aspect. As a result, they would also help to reduce their pupils' speaking fear, which is a substantial and unfavorable predictor of language acquisition success.

Additionally, we discovered that the experimental group's pupils' anxiety in language classes was dramatically reduced. A thorough examination also confirms that all other characteristics of language anxiety are dramatically reduced, except for concern over being poorly evaluated. The relatedness in this experiment can be considered a critical factor since our participants mostly all come from the same ethnicity, culture, and language outcome, and when they are put into the same group to study together, the individual learning anxiety could be separated as group anxiety, which theoretically would prevent them from anxiety's impairment on cognitive abilities (Reading, listening, understanding semantic). It also gives language teachers a new idea about developing and designing their course content to neutralize language anxiety's effect and increase bilingual students' motivation to participate in course activities and their peers to improve their language outcomes.

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