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The role of social distance between teachers and students in English proficiency at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong

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Abstract: A teacher undergoes fundamental changes in English language teaching. He/she creates conditions and develops activities in order that students are able to practice the language in a meaningful context. The teacher is also instrumental in creating a positive and helpful learning environment within the class. Students who feel safe and secure are much more willing to practice the target language. Meaningful classroom atmosphere promotes risk-taking and allows the students to experiment. This study aims to investigate the role of social distance between teachers and students in English language proficiency at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong. The research population comprised all the students at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong. A sample was established using the proportional stratified random sampling technique. This study is an ex post facto research, using quantitative approach. The data were analyzed by simple regression technique. The result of the study shows that the role of social distance in English proficiency level of students at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong is not high, 0.186 (18.6%). Social distance between teachers and students builds the students at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong in English proficiency level. Students at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong have greater interaction to their teachers get more English proficiency than those who do not interaction to their teachers.

Keywords: social distance, English proficiency

A teacher undergoes fundamental changes in English language teaching. He/she creates conditions and develops activities in order that students are able to practice the language in a meaningful context. Those are the teacher's responsibilities to develop in the students a positive attitude to learning English. The teacher acts as a facilitator, a resource person, an expert, an advocate, a consultant, and a language model for the students (TESOL International Association, 2013: 9). He/she needs to see the potential needs of the students.

The activities should be designed with the intention that the students experience a high level of success. The teacher will also experience a big success when the actions are planned around the students' interests and takes into relation subjects that they cover some information about. The teacher is also instrumental in creating a positive and helpful learning environment within the class.

Teachers do much more than standing at the front of a classroom talking. They have an vital accountability to the movement and education of the pupils. The most important responsibility of a teacher is to help your students understand English, speak it and are able to write and read it. The duties will range from the preparation of course work, planning of classes and the marking of work handed in. On top of this you will also have to arrange any extracurricular activities and set targets for your pupils. You will of course spend a lot of time writing on blackboards and will also be responsible for the safety of pupils during the lessons.

A tiny teacher shows kindness to students, colleagues, parents and those around her/him. kindness makes the world go around. It truly changes the environment in the classroom and school. The teacher helps students feel welcomed, cared for and loved.

Teaching is a very humanistic profession, and compassion is the utmost feeling of understanding, and showing others you are concerned about them. A compassionate teacher models that characteristic to the students with her/his actions, and as a result students will be more open to understanding the world around them.

Empathy is such an important trait to have and to try to develop in ourselves and our students (Chen, 2008: 146). Being able to put yourself in someone's shoes and see things from their perspective can have such a powerful impact on our decisions and actions.

Being a positive teacher is even harder meeting with problems with very limited solutions. Nevertheless, staying positive when it's tough can have such a great positive impact on the students and everyone around us. A great teacher bridges gaps and builds relationships, friendships, and a community. Teachers always look to make things better and improve things in and outside of the classroom. Building a community is something a great teacher seeks to do in the classroom and extends that to the entire school and its community. Everyone looks at a great teacher and they want to be a better teacher, they want to be a better student, even better, they want to be a better person. A great teacher uncovers hidden treasures, possibilities and magic right before everyone's eyes.

The teachers' presentation at class will give power for their students. A teacher who lacks self-esteem will find it difficult to make self-esteem of his students. A teacher who does not lead a warm atmosphere at class will find low spirits of students to learn. So the teachers' role is very critical in language teaching. There are three basic roles for teachers: "lecturer", "teacher", and "facilitator". They made distinctions among the three based on the theory of affective factors. "Lecturers" are those who solely consider their professional skills but neglect teaching methodology.

“Facilitators” are like those who not only take characters of the former two but also care students’ affective state and learning process to help them in language learning by self-consciousness-raising. Through comparison, it reflects that lecturers lack flexibility during their teaching and there are less interaction between students and lecturers as if there exists an invisible wall. It is better for teachers to realize how to turn burdensome language class into dynamic one but they pay less attention to the students’ involvement or do not perform enough to release the capacity of students because of individual differences.

As facilitators, they try to break the invisible wall and communicate with students in time so that the previous opposite two sides can be changed into a harmonious group. Both learning and teaching go on smoothly without tension. It is no doubt that such facilitators can be successful ones for they explore attentively students’ psychological feelings, skillfully manipulate students from loving language classes and attract students to participate actively (Huang, 2000: 194).

Students who feel safe and secure are much more willing to practice the target language. Meaningful classroom atmosphere promotes risk-taking and allows the students to experiment. The teacher will continue to serve as a language model for the students. While remaining the person with whom the students will communicate most often, one of the main functions of the teacher will be to see ways to encourage students to communicate meaningfully with each other. Instead of actively directing and controlling all activities the teacher will aim to set up conditions for meaningful practice and then take on the role of a resource person.

Sharing the ideas, feeling, and thought to one another is also important in English language learning. In addition, it is also important for the teacher. According to McAllister (2000: 442) empathy helps the teacher to be more effective teacher with all their students. It creates positive classroom climate. An empathic teacher takes on the perspective of the students’ culture and responds to another from that the students’ perspective. Empathy facilitates communication. Both students and the teacher can send and receive messages. Every teacher is responsible for creating a highly empathizing atmosphere in classroom to spur their high motivations for speaking and to develop students’ capacity of language use in the most favorable state (Chen, 2008: 146).

Social distance between a teacher and students is necessary. Social distance between the teachers and the students enhance the learning outcome. Moreover, social distance helps the students to speak up with no high anxiety level. Krashen (2002: 18) states that a student with minus hesitant has more success in language learning than students who has more hesitant. The anxiety level of students affects their fluency and accuracy producing English language.

Spratt (2007: 34) states that the spoken language requires the fluency and accuracy. The fluency is related to acquires’ capability to communicate with no doubt, no repetition or no correction, no frequently stopped, and no be off on many times in

exploring the ideas or combining sentences. The correctness in linguistic forms, vocabularies, and pronunciation are connected to the language accuracy. The acquirers' fluency and accuracy in second language communication affect the assumption and understanding of addressee on the ideas or messages delivered by the language acquirers. The addressee get the points or not of what are being explored by the language acquirers depend on the fluency and clearness of language acquirers in expressing the ideas and messages in the communications.

To get achievements the proficiency in spoken language are required common practices of second language such as expressing the ideas, linguistic forms, and accuracy in pronunciation (Spartt, 2007: 35). The practices help the language acquirers in second language, so the second language capability of the language acquirers in producing language is better. Performing meaning in second language can be done by peers, teachers, and parents. It is the chance of language acquirers to identify and measure their ability in second language.

Common practice in producing second language helps the language acquirers to spring up their self confidence (Turk, 2003: 2). Self confidence affects the language acquirers on expressing their ideas or thought. Language acquirers are exploring the ideas and thought in organization, producing the language clearly, and selecting the correct vocabularies if they are in a low anxiety level, they have high self confidence. On the other hand, the language acquires are presenting the ideas and messages to the addressee in confusion if they are in a high anxiety level, they are not confidence. Moreover, it **influences the acquirers' fluency on second language. Affective factors are due to the varieties of speech on second language.**

Krashen (2002: 4) argues that there are three individual variation in the use of second language that are overuser, underuser, and optimal user. Overuser is a kind of language acquirers who usually over concerns to linguistic forms. Doubt, fear, error, and so on are usually in their mind. They are little in speaking due to they are afraid to make mistakes. However, Underuser is a kind of language acquirers who does not seem to use the conscious grammar at all. Even though there will be condition allow hem/her to use it, he/she prefer not to use the conscious knowledge. He/she is typically a self-correct only by using feeling for correctness. Optimal user is a language acquirer using linguistic forms when it is appropriate, not get in the way with communication. He/she use a learned competence as a supplement for his/her second language.

Empathy shows the closeness between the teacher and students in English language teaching. Teachers, like learners, have personal characteristics and individual differences that influence their performance in the L2 class and, consequently, **their effect on the students outcomes (Madrid, 1995: 74). The teachers' characteristics** can be showing an interest in the students, be friendly and funny, having good sense of humor, treats students well, being a good friend for the students, helpful, fair, being close

terms with the students, teaching in a pleasant and graceful way, etc but some of them are not. **The teachers' traits influence the students' target proficiency level.**

Those traits are also belonging to the teachers and students at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur. MTsN Model Sumber Bungur is located in Pakong District, one of thirteen districts of Pamekasan. **In 1990, The Minister of Religion gives "MODEL" to MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong.** MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong was the champion of English Competition in 2012 that was held by Religion Department of Pamekasan. The students of MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong are from Bali, Bandung, Surabaya, etc. It indicates that MTsN Models is well known and has good qualities in administration, curriculum, and teachers. Therefore, it is important to study more about the role of social distance between teacher and students in English proficiency of MTsN Model Sumber Bungur 3 Pakong. This study aims at examining the amount of social distance between teacher and students in English language proficiency at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong.

METHOD

The study is categorized into a quantitative research. The data in this study is in numbers and a statistical analysis used in it. This study is using an ex post facto approach. This research is teasing out possible previous circumstances of the role of social distance between the teachers and the students of MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong in English Proficiency that have happened and cannot be controlled and manipulated.

In collecting the data, questioners and test by using interview will be used as the main data. The observations and documentations will be the supporting data. Then, the data is going to be analyzed by simple regression technique by a computer program *SPSS version 16 for Windows*. Undertaking simple regression, normality and linearity tests will be undertaken.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The data of students' English proficiency level were gathered by English spoken test by using interview. The statistical descriptive results show that the mean is 47,40, median is 47, and standard deviation is 9,36.

The output of SPSS program 16 for windows estimation indicates that students of MTsN Sumbur Bungur Pakong are able to join daily conversation in English. They are able to get the meaning and understand the conversation discussing about greeting, family, educational background, interest as well as describing the social distance between teachers and students at MTsN Sumbur Bungur Pakong.

Test of normality used was to know whether the data in normal distribution. If the test is non-significant ($P > .05$) it tells that the distribution of sample is normal, but if the test is significant ($P < .05$) it indicates that the distribution of sample is non-normal.

		X	Y
	N	95	95
Normal Parameters ^a	Mean	47.5368	47.4063
	Std. Deviation	5.93190	9.36655
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.069	.135
	Positive	.069	.128
	Negative	-.050	-.135
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.671	1.311
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.758	.064
Linearity test is not linier if the ($P > .05$), but it is linear if ($P < .05$).			
Variable Linearity	Probability (p)	Criteria	Explanation
X – Y	0.000	0.05	Linier

There is a positive and significant role between social distance (X) and English proficiency (Y) of students of MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong. The output of linier/simple regression for the hypothesis is presented as in the following Table

Summary of Varian Analysis of Linier Regression

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1531.343	1	1531.343	21.207	.000 ^a
	Residual	6715.494	93	72.210		
	Total	8246.836	94			

The table above indicates that sig. (p) is significant. So, linier/simple regression proposed estimate the role of social distance (X) in English proficiency (Y) of students at MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong. It can be said that there is a positive and significant role of social distance between teachers and students (X) in English proficiency (Y) of students of MTsN Model Sumber Bungur Pakong.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	15.061	7.078		2.128	.036
	Social Distance in English	.680	.148	.431	4.605	.000

In *unstandardized coefficient* of Table 6 shows that constant $b_0 = 15.061$ and $b_1 = 0.680$. Therefore, regression model that is proposed can be formulated as follow.

$$\hat{Y} = 15.061 + 0.680$$

As a result, the model proposed is significant, the estimation, prediction, and inferential process can refer to the model. In Table 7 as follow *adjusted R²* score indicate that the amount of the estimation is showed in R^2 score. The R^2 score is corrected for part of (b_0) in order to get *adjusted R²* score. The score shows that the variant of social distance in English of Students at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong, but the rest 82.3,5% (100% - 17.7%) relate to another factor.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.431 ^a	.186	.177	8.49762

Statistical descriptive analysis in social distance says that students of MTsN Sumbur Bungur Pakong are considering their teachers. Teachers enthuse students in the instruction and learning course, teachers provide their smile to the students, students contribute to their troubles to the teachers, students acculturate to the teaching learning process, students normally have no a large number of worry in the teaching learning process, etc.

Related to English proviciency, statistical descriptive analysis shows that students of MTsN Sumbur Bungur Pakong are able to hold on every day discussion in English. They are able to get the meaning and identify with the dialogue discussing about salutation, relatives, educational background, and interest as well as describing the social distance between teachers and students at MTsN Sumbur Bungur Pakong.

Social distance is important in the success of language teaching learning process at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong. Students who are interacting frequently to their teachers in the target language are more success in the langue they are learning. The study of Ormeci (2013) studying about how do the psycholinguistic factors affect the foreign language learning process of preparatory class students asserts that the success of

individuals in learning language affected by social distance between students and their environment.

The closeness between teachers and students at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong **affect on students' motivation in learning target language. The students with high motivation in learning English help them to have interaction in English to their teachers and friends.** Robertson (2011) states that students who are lowered, they use their target language and comfortably.

Students of MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong express their ideas and emotion in English to their teachers. Students who are not in high degree of anxiety are speaking in target language intensely to their teachers and peers. Andrade and Wichadee and Chanprasert (2015) says that the level of students nervousness provoking the situation in learning English. The closeness between teachers and students at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong **decrease the students' anxiety. They will speak up when they are in low worry level.**

CONCLUSION

Based on the result and explanation of the research, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant role of social distance in English proficiency level of students at MTsN Sumber Bungur Pakong and the amount of the role of the variable is not high, 0.186 (18.6%).

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