

The Factors behind the Aversion of the English as Second Language Learners to Speak in the Target Language

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English is a global language and it has become one of the most influential factors in the modern world. Therefore, learning English has become very important in all the countries where English is not spoken as the native language. In the field of English as Second Language (ESL) learning and teaching, a major problem that a teacher encounters is the aversion of the ESL learners to speak in the target language. This research was conducted in order to identify the factors behind this aversion of the ESL learners to speak. According to a considerable amount of related literature, it is evident that this problem is encountered not only by a majority of the learners in developing countries like Sri Lanka but also in developed countries like Korea. Therefore, this situation can be identified as a global issue. The research was carried out with a case study approach and comprised a sample of 35 ESL learners who had very limited exposure to the target language being taught to them. All the pupils, involved in the study, were interviewed within twenty days. The findings reported four major factors that caused an aversion to communicate in English and from among them, anxiety towards learning English was identified as the most common factor. Furthermore, this study forwards the remedial measures that are feasible and very effective in making students confident enough to speak in and outside the classroom.

Keywords : English language; aversion; anxiety; ESL learners; ESL teachers