Relationship between anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a Second Language

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to determine the relationship between anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a second language with regards to discipline, gender and language proficiency. The respondents were 60 first year undergraduates students studying at the Faculty of Education in a local university in Malaysia. The data was collected using a questionnaire (adapted from Gardner and Smythe’s AMTB survey) and semi structured interviews. Data obtained were analysed using SPSS software to determine the relationship between anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a second language while the interviews conducted was transcribed and were used to triangulate the findings. The findings from this study indicated that there is a negative but significant relationship in learning English as a second language between the three main variables of discipline, gender and language proficiency among the tertiary students. Findings also revealed that Science major students have slightly higher positive attitude towards learning English than the Non-Science students but interestingly, low proficiency students have higher and significant relationship in attitude and motivation than high proficiency students.

Keywords: ESL; Anxiety; Attitude; Motivation; Tertiary students

1. Background Of The Study

   English has become a lingua franca of the world that holds the role of natural language among people with different native languages (Cruz-Ferreira & Abraham, 2006). As a business language, English language is being emphasized and widely used in various education levels to ensure the survival of nation in the competitive world. However, in Malaysia, the poor English Language proficiency and communication skills have been identified as
two of the main factors behind the increasing rate of unemployment among local graduates. Consequently graduates have been unable to secure a job that corresponds to their education and expectations (Azina Ismail, 2011). Henceforth there has been a critical call for Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) to develop the soft skills of undergraduates specifically in the area of English Language proficiency and communication skills so that they will be able to compete as global players in the keen international market scenario (Voviana Zulkifli, 2006).

In Malaysia, English is taught as a compulsory second language in all public schools. Therefore, students are exposed to a minimum of eleven (11) years of formal education both at the primary and secondary school levels. However, even after more than ten years of learning English in schools, a vast majority of Malaysian students have been unable to gain a good mastery of the language. According to the article published by the local daily, Berita Harian (January 23, 2007) entitled ‘IPTA Students’ English Language Still Weak’ stated that almost 30 percent of the community colleges, polytechnics and public universities students achieved Band 1 and Band 2 in the Malaysian University of English Test (MUET) whereas the highest level is Band 6. A majority of the students also failed to converse effectively in English. This was highlighted by the Minister of Education, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin who stressed that English language plays a vital role in ensuring nation building (New Straits Times, May 1, 2012). Students’ limited English Language proficiency poses a challenge to many students when they gain entry to IHL as English is used as the medium of instruction. With English being widely used at the tertiary level in terms of reading and instructional materials a majority of these students fail to adjust to the language shift.

Various measurements have been taken to curb the decreasing level of students’ proficiency in English. Among the initiatives was the implementation of using English for the teaching Mathematics and Science (EteMS) or commonly known as Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Sains dan Matematik dalam Bahasa Inggeris (PPSMI) by the Ministry of Education in year 2003. However, the policy was reversed in 2009 and Bahasa Malaysia is now used as a medium of instruction is teaching the two subjects. The main reason behind the shift was that many students faced difficulties in adjusting to using English and were unable to cope with the language shift. Henceforth this study examined the anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English when they enter institutions of higher learning.

2. Literature Review

According to Noor Azina Ismail (2011); Latisha Asmaak Shafie & Surina Nayan (2010) and Ambigapathy Pandian (2002), students’ diversity in terms of education background, exposure to the real world and learning abilities are often the factors that have been cited as to why students fail to master the English language. Omaggio (2001) as cited in Morreale (2011) stated that educators often face challenges in promoting second language proficiency among the students. This was further supported by Biber (2006) who explains that freshmen who have just entered the university will face many obstacles and changes which include learning to use language accurately. In line with these thoughts, researcher (Pappamihiel, 2002) further explained that teachers often focus more on students’ lack of proficiency that they overlook the learners’ lack of engagement in the classroom and lack of limited cognitive skills in English. Besides that, Stroud and Wee (2006) added that language learning becomes difficult because learners are often not confident to speak the target language as they are afraid of being evaluated by teachers or the native speakers of the language. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) further highlight that even a good learner who is highly motivated claims to get a mental block when it comes to learning the second language. Students are seen anxious when they have to speak in English. Several studies (Tanveer, 2007; Von Worde, 2003; McIntyre & Gardner, 1989; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986) have indicated that anxiety does impede second language production and achievement.
2.1. Anxiety

Ellis (1999) stated that anxiety can be divided into two – i.e. facilitative and debilitative. Facilitating anxiety is said to be motivators to the learners in putting the efforts in the language learning while debilitating anxiety is the type of anxiety which causes learners to avoid the language learning process (Zhang, 2001). Anxiety derived from the tension and apprehension is linked to the second language skills such as speaking, listening and learning (McIntyre and Gardner, 1994) as cited in Gregersen (2007). This is further supported by Du (2009), who claimed that the anxiety feelings occur when one is not fully proficient in the second language. According to Du (2009), communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation are the three components of language anxiety and the occurrence of each anxiety depends on the situations faced by the learner. Nevertheless, it was also stated that complexities and difficulties in the second language learning process cause language anxiety among the ESL learners (Tanveer, 2007).

2.2. Attitude

Attitude towards a language can be either positive or negative (Youssef, 2012). In learning a second language, a person with negative attitude learns for the sake to prevail over people in the community while positive attitude of a person will strengthen the existing motivation in the language learning. According to Youssef (2012), attitude is an important concept in language learning for one to be successful. This is further supported by Young (2006) as cited in Yu (2010) who claimed that learners with positive attitude in language learning will result in increasing input and better interaction in second language.

2.3. Motivation

Motivation is defined as the force that drives a person to strive and work hard to learn the language because of the desire of learning and the satisfaction he will get in the learning process (Gardner, 1985) as cited in Zhang (2001). Motivation also plays a crucial role to determine effective language learning as Gardner (2007) puts, motivation in various aspects will make learners eager to learn second language. According to Yashima (2002), willingness to communicate in second language comes from self-confidence which is affected by one’s motivation. Brown (2000) highlighted that there are two basic types of motivation proposed by Gardner and Lambert in 1972. The two basic types of motivation are instrumental and integrative motivation. According to Brown (2000), instrumental motivation refers to the desire of a person learning a language for the sake of achieving instrumental goal in his life such as becoming a translator or furthering a career while integrative motivation is being defined as a force that drives a person to learn a particular language for the sake of integrating himself into the culture of the second language or becoming part of the social interchange group.

Self-determination plays an important role in second language learning which brings to the other two types of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Dornyei, 2003) as cited in Nazeera Ahmed Bazari and Faizah Abdul Majid (2010). According to Dornyei (1994), a person who is intrinsically motivated is the one who learns a second language because of the joy he has in himself and also to satisfy his curiosity which is the opposite of extrinsic motivation in which a person who is eyeing for reward such as good grades or prizes and avoiding punishment. In short, it can be said that intrinsic motivation brings to better and successful second language learning.

It is clear that anxiety, attitudes and motivation play an important role in second language learning. However, a distinctive complex of self perception, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning also depend on the uniqueness of the language learning process.

The above review of literature indicates that anxiety, attitude and motivation in learning second language has been a widely explored area in the west (Svanes, 1987; Auger & Overby, 2005) but there is scant empirical
research on anxiety, attitude and motivation in learning English as a second language among the tertiary students in Malaysia and the Asian region. Thus, the aim of this study is to identify the relationship of all the three factors that impede language learning; anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a second language with regards to discipline, gender and language proficiency.

3. Methodology

This study was conducted in a local university situated in Malaysia where English language is used as the medium of instruction. The target population comprised of 60 randomly selected first semester undergraduate students from the Faculty of Education majoring in the following two disciplines: Science Education (30 students studying Chemistry, Physics, Biology or Mathematics) and Non Science Education disciplines (30 students studying Art, Music or Physical and Health Education). To triangulate the findings, interviews were conducted with five randomly selected undergraduates from each major. The Science major respondents are referred to as SR1 to SR5 (S= Science major ‘R’= Respondent, l= respondents number) whilst the Non- Science major respondents are referred to as NSR1 to NSR5 (NS= Non-Science major ‘R’= Respondent, l= respondents number).

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Gardner and Smythe’s AMTB survey (1981) or The Attitude Motivation Test Battery which has been widely used in a number of international studies (Thang, Ting & Nurjanah Mohd Jaafar, 2011, JYamashiro & McLaughlin, 2000, Abdul Hafeez Mian, 1998). Apart from that, Gardner (1985) as cited in Chalak and Kassaian (2010) stressed, the AMTB survey was reported to have good reliability and validity. For the purpose of this study, an adapted version of the questionnaire was modified by replacing the term foreign language with the generic term ‘English’. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A of the questionnaire explored the demographic variables of the respondents while Section B consisted of 73 items rating on 1 to 5 Likert scale with the starting point of “1- Strongly Disagree” and the end point of “5- Strongly Agree” allowed the respondents to indicate their responses on their anxiety, attitude and motivation in learning English as a second language. The adapted version of the question was pilot tested and the overall, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.940 (α=.940), followed by the reliability of for each of variables stood as anxiety (α=.773), attitude (α=.908) and motivation (α=.860) as shown in table 1 below indicating a high reliability (Cramer, 1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Reliability Index of AMTB Questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety (24 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude (25 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation (23 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMTB Overall Reliability Index (73 items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s Alpha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Findings & Discussion

Altogether a total of 70 questionnaires were distributed. The response rate stood at 85.7% as 60 students responded to the questionnaire. Out of the 60 students, 16 (26.6%) were males and 44 (73.3%) of them were females. Their English Language proficiency was based on their performance for the English SPM (Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia) or Malaysian Certificate of Education results. Their performance is displayed in Table 2 below.
Table 2. Distribution of respondents by language proficiency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficiency Level</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Proficiency</td>
<td>4 (6.67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Proficiency</td>
<td>8 (13.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Proficiency</td>
<td>48 (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Mean Rating

The overall mean score for the three variables were computed and are reported in Table 3 below. The mean rating for anxiety was 3.52 (SD = 0.41) which showed that the respondents have high level of anxiety learning English. Attitude reported mean rating 4.06 (SD = 0.51), followed by the mean score for motivation (mean = 3.83, SD = 0.52), indicating positive attitude and high level of motivation among the tertiary students in learning English as a second language.

Table 3. Overall Mean rating for Anxiety, Attitude and Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sample size (n)</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients analysis was carried out to examine the relationships between anxiety, attitude and motivation among the tertiary students in learning English as a second language with regards to their discipline, gender and language proficiency.

The overall total score correlation analysis (Table 4) indicated that there was a significant and negative correlation between anxiety and attitude among tertiary students in learning English as a second language. The Pearson r statistic was (r = -0.676, p = 0.000), means the increasing of the level of anxiety have negative impact on the attitude of English learning among the tertiary students. The similar pattern was also identified between anxiety and motivation in the study (r = -0.618, p = 0.000) which indicates the increasing level of anxiety will decrease the level of motivation in English learning among the undergraduate students in higher learning. On the other hand, the correlation analysis indicated a strong, significant and positive correlation between attitude and motivation (r = 0.799, p = 0.000). Overall, the finding indicated that there is a significant relationship between anxiety, attitude and motivation of learning English as a second language among undergraduate students in higher learning but negative relationship of anxiety to both motivation and attitude.

Table 4. Correlation between Anxiety, Attitude and Motivation of Students in Learning English as a Second Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>r value (n= 60)</th>
<th>p value (n= 60)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety &amp; Attitude</td>
<td>-0.676**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>0.799**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation &amp; Anxiety</td>
<td>-0.618**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 displays the result of correlation scores on anxiety, attitude and motivation of Science major students. Correlation of anxiety and attitude registered negative but significant relationship (r = -0.729, p = 0.000), which means increasing level of anxiety, will create negative attitude of the respondents. Similar pattern of result
was found between anxiety and motivation \((r = 0.414, p = 0.023)\). In which the increasing of attitude, also means the decrease level of motivation of the respondents. Interestingly, there was one pair of bivariate correlation between motivation and attitude which is high and significantly correlated at \(0.807 \, p = 0.000\).

Table 5 also displays the results of correlation among variables of anxiety, attitude and motivation of Non-Science major students. As indicated by the \(r\) values of anxiety and attitude were negative but have significant relationship \((r = -0.638, p = 0.000)\). In the meantime, the scores of motivation registered high and significant relationship with attitude \((r = .708, p = 0.000)\) but negative with anxiety \((r = -0.752, p = 0.000)\) indicating, the increasing level of motivation will also increase the level of attitude but anxiety will decrease the level of motivation of the Non-Science major students in learning English as a second language. Generally, the entire total scores showed negative and significant relationship between anxiety to attitude and motivation of Science major and Non-Science major students.

Table 5. Correlation between Anxiety, Attitude and Motivation of Science Major and Non-Science Major Students in Learning English as a Second Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Science Major (n =30)</th>
<th>Non-Science Major (n =30)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(r) value</td>
<td>(p) value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety &amp; Attitude</td>
<td>-0.729**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>0.807**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation &amp; Anxiety</td>
<td>-0.414*</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation in Table 6 indicates that there is a negative and significant relationship between anxiety and attitude of male \((r = -0.638, p = 0.000)\) and female \((r = -0.636, p = 0.000)\) students. The correlation between attitude and motivation was reported high and significant relationship between the male \((r = 0.780, p = 0.000)\) and female \((r = 0.804, p = 0.000)\) students which indicated the more positive attitude will increase the level of motivation among the male and female students in learning English as a second language. The negative and significant relationship was also identified between the correlation of motivation and anxiety of male students \((r = -0.752, p = 0.000)\) and low and significant relationship reported among female students \((r = -0.535, p= 0.000)\).

The total scores on all the variables indicate that there is negative and significant relationship in anxiety of the attitude and motivation between the male and female students in learning English as a second language.

Table 6. Correlation between Anxiety, Attitude and Motivation of Male and Female Students in Learning English as a Second Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male (n=16)</th>
<th>Female (n=44)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(r) value</td>
<td>(p) value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety &amp; Attitude</td>
<td>-0.638**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>0.780**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation &amp; Anxiety</td>
<td>-0.752**</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 7 indicates the correlation between variables of anxiety, attitude and motivation with students’ language proficiencies. A negative and insignificant relationship was identified between the correlation of anxiety and attitude \((r = -0.933, p = 0.067)\) of high proficiency students. On the other hand, negative and insignificant relationship was reported in the correlation between the anxiety and attitude of the average proficiency students \((r = -0.514, p = 0.193)\). Both results differ from the scores of low proficiency students \((r = -0.655, p = 0.000)\) indicating the existence of negative and significant relationship between anxiety and attitude of tertiary students in learning English as a second language.

As for correlation between attitude and motivation, a high and insignificant relationship was found among the high proficiency students where \(r = 0.802\) and \(p = 0.198\), the weakest and insignificant correlation between
attitude and motivation was reported in the average proficiency students \( (r = 0.393, p = 0.335) \). A positive and significant relationship of attitude and motivation was found among the low proficiency students with \( r = 0.819, p = 0.000 \). Hence, it can be indicated that positive attitude among low proficiency students bring to their increasing level of motivation in learning English as a second language.

The correlation analysis between motivation and anxiety of high proficiency students showed a negative and insignificant relationship \( (r = -0.816, p = 0.184) \), a low and insignificant relationship was found in the average proficiency students with \( r = -0.460 \) and \( p = 0.251 \). A similar pattern of result was also reported in the low proficiency students with \( r = -0.583, p = 0.000 \) indicating negative and significant relationship between motivation and anxiety of low proficiency tertiary students in learning English as a second language.

Overall, the bivariate pairs indicated a negative and significant relationship among the low proficiency tertiary students in learning English as a second language which indicated attitude and motivation of the students were interfered by anxiety in language shift.

### Table 7. Correlation between Anxiety, Attitude and Motivation Students’ Language Proficiency in Learning English as a Second Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Proficiency (n=4)</th>
<th>Average Proficiency (n=8)</th>
<th>Low Proficiency (n=48)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r value</td>
<td>p value</td>
<td>r value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety &amp; Attitude</td>
<td>-0.933</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>-0.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude &amp; Motivation</td>
<td>0.802</td>
<td>0.198</td>
<td>0.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation &amp; Anxiety</td>
<td>-0.816</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>-0.460</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

### 5. Implication of Findings

From the findings, it can be concluded that anxiety has negative impact on attitude and motivation among the tertiary students in learning English as a second language with regards to discipline, gender and language proficiency. The results from this study indicated that the increasing level of anxiety will also create negative attitude and decrease the level of motivation of the students regardless of their discipline, gender and also language proficiency. This shows that some students tend to have high level of anxiety when their conscious mind realised that they will be facing certain language task. This was further supported by Brown (2000) who claimed that anxiety can be divided into two types which are debilitative and facilitative anxiety. He further explained that debilitative anxiety is known as the ‘harmful’ anxiety while facilitative anxiety as the ‘helpful’ anxiety. Hence, the findings in this study also corroborated this fact as most of the respondents have the debilitative anxiety which drives them to have negative attitude and low motivation when high level of anxiety was reported. This was further supported by the findings from the interviews conducted. One of the respondents (NSR4) claimed that the anxiety is the barrier to be competent in English language.

“When it comes to presentation, I remembered everything I practised the night before...but when I stand in front of the classroom, my head goes blank and I ended up stood there reading the notes I wrote”

Nevertheless, anxiety is still a critical factor that influences language learning and something that cannot be ignored or swept under the carpet. Despite the high level of anxiety of the learners, educators should cultivate effective language learning environment by creating more interaction-based classroom where learners get the chance to use the language without feeling embarrassed or intimidated by others and at the same time help to improve their language proficiency. Hence, a positive reinforcement from the educators will create less anxious, more confident, motivated and capable learners in our ESL classrooms. It is important to make the students love the language as they will be learning and using the language until they are old. Some students ended up hating the language because of the experience they faced in school. This was found in the interview conducted in which a respondent (SR5) claimed that she had negative attitude towards English language since primary school after being scolded by her English teacher for forgetting to complete her homework. She felt that she had carried the
dislike for the language into adulthood and she viewed English language as a language of colonization (‘bahasa penjajah’).

“English is a bahasa penjajah and I hated English since I was young, I never like English and there is no way I’m going to like the language, I love arithmetic and if possible, I would love to write my name in arithmetic too”

Apart from that, the findings also indicated that, overall both Science and Non-Science majors students have high motivation and positive attitude in learning English as a second language. This shows that the students realized the importance of the language for their future career and they are highly motivated to be competent in the language. This was further supported by a respondent (SR3),

“English is important for my future job, in the outside world and I try to improve my English by watching movies and listening to English songs”

The findings further revealed that Science major students have slightly higher positive attitude towards learning English than the Non-Science students but interestingly, low proficiency students have higher and significant relationship in attitude and motivation than high proficiency students.

Findings indicated that there were students with low proficiency students among the Science majors. These low proficiency students have the desire to learn English language despite high level of anxiety. The fact that the low proficiency students have high motivation and positive attitude in learning English shows that they were intrinsically motivated to learn and were driven by their self-interest and self-development. This is in contrast to other studies conducted by Koo (2003), Thang (2009), Thang and Azarina (2007) and Umadevi (2001) as cited in Thang et al. (2011). Their findings showed that that the students with low confidence level were reluctant to speak in English because of extrinsic motivation such as passiveness, lack of autonomy and teacher-centered classrooms. Hence, educators play a vital role in changing the mindsets of the students to be more autonomous and produce more interactive and effective language learning environment.

6. Conclusion

The findings from this study shed light on the existence of facilitative anxiety among the tertiary students in learning English as a second language. Despite many studies (Morreale, 2011; Du, 2010; Tanveer, 2007) have reported that anxiety deliberate language learning, scant studies found that anxiety as a helpful factor in language learning among the tertiary students.

Nevertheless, it is hoped that a study of anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a second language at the tertiary level will provide valuable input to the Ministry of Higher Education. Specifically this study will be able to highlight which factors contribute most to the study of English and what steps can be taken to address these contributing factors from the early stage of education in Institute of Higher Learning. Furthermore, the study will be able to provide recommendations as to how we can improve level of students’ proficiency while they are still studying at the undergraduate level.

Besides that, the findings of this study will also help provide insight on anxiety, attitude and motivation of tertiary students in learning English as a second language and the relationship between the three main variables with regards to gender, discipline and language proficiency. This yields useful input for the policy makers in gauging the effective way in language learning and encourage the practice of speaking in English among students in learning institutions.

Apart from that, this study will shed some light on the challenges faced by the tertiary students when it comes to learning English as a second language. Through the understanding of these challenges, it would be possible for relevant recommendations to be made to help students to cope with the situation and also prepare the students for the working world which requires them to verse in English fluently. It is hoped that the findings of
this study may help the ministry to focus essentially on the importance of mastering the degree of fluency in all the skills of English language particularly speaking, listening, reading and writing of the students, and guide the policy makers in strategic planning of curriculum specifications that will ensure the effectiveness in language learning.

It is important that language learning in the ESL classrooms is given the due focus as English is fast becoming an international language for commerce, education and social interaction. If Malaysian students want to become global player in today’s keen competitive international market they must be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and right attitude towards learning the English language.

References


